

Michael S. Renslow



1946-2023

It is with great sorrow that we announce that Michael S. Renslow passed away in his beloved log home in Eugene, Oregon surrounded by his family on November 22, 2023 looking out at the birds and fields surrounding his home. The Beatles song “Come Together” was playing as he took his last breath. Mike is survived by his wife Linda and two children Jason and Adrienne along with their families and many grandchildren. A celebration of Mike’s life will take place on July 20, 2024 for all friends and family.

Mike was born on October 5, 1946 and grew up in the San Francisco Bay area. He graduated with an AA in Civil Engineering in 1967 from Solano College and began his career as a civilian land surveyor for the US Department of Defense. Following a BS in Geography from San Francisco State University in 1971, Renslow became a surveyor, cartographer, photogrammetrist, and project leader for the US Forest Service where he worked for 11 years. He was instrumental in the development and implementation of the FIRESCOPE Project in Southern California and the Incident Command System for disaster response to wildland fires. In 1983, Renslow left government service and entered the private sector as the general manager of Pacific Aerial Surveys and vice-president of Hammon, Jensen, and Wallen in Oakland, California where he worked until 1989. While there he was responsible for

contract implementation, proposals, daily operations, two flight crews; conducting and publishing research on modern-generation aerial films for Kodak and Agfa products; and performing research for the USGS on aerial film(s) resolution.

His next position, in 1989, was with the Oregon-based WAC Corporation in market development and operations management of Digital Geographic Systems writing digital aerial imagery on CD-ROM. Renslow started his first mapping firm in 1995, Renslow Image Mapping, which specialized in digital imagery and orthophotography. After one year, he sold the company to Spencer B. Gross Engineering and became the firm’s vice-president managing the Eugene office. It was at this time that Mike’s interest in lidar began. His job also included being senior technical advisor for the Applications of Advanced Technologies group; providing GIS support operations; using Map Objects, and co-authoring “SBG View” a stand-alone viewer for geo-referenced imagery and ESRI shapefiles. In 1997, Renslow took a position at the University of Oregon, Geography Department as adjunct faculty, teaching a class in Fundamentals of Remote Sensing for the next five years. In 2007, he established Renslow Mapping Services specializing in consulting for emerging technologies and map accuracy QA/QC validation procedures. In 2009, he

accepted a position with Penn State University, John A. Dutton e-Education Institute as a senior lecturer in the Geography Department teaching a new course on Lidar Technology and Applications (GEOG497D). Most recently, Renslow has been very active in research and development for applications of lidar mapping technology and has an established reputation for expertise in this field. He also participated in lidar research projects with Oregon State University, the University of Oregon, and the University of Washington. He published several papers on the subject and has presented numerous workshops and technical sessions at local and national conferences throughout the country. In 2012, the Manual of Airborne Topographic Lidar was published in which Mike was the editor and a contributing author.

I can think of no one who has contributed more to ASPRS than Mike Renslow. He joined ASP in 1973 and was a member for over 50 years. He served nationally on numerous committees and technical divisions, on the Board of Directors, on the Executive Committee, and as National President in 1999-2000. In addition, he was technical editor for Photogrammetric Engineering & Remote Sensing from 2004 – 2018. During the transition between ASPRS Executive Directors in late 1997 and early 1998, Mike took on the role of controller as the Society struggled with a financial crisis. Mike's focus on financial reporting and his commitment to transparency was critical to resolving the crisis and his monthly financial report, dubbed the Renslow Report, served as the basis for continuing financial stability over the next 16 years. In recognition of his financial acumen, Mike was appointed as the first volunteer Treasurer for ASPRS from 2000-2004, after which he was the first Treasurer of the ASPRS Foundation (2004 – 2015) and then served as its Vice President (2015 – 2020). He was the Chair of the ASPRS Evaluation for Certification Committee beginning in 2002, Chair of the ASPRS Professional Examination Development Committee (serves NCEES for assessment items for the national photogrammetrist exam), and formerly the ASPRS Representative to the Council of Engineering and Scientific Specialty Boards (accreditation of science-based certification programs). He was also the technical editor of the ASPRS Manual of Remote Sensing, 6th edition.

In addition to all the ways that Mike served nationally, he was also extremely active in whichever ASPRS Region he lived (Northern California and Columbia River). Mike hosted the Board and Officers meetings for the Northern California Region at his office for most of the 1980's. During this time, the region planned and hosted the first large GIS conference of its kind (GIS '87) in San Francisco in which more than 1000 people attended. Mike was in charge

of getting a hotel for this conference and did an amazing job considering the first time we looked at the hotel it was under construction with just girders in place.

Mike received many awards and recognition for his contributions to ASPRS and the geospatial community. He was elected an ASPRS Fellow (2002) and was a Certified Photogrammetrist (#1073) and an Oregon Registered Professional Photogrammetrist (#78313RPP). He received the Birdseye President's Citation – 1999; a Conference Management Award for GIS'87 in 1988; Presidential Citations for Meritorious Service- 1988, 1989, 1991; ASPRS Merit Award - 1994, 1997, 1998; ASPRS Presidential Citations - 1998, 2003, 2004; and was the first recipient of the ASPRS Outstanding Workshop Instructor Award, 2007; the ERDAS Award for Best Scientific Paper in Remote Sensing, 2001, 3rd Place and the ASPRS Outstanding Service Award, 2005 and 2015. Finally, Mike received ASPRS' highest award, the Lifetime Achievement Award, in 2018.

Mike was also extremely active within ISPRS serving as a Working Group Chair 2000 to 2004, active member of Commission I, and was elected to the International Council as the Treasurer from 2008-2012. He was the 2011 recipient of the ISPRS Carl Pulfric Award.

If you knew Mike or if you are just reading about him here, it is clear that he was a busy guy with boundless energy who was willing to work hard and loved his career and his family. To me, Mike was an amazing friend and mentor. He very unselfishly brought me into ASPRS when I was a new assistant professor at the University of California, Berkeley. He graciously shared his hotel room with me in those early days when I did not yet have the funding to afford all the costs of a national conference. He took me around and introduced me to all the big names in the field and he got me involved in the regional activities as well. Mike was always smiling and always willing to offer encouragement and help to whoever needed it. Mike was an excellent winemaker, and many special social events were even more enjoyable when Mike brought along a few bottles to share with his friends. He was truly a special individual and I only wish there were many more like him. I know that we all miss him.

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