

# PIONEER

## 62<sup>nd</sup> ANNUAL AWARD DINNER



2002 EDITION

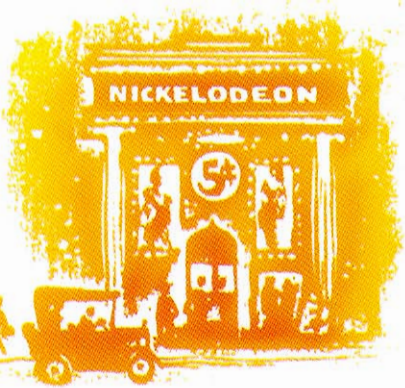
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# Cathy Watson



**2002 Canadian Picture  
Pioneer of the Year**

# Cathy Watson



I began my career with Stinson Theatres in 1974 in the concession stand at the Imperial cinemas in Barrie. That's where my love affair with the movie industry began. After graduating high school I planned to go on to university to pursue my dream of being a Veterinarian. I was approached by Henry Stinson (Bob's father) to come and work in the office for Stinson theatres so I decided to work for a year before going to university. Once there I worked as receptionist and before the year was over I was promoted to office manager. Well the rest is history as I was having so much fun that I decided to stay with Bob and carry on my work here. Before long I was given a new task of booking and buying the films for Stinson Theatres and so began my career as a booker. I was one of the few females in the booking part of the business and I often found that I was surrounded by men at most screenings and meetings that I attended.

In 1991 Bob Stinson became President of the Pioneers and encouraged me to join the board. I was only the second woman on the board at that time the other being Gail Shiffman. In 1995 I became Vice President and from 1998 to 2001

I served as President of the Pioneers. Being voted in as President was quite an honor as I was only the second woman to be named to that position. During these four years I worked with a very dedicated group of people and together we raised more money at our fund raising events from 1998 to 2001 than was raised over the previous 15 years combined. That truly is quite an accomplishment and a tribute to the many hard working people on the board of directors.

I am honored to be named Pioneer of the Year and I hope that being the first woman to receive this award will open the door to many of the other women that have put in years of hard work to help make this organization what it is today. I have always enjoyed working hard on many of our events to help the Pioneers achieve their goals and objectives. During the four years that I served as President I was also a Trustee of the Trust Fund. I have been very touched by the many different areas that the Trust Fund helps those in need in our industry. The donations and contributions are always kept confidential and the Trustees make the decisions on where the money is allocated. It was then that I truly gained more insight and appreciation for what the Pioneer's do for others.

I encourage each and every one of you to consider volunteering your time and effort to this worthy cause and help to carry on the tradition and goodwill of the Pioneer's and it's many volunteers.

# 2002 Ancillary Award Recipient

## **Colin Davis**



Born and educated in England, he immigrated to Canada in 1966. For the first nine years of his career, he was involved in many aspects of the Post-Production business.

In October of 1966, he joined Pathe-Deluxe laboratories as a Quality control Technician, then to Film Effects and eventually to FilmHouse in 1971. During his tenure at Film House he eventually became Technical Director of the laboratory operations.

In 1975 he joined Kodak Canada in the Motion Picture products Division. Throughout his twenty seven year career at Kodak, he held numerous positions in Sales and Marketing both in the United States and Canada, and eventually held the position of Marketing Vice President and Business Manager, Entertainment Imaging, Kodak Canada.

He is currently a member of the Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers, and has held numerous positions in both the Toronto Section and at the International Conferences.

Colin is also an Affiliate member of the Canadian Society of Cinematographers and in 1996 was the recipient of the prestigious Bill Hilson Award, "For outstanding service contributing to the Development of the Motion Picture Industry in Canada."

He is currently serving on the Board of Directors of the Canadian Picture Pioneers.

# 2002 Ancillary Award Recipient

## Bruce Elves



Bruce Elves' interest in "the biz" started when he saw his first movie at the age of 7. It was "Wings". Bruce recalls that even though it had no dialog it had the sound effects of guns, planes and rain etc. reproduced from a non-synch turntable. He was hooked. It was 6 years later when he saw his first "talkie". It was "The Virginian" with Gary Cooper and Fay Wray.

In 1934 at the age of 16, Bruce got his start at the Variety Theatre in Calgary changing the lobby cards and hand delivering show-bills to houses for 50 cents a week. He was in heaven. When he first caught a glimpse of the projection room he was awestruck. Bruce can still recall all the projectionist's names. They all began with "Mr.". Bruce began his 1000 hours of service of service (unpaid) in the booth. But he persevered and was apprenticed.

Bruce signed on with Sharp's Circuit

Shows and soon found himself in most every little town on the prairies running one night shows from a portable projector to throngs of local people eager to catch a glimpse of some movie magic. When in a mining town, Bruce would voluntarily run movies through the night to accommodate miners just coming off shift.

Always yearning to have a theatre of his own, Bruce saw an opportunity in 1949 in Quill Lake Saskatchewan. He ran such a successful business he was made an offer he could not refuse. At the time in Western Canada the Rothsteen Circuit was prominent. The owner, Dave Rothsteen, approached Bruce about opening and running a theatre they were opening in Hinton, Alberta. Bruce opened the Roxy Theatre in 1957 and stayed for the next 40 years. Even when Rothsteen sold out to the Landmark group, Bruce stayed as part of the package. Bruce spent a total of 38 years at the Roxy. He became a local legend as the man who was always at the door to greet his guests and would never take a night off because "something could go wrong."

