



Theodore Rozsa

1915-2006

Theodore Rozsa passed away peacefully on Thursday, March 2 at his home in Calgary. Ted was born in Grand Rapids, Michigan on June 12, 1915. He was the son of a Hungarian immigrant who instilled in him his lifelong commitment to the value of hard work. In 1933, he completed his high school diploma with honours and in 1936, two and a half years after he entered what is now Michigan Technological University, his Bachelor of Science degree in geology, with honours.

Ted was a pioneer in the post-war oil industry. His first and only employment after graduation was with the Shell Oil Company, where he spent thirteen years managing seismic exploration from the Gulf of Mexico to the tundra of northern Alberta. In 1950, one year after relocating to Calgary to assume the position of chief geophysicist for Canada, he left Shell to start his own company, Frontier Geophysical. Over the next forty years, Ted utilized his considerable skills as a geophysicist and geological engineer to build three petroleum exploration companies in southern Alberta. For these accomplishments, in 1987, he was awarded the first Canadian Society of Exploration Geophysicists (CSEG) gold medal for his integrity, outstanding professionalism, and significant contribution to the application and business development of Exploration Geophysics. Ted actively supported his community by sharing his financial success.

His capital contributions launched the construction of the Rozsa Centre at the University of Calgary, and the Rozsa Center for the Performing Arts at Michigan Technological University, where he also established a student scholarship fund. Capital support was also given to the Banff Centre and Centre for the Performing Arts. Ted made a large endowment to the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra for the Maestro's Chair, as well as giving significant annual operational funding to the CPO, Calgary Opera, Honens, in addition to supporting the Glenbow Museum, Theatre Calgary, Foothills Hospital and many other charitable causes. Mr. Rozsa received numerous honours for his professional contributions, philanthropy and civic leadership. In 1990, he received an Honorary Doctor of Engineering from Michigan Technological University and an Honorary Doctor of Laws from the University of Calgary.

In 1991, he was named an Officer of the Order of Canada, of which he was most proud. Other honours he received include the Michigan Technological University Silver Medal (1988), the Canadian Music Council Award (1989), the Government of Canada Lescaibot Award (1991), Rotary Integrity Award (1994), Edmund C. Bovey Award for Business and the Arts (2002), Lieutenant Governor Award (2004), Alberta Centennial Medal (2005).

Ted's lifelong recreation was the game of golf. He was one of the early CSEG members who founded the Doodlebug Golf Tournament in 1953, in which he played for thirty-eight consecutive years and is remembered through the annual Ted Rozsa Doodlebug Award. He was an active member of the Calgary Golf and Country Club for over fifty years.

Ted is survived by his loving wife of sixty-six years, Lola Rozsa; two daughters, Ruth Ann Rayner, and Mary Rozsa de Coquet; and son Ted and wife Diana Rozsa; all of whom reside in Calgary. He has seven grandchildren: Howie and wife Hella Nordstrom of Sweden; Scott and wife Paige Rozsa of Dallas, Texas; T.J. Rozsa and Stacy Rozsa of Los Angeles, California; Karen and husband Jim Rice, Mary Cristina Rozsa de Coquet, and Charles Rozsa of Calgary; and four great-grandchildren. He is also survived by his brother-in-law, Charles and wife Mildred Estes, of Sherman, Texas.

Ted loved his family and was highly respected in the community. He was pleased to have watched Calgary grow, and to have had the opportunity to "give back" to the community and support that growth. He will be remembered for his brilliance, hard work, integrity, and philanthropic generosity, which will be carried on, by the Rozsa Foundation and the annual Rozsa Award for Excellence in Arts Management.

(This obituary was first printed in the Calgary Herald)