

Engineering Heritage Australia

**National Engineering Oral History Program
Biographical Notes**

Alexander Ross McIntyre (1923 -)

Civil Engineer

- Birth & Family:** Born 21 March 1923, Private Hospital, Chatswood Sydney. Younger child of Alexander John McIntyre (1886-1954), warehouse manager and Blanche Emily (nee Bonfield) (1888-1976).
Brother, Alan William (1918-1976).
- Education:** Attended Roseville Primary School, Sydney NSW (1928-1934), Chatswood Intermediate High School, Chatswood, Sydney NSW (1935), North Sydney-Chatswood Junior High School, North Sydney NSW (1936-1937), North Sydney Boys' High School, North Sydney, NSW (1938-1939). NSW Leaving Certificate (1939). Attended University of Sydney, Engineering Degree Course (1940-1944). Awarded BE, Civil, University of Sydney (1944).
- Qualifications:** Bachelor of Engineering (Civil), Sydney University (1944), Sydney Technical College Health Inspector Certificate (1948), Certificate of Qualification as Engineer under the Local Government Act (1948), Certificate of Qualification as a Health Inspector under the Local Government Act (1950).
- Memberships:** Fellow of the Institution of Engineers, Australia (FIEAust)
- Awards:** The Institution Award (with others) (1964)
Hall of Fame, North Sydney Boys' High School (1970s)
Canberra Engineering Hall of Fame (2002)
- Work History:** Joined the Metropolitan Water Sewerage and Drainage Board (1943) as a Professional Officer General Grade while waiting to be called up by the RAAF. Worked in the Design Office on the Warragamba Pipeline project.
In RAAF from December 1943 to December 1945 as an Engineer Officer with No 5 Airfield Construction Squadron engaged on airfield and road construction and maintenance work, erection of large tanks for aviation fuel, construction of water points and associated engineering construction work. Participated in assault landings at Aitape (Papua New Guinea) (1944), Noemfoor Island (Dutch New Guinea) (1944) and Labuan Island, British Borneo) (1945). Carried out airfield and road maintenance at Biak Island (Dutch New Guinea) (1945). Took a detachment to Kuching (British Borneo)

(1945) to upgrade airfield to allow aerial evacuation of Allied Prisoners of War.

After the war returned to the Metropolitan Water Sewerage and Drainage Board and worked in the Design Office until resignation in 1946.

Joined the Commonwealth Department of Civil Aviation as an Airport Engineer in August 1946. After assisting in a preliminary survey of site for Hobart Airport, carried out compass and pace preliminary surveys and designs for new airports in Country New South Wales as well as checking existing airports for current adequacy in NSW and Norfolk Island. Seconded to the Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Authority (SMHEA) in January 1950.

First employed as Plant Procurement Engineer and then Plant Engineer. Selected site and made preliminary survey and design for the aerodrome at Cooma. Joined Major Contracts Group in 1952 and worked on road and camp layouts, tender documents for major contracts and conducting possible tenderers around the work sites. In 1954 spent 10 months in the USA as a trainee with the Bureau of Reclamation in Colorado, California, South Dakota and Kansas. From 1954 to 1958 was Office Engineer (Cabramurra, NSW) administering major contracts. From 1958 to 1961, was Resident Engineer at Tantangara for the construction of a concrete dam on the Murrumbidgee River and a 10 mile tunnel to the Eucumbene River. On completion in 1961, returned to Head Office in charge of construction work associated with the Snowy-Murray diversion. Located in Khancoban, NSW this project involved driving large tunnels, construction of Geehi, Murray 2 and Khancoban dams, civil works for Murray 1 Power Station and excavation for Murray 2 Power Station and pressure pipelines for both power stations.

Terminated secondment to the SMHEA in 1966 and moved to Commonwealth Department of Works in Canberra as the Assistant Director (Construction), later appointed Director in the ACT Region. Works covered design and construction of Corin and Googong Dams, Bendora water pipeline, Telstra Tower, Australian Defence Force Academy, Lower Molonglo Water Quality Control Centre, Calvary and Canberra (Woden) Hospitals, multi-storied and school buildings roads, water, sewerage and drainage systems, quarry, sawmill and cement products factory. Professional, administrative and tradesperson totaled over 2,000.

In 1972 attended a 3 month course at the Administrative College

Retired from the public service at age 61 in 1984

Other Activities: Institution of Engineers:

Joined the Institution of Engineers in 1941, Chairman of Canberra Division in 1973. Member of the Heritage Panel since 1985, filled the positions of chairman, secretary and treasurer at various times.

Member of the Excellence Committee on two occasions. In 1987 wrote a paper for the Diamond Jubilee of the Division covering the highlights since 1927, later expanded it to 2002. Member of a voluntary four-man group (2003-2004) known as 'Dad's Army' conducting research and reporting work on Canberra's water supply situation. Report and submission presented to Government.

Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Authority:

Organised the official ceremony for the opening of Cooma Airport and the closing of the gates controlling the Eucumbene Dam entrance to the Eucumbene-Tumut tunnel.

Planned and coordinated the 3 day visit of HRH Prince Philip to the Snowy in 1956 and the later 2 day visit by the Governor General.

Coordinated and edited the section dealing with Sir William Hudson's career as Commissioner in the biographical work published by the Fellows of the Royal Society.

Initiated and organized annual reunions in Canberra of the former SMHEA for the last 31 years.

Memberships/Organisations:

Created a branch of the Returned Services League in Khancoban and Chairman for 1 year.

Secretary of Cabramurra Ski Club for 2 years.

Life member of the Probus Club of Canberra and treasurer since 1994.

Member of the Federal Golf Club, Canberra, 1967 to 2004.

Member of the Canberra Bowling Club since 1997.

Listed in *Who's Who in Australia*, 1971.

Prepared by Dr Margaret Park, December 2004 from oral history interviews conducted on 14 and 19 May 2004