

THE GRADUATE

**George R. Humphrey, B. Arch.,
CIM**

Submitted by

Bob Buckland, BCQ, ASCTT of BC

I remember my first knowledge of George R. Humphrey shortly after I joined the City of New Westminster Engineering Department staff in 1969. The Assistant City Engineer, whom I worked closely with, commented that he had a recent phone conversation with George Humphrey of the City of Burnaby Building Department in reference to an interpretation of a requirement of the 1965 National Building Code. He went on to say that George's input on the matter was in agreement with our interpretation, and thus we were able to bring the matter to conclusion. At this point I should mention that prior to 1972, which is approximately when the 1970 National Building Code was adopted provincially for enforcement in each municipality or city. Prior to this adoption, each jurisdiction adopted it's own locally developed building\plumbing bylaws, hence there were many different requirements for each different jurisdiction, and there was little discussion between jurisdictions as to uniform interpretation. The City of NW had a policy of using the 1965 NBC as a guide for new construction in conjunction with the City of New Westminster Building Bylaw, and the Assistant City Engineer, had discussed the matter with George Humphrey of the City of Burnaby Building Department since he knew George had the necessary knowledge, training, and interest, to offer qualified comment. Many years have passed since this first discussion with George in reference to the 1965 NBC, and he continues to the present day, to dedicate his knowledge and experience to the betterment of the building industry in British Columbia.



George Humphrey 2011

George R. Humphey was born on August 4, 1944 in Vancouver, was raised in the area of 34th Avenue and Knight Road, attended Tecumseh elementary, and following, attended Gladstone Senior Secondary highschool, and completed grade 13 at King Edward highschool. George's initial employment was in 1964 with "Binns Equipment" (heavy equipment dealer) located on Marine Drive in Burnaby. In 1965 George entered the BC Institute of Technology and graduated with a diploma in "Building Technology" in 1967.

George and wife Dayle married in March 1970, and in the years to follow they raised a daughter, Eran; and a son, Jarett. Presently they have three grandchildren; Miya, 7-years; and twins, Brook and Emma, 8-months. George and Dayle presently live

in a North Vancouver residence that he designed and built in 1974. George clearly states that: "My most outstanding achievement is my family that I am so blessed to have and am so proud of."

George and Dayle enjoy their life in North Vancouver and George says he still enjoys playing hockey, as well as engaging in other activities such as gardening, hiking, traveling, water colour painting and collector cars. He quotes "Life is a journey and it is the people you meet, the path you choose, and the attitude you employ, that makes the journey a vacation, or only a day at work".



**George and son, Jarett's 1968 Firebird,
24000-original miles.
On Firebird Calendar this year,
A source of great fun.**



George's Hockey Team

George's career in the building industry began with the City of Burnaby's Building Department in 1967

as a "Plan Checking Assistant"; as one of two plan checkers employed by the City at that time, under then "Chief Building Inspector", Mike Jones. As Burnaby grew he gained experience and knowledge to become "Supervisor, Plan Checking" with a staff of 8-residential and commercial plan checkers by 1981. During the the time period 1974 to 1979 George also found time to study, and become a "Graduate of the Canadian Institute of Management" offered through the B.C.Institute of Technology. George left the City of Burnaby in 1981 to attend the University of BC School of Architecture where he was awarded a "Bachelor of Architecture" degree in 1984, and also during this time period he operated a self-employed "Design and Code Analysis" business, which allowed him to be involved in the design of residential and small commercial projects, and to also deal with his clients at a personal level which he always found challenging and rewarding. George returned to the City of Burnaby's Building Department in 1984 to assume the position of "Assistant Chief Building Inspector", under then "Chief Building Inspector", Frank Mehling. George was appointed to the position of "Chief Building Inspector" for the City of Burnaby in 1991, to a department which had a staff of over 60-persons, a position which he fulfilled until his retirement in 2008.

George Humphrey has continued activities into retirement as noted following:

Current

- Chairman Provincial Building Code Appeal Board, 1990 to present.
- Member of BC Building Research Committee since 2002. This organization consists of industry, provincial, regulatory and professional members who review topically building design and construction issues with the intent to identify issues that require investigation and establish funding etc. to complete the identified task.
- Member of Architectural Institute of BC, Regulatory Co-Ordination Committee (AIBC)

