

Citation - For Services to the Remote Sensing and Photogrammetry Society

Ernie Wickens has had an exceptionally varied career. On leaving school he was employed as a field surveyor at the Ordnance Survey, later becoming an “indoor” (photogrammetric) surveyor. He spent time at Fairey Surveys Ltd (once a leading British mapping firm) before moving to UCL as a “Chief Technician” in April 1964 where he became a highly respected and helpful member of staff. He left UCL in 1989 and went to Wild (UK) Ltd, spending time also at SGI before joining Carl Zeiss (Oberkochen) where he remained until his retirement in 2000. Ernie effectively replaced Mark Hart (another active member of the former Photogrammetric Society) as the UK face of Zeiss. As a representative of a German non-profit foundation (the Carl Zeiss Stiftung) dedicated to engineering perfection, Ernie may at times have been uncomfortable at this interface of educated and pragmatic solutions!

Ernie joined the Society of Surveying Technicians becoming a Fellow of that organisation, which eventually merged with the RICS to give him the TechRICS qualification.

Ernie was elected as a Vice-President of the Photogrammetric Society in 1995. He had already served on Council from 1978 to 1989 and again from 1992, initially as Honorary Treasurer from 1978 to 1983. He was an ever-present participant in the weekend symposia of the Photogrammetric Society. On one occasion he demonstrated the breadth of his interests beyond photogrammetry (and incidentally well into remote sensing) by organising a dowsing (water divining) session on the lawns of the Birmingham University campus during a break in the symposium programme.

Ernie’s part in fostering and executing the merger of the Photogrammetric and Remote Sensing Societies, as last President of PSoc (1999-2001) and one of the two first Co-Chairmen of the Remote Sensing and Photogrammetry Society is a matter of record. However it is important not to overlook his earlier contributions to the Photogrammetric Society and to the science and technology of photogrammetry. Ernie’s quiet good humour certainly ranks with his administrative and technical contributions in the recollections both of students and colleagues. Scrutiny of the Cumulative Index of The Photogrammetric Record will reveal his contribution over a thirty year period.