

Comeau family loses two leading members: Seafood pioneer Bernardin, 95; son Marcel, 66

THE CHRONICLE HERALD

Published December 4, 2014 - 7:19pm



Bernardin Comeau, chairman of Comeau's Sea Foods Ltd., died Dec. 2.

Nova Scotia has lost two prominent francophone businessmen in less than two weeks — one a founding father of one of the province's largest seafood producers and the other his son and company president.

Bernardin Comeau, chairman of **Comeau's Sea Foods Ltd.**, in Clare, died Dec. 2, less than two weeks before what would have been his 96th birthday.

He was "heartbroken," his obituary said, after the death of his son, 66-year-old Marcel Comeau, on Nov. 20.

"For over 50 years, (Marcel) followed the footsteps of his father ... who was his mentor and teacher," the younger Comeau's obituary said.

The family-owned business employed hundreds of people in the French Shore region of Nova Scotia, and supported Acadian institutions and francophone culture in the province.

It was back in 1946 when Bernardin Comeau and his brother, Clarence, started a lobster fishing business.

The two men fished from November to May and eventually moved on to herring, a summer fishery, in order to have their own bait and another product, smoked herring, to take to market, Bernardin Comeau told The Chronicle Herald in 2008.

They continued to add to their line with marinated herring, scallops and a variety of other products.

By the time Clarence Comeau left the company in the mid-1960s, the company had a fleet of nine vessels and was involved in the U.S. and Caribbean markets.

Son Marcel Comeau joined the company in 1973, becoming president in 1981; his sisters and other relatives also work for the business.

The firm now employs about 500 people throughout the French Shore and has several processing plants, along with a dry-dock facility, fishing vessel and equipment repair, a laboratory testing facility and a supply store.

In 1987, Bernardin Comeau was named to the Order of Canada and received an honorary business degree in 1983 from Universite Sainte-Anne, where a building bears his name.

He was inducted into the Junior Achievement Nova Scotia Business Hall of Fame in 2008 for his contribution to the economy and “his dedication to the cultural prosperity of Nova Scotia’s French Shore region,” The Chronicle Herald wrote in 2008.

He is survived by his wife of 67 years, Therese; daughters Yvette, Denise and Janice; daughter-in-law Patsy; and several grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Source: Chronicle Herald <http://thechronicleherald.ca/business/1255602-comeau-family-loses-two-leading-members-seafood-pioneer-bernardin-95-son-marcel-66>