

# The Graduate

## BOABC Colleague “Bill Jones”

*Submitted by ;  
Bob Buckland, BCO*



**Bill Jones**

William Andrew Jones, better known as Bill Jones, passed away December 7, 2006 at Nanaimo BC. Bill was a Life member of the Building officials of BC and a long service employee of the District of West Vancouver having joined the District as a Building/Electrical Inspector in 1954 .

Bill was born, raised, and attended school in the City of Vancouver. He attended school with classmate Bill Kade, who during the career years to

follow would become an Architect, and then, Chief Building Inspector, City of Richmond.

Following his school years during World War 2 Bill tried to enlist but was not accepted because of a severe asthma condition. He then went to work for the Canadian Pacific Railway. During the late forties and early fifties he joined the firm of Brown and Munton to train as an electrician. He also became a licensed projectionist and would operate film projectors in movie theatres.

Bill met his wife to be, Helen, in West Vancouver while she was employed in the record section of the Wilf Munton store. Bill and Helen married in 1946 In 1948 they bought a home on 21<sup>st</sup> Street in West Vancouver where they lived for almost 50 years during which time they raised son Alan and daughter Sharon.

Bill and Alan would take fishing trips together each year. They would travel by car to Squamish and take the train to Garibaldi before there was a good road to what became Whistler. The May 24 weekend was also a time for them to get away together into the interior of BC. Bill was much-loved husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather. He will be fondly remembered by the family for many things that were special to him, such as Christmas cake with 1” high almond icing, watching MASH, drinking a gin martini straight up with a twist of lemon, working on a crossword puzzle, and taking trips to Hawaii, and the Christmas traditions that include gift hunts and poems.

Bill and Helen had celebrated their 60<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary, May 20, 2006. Bill and Helen’s family now includes 5 grandchildren and 1-great grandson.

Bill began his inspectional career in 1954 when he became a Junior Building / Electrical Inspector with the District of West Vancouver. With effort and dedication to his new career, experience and advancement soon followed, as noted by the following:

- 1955 to 1964 Assistant Building Inspector
- 1965 to 1979 Chief Building Inspector
- 1980 to 1985 Director of Permits and Licenses During the later years of his career with the District Bill also served as Secretary of the Board of Variance and Secretary of the Advisory Design Panel.

Shortly after Bill began his career with the District of West Vancouver, he joined BIABC becoming one of its founding members as member number 44. Bill promptly became a volunteer, active in BIABC affairs as noted by the following:

- 1958 Bill attended annual BIABC conference and become active in preparation work for future annual conferences. Preparation would mean negotiating costs, and arranging with the Host City, Municipality, or District businesses, suitable accommodations and registration, and assembly meeting rooms, food menus, based on the number of BIABC members proposing to attend the coming years conference.
- 1966 Chairman of the Annual Conference “Ladies Program”.
- Chairman of the Building Code Committee
- 1967 to 1985 BIABC Treasurer, also Chairman of the Membership Committee.
- Publication of BIABC Newsletter

In 1985-86 the Building Inspectors Association of British Columbia members voted a name change to become Building Officials Association of British Columbia.

- 1985 to 1995 BOABC Secretary Treasurer
- 1985 Awarded “Life Membership” standing by BOABC membership.
- 1986 to 2003 Membership and Certification Committee. Arranged examination sittings, supervision, and marking, keeping and maintenance of

examination records, and also informing examination contestants of resulting marks.

One would think that Bill’s dedication to family, career, and volunteer activity with BOABC would be enough, but he also served his community as a volunteer ambulance driver during the 1960’s. His family remembers the interruptions of family activities by phone calls to drive the ambulance. One such a call came during their evening meal in October 1962 when Hurricane Frieda was in force and Helen tried to stop Bill from going because of the danger involved, but he insisted he must go because it was his responsibility to respond. Respond he did, Bill’s ambulance team rescued a motorist and became the last vehicle to cross Lions Gate Bridge before it’s traffic closure due to the Hurricane.

The years passed and Bill continued to serve as Director of Permits and Licenses with the District. until retirement in 1985, culminating 31-years of service. However, Bill did not retire from BOABC service as noted by Rob Belsham, BOABC, Past President, in his BOABC News & Report article of Spring 1996, entitled “**Bill Jones Profile Of A Member.** Mr Belsham states “**Through the last ten or better years he became the “de-facto” executive director of our association. Bill’s experience and advice to each new incoming executive has been invaluable and the key to continued growth and success of our Association.**” I noticed the Editor added a footnote to this article which states “Bill also told me that he had planned on writing a list of things he could do now that he has a lot of spare time-unfortunately he hasn’t yet “found” that time”.

Although retired from his career as building inspector Bill continued to be active with the BOABC Certification Committee until 2003.

I have spoken to BOABC members who have known and worked with Bill through the years and they have commented as follows:

**Mr. Ernie Neale, Retired Building Inspector, District of West Vancouver, Long standing working Colleague of Bill Jones wrote:**

Bill was respected by his staff members, other Municipal employees and contractors. Bill employment with the District of West Vancouver began in 1955 as Assistant Building Inspector and as Director of Permits and Licenses in retired in 1986.

Bill also served the District as Secretary of the Board of Variance and the Advisory Design Panel. He also found time to serve on his church board.

Bill served BOABC as Treasurer (1967-1985). He also managed BOABC conferences –expanded duties, and published News Letters during this time. As Bill retired from West Vancouver in 1986 the Association had a change made to the Bylaws to allow Bill to continue as the Association Secretary Treasurer.