Although Bruce retired in 1995, he still goes to the Alberta Branch of the Pioneers yearly meeting. Bruce represents a generation of Pioneers that sought nothing more than to bring a little bit of Hollywood to small town Canada.

# 2002 Ancillary Award Recipient

## Phil May



Born in Manville, Alberta in August 1956 Phil May could in fact be the youngest pioneer (6 months) to work a theatre box office. His parents, Phil Sr. and Lois May ran the local theatre in Manville. Lois would rock the carriage with her foot while she sold tickets at the box-office.

At the young age of thirteen Phil officially became the third generation May to be involved in the Motion Picture Industry working as an usher at the Alma Theatre in Wainwright, Alberta. Over the next few years Phil's education included working every position available in theatres – box office, ushering, concession, projectionist – even janitorial. He became a theatre manager at the age of seventeen.

In 1975 Phil moved to Toronto to complete his education by learning the distribution side of the business tak-

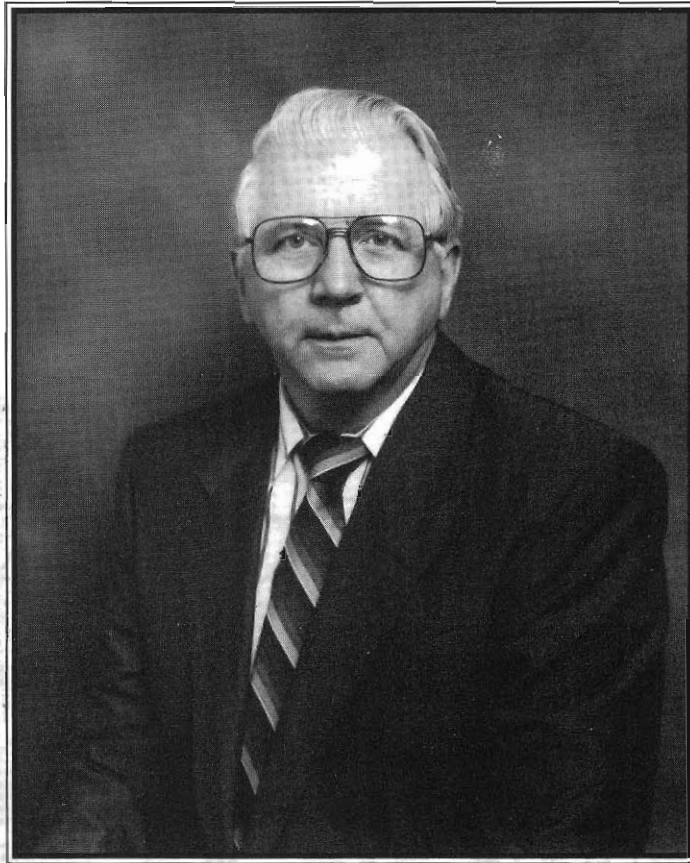
ing a job with Saguenay Films and working closely with Marty Bochner and Gordon Guiry. In 1979 the opportunity to start an exhibition company with his brothers Mike and Colin lured Phil to the bustling metropolis of Thunder Bay. After working seven days a week, twenty four hours a day for several years, Phil saw the error of his ways and 1985 decided to get an "honest" job back in distribution with Astral Films. His career moved along with stops at Alliance Releasing, Norstar Releasing, Orion Pictures, Paramount Pictures and Cineplex Odeon, to his current position as Vice-President and Canadian Division Manager at Metro Goldwyn Mayer Distribution.

Phil's involvement with the Canadian Picture Pioneers began innocently enough when Norm Stern asked him to take over the annual Christmas/Chanukah party. Phil continued to organize the next five Christmas/Chanukah parties and contributed to the planning and development of several Pioneer Award Dinners. In 1994 Phil was elected to the Canadian Picture Pioneer National Board where he currently serves as President.

Along the way Phil found time to meet and marry his longtime love Lynda. They've been happily married for the past twenty-one years and have two beautiful children whom they are both very proud of Dana (14) and P.J. (3).

# 2002 Ancillary Award Recipient

## Ken Williamson



In March of 1950 J.J. Fitzgibbons was President of Famous Players, R. W. Bolstad was Vice President. It was the era of N. L. Jackson, L. G. Geering, Morris Stein was Eastern Divisional Manager and R. S. Roddick was District Manager for the Maritimes.

Ken began his career at the age of 13 on March 1st, 1950 at the Famous Players Paramount Theatre in Saint John, New Brunswick. Harrison Howe was his first Manager. Following four years of ushering and management training, he was transferred to the Paramount Theatre in Moncton as Assistant to T. Murray Lynch. Ken went on to manage theatres in Sydney, Glace Bay and the Paramount Theatre in Halifax, with the majority of his time spent at the Vogue and Paramount Theatres in Sydney.

In the fifty plus years in the industry, Ken has worked for a least six District Managers, two of the finest were the late Jim McDonough and T. M. Lynch. He has worked for several Presidents of Famous Players, one of which was George Destounis who initiated a pension plan for management.

Following the closure of the Vogue Theatre in Sydney in April of 1999, he retired but is still actively involved in the sale of the building.

Ken is married to the former Pauline MacKinnon and they have a daughter and four sons and eight grandchildren. Ken spends his leisure time playing ball in the summer and bowling and curling in the winter months.