

2012 Ottawa, Real Estate Forum Speech by Arnie Vered

October 11, 2012

The following is a history of how Ron Engineering and Arnon Corporation have evolved from one generation to the next. I am making this presentation on behalf of my Brothers Gillie & Ronnie & myself. ur parents Zeev and Sara Vered came to Canada right after the Israeli War of Independence. Our father entered 2nd year McGill Engineering with a grade 10 education and graduated successfully. The two then started Ron Engineering from scratch.

Ron Engineering was established in 1958 and Arnon Development Corporation Ltd. in 1960 and Arnon Corporation in 1992. Today my brothers and I own the 3 entities.

Zeev Vered was quite the builder taking on many complicated and risky projects. Ron Engineering built locks/dams/bridges. Projects such as locks in Smith Falls and Rideau Canal Locks 1-3, Dams at Long Island, Campbell ford and Chaudiere and the Mackenzie King Bridge.

There were also many water pollution control plants built and renovated. Projects located in Brockville, Kapuskasing, Carleton Place, Timmins, Thunder Bay, The Robert Pickard Environmental Centre and others.

As a family we got to know much of Ontario through the various construction projects Ron Engineering performed.

Our Father established a great relationship with Public Works in Ottawa through projects like the Jean Talon Building, Canadian Police College, RCMP National Police Services Building, Peace Tower Alterations, East Block Window replacements, renovations to the Connaught Building, the Supreme Court of Canada, the Justice Building and more.

An exciting time was Ron Engineering doing work at Expo 67. Projects included the Labyrinth Theatre, Place des Nations and the Israel Pavilion. Though it was great work, our Father knew not to go back to Montreal for the Olympics.

Other interesting international projects were for CIDA like the St. Lucia Airport and several schools in the West Indies.

The City Hall Plaza in Jerusalem was a project our Father was very proud of. Utilizing North American design techniques Ron Engineering assisted the City of Jerusalem with their new City Hall. Local institutional relationships were also important to our Father. Ron Engineering built 3 schools for the Ottawa Catholic School Board, built Canterbury High School and Roland Michener Public School, completed projects with Carleton University, the Tory Building renovations and the new David Azrieli Building and for the University of Ottawa, Guidon Hall.

From the profits of being a general contractor, our Father then started investing in real estate through partnerships such as with his best friend Bernie Besner, for himself and through Arnon. Arnon manages and leases all of the properties within our portfolio.

For a period of time there was building apartment buildings like 10 Driveway, 100 & 110 Boteler, 450 Daly, 431 Daly. Then some of the earliest condominium projects, 400 Laurier, 40 Boteler and later 475 Laurier Avenue West.

Together with residential, there was investment in commercial office space, his 1st office building 245 Cooper, purchasing 66 Queen and 56 Sparks, building 60 Queen, all with Bernie Besner and Barrister House, 1431 Merivale Road, 171 Slater and others.

There are four special land assemblies/developments Arnon and Ron Engineering were involved in. These are Carling Square, Skyline Campus, 2/100 Constellation and 1600 Star Top Road, the last being a design build for Public Works. The Skyline Campus and 100 Constellation were built for Nortel. The Skyline Campus was sold to Public Works and the City of Ottawa took over the lease at 100 Constellation, not a dollar lost on Nortel's demise.

Ron Engineering performed work in the United States with Olympia & York, Blanchard Plaza in Seattle and Koin Center in Portland which included the Fountain Plaza Condominiums. In addition there was an office building in West Palm Beach.

Further local relationships include developing for Cognos their Headquarter Site and building for Minto the new JDSU Building and then renovating the new RCMP facility at 3000 Merivale Road. Presently we are building 395 Terminal Avenue for The Trainyards Development and building condominiums with Charlesfort Development.

Our strongest relationship is with Great West Life, our Father's partner together with Bernie Besner when Skyline was mostly developed and then sold. We built for Great West Life a building on the Queensway Corporate Campus, co-ordinated and built the 269 Laurier built to suit for Public Works and are presently working with Great West Life on the 90 Elgin Street design-build for Public Works.

As a Canadian, our Father's proudest moment was receiving the Order of Canada, an Israeli immigrant receiving Canada's highest award. It meant so much to him.

Zeev Vered will be remembered as a great builder, entrepreneur, philanthropist and a remarkable contributor to Ottawa's real estate landscape.

Our Father passed away in 2008 but together with our Mother left a great legacy. My brother's and I are working hard to continue that legacy for our children.

Thank you!
Arnie Vered