Bill retired from the BOABC Certification Committee in 2003. Following retirement Bill and Helen moved to an apartment where Bill served on the Strata Council as a committee member before becoming Chairman.

**Ernie Neale**

**Mr. Rick Hodgson, RBO, Chief Building Inspector Cariboo Regional District, President of BOABC-wrote:**

I became a member of BOABC in the late 1970's, and became acquainted with Bill through his involvement with the Certification Program. First impressions were of a stern and unshakeable individual. No one dared question Bill about the results of their exam, and very few asked twice why their exam results were so long in coming. As I became more involved with the Association, I learned of Bill's dedication and years of hard work for BOABC, "his expectations of doing things

right" and his concern with being fair to all members. My respect for the man only grew. Bill continued to man the "BOABC" Office for many years, and continued to travel throughout the province to oversee exam writing until he couldn't do it anymore. BOABC has lost a dedicated member, a friend, and an individual who helped establish the integrity of our Association. Godspeed Bill.

**Rick Hodgson**

**Mr. George Humphrey, B.Arch., Chief Building Inspector, City of Burnaby Past President BOABC-wrote:**

Bill has been a dear friend, mentor and colleague of mine for almost 35 years.

Every Association can trace their roots and their success to a few individuals who had a vision as well as the determination and dedication to make that vision a reality. Bill was one of those people. Bill was proud of and loved to talk about his wife Helen and his family. It was very clear that they were and always would be his source of pride and joy and were his number 1 priority. While many people constantly struggle with balancing the multitude of life's demands, Bill seemed to be completely in control and was always willing to unselfishly devote his time and energy assisting others to make the built environment a safer place for everyone.

Bill was the Treasurer and the conference organizer of the Building Officials Association for as long as I can remember and was also an integral member of several committees including the certification and Education Committees. Along with his good friend Ernie Neale, Bill would travel the Province supervising exam sittings. As treasurer he established BOABC as a financially secure association and enabled us to grow and develop an education and certification program that is recognized across North America.

recognition of his leadership, dedication and exemplary service to the Association and to the betterment of safe buildings Bill was recently the first recipient of the Casey Van Den Broek Award presented by BOABC in. While others certainly qualified to be considered for this award there was no hesitation or question that Bill was the deserving choice of everyone.

Bill was a very proud and honourable man with the highest of principles. He also had a great sense of humour and an innate ability to put everyone around him at ease regardless of the situation. I fondly remember our many colourful executive meetings where Bill would allow us to order ONE and only one drink during lunch and our certification/examination lunch meetings which included playful bantering between both ourselves and of course the waitresses.

**George Humphrey**

**Ms. Shannon McAvella, BOABC Office Manager-wrote:**

From the first day I started with BOABC, Bill Jones was my main contact. I began working for the Building Officials Association of British Columbia when Roz Hobbs left the position as registrar. Prior to that I had spoken to Bill when he would call the office asking for Roz, but had never really had a full conversation with him. Without Bill, I never would have made it through my first exam session (and future exam sessions), and I will always be grateful to him for all the support and kind words. There were many questions on my end, and Bill always took the time to clearly explain the process, and when I had a problem, Bill was there to help me out. I valued my opportunity to get to know Bill Jones and will remember him with fond memories.

**Shannon McAvella**

**Mr. Fred Kade, MAIBC, Retired Chief Building Inspector, City of Richmond-wrote:**

I consider Bill an extraordinary man. His contributions to BIABC/BOABC were outstanding.

Bill was a Clydesdale, rather than a racehorse. He was the kind of man that I would like to ride the river with –totally dependable, completely reliable, even-tempered, slow to anger, thorough, responsible, solid as a rock, and lived to the highest Code of Ethics. Through it all he had a remarkable sense of humour. (I enclose one of his letters to me to illustrate his humour)

Bill was one of the original founders of BIABC along with Jimmy Robison, Bill Hopen, Ernie Neal, and some others. As far I can remember he was always our Treasurer. He was a great organizer, especially in making arrangements for our annual conventions. He was a great help to me during my two years as President of BIABC during the 1970's.

It is twenty-six years since I retired and since I worked with Bill, but my memories of him have faded only a little. If he is resting now, he certainly deserves it.

**Fred Kade**

I joined the City of New Westminster in 1969 as an Inspector and my memory of BIABC/BOABC executive is that Bill Jones was always there when you needed him. My clearest memory is of course, my phone enquiries of Bill regarding my Certification exam standings. He would go to what I believe was his basement office in his house, check his files, and answer my enquiry. One of my enquiries stands out in my memory, our conversation about Part-3 exam papers went beyond the norm and he mentioned he had one young fellow from Vancouver Island write all 10-papers at one sitting and passed. I had a feeling from Bill's tone of voice he was proud to have an individual in our Association who could complete the Certification Qualifications so well in such a short period of time. Bill, I think you were satisfied that this individual understood how to complete a task as well done.

I would like to personally thank Bill's family for their cooperation in answering my questions and permitting me to use this information to compose

the family content portion of this article. I would also like to thank both retired and active members of BOABC, Mr. Richard Bushey, Executive Director BOABC, and Shannon McAvella, BOABC Office Manager, Mr. George Humphrey, Past President BOABC, and BOABC retired members, Mr. Bob Light, Mr. Fred Kade, and Mr. Ernie Neale, who all took time from their busy lives to answer my questions which provided me with the information necessary to compose the remaining portion of this article regarding Bill's professional career and experiences.

Bill Jones began training as an electrician probably about 1950, began his Building Inspector/Official career in 1954, and retired from BOABC in 2003, which is a total of 53-years dedicated service in the building industry. A career of dedication second to none I would say.

Respectfully

Bob Buckland