



## Sven Fredrickson (1922-2005)

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the National Institute of Disability Management and Research (NIDMAR), we regret to advise that our good friend and colleague, Sven Fredrickson died at Port Alberni on Monday, February 14, 2005.



Sven was a pioneer in our “return to work” initiative. Following honours graduation as a forest engineer from the University of British Columbia, he spent many years as a faller, following in his father’s footsteps, for MacMillan Bloedel, Sproat Lake Division. A severe industrial accident in 1974 confined him to a wheelchair whereby Sven then devoted the next 30 years of his life to the ideas and values which have made NIDMAR so successful. From the outset, Sven understood the underlying value of work. He understood it brought self respect and dignity to every human being. His advocacy for the right of every injured worker to return to work was an essential ingredient in what was later to become NIDMAR. Sven’s determination to see that workers who had been injured and disabled continue to work and contribute to their families and communities made him an early leader in the disability rights movement without whom there might never have been a successful NIDMAR.

Sven was a charter executive member of the group of injured workers that incorporated the Disabled Forestry Workers Foundation of British Columbia. His energy and enthusiasm was at the root of that group’s first success, the production and national broadcasting in 1987 of the TV documentary, Every 12 Seconds (referring to the number of times there were industrial accidents in Canada).

As we look back on the life of this exceptional Canadian, we see him not only as a pioneer in our work at NIDMAR but in all respects a pioneer in the disability rights movement. His advocacy predated our Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and

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it was this kind of pioneer work from Sven and others across Canada that ultimately resulted in the constitutional equality provision, Section 15 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. He believed in the value of every individual. He believed workers who were injured and disabled could continue to make a contribution in the world of work and to the community in which they lived.

As we look back on the life of Sven Fredrickson we remember the many abilities of this remarkable man. He was a founder of NIDMAR, a leader in the field of return to work, and a person who made a lasting contribution to his community, his country and an impact felt around the world.

In addition, his many endeavours to support physical access initiatives in the community where he lived most of his life, Port Alberni, will be forever appreciated. As this initiative moves forward, his wisdom, guidance and personal commitment will be greatly missed.

*Henry Nedergard*

*David Vickers*



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