

William (Bill) D. Heenan – School 1949

Honorary Life Member 2013

Bill Heenan was born June 2, 1929 to William and Annie Heenan. William immigrated to Canada from Northern Ireland in 1912. He met and married Annie White from Zehner Saskatchewan. The Heenan's took up farming in the Grand Coulee district near Regina. Bill attended school in Grand Coulee and later attended the U of S School of Agriculture, graduating in 1949. Upon graduation Bill returned to the family farm to begin a lifelong career in agriculture. In 1953 Bill married Eleanor Threlfall. They were blessed with two children Dale and Debra.

Early in his farming career Bill recognized the benefits of better crop varieties and became a registered seed grower in 1955. He became actively involved in the Saskatchewan Seed Growers Association as a member of the board of directors during the 70's and as president of Saskatchewan Seed Growers Association in 1978-79. In the 70's Bill saw the need for improved grain handling equipment and launched Heenan Industries that manufactured a line of hydraulic drill fills and grain augers. In 1976 Bill was presented with the SSGA award for outstanding service. This award is presented to a Saskatchewan seed grower who has made a significant contribution to the pedigreed seed industry and shown leadership in his or her community.

Bill was a tireless promoter of the pedigreed seed industry. He was one of the original founders of the pedigreed seed show at the Canadian Western Agribition and served as the show's first chairman in 1980-81. In 1982 Bill was recognized nationally by the Canadian Seed Growers Association and named a Robertson Associate. This award, named after the original founder of the Canadian Seed Growers Association, is the highest award offered by the CSGA. It recognizes seed growers, who through their actions have emulated the original goals of the organization. The award is presented to those members who have fulfilled, with commitment and success, their obligations to the association.

The Heenan farm also acted as host to a number of foreign visitors to the province including delegations from China, NATO, the Warsaw Pact and the British Commonwealth Agricultural Society. Bill also found time to belong to other agricultural related organizations. He served on the local Wheat Pool committee, was a director of Co-op Hail from 1956 until the 1990's and chairman of Saskatchewan Crop Insurance from 1983 to 1986. He was appointed to the Prairie Implement Manufacturers Association (PIMA) in 1986 and was the PIMA representative for the Prairie Agricultural Machinery Institute (PAMI). He was also a member of both the Palliser Wheat Growers and Flax Growers associations.