



Raymond John Matthews OLS #744
August 27, 1924 to October 14, 2014

Submitted by Tony Roberts OLS (Retired),
George Llowen OLS (Retired) and Andy Cameron OLS

Ray was born in Stamford Township, now part of the City of Niagara Falls, and lived his entire life in Niagara Falls. He was educated at Fallsview Public School, followed by Stamford Collegiate where he also played on the Senior Basketball Team. After a year's work in manufacture and service industries, he studied Chemical Engineering for two years at Queen's University.

Ray commenced his survey career as a chainman with R. Blake Erwin OLS in 1945, and in 1946 he signed a 3-year apprenticeship with Mr. Erwin. During the apprenticeship period, Ray met and married his wife Joyce (Dell) on July 17, 1948 and together they raised three children, David, Gary and Sandra.

Ray received his Commission as an Ontario Land Surveyor in 1950, and continued working for Mr. Erwin, eventually becoming the manager of the business. Upon Mr. Erwin's retirement in 1977, he purchased the business and ran it successfully for 5 years, until Andrew Cameron, OLS joined the firm in 1982, and the firm incorporated in 1983 as Matthews and Cameron Limited.

Ray specialized in planning and development throughout his career, and was responsible for the design and development of well over 100 subdivisions throughout the Niagara Peninsula, transforming much of the largely rural ambient township lands into the present day Niagara Falls, as its population more than tripled in that time. That city, being the premier tourist destination in Canada, generated an appreciable demand for boundary surveys and construction lay-out, as new buildings, road expansions and parking lots grew to accommodate visitor traffic. Under Ray's supervision, for example, the firm provided survey control and positional monitoring of the then still-novel concrete slip- forms for the Seagram (Minolta) and Skylon towers.

Ray was a very community-orientated individual, and was an active Kiwanian for many years. He served and Chaired many committees and was particularly active with their non-profit housing corporation. He was a President, Past President and life member of Kiwanis. He also was a "Big Brother" for many years and served on their Board of Directors. He served with the Y's Men's Club and was an executive, referee and coach with the Ontario Minor Soccer Association, and was a long-time member of Stamford United Church. In recognition of his community service, he was presented with a Paul Harris Fellowship by the Rotary Club of Niagara Falls.

As a professional, Ray served on the Board of Examiners of the Association of Ontario Land Surveyors. He was also a life member of the AOLS Educational Foundation. These facts spoke out for Ray's big heart, befitting the big man he was...deferential and gentlemanly in manner and speech, but never timid. Considerate in action and judgment and restrained in temperament, but with a lively sense of humour behind an infectious, almost sheepish smile, suggesting some mild mischief with much mirth held in abeyance. He always took great joy in his family, and in later life adored and doted on his three grandchildren.

Take him all in all, he was one of those people that was always needed but in short supply. It can be justly said that Ray was both a gift and a compliment to humanity.
