

Ontario Land Drainage Practitioner – Biography

Armstrong, Christopher Gillette Russell, P. Eng. (1897 -)



For 60 years, Russell Armstrong made significant contributions as a consulting engineer and drainage practitioner in counties and municipalities of southwestern Ontario and the City of Windsor.

Christopher Gillette Russell Armstrong was born in 1897 in Merlin, Ontario. He completed his engineering degree at the University of Toronto, graduating in 1920 as president of the graduating class. Following graduation, he worked for the City of Windsor, in Amherstburg, and lectured at the University of Toronto for two years on Structural Engineering.

Armstrong met John and William Newman joining the Newman Brother's engineering firm in 1923 to work on Pelee Island drainage projects. Armstrong became a partner in the firm in 1925 under the new name of Newman and Armstrong.

Armstrong worked on the following drainage projects during his career:

- Detroit-Canadian Tunnel. The underwater tunnel took 26 months to construct, costing \$23 million. Completed in 1930, Armstrong negotiated land acquisitions and easements, and completed the surveying of the Canadian side.
- The Union on the Lake Water Plant. The expanding greenhouse industry benefited from integrated service to Essex County and townships including Gosfield North, Gosfield South, Maidstone and Mersea
- West Windsor Sewage Treatment Plant. Armstrong designed the treatment plant which eliminated 32 outlets dumping raw sewage into the Detroit River.
- Consulting Engineer to over 30 Municipalities

Armstrong was also active within his profession serving the following organizations:

- President of the Canadian Institute of Pollution Control, and The Canadian Section of the American Waterworks Association

- Vice President of the Engineering Institute of Canada
- Councillor of the Professional Engineers of Ontario