



## **George Bernard Lyon**

September 8, 1917 – December 13, 2010

Civil and Environmental Engineering Professor Emeritus George Lyon died in 2010 at the age of 93. Born in Hancock County, Illinois, George grew up in the state's farm country. After graduating from the University of Illinois in 1940, George pursued a master's degree in engineering at the State University of Iowa where he specialized in hydraulics and fluid mechanics. Upon completing his studies, he worked for the U.S. Engineer Department Hydraulics Laboratory in Iowa City where he participated in the design and construction of a physical model for the MacArthur Lock at Sault Sainte Marie, Michigan. Next he served in the Army Corps of Engineers from 1943 to 1946, as a surveyor for the construction of piers, docks, pipelines and other structures in the South Pacific. Upon the end of his military service, he gained his Professional Engineer license from the state of Illinois.

After World War II, Professor Lyon began his next career – teaching – as an instructor at the University of Minnesota. In 1947, he joined the faculty of the School of Civil Engineering at Cornell as an assistant professor and in 1954 was promoted to associate professor. Early in his Cornell career he taught fluid mechanics, hydrology, hydraulics, surveying, marine navigation, and transportation. But by the mid-1950s, his teaching was exclusively in the areas of surveying and photogrammetry, and he regularly was part of the faculty supervising the annual five-

week summer surveying course at “Camp Cornell” on the shore of Cayuta Lake until the final and 86<sup>th</sup> offering of this course in 1963. In the last dozen years of his time at Cornell until his retirement in 1984, he served as Assistant Director of the School of Civil and Environmental Engineering, assuming an important role in the coordination of academic advising, curriculum development, and academic standards and records. Professor Lyon’s dedication to students was recognized by his being named to the Class of 1979 Faculty Honors Program as “a professor who through ... wisdom, counsel and friendship exemplified the ideals of higher education and of Cornell.”

During his 37 years at the university, George was also active as an engineering consultant, often in concert with faculty colleagues, participating in site selection studies for the capital of Brazil and taking part in reservoir, drainage, and flood-control studies. He also developed photogrammetric methods and for 23 years provided computations for the section on field astronomy of the Solar Ephemeris, a book of tables for surveyors. A consulting contribution to Cornell was his design of the water circulation system of the rowing tanks for the Cornell crew team’s practice facility in Teagle Hall.

In 1950, he married Betty Taylor, and they had three children. Betty passed away in 1980 after a long illness. In 1999, George moved from Ithaca to Michigan to live near his daughter Maud. He is survived by his sister, Ruth Linner, his children, Kathryn Lyon Graham, Maud Lyon, and Robert Lyon, a granddaughter, and a step- grandson.

*James J. Bisogni, Chair; John F. Abel; Wilfried H. Brutsaert; James A. Liggett; William D. Philpot*