

**Nicolaas (Nick) H. Verhoef, OLS# 1134**  
**September 20, 1931 – July 11, 2017**



Nick was born in Potosi, Bolivia, the youngest of three brothers. His father was a mining engineer there, but the family moved back to the Netherlands just a few months after Nick's birth. They settled in a town called Zeist, where Nick met his future wife, Thea, in high school. In 1953, Thea was sponsored by an uncle in Toronto to come to Canada. She, in turn, was able to sponsor Nick, after he finished his mandatory military service in Holland. He arrived in March of 1954, and they were married in Toronto in April of that year.

One of Nick's first jobs in Canada was at a Woolworth's store, but he knew he didn't want to work there forever. As he once wrote, "In 1955, while working in the basement of an F. W. Woolworth store on Dundas Street in Toronto, I decided to do something else, which would get me into the outside world. As it turned out, the choice was to get into surveying/engineering and to follow that through, I subscribed to a correspondence course." When the job at Woolworth's came to an end, Nick was able to find employment with Marshall Macklin Monaghan, where, in his words, he "started off as chainman and doubled as rodman on the engineering crew."

In 1956, Nick and Thea moved to Peterborough, where he got a job with John G. Pierce (known for completing the survey of the Ontario-Manitoba border). Nick articulated with Mr. Pierce, and got his OLS licence on May 7, 1963. He worked for Smith and Smith in Lindsay for about a year, and then worked at Grange Elliott in Peterborough. Around 1967 he returned to Pierce and Pierce, and stayed there until he decided to strike out on his own. On March 23, 1970, he opened his own office in Campbellford, and once he felt financially secure, he moved his family there (wife Thea and two daughters, Monique and Henriette) in 1974. Nick eventually opened satellite offices in Marmora and Tweed. After many years as the only O.L.S. in the company, Nick realized he needed some help. He articulated Jack Keat, and when Jack obtained his OLS, he and Nick formed a new company called Keat and Verhoef on April 8, 1991. They continued until Nick's retirement on December 31, 1997.

Nick was a member of the Kawartha Haliburton Regional Group for many years. He belonged to Cephas Christian Reformed Church in Peterborough, and after retirement, he volunteered at Campbellford Memorial Hospital until shortly before his death.

Nick took to surveying because he loved the outdoors. This love showed in his personal interests too. He wanted to learn to fly - initially taking gliding lessons and later getting his ultralight instructor's licence. He flew his ultralight at Norwood. Nick was an amateur rockhound, collecting many interesting specimens over the years. He loved music, and a great thrill for him was participating in the Liberation Choir, which travelled back to Holland in 1995, in celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Dutch liberation.

On his retirement, Nick and Thea were able to travel more, including making an annual road trip to Fort Frances to visit their daughter Henriette, who was also a surveyor (OLS #1817 - she passed away in October of 2017). Nick and Henriette even travelled to Bolivia together to learn more about the place where he had been born.

In his later years, Nick spoke often of his gratitude for the “many blessings” he felt he had received during his life. His story is like that of so many immigrants to Canada – one of hard work and dedication to a profession he loved, and of realizing the dream of making a better life for himself and his family.

Submitted by Monique Ibey