

## Biographical Notes Claude A. Edwards

1916 – 2010

Born and educated in Toronto, Claude Edwards had a long and distinguished career that influenced many organizations and individuals. After serving with the Royal Canadian Air Force in Canada, the UK and Europe during World War II, Claude Edwards worked for the Department of Veterans Affairs Rehabilitation and Welfare Branch before being elected founding president of the Public Service Alliance of Canada in 1966. During the 10 years he held that position, he saw the arrival of collective bargaining and the first public service strikes, cost-of-living increases, and wage and price controls.



He went on to fill a seven-year appointment to the Public Service Staff Relations Board.

In 1971, the renowned unionist entered into a partnership that lasted almost 30 years with the Board of Governors of Carleton University, where he served both as committee member and as chair. Since 1996, the Claude A. Edwards Bursary has been awarded to deserving full-time mature students who are in need of financial assistance to continue their studies. Edwards himself was conferred an honorary degree of Doctor of Laws by Carleton University in 2001.

During those three decades, he served on many other boards and councils, such as the National Joint Council, the Canadian Labour Congress, the Economic Council of Canada and the Canada Labour Relations Council.

When he was named Officer of the Order of Canada in 1976 for his tireless work, he was 60 years old. He nevertheless continued to add to his list of accomplishments by dedicating more years to his community as chair of the Ottawa-Carleton Regional District Health Council, as well as a member of the Ottawa Civic Hospital President's Council and the Children's Aid Society Foundation.

In 1989, he undertook his last official role as national president of the National Association of Federal Retirees (formerly known as the Federal Superannuates National Association). During his nine-year mandate, he was a pivotal advocate not only for pensioners, but for all Canadian seniors. As representative of pensioners, he played a major role in obtaining a dental plan for federal pensioners. As Chair of the Coalition of Seniors for Social Equity, he pushed to have a government department for seniors and pursued the promotion of healthy living.

"The friends I have met through my work and activism are the ones that keep me young and staying young should be the goal of every senior," said Claude Edwards before resigning as national president of FSNA in 1998.