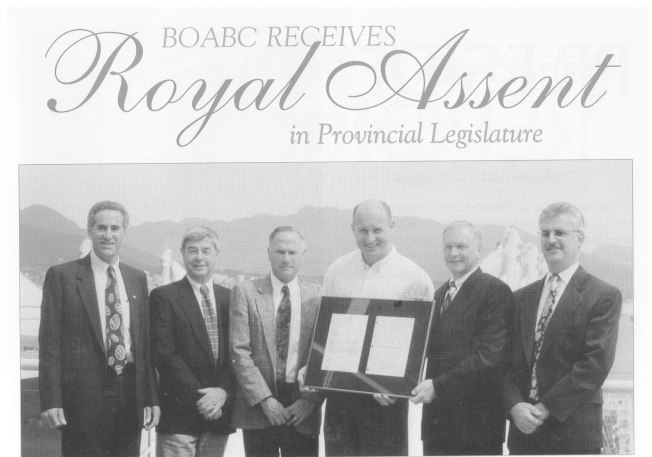
- Member of the Alliance of Canadian Building Officials Association (ACBOA)
- Member of several Workshop Committees dealing with Building Code administration, interpretation and enforcement
- Member of AIBC Building Envelope Committee
- Building Code and Regulatory Enforcement Consultant
- Member of the Canadian Commission of Building and Fire Codes (CCBFC)
- Honorary Member of the Architectural Institute of BC (May 2011)
- Honorary Member of the Applied Science Technicians of BC November 2006)
- Life Member of the Building Officials of BC since 2006
- George stresses he intends to continue enjoying being an active participant in the regulatory enforcement process through volunteering on several industry committees, and also by involvement in political forums regarding regulatory reform.
- Further, George provides a consulting service to local government requiring expert reports relating to legal action, provides assistance in the revision of building bylaws, and creation of associated policies or information.

Building Officials Association of B. C. (Past)

- George Humphrey has been member number 634 since early 1960's and was awarded a Life membership in 2006 for his past contributions to the association.
- Served 4- 2 year terms as President: 1995 - 1999 and 2004-2006.
- Served as Treasurer: 2003-2004.
- Served as Certification Chair and Secretary of the Association.
- Served on the Education workshop Committee

The creation of the BOABC Act was given *Royal Assent* to the "Building Officials Association Act", on July 23, 1997 by the BC Legislature, during his tenure as president. George credited this legislation to the assistance of some very dedicated BOABC members.

The photograph following was published in Summer/Fall 1997 edition of the BOABC NEWS & REPORTS



Pictured left to right Steve Gertsman, Bob Light, Peter Sweeney, Hon. Michael Farnworth, George Humphrey and Rick Bortolussi

Steve Gertsman, Bob Light, Peter Sweeny, Hon. Michael Farnworth, George Humphrey, and Rick Bortolussi.

- Worked in conjunction with the International Codes Council of the U.S. (ICC), which is our American counterpart that deals with education and certification of building officials in the U.S.. As a result we have an agreement with ICC for their assistance with the preparation of exam questions and the marking of examinations.
- Was a founding member of the Alliance of Canadian Building Officials and created their initial business plan.
- Prepared BOABC's initial Business Plan that was adopted by the executive in September of 1996.
- Created the BOABC Conference Manual in 2001.
- Updated the BOABC Policy and procedure manual.

Created a current and a 5-year budget projection process that included specific account identifiers to enable improved tracking of revenues and expenditures.

He considers himself fortunate to have worked with so many dedicated and knowledgeable BOABC members in the delivery of educational seminars and workshops throughout his time as a BOABC member.

In 2011 George received an "**Honorary Member Award**" from the Architectural Institute of BC. This award is bestowed sparingly on architects and non-architects who have made an exceptional noteworthy contribution in the practise in advancing in advancing the development and standing of the profession of architecture in British Columbia.

With a degree in Architecture, George has a rare understanding of the profession, and he has used this knowledge to actively promote dialogue and cooperation between building officials and architects. He has promoted the building official perspective through the Architectural Institute's Intern Architect program, and has brought professionals together for building upgrade courses.

In serving on local, provincial and national committees for decades, George has increased public safety while elevating the practice and public understanding of architecture and regulatory enforcement.

George's work as Chair of the BOABC Code Change Steering Committee and the Building Envelope Qualifications Committee, combined with his impeccable reputation was instrumental in restoring public faith in construction after the "leaky condo" problems in the 1990s. His broad knowledge and intelligence has earned him unmatched respect among his peers, and the highest regard throughout the architectural and regulatory community.

In summation of the above as the author of this column I can only comment that George Humphrey has had a very active career as a building official and will likely continue activity well into retirement years. It certainly brings me to the conclusion that building construction regulation and knowledge has improved since my entry into the inspectional field in 1969. George has participated greatly in these improvements.

Respectfully:

Bob Buckland, BCQ, ASCT.