In Memoriam

Sidney S. Smith, AES life member, passed away on October 25, 2000, at the age of 77. The cause of death was pancreatic cancer. I considered him one of the greatest, most gifted and brilliant audio engineers that ever lived. He was a legend in his time.

Sidney got his start after World War II, working for the late Ed Miller at Radiocraftsmen in Chicago. Being an aspiring operatic tenor, however, drew him to New York where he got an engineering job at a fledgling company called the Marantz Company. Through his designs and brilliance, Marantz soon became the unrivaled premier company in the audio industry. His designs include the Models 2, 5, 8, 9, and 8B tube amplifiers. He also designed the Model 6 electronic crossover and the legendary Model 7C tube preamp. His premier accomplishment, however, was hiring and teaming up with Dick Sequerra to develop the world renowned Model 10B stereo tuner. Sidney followed this up with the solid state 7T preamp and the world’s first state-of-the-art solid state power amplifier, the Model 15, which today will still hold its own against modern products.

When Superscope purchased the Marantz Company and intended to move it to the West Coast, virtually none of the technical people at Marantz were willing to move west. Sidney left the company. Dick Sequerra followed shortly after, and they again teamed up to produce an incredible piece of audio gear, namely, The Sequerra Model One stereo tuner.

His later years were spent mainly relaxing and enjoying his grandchildren. He did, however, stay in touch with the audio world. To me he was the smartest of the smart, the brightest of the bright, and the best of the best. In addition, he was one of the nicest people one could hope to meet. Sidney was my mentor and best friend for 35 years. He may be gone, but his genius will live on forever.

Wes Dooley

James Bongiorno