

Anthony J. Dwyer

1902-1965

Anthony J. Dwyer (1902-1965) was a lumberman, civic leader and civil aviation enthusiast.

He held great respect for the forest as a basic resource of the Pacific Northwest, and a renewable one. He was a successful innovator in conservation, utilization of timber through relogging and protection of the woods through improved slash burning methods.

“Tony” early demonstrated the value of the light plane in forest operations. He served 14 years on the State Board of Aeronautics, including three terms as chairman. He supervised the building and improving of many airports throughout the small towns of Oregon, making them more accessible.

Mr. Dwyer was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota, August 19, 1902. He was the eldest son of Anthony J. Dwyer, Sr., and Katherine McCarthy Dwyer. The Dwyers moved to Portland in 1906 where Tony attended St. Stephens parochial and Columbia Preparatory schools. He played both baseball and football in high school and later won his letter on the varsity baseball team at Oregon State College (now Oregon State University).

At Oregon State he majored in logging engineering and was a member of Phi Delta Theta fraternity and Xi Sigma Pi, national forestry honorary.

Tony learned the logging and lumber business from the bottom up. During vacation periods, he started his work in the forest on his father's operations near

Estacada and Sandy at jobs ranging from whistle punk to donkey puncher and locomotive engineer.

When A.J. Dwyer, Sr. built the family sawmill in southeast Portland in 1923, Tony became vice-president in charge of logging. Logging operations were carried on in the Mt. Hood National Forest, adjacent company-owned lands in the Clackamas River Basin and the Foss Tract near Cochran.

Tony Dwyer was active in measures to conserve the forests and reduce waste both in logging and milling operations. Forestry operators credit him with initiating salvage techniques that resulted in increasing yields from logged over areas by at least 25 percent.

Early in the 1940s Tony began experimenting with a small circular saw mounted on skids in a logging show near Fish Creek, east of Estacada. He cut rejected logs with diameters as small as six inches, in contrast to a previous 20-inch norm. The stands had been logged 3 ½ years previously for virgin stands of 250-year-old Douglas fir.

The salvage was chiefly small trees from the Hemlock understory. The operation was expanded and proved economically profitable over a three-year period, reclaiming small logs, short logs and chunks. Operating costs were high and the profit margin low, but Tony proved it could be done, making merchantable lumber out of materials that had formerly been wasted in slash fires. Later the operation was continued with a Swedish

gang saw in the Portland mill where there was also greater recovery of by-products.

The United States Forest Service, compiled a special report on the project and eventually changed their specifications on logging to require that logs down to diameters of six inches be taken to the sawmill.

Following the example of their father, the Dwyers reserved prime timber that bordered roadsides through their operations for recreational use. A stand near Estacada, which is now the Eagle Fern Park, is an example. The Dwyers were the first to use aircraft in their operations, making the trip from mill to woods in 15 minutes instead of an hour and a half. This also resulted in fast delivery of parts, spotting of fires and speedy hospitalization of injured workmen.

One of the company planes was equipped as an ambulance. Its effectiveness in

emergencies was a contributing factor in persuading the Federal Communications Commission to allot private radio frequencies to the lumber industry.

Tony was a director of the Portland Chamber of Commerce and served as chairman of both its forestry and aviation committees. He was a member of the Society of American Foresters, the Aero Club and Waverley Country Club.

Tony married Edna Hayes on August 30, 1930. They had four daughters: Joanne (Mrs. William Harsey), Kathleen (Mrs. Robert Duyck), Rosemary (Mrs. Adolf Seggert) and Stephanie (Mrs. Ernest Talley).

He died of a heart attack on June 23, 1965, at Providence Hospital, Portland. At the time of his death, he was president of the Dwyer Lumber and Plywood Company, and a partner in the Clackamas Logging Company, the Dwyer Forest Products Company and the Dwyer Fuel Company.