



John S. Brandis

1915-1972

Born April 6, 1915, in Aberdeen, Washington, a lumber town near the greatest stand of Douglas fir ever found in the Pacific Northwest. John S. Brandis spent his life in the timber industry. He worked his way from being a rigging slinger to being one of the top timber executives in the country.

After high school, Brandis exchanged the West Coast for the East Coast when he enrolled at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland. After one year, however, he returned to the Pacific Northwest and attended Oregon State University where he was graduated in 1938 with a degree in Logging Engineering. While at OSU he lettered in football and track, and was president of both the OSU Letterman's Association and Phi Sigma Kappa fraternity. Subsequent to graduation, he married Evelyn Fosse, a graduate of the University of Washington.

With a new degree under his arm, Brandis formed his own logging operation. In 1945 he joined Willamette Industries and served as Vice President of timber. In 1954 he formed Plywood Products Corporation. His idea for making plywood by utilizing low grade timber created the largest sheathing plywood manufacturing complex in the industry. Plywood Products was acquired by Georgia-Pacific when he became a Vice President.

During his tenure with Georgia-Pacific, Brandis was credited with helping to structure the company into a position of leadership among forest products industries. He was instrumental in the acquisition of several manufacturing operations and timber holdings for the company. Before he left Georgia-Pacific, he had risen to the position of Executive Vice President. During this period Gerry Pratt, writing as Business Editor of *The Oregonian*, once described Brandis as “a

rare combination of a powerful executive talent and a 240-pound logger” who knows the industry from top to bottom.

In January of 1964, Brandis left Georgia-Pacific and organized his own company, Brand-S Corporation. From its inception until his death in 1972, his holdings included plywood and veneer plants in Corvallis and Eugene, sawmills in Portland and Livingston, Montana.

During his lifetime Brandis performed countless generous deeds, many of which were little known. As an industrialist, he felt responsible for sharing his productivity with those who needed it. He contributed to churches, hospitals, universities and many other worthy institutions and causes. In 1964 when Alaska suffered the devastating Good Friday earthquake, Brandis organized the Alaska-Aid Committee which shipped lumber, plywood, and other building materials to the people of Alaska as a gift to assist in rebuilding. For his efforts, Crow’s Forest Products Digest picked him as “Lumberman of the Year” and described him as a “genuine humanist” when he saw the opportunity for public service.

Some of the other ways in which he served were as the chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Oregon State Foundation, as a trustee of Linfield College, and as a regent of Mt. Angel College. He was one

of the founders of the Western Forestry Center (now the World Forestry Center) and was the first chairman of its board. He was also in charge of the Muscular Dystrophy Drive and a United Good Neighbors Fund Drive for Advance Gifts.

Professionally he served as a director of the American Plywood Association, as a director of the Industrial Forestry Association, and as president of the Columbia River Log Scaling and Grading Bureau.

He also found time to be finance chairman for the Republican Committee of Oregon, to be chairman of the board of the Zoo Portland Railway and director of both the Portland Symphony Society and the Japanese Garden Society. He was also a Port of Portland Commissioner for five years.

In addition, he was active socially in the Waverley Country Club, La Quinta Country Club, the University and Arlington clubs, Rotary, B.P.O.E., Masonic Lodge, Shrine and Scottish Rite.

Brandis, who was known as Jack to his many friends, was a family man with a deep Christian faith. He and his wife Evelyn had three children, John Jr., and daughters Gail and Susan. He died of cancer at his home in Portland on November 25, 1972, at the age of 57.