



A TRIBUTE TO - DR. TONY BUBENIK 1913-1995

A memorial service was held in Richmond Hill, Ontario on February 9th, in honour of Dr. Tony Bubenik. Tony passed away suddenly while walking his dog, on February 4th. He is survived by his wife Marie, son George and wife Ella, daughter Jelena and husband Milan and 5 grandchildren. The following are excerpts from 2 of 7 eulogies delivered at the service.

Tony was born in Jevicko, Moravia, today a part of the Czech Republic. After gradu-

ating from high school he studied at the University of Brno, where he obtained a Ph.D. in organic chemistry. After a short university career in chemistry he switched to wildlife research, the love of his life. He began work in his native Czechoslovakia as head of the Department of Wildlife Research in the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences. After the Second World War when the Communists took over, he was forced to abandon research and work as a labourer. He resumed work on

red deer research in Yugoslavia and after spending two years there, he and his wife were allowed to move to Switzerland to continue research on a variety of deer species.

Tony and Marie came to Canada from Switzerland in December 1970, at an age when most people think of retirement. Dr. CH.D. Clarke, Chief of Wildlife for the Ontario Department of Lands & Forests, had persuaded Tony to come and work at the Southern Research Station in Maple, Ontario as a Wildlife Research Scientist. His challenge was to stimulate thought and transfer his European experience to North American wildlife managers and researchers. Little did Dr. Clarke know back then how effective Tony would be.

Tony quickly developed an interest in moose and attended his first North American Moose Conference; the 8th held in Thunder Bay, Ontario in February 1972. His paper was entitled "North American Moose Management in Light of European Experiences." At that time Tony was conducting research on white-tailed deer at Longpoint in southern Ontario, but he soon developed a burning interest and passion for moose and for the "bush" of northern Ontario. For almost the next 20 years he and Marie made regular trips to northwestern Ontario to conduct moose behavioural research and to hunt.

Over the years Tony regularly attended the Annual North American Moose Conference and Workshop, nearly a dozen between 1972 and 1992 and contributed 16 published papers dealing with a wide variety of subject matter. Included were studies dealing with management philosophy, antler morphogenesis, sex and age criteria, hoof wear, the role of the tarsal glands, brain volume, maturation, spermatogenesis, the moose bell, taxonomy, research needs and a standardized recording system. Many were pilot projects intended to stimulate thought and lead to further investigations.

Delegates attending these Conferences

respected Tony's informed critiques and comments. His ideas were often highlights of these meetings, and provoked a great deal of further thought and debate. He was a consummate ideas person, always thinking and drawing on his vast experience and knowledge of deer species to challenge accepted convention.

In 1982, Tony was honoured by his peers and received the Distinguished Moose Biologist Award in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the field of moose management and research.

Tony attended and participated in all 3 International Moose Symposia, (Quebec City, Canada, 1973; Uppsala, Sweden, 1984 and Syktyvkar, USSR 1990) where he broadened his world-wide network of contacts and produced two major papers dealing with behaviour and sociobiological modelling of moose.

Tony reluctantly retired from the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources as an active wildlife researcher in 1980, but retained an active interest in ungulate management physiology and behaviour. During the 1980's, at an age when most retirees gear down, Tony was gearing up. He maintained a busy schedule, by contracting out his services and giving papers in Japan, China, Chile, Austria, and the US.

He even managed, along with his son George, to co-edit and publish a major book entitled *Horns, Pronghorns and Antlers*, a subject in which he had few peers.

During the past two years Tony wrote 2 of 18 chapters for a major Wildlife Institute book entitled *The Moose of North America*. These deal with moose taxonomy, anatomy and physiology, as well as breeding behaviour. Tony was a very talented wildlife artist and illustrated many of his papers. A selection of some of his best work will be featured in this soon to be published book on moose.

One of Tony's great interests and strengths was in the field of hunter education. During the mid 1970's he initiated moose hunter

seminars in Ontario based on his experiences with hunter education in Europe. Subject matter covered a wide range including moose biology, sex and age identification, field care and handling, hunting techniques, ethics and hunting law. Tony also challenged hunters to further develop their shooting skills using life-sized moose silhouettes. He had a special rapport with hunters and quickly gained their attention and respect. This was especially evident after they saw movie footage of him taken by Marie, carrying a life-sized dummy moose head and challenging a large Alaskan bull during the rut.

Tony was instrumental in introducing new management strategies for moose in British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario during the 1980's. His fingerprints were all over new and controversial selective harvest strategies designed to protect mature breeding stock and increase moose populations. He introduced biologists to the concepts of social order, disorder, balance and social classes within populations and how these can be controlled by selective removal. The terms teenager, prime, and senior were soon being widely used to describe population structure. In many ways Tony was a pioneer and was often ahead of his time.

Tony was fluent in 6 languages and corresponded actively with colleagues from all over the world. His research activities resulted in nearly 300 scientific papers and articles in leading publications and hunter magazines. He authored several books on wildlife nutrition, physiology and behaviour of deer species. He was considered by many as the foremost expert on the subject of his most intense interest, the deer antlers. Besides his scientific achievements he was known to the public as an advisor and contributor to several wildlife films made for television.

Tony was the first person to admit that a pet theory had been proven wrong and did not hang on to ideas just because he thought of them. He learned from his experience and

moved on to refine his thoughts and theories. This was an admirable trait, characteristic of a true scientist.

Above all Tony was an ALPHA, an achiever, often demanding with high expectations but always highly motivated and respected for his broad knowledge. He was resourceful, tough, always kept his word, defended his convictions with great passion and loved to debate on many subjects. Tony gave advice freely and consequently has had a profound impact on all those who were fortunate enough to have known and worked with him. He challenged us all with his enthusiasm, lust for knowledge and life. He was an inspiration to many and leaves a unique and rich legacy in the form of many published works and art.

We know many will personally miss his wise counsel and judgement, and treasure having known and worked with him. He left his mark!

(H.R.) Tim Timmermann and G.A. Bubenik

NOTE: Family, friends and colleagues are in the process of establishing a Tony Bubenik Wildlife Research Scholarship Fund at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay. If you wish to make a contribution please make cheques or money orders **payable to Alces Book Account #6220 (re. Tony Bubenik)** and forward them to the ALCES Co-Editors c/o Department of Biology, Lakehead University, 855 Oliver Road, Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada, P7B 5E1.

