



News Release

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Donald Collins inducted into Northern Maine Construction Hall of Fame at NMCC ceremony

Aroostook County - Well-known and highly respected County leader and businessman Donald F. Collins was inducted into the Northern Maine Construction Hall of Fame during a ceremony held on the evening of October 20 in the College's residential construction lab.

"Aroostook County has had a number of individuals who have been and need to be recognized for service to their community, their state and their nation. We are glad to honor Mr. Collins here today," said NMCC President Tim Crowley as he welcomed the group of local business leaders and family members and friends of the Collins family. Crowley went on to say that, as a father, he felt one of a person's greatest accomplishments is to be recognized by others in front of your children, so they can see what value others place on you. He went on to assure the Collins family that, "we recognize the work your dad has done, and the difference he has made."

Collins is the fourth generation member of his family to operate the S.W. Collins Company. He is credited with diversifying and expanding the business from the 1950's through the 1980's. For several years, he also managed the Collins Construction Company, selling lots from the original Collins farm and building houses on them. Founded by his great-grandfather Samuel W. Collins in 1844 as a lumber sawmill, Donald Collins transitioned the company to what it has grown to today when he designed and built a home retail center which opened in 1980 and drew "do-it-yourselfers" in addition to contractors. Although he continues to serve on the board of the S.W. Collins Company, Donald Collins retired from the business in 1992.

His interest in the industry extended beyond Aroostook County. He was active in the Retail Lumber Dealers Association of Maine, including serving as its president. In 1985, he was named the association's first Lumber Person of the Year.

His public service has included holding a number of elected positions, including serving as mayor of Caribou, in the Maine House of Representatives and for four terms in the Maine State Senate.

Collins has been involved in numerous business, community and educational organizations. His extraordinary leadership and community service have earned him many honors, including Caribou's Citizen of the Year in 1975. He was also recognized on the state level as the Maine Chamber of Commerce and Industry's Business Leader of the Year and by the Caribou Rotary Club as a Paul Harris Fellow in 1987.

"To our family, Dad has always been in the Hall of Fame, now we are proud that he's being inducted into the Northern Maine Construction Hall of Fame at NMCC," said Sam Collins, one of Donald's sons and the current president of S.W. Collins Company as he paid tribute to the inductee. He spoke of his father's deep regard for Hollis Burgess, a former long-time instructor of the residential construction program at NMCC who was inducted posthumously to the Hall of Fame in 2007, and the role his father played in supporting the program over the years.

"I remember him telling me that we have a shared responsibility in educating those that will be the future of this industry," recalled Sam Collins.

Although U.S. Senator Susan Collins, another one of Donald's six children, was unable to attend the event due to her schedule in Washington, her chief of staff, Steve Abbott, was on hand to read a personal letter from the Senator to her father. While the Senator has received many awards and honors in Washington, Abbott told attendees, "the thing that she will always be most proud of is being one of the Collins kids from The County."

After the unveiling of his photo, Donald Collins spoke to those who had gathered in his honor, thanking them for their kind words and reminiscing about his early days getting started in his father's saw mill.

"I haven't been here [on the NMCC campus] for awhile—I'm amazed at what's happening here, and I commend you," he told College representatives at the event.

Established in the fall of 2007 on the NMCC campus, the Northern Maine Construction Hall of Fame was created to recognize key individuals who have contributed both to the profession and have served as mentors to others entering the profession. The wall of honor featuring the inductee photos is located inside the main entrance of the Mailman Trades Building in the corridor that students, faculty, staff and visitors use to enter and exit the building daily.

The inductees honored to date represent prominent construction business owners and industry leaders, as well as alumni and retired faculty of NMCC and its forerunner Northern Maine Vocational Technical Institute.

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Several members of the Collins family joined Donald Collins (center right) and his wife Patricia (center left) as they unveiled the photo that will now hang in the entrance of the Mailman Trades Building at NMCC with fellow honorees in the Northern Maine Construction Hall of Fame. Joining the couple are, from left, Laura, Clark, Lise, Gregg, Lori, Tess, Sam and Mike Collins.