



Otto Ertl, O.L.S.
March 22, 1928 – January 27, 2006
By Larry Ertl – Assisted by the Ertl Family

Otto, the fourth child of Colonel Franz Ertl of the Uhlans (equivalent to the British Light Brigade) and Leopoldine Felicitus (nee von Koechel) and godson of the Empress of Austria Zita von Hapsburg was born into what began as a privileged life. His father, a highly decorated Uhlan officer, popular with the aristocracy and his mother of noble descent, seemed to have everything going for them. Fate would have it that it would not be the case and their lives were wrought with hardship and tragedy. In spite of the events that transpired, the illness and passing of his mother and the death of his oldest brother, Rudy on the Russian Front, Otto managed to keep a positive outlook.

He was an active member in a local sports club and participated as a strong competitor in track and field as a decathlete, boxing, gymnastics, swimming and cycling. One summer he and his buddies went on a bicycle tour to Italy on a lark. To make time they would often "skitch" on trucks. He told us of truck drivers who would try to shake them off but by doing so would harden their resolve to hold on. Then, once in Italy, how it cost pennies for a good meal and a bottle of wine. Otto had a profound love of opera and attended many as a school boy with either his friends or his aunt.

Academically, Otto graduated the civil engineering program at the University of Graz, after which, he worked for a construction company for a couple of years. In general, he had a deep appreciation of the arts and was an avid reader of both German and English text with a particular fondness for poetry and philosophy throughout his life.

In 1951, Otto decided to follow his older brother and sister to Canada to "check it out" for a couple of years. 42 years later he went back to Austria to visit, he had made his home in Canada.

Otto quickly found employment with Marshall Macklin and Monaghan (MMM) and worked on many projects as a calculator, instrument man and party chief. He articulated to J. W. "Larry" Monaghan O.L.S. and worked side by side with him, particularly on the base-line surveys in the far north. During this time Otto forged many friendships which remained strong throughout his life.

In 1960 Otto joined Wildman and Rhodes and worked there until the firm was dissolved in the mid 60's.

In the latter part of the 60's Otto went with Bill Wildman O.L.S., as did several others, and worked together on a 10,000 acre subdivision on Manitoulin Island.

Shortly after that, Otto got his commission, May 16th, 1968 and opened his own practice in Stouffville. By this time Otto had, by today's standards, a large family of 6 children, 3 boys, Larry, Moritz, and Andre and 3 girls, Gabriella, Nicolette, and Chantal. At one time or another all of them worked with Otto in some capacity whether it was drafting, field work or answering phones. Around the same time Malcolm Phillips O.L.S., also opened an office in Stouffville. It wasn't long before the two became good friends having long discussions on many topics, particularly on one of their favorites, opera. Eventually they shared an office and had a "loosely defined" partnership for a time. During these years from the early 70's to the mid 80's Otto had many contracts with Trans-Canada Pipelines and surveyed throughout the province along the pipeline corridors.

From 1985 to 1987 Otto was partnered up with Ed Rowan O.L.S., a newly commissioned surveyor who had articulated with Vladimir Kremer O.L.S. to form Ertl and Rowan Ltd.

Otto worked well into his 70's with his son Larry Ertl O.L.S.. Whenever clients came into the office they would want to say hello to Otto and have a cheerful word with him and get one of his latest jokes. During the summer months Otto would ride the 22 km. on a bicycle he purchased from Chris Sexton O.L.S. in the 60's. His 11 grandchildren kept him busy when he wasn't in the office. He was always busy, if not with the grandchildren, helping a friend, cooking, reading, cycling, photography and even tennis.

He will be remembered, by the people who knew him, as a humble, kind, generous man with a sense of humour and a deep respect for his fellow man.