

John Macfie Receives Honorary Diploma from Fleming College, Lindsay, Ontario

John Macfie joined the Ontario Department of Lands and Forests (L&F) in 1949. January, 1954, found him, after nearly five years of service spent mostly in Ontario's far north, attending the Ontario Forest Ranger School at Dorset for in-service training. John graduated with a diploma, placing at the top of his class of 48 people with a 97% average. The curriculum that year, broken into three semesters, covered a host of both scientific and practical subjects, including biology, forestry, timber cruising, tree identification, surveying, commercial fishing, forest fire fighting - right down to the internal workings of the hand-cranked telephone sets that fire watchers used in their lookout towers.

Some sixty-three years later, on June 2, 2017, John found himself sharing the Sir Sandford Fleming College Convocation stage with his grandson, Stuart Macfie, as he received an Honorary Diploma from the Board of Governors.

The citation for the Diploma reads:

“John Macfie has spent a lifetime dedicated to recording and writing about forestry and logging history in Ontario. His connection to Fleming College and graduates began with John’s work with the Ontario Department of Lands and Forests, now known as the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry.

John was born in Dunchurch, Ontario in 1925 to a family of six siblings. He served in the Royal Canadian Air Force during World War II. John attended Forest Ranger School at Dorset in 1954.

John has spent countless hours interviewing people, collecting photographs, artifacts and recording historical events. He has authored several books and articles on forestry and logging history.

He has contributed articles and photographs to the Fleming College 402 Museum, including a record-setting Black Ash specimen confirmed to be over 340 years of age. He has assisted Fleming College Staff in collecting tree research data and material.

It is, therefore, with great pleasure that the Board of Governors – on behalf of the Fleming College community and the greater community that it serves – award John Macfie this Honorary Diploma from Sir Sandford Fleming College.”

Sir Sandford Fleming College

Presented at the Awards Ceremony

School of Environmental and Natural Resource Sciences

Frost Campus

June 2, 2017

John indicated he framed his brief words of acceptance around the fact that the Frost Campus of Fleming College is rich in the DNA of the old Ontario Forest Ranger School

at Dorset. When L&F stopped training there, circa 1967, they handed the job to community colleges, notably Fleming. “This diploma amounts to a re-issue, in fancier form, of the one I received at the Ranger School some 63 years ago.”

The FHSO and its members congratulate John on this achievement!



Above: John Macfie responding to receiving his honorary diploma.

Photo: Used with permission of Sir Sandford Fleming College.