

GEORGE JOHN ZUBEK
1936 – 2003

By Kathy and Paula

George John Zubek was born on January 26th 1936 near Stonewall, Manitoba. He was the youngest of thirteen children born to Ukrainian immigrant parents. By the time George was six, both of his parents had died and he was raised by his siblings.

When George was 11 years old he moved with his family to Toronto where he attended Wellesley Public School and Jarvis Collegiate. He spent one year at the University of Toronto before joining the Survey Department at the Canadian National Railroad.



Under the tutelage of H.D.G. Currie, George was commissioned as an Ontario Land Surveyor on his birthday in 1961. Mr. Currie conducted the Oath of Office.

Soon after, George began searching for a site to open his own survey firm. He chose Wasaga Beach and opened his business in May of 1961. The following year he moved his office to Collingwood. In 1963, Ron Emo joined George and the firm became Zubek & Emo Ltd. Forty-three years after opening his first business the firm is known as Zubek, Emo, Patten and Thomsen Ltd., and still operates in Collingwood.

George was very active in the Georgian Bay Regional Group, which naturally led to his interest in the Association of Ontario Land Surveyors. He was elected as a Councillor in 1976 and saw many changes made to the survey profession during the late 1970s. When George became the 89th President of the A.O.L.S. in 1980, it was his mentor, H.D.G. Currie who once again conducted the Oath of Office. In 1982, he became a Canada Lands Surveyor.

George was a great supporter and a lifelong member of the Educational Foundation of the A.O.L.S. He also sat on the Disciplinary Committee and, as Chairman, was affectionately labeled "The Hanging Judge". Although he could not tolerate unethical behaviour by his fellow surveyors, he was always willing and able to assist them in getting back on the right track. He was also instrumental in getting the new Surveyors Act passed by the Ontario Legislature.

In 1955, George was appointed President of the Landata International Services – a consortium of O.L.S. firms engaged in providing electronic mapping of all Ontario properties.

George was as keenly interested in his community as he was about his profession. He was Past President of the local Kinsmen Club and the Blue Mountain Golf and Country Club. He served two terms on the Collingwood Town Council where he worked long hours to help bring industry and the local airport to town. He was also a strong supporter of the Cancer Society and the Collingwood General & Marine Hospital where a plaque in his memory will be hung on a commemorative wall.

Although George sold his shares of Zubek, Emo & Patten Ltd. to Lynn Patten in 1996, he continued to work part time until 2002. Despite his strong work ethic, George ultimately worked to play. He enjoyed golf, bridge, skiing and his trips to Casino Rama. Holidays were usually "golf trips" to a Caribbean Island or Pinehurst, North Carolina.

George was diagnosed with esophageal cancer in September 2002. He died at home on April 20th 2003. He is sadly missed and lovingly remembered by his wife of 42 years and his daughter Paula who continue to cherish the memories.
