

In Memoriam - John A. Scrymgeour

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on behalf of

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To: DAL-NOTICE@LISTS.DAL.CA <DAL-NOTICE@LISTS.DAL.CA>

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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Dalhousie University Community

FROM: Sue Gibson-Garvey, Director/Curator, Dalhousie Art Gallery

DATE: Sept. 4, 2003

RE: In Memoriam - John A. Scrymgeour

It is with great sorrow that the staff of the Dalhousie Art Gallery report the passing of John A. Scrymgeour. He died on August 31 after a heroic battle with cancer.

A native of Dartmouth, N.S. and a 1943 Dalhousie Commerce graduate, Scrymgeour went to Alberta in 1946 to work in the oil and gas industry. In 1968, he founded the oil and gas exploration company Westburne International Enterprises Limited, which later became United Westburne Industries Limited. An avid art collector, he also developed Westburne's art collection into one of the country's finest corporate collections. (The nationally touring exhibition, "Selections from the Westburne Collection", was presented at the Dalhousie Art Gallery in 1983). After retiring, he divided his time between residences in Bermuda and New York. But he kept in touch with his Nova Scotian friends and relations, and with Dalhousie.

John Scrymgeour took a particular interest in the Dalhousie Art Gallery, donating funds for the purchase of works for the Gallery's collection from 1988 onwards. When he came here to receive an honorary degree in 1993, Gallery staff were able to show him all the works of art acquired through his generosity.

In the fall of 1993, when he heard that the Art Gallery was in danger of closure due to fiscal cutbacks, he stepped forward to pledge \$250,000 (\$50,000 annually for five years) in operating funds, to be matched by the University. His generosity bought five years' grace in which vigorous fundraising might establish an endowment fund for the

Gallery. Even after his major gift ended, he still periodically sent gifts to assist with the purchase of art and equipment for the permanent collection.

In 1999, in honour of our benefactor, the Main Gallery of the Dalhousie Art Gallery was named the Scrymgeour Gallery.

The community and the Art Gallery mourn the passing of John A. Scrymgeour, a great industrialist, philanthropist and art lover, and we send our deepest sympathies to his widow, Dana, his five children and their families.

The funeral will be on Monday, September 8 in Pembroke, Bermuda. We are deeply moved and honoured that Dana Scrymgeour has requested that in lieu of flowers, donations be made to the Dalhousie Art Gallery (the Scrymgeour Gallery).