



NEWS RELEASE

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CITIZEN KANEE – A CITIZEN FOR ALL REASONS SOL KANEE IS CITIZENS HALL OF FAME 2009 INDUCTEE

Sol Kanee, this year's inductee into the Citizens Hall of Fame, was referred to as "Citizen Kanee" in a *Winnipeg Free Press* tribute, and as "an exemplary citizen" by Ernest Sirluck, the president of the University of Manitoba.

"Where do you begin and where do you end on describing an individual living nearly 98 years (passed away in 2007) and nominated for his achievements in all fields of endeavour – arts, business, voluntary service, professionals, public affairs and others," said Rick Preston, chair of WinnipegREALTORS® Citizens Hall of Fame committee. "Kanee is a truly remarkable citizen who touched so many people and organizations throughout his prolific life in ways that will endure for many years to come," he added. Winnipeg is incredibly fortunate he chose to settle here after serving out his military service in World War II. During the war, he attained the rank of major. Kanee was born in Melville, Saskatchewan where he opened a law practice in 1932 after graduating with a Bachelor of Law from the University of Saskatchewan."

Kanee's contributions to Winnipeg encompass a commitment to achieve results and progress through working out differences between generations, divergent religious groups, and ethnic communities. A good example is his instrumental role in creating the United Way of Winnipeg, which was originally called Winnipeg Community Chest. As with other Citizens Hall of Fame inductees, he took unselfish delight in mentoring others to the greater good of this community.

His resumé includes lawyer, soldier, senior business executive, confidant of prime ministers and presidents, negotiator, community leader and builder, mentor, philanthropist and humanist. References for his nomination are The Honourable Jean Chrétien, The Honourable Duff Roblin, Kathleen Richardson, Edgar Bronfman and Arthur Mauro. In addition, The Honourable Richard Kroft came before the selection committee to speak in support of Sol Kanee.

Here are just some of Kanee's contributions to the well-being and future development of Winnipeg.

As chair and active volunteer board member of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, he helped make it a world-class ballet gaining international acclaim.

As co-founder of one of the largest law firms in Winnipeg – Thompson Dorfman Sweatman LLP (originally was Shinbane Dorfman Kanee) and a close colleague of former Chief Justice Samuel Freedman (1987 Citizens Hall of Fame inductee), he was a leader in establishing the law profession as trusted advisors to the Winnipeg business and general community.

Kanee was instrumental in creating the United Way of Winnipeg.

He built Kanee Grain Company and Soo Line Flour Mills into a major industry player as it was first to introduce new Swiss technology in North America which changed the way everyone conducted business. As chair of Transair Inc., he negotiated its sale to PWA.

He led other important community institutions such as the University of Manitoba Board of Governors, the Social Planning Council of Winnipeg and The Society for Crippled Children and Adults Winnipeg.

Most notable is his service to Winnipeg's Jewish community. He continued a family tradition of over 60 years of service to the Sharon Home (this leading North American personal care facility is now called the Kanee Centre). He was national president of the Canadian Jewish Congress and executive member of the World Jewish Congress. In being awarded the Order of Manitoba, Kanee was noted for his "unparalleled service to Winnipeg and Canada's Jewish community".

At 17 years, Kanee is the longest-serving director of the Bank of Canada. As director, he was a trusted confidant to Bank of Canada Governors Louis Rasminsky and Gerald Bouey. He also was the chairman of the Federal Business Development Bank from 1975 to 1978.

Awards conferred on him include a Centennial of Canada Medal, Doctorate of Laws from the University of Manitoba, Officer and Companion of the Order of Canada, Order of Manitoba and the Sol Kanee Lecture series on International Peace and Justice through U of M's Mauro Centre for Peace and Justice.

He has also received a number of prestigious awards from the Jewish community such as the Canadian Jewish Congress Samuel Bronfman Medal in 1978, the International B'nai Brith Humanitarian Award in 1979 and the Nahum Goldman medal in 1995. In his honour, the Winnipeg Jewish Community Council created the Sol Kanee Distinguished Service Medal in 1994.

The following typifies the credo by which Kanee lived and was written in the submission on his nomination. "Sol Kanee fully embraced his father's principle that all good that is taken from the community must be paid back in kind. Sol Kanee repaid his city, his country, and the world far in excess of his fair share."

"Kanee shows us through his entire lifetime what can be accomplished by combining a keen intellect with a driving determination to succeed and make a difference above and beyond one's own personal pursuits," said Preston. "Far from being a spectator in life, he was actively engaged. Through his connections and care and respect for others, Winnipeg is that much better off as a result."

Established in 1986 by WinnipegREALTORS®, the Citizens Hall of Fame is a unique program honouring outstanding citizens contributing to Winnipeg's quality of life. Each inductee has a likeness of themselves sculpted and prominently displayed at the Citizens Hall of Fame site in Assiniboine Park.

For further information contact Peter Squire at 786-8854.

To learn more about past inductees and the Citizens Hall of Fame program please visit: www.winnipegfame.ca

