



CANADIAN PICTURE PIONEERS – ANNUAL AWARDS

The Canadian Picture Pioneers has been fostering industry relationships, fundraising and providing assistance for those in the motion picture industry since 1940.

The Picture Pioneers have always been grateful to have industry executives and employees become volunteers and members who support the Picture Pioneers organization. In 1950 the Canadian Picture Pioneers began hosting an annual gala awards dinner event to pay homage each year to a selected few hardworking selfless Pioneer members selected from across Canada. The annual event is attended by entertainment industry members, friends and associated business partners from across Canada and the USA.

In 1952 the first “Pioneer of the Year” Award was given out at the annual awards gala dinner. This award acknowledges those who have shown extraordinary leadership and have excelled in their contributions to the Canadian Picture Pioneers, the motion picture entertainment industry and their communities. The 1952 Awards Dinner honoured multiple people selected as “Pioneer of the Year” to mark the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the first successful film theatre in Canada, the “Electric Theatre” in Vancouver. The Pioneer members first honoured were; British Columbia’s John Schuberg owner of the Electric Theatre, Ernest Ouimet who opened the first successful movie theatre in Quebec and also pioneered film production and distribution, George Ganetakos of Montreal founder of another Quebec movie theatre circuit, Archie Mason from Nova Scotia who was a touring movie exhibitor and headed many Maritimes and Canadian film trade associations, F. G. Spencer from New Brunswick who operated theatres in the Maritimes and theatre exhibitor Jule Allen who along with other family members opened the first “grand” theatre outside of Toronto and Montreal with the opening of their first theatre in Brantford, Ontario and then went on to build one of Canada’s largest theatre circuits of the time.

Each year since then Canadian Picture Pioneers National and Branch executives and members from across Canada send in their nominations for the Annual Awards. A selection committee made up solely of past Pioneer of the Year recipients selects one person to honour as Pioneer of the Year. The committee may also at their discretion select others who deserve acknowledgment for their industry and charitable work. Over the years the annual committees have called these other awards many different names, currently they are named the Silver and Diamond Spotlight Awards.

A complete list of “Pioneer of the Year” recipients and others who have been honoured by the Canadian Picture Pioneers is available at CanadianPicturePioneers.ca

The Canadian Picture Pioneers is one of the oldest Canadian movie industry benevolent organizations. For over six decades the Pioneer organization has honoured Award recipients with some of the most historical and prestigious acknowledgements the Canadian motion picture industry bestows on an industry member. The awards are presented at the Canadian Picture Pioneers Annual Awards Dinner which is held in the Fall of each year.

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