

Donald Rennie



Donald Andrews Rennie April 21, 1922 December 23, 2007

Donald Andrews Rennie, BSA, PhD, Dean Emeritus of the Faculty of Agriculture of the University of Saskatchewan passed away on December 23, 2007 after an extended battle with cancer of the liver. He was 85 years old and in his own words "had lived a good life. " He leaves behind a family who both loved and respected him. Celebrating his life are his son, Dr. Robert Rennie (Brenda); daughters, Dr. Wendy Duggleby (Tom) and Reverend Joan Rennie-Laing (Bob); his six grandchildren (Dr. Courtney Rennie, Dr. Kriston Rennie, Dr. Andrew Duggleby, Shanda Wenzel, Leia and Christina Laing) and two great grandchildren (Amy and Adam Wenzel). He also leaves behind a legacy of agricultural research whose impact transformed the way farmers conserve their soil in western Canada. In many ways he was the founder of soil fertility in western Canada and his many graduate students now occupy senior posts on all three prairie universities and in government. Don was born in Medicine Hat, AB, raised on the family farm south east of Gull Lake, SK where he took his Public and High School education. His first job was as a clerk in the Bank of Nova Scotia (1940-42). From 1942 to 1945 he served as a Flight Lieutenant in the, R.C.A.F., flying with 407 Coastal Squadron on anti-submarine patrol. Following WW II he completed his B.S.A. (Soil Science, SK) and Ph.D. (WI). He accepted a faculty position in the Department of Soil Science, U of S, in 1952, served as Head of the Department from 1964 1980, and Director, Sask. Institute of Pedology and Dean of the College of Agriculture in 1984 until he retired in 1989. He was active in international agricultural serving a two-year term in Vienna, Austria as the Head of the Soils, Irrigation and Crop Production Section of

the Joint FAO/IAEA Division of Nuclear Energy in Agriculture. For over 40 years his focus on international agriculture took him to over 20 countries. Don will be remembered as a teacher whose wisdom and guidance set the course for scores of undergraduate and graduate students from over 20 countries. Don was a distinguished agricultural scientist and researcher publishing 92 research papers and supervising over twenty graduate students. He was recognized nationally as a Fellow of the Canadian Soil Science Society, the Agricultural Institute of Canada and received many Canadian awards including the Saskatchewan Institute of Agronomy Distinguished Agrologist Award, the L.B. Thompson Conservation Award, the Western Canadian Fertilizer Association Award of Merit, the SK Soil Conservation Award of Merit and the Rotary Golden Wheel for Excellence in Science and Technology. He was inducted into the Saskatchewan Institute of Agrologist's Wall of Honour and the Saskatchewan Agriculture Hall of Fame. Internationally he was made a Fellow of the American Society of Agronomy, the Soil Science Society and Crop Science Society America and received the American Chemical Society Award. His contributions went well beyond agriculture and science and he served on the Board of Trustees of the National Museum of Science and Technology and was made a Member of the Order of Canada in 1992 and received the Canada 125 Medal in the same year. He was an active member of the Masonic Order and the Shriners. But most of all Don will be remembered as a patient, caring and loving husband, father and grandfather. He believed that we live on through our children and he was justifiably proud of all of his children, their spouses and his grandchildren. Don and his wife June who pre-deceased him in January of 2003, believed in the value of a good education and as can be seen from the academic achievements of all of their descendents Don's legacy lives on. The family wishes to thank the Doctors and Staff of the Saskatoon Health Region Palliative Care Services, Veteran's Village at Sherbrooke for their care and understanding throughout the last five months. A family internment service will be held at 10:30 on Friday, December 28 at Woodlawn Cemetery with Reverend Joan Rennie-Laing presiding. Reverend Marjorie Keyser will be presiding at a Memorial service for family, friends and colleagues on the same day at 2:00 pm at St. Paul's United Church (454 Egbert Ave., Saskatoon). The family has requested that in lieu of flowers, a donation be made in Don's name to the Canadian Cancer Society. Condolences may be emailed to mail@saskatoonfuneralhome.com Arrangements have been entrusted to Saskatoon Funeral Home, 244-5577.