

# **WILLIAM MacGREGOR MURRAY 1910-1990**

## **Founder and First President of SESA (SEM)**

It is with deep regret that we announce the death of Dr. William M. Murray on August 14, 1990 in Georgeville, Quebec, Canada, his retirement residence since 1973. He leaves his wife, Joan, daughter Sydney Alison and son William Steele.

Dr. Murray's dedication and commitment to SESA (now SEM) over the past 50 years has exceeded all others. He, with the assistance of Charles Lipson, Miklos Hetenyi and Raymond Mindlin, founded SESA in 1943, served as its first president (1943-44), and while at M.I.T., continued to manage the Society's business affairs for an additional 16 years (to 1960). He edited or co-edited SESA Proceedings from 1943-

1959 which documents the premier experimental mechanics articles of the period. Dr. Murray was an Honorary Member (one of nine in the entire Society) and Honorary President since 1962. Throughout his 17-year retirement, Dr. Murray periodically sent comments regarding SEM's business affairs to the staff.

In 1952, the William M. Murray Lecture, the Society's most prestigious award, was initiated in his honor. Subsequent Murray Lecturers are some of the most respected names in the field such as: Timoshenko, Hetenyi, Ruge, Lazan, Frocht, Peterson, Mindlin, et al.

Dr. Murray was also active in ASTM, the Engineering Institute of Canada, Corps of Professional Engineers, Quebec, and Past Chairman, Applied Mechanics Division, ASME.

Professor Murray was highly respected and revered by his colleagues. Peter Stein, a student of Prof. Murray's at M.I.T. referred to him as "one of the two 'intellectual' parents to whom I owe whatever standing I have in my profession." Ferdi Stern was a graduate assistant at M.I.T. working for Prof. A.V. de Forest when he first met Dr. Murray. Of Bill Murray, Mr. Stern could only say, "He was a wonderful friend, but



perhaps more importantly as a teacher he had the ability to inspire us and never ceased to continue his support of students." Former student Fred Bailey said, "Although it took a number of people to form SESA, it was one person—Bill Murray who propped the Society up until it could stand alone. Many of us are indebted to him not only for this, but also for his long friendship which dates from our student days under his tutelage in the 1940s and 1950s. Even though he wasn't able to be with us much in the past few years, it is sad to know that now he won't be, but we realize that the Murray Lectureship will perpetuate his memory."

In 1960, when the management of SESA was transferred to a full-time staff, Len Vidmark began his 28-year career with SEM. Len, who worked closely with Bill Murray, commented that, "Bill was a gentleman and a good friend. His support of EXPERIMENTAL MECHANICS in its growth years was invaluable. In my opinion, he contributed greatly to the early success of SEM's journal."

Dr. Murray's widow, Joan, has informed us that it was her husband's wish that any donations in his memory be made to the SEM Education Foundation in care of SEM, 7 School St., Bethel, CT 06801.

Professor Murray was a humble and unselfish man who possessed the ability to teach and inspire. The measure of any man's life is not so much what he achieved but what he contributed back to future generations. In this regard William Murray was a most generous man and a giant in his profession.

**Kenneth A. Galione  
Publisher**