



**Kemble Widmer (1913-1999)**

Kemble Widmer, State Geologist of New Jersey from 1958 to 1980 died March 6, 1999 at the age of 86 in Princeton, NJ. Born in New Rochelle, New York, he was a long-time resident of Pennington, NJ. He was preceded in death by his wife, the late Virginia Widmer, and is survived by a son, and daughter-in-law, Kemble II and Yvonne Widmer of Gastonia, N.C.; a daughter, Katharine Widmer of Pennington, NJ and three grandchildren.

Widmer received an AB degree in geology from Lehigh University in 1937 and did postgraduate work at Stanford University between 1937 and 1939. He entered the U.S. Army as a Second Lieutenant in 1941 and came out as a Lieutenant Colonel in 1945 at the end of World War II. He continued his geologic studies at Princeton University where he received an M.A (1947) and Ph.D. (1950). He worked for the Newfoundland Geological Survey during the summers of 1937-41 and 1947. He was an Associate Professor of Geology at Rutgers University (1949-51) and Associate Professor of Geology at Champlain College (SUNY) from 1951 until 1953 when he joined the New Jersey Geological Survey as a Principal Geologist. Upon the retirement of State Geologist Meredith Johnson in 1958, Widmer was named State Geologist of New Jersey.

During his tenure the NJGS revised all of the state's 1:62,360 topographic maps. Widmer also tried to enforce the state's well drilling law by personally accompanying State Police to drill rigs of errant well drillers. As a former educator he spoke to many school groups and created the state's first rock set for students.

Although Widmer retired before the advent of geographical information systems (GIS), he knew the value of overlaying various coverages. In 1974 he originated an innovative system of mylar overlays which provided land use, geology, water-service areas, public supply wells, sewer service areas and landfills, drainage basins and flood plains, and population density.

Kemble Widmer was an Honorary Member of the Association of American State Geologists, a Fellow of the Geological Society of America, American Association for the Advancement of Science and Company of Military Historians. He also was a member of the Explorers Club, Sigma XI, and the American Association of Geographers.

Widmer maintained his reserve officer status as Colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve and was an Adjunct Professor in the Department of Earth, Space, and Graphic Science at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. He was a well-known expert on U.S. Revolutionary War history and gave hundreds of talks on the subject both as State Geologist and after retirement.

Haig F. Kasabach