

Armour McCREA

Obituary

McCREA, Armour Mayes (Ben)

M.Sc., P.Eng., PhD (Hon)

Husband, father, grandfather, visionary builder, entrepreneur, conservationist and philanthropist, Armour Mayes (Ben) McCrea died April 16, 2013 at the QEII Hospital in Halifax at the age of 73. Born in Salisbury, New Brunswick in 1940, he earned a Civil Engineering Degree from the University of New Brunswick and a Masters in Science (Engineering) from the University of Illinois. He began his early construction career with Ellis Don and then Dineen Construction. In 1972 at the age of 32, he founded The Armour Group Limited, a company he led for almost 40 years and that is recognized today as one of the region's largest integrated real estate and investment enterprises with close to 200 employees. One of his first major projects was the transformation of three downtown city blocks from derelict buildings into the internationally recognized Historic Properties. He oversaw construction and ownership of over 2.0 million square feet of office, residential, and hotel property in the Atlantic region and developed numerous landmark projects, including Founders Square, which preserved seven pre-confederation structures around one of Halifax's largest office towers. Today, cranes and craftsmen are at work on the RBC Waterside Centre, which respectfully incorporates many key heritage structures. A leader in environmental sensitivity and conservation, he pioneered the use of sea water as the primary source of cooling and heating for buildings in North America and constructed Park Place V, the first privately developed multi-tenant commercial building in Nova Scotia to achieve the Green Building Council of Canada's standard for LEED certification.

In the 1980s he, along with other notable entrepreneurs bought the ailing Halifax Shipyards and resurrected it before selling it to the current owners, believing the land and buildings were too important to the region's history and future to be used for any other purpose than as a shipyard.

Many of his happiest moments were spent fishing and hunting in rivers and fields, and his reverence for nature was evidenced by his lifelong commitment to conservation. He provided active leadership in Ducks Unlimited in Nova Scotia, including the Annapolis Royal Wetlands Project; and the establishment of the Greenwing Legacy Project (later named the McCrea Legacy Centre) at the Shubenacadie Wildlife Park, which includes an Interpretative Centre and Marsh Trail and Scholarship Program to promote wetlands education for students.

In 2012, Ben's business and entrepreneurial contributions were recognized when he was inducted into the Nova Scotia Junior Achievement Business Hall of Fame. Ben is the recipient of numerous other awards recognizing his professional and community leadership, including the Queens Golden Jubilee Medal, City of Halifax - 250th Anniversary Gold Medal, the 2006 Lieutenant Governors Greenwing Conservation Award, Ducks Unlimited Legacy Award, University Of New Brunswick - Engineering Dept. Wall Of Fame, the Halifax Chamber of Commerce 2009 Business Person of the Year Award, the 2010 Lieutenant Governors Conservation Award - Wild Atlantic Salmon Conservation and the 2010 Engineers Nova Scotia F.H. Sexton Gold Medal. He contributed generously to numerous causes including the Sacred

Heart School, Annapolis Royal Project, McCrea Legacy Centre, Harry M. McCrea Memorial Scholarship, Mount St. Vincent University and the MBA-Engineering Management Scholarship at University of New Brunswick. He served on many community and national boards as Director of Fundy Tidal Power Corporation, Nova Scotia Place (now World Trade Centre), Council of Maritime Premiers Advisory Group, National Research Council of Canada Standing Committee on Building Code, Founding Director of Sacred Heart School and National Director of Ducks Unlimited Canada, Miramichi Salmon Association, and Scotia Springer Club. He was a life member of the American Society of Civil Engineers and a member of the Nova Scotia Association of Professional Engineers, North British Society and the Royal Nova Scotia Yacht Squadron.

Source: National Post <http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/nationalpost/obituary.aspx?n=armour-mccrea&pid=164322008&fhid=11154>