



New Jersey Pinelands Commission PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Paul Leakan

Phone: 609.894.7300

E-mail: info@njpines.state.nj.us

Remarks on the passing of former Pinelands Commission member Thomas B. Darlington

NEW LISBON, N.J. – It is with great sadness that the New Jersey Pinelands Commission acknowledges the passing of Thomas B. Darlington, who served as an original member of the Commission from 1979-1998.

“When we were putting together the original Pinelands Plan, he was the source of information,” said Candace McKee Ashmun, who has served as a member of the Pinelands Commission since its inception in 1979, said of Mr. Darlington. “In many ways, he was the institutional memory of cranberry growers in South Jersey. He was fabulous.”

Mr. Darlington was a former longtime cranberry and blueberry farmer in Pemberton Township, Burlington County. He operated Joseph J. White Inc. from 1952 until his retirement in 1995. He is the nephew of Elizabeth C. White, who helped to cultivate the blueberry at Whitesbog. Mr. Darlington had a background in machine design. He invented the “Darlington Picker,” the first successful dry-harvesting picker, as well as a blueberry-picking machine.

Mr. Darlington served on the Pinelands Commission’s Personnel and Budget Committee for many years, and was a proponent of protecting the Pinelands and its unique natural, cultural and historic resources.

“Tom brought the original farming perspective to the Pinelands Commission,” said Stephen V. Lee III, who has served on the Commission since 1982. “He was the primary agricultural voice on the Commission for a number of years. He served that role well in striking a balance on the Commission. He was a fine man.”

“Tom Darlington always demonstrated the best qualities one could ask of anyone serving the people of New Jersey in his role as a member of the Pinelands Commission,” said Terrence D. Moore, who served as the Commission’s Executive Director during the panel’s first two decades. “He exhibited extraordinary courage in voting to adopt the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan, consistently set the standard for integrity, and remained a person of genuine humility and kindness which endeared him to those who worked with him. These were not difficult for Tom to display in public life, since they were qualities he practiced every day in private life.”

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