

BENY, Wilfred Roy Roloff [UNTD YORK '43] (1924 - 1984) Age: 60



A native of Medicine Hat AB, Roloff (his preferred name in later life) Beny was attested into the UNTD in Oct '43, in his 2nd year of Fine Arts at U of T. He was already an accomplished photographer and painter in his teens, arriving in Toronto from the Banff School of Fine Arts. After 2 UNTD summers he graduated in the Spring of 1945 with a BA (Fine Arts). He went on to an MA (Fine Arts). He had no subsequent Naval service.

He did however have an artistic career that was a virtual tsunami of international accomplishment and accolade, right up until his untimely death in Rome Italy, on March 16, 1984, at the age of 60.

His book of photographs; "To Every Thing There Is A season" was chosen by the Gov't of Canada as the Official Gift to visiting Heads of State during Centennial Year, 1967. He was appointed as an Officer of the Order of Canada on Dec 22, 1972 and was so Invested on Apr 11, 1976.

I will admit to being virtually clueless about Roloff Beny until coming across his UNTD Bona Fides. There is a lot of material available on him but I will link to just one somewhat longish piece; a speech he gave at the Empire Club in Toronto on October 27, 1983, just 6 months before he died. The speech does summarize a lot of his career but there is a delightful running anecdote therein concerning the Queen Mother, who he first photographed during her and King George VI's famous 1939 Canadian Tour and with whom he had a number of subsequent encounters.

<http://speeches.empireclub.org/61923/data?n=30>

In the piece he is referred to as a Dr. Beny, by virtue of an LL.D. received from the University of Lethbridge in 1972.

Bill C