

MARK T. OLSEN (1926-1997)

By Cyril E. Leonoff

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Mark T. Olsen was born in Calgary and graduated from the University of British Columbia in 1951. He then spent his entire career with the company Ripley Klohn Leonoff.

Mark Olsen began his career as an engineering inspector of earthworks at Wahleach Dam BC. He continued this work through the 1950s as the personal field representative of Dr. Karl Terzaghi on the construction of the Cheakamus and Terzaghi dams of the British Columbia Electric Co. Dr. Terzaghi commended Olsen for his 'faithful and invaluable services' on these projects. In the 1960s, when open-pit copper mines were started in British Columbia, Olsen pioneered the application of innovative techniques to the construction of large tailings dams at Brenda and mines in the Highland Valley. For many years, he was a consultant on water supply dams for irrigation projects in the Okanagan.

In the later years of their careers, Bob Maartman and Mark Olsen served as senior engineers on the review of major geotechnical and mining projects, domestically and internationally. As mentors, their knowledge, integrity, and dedication to excellence in engineering were an inspiration to younger colleagues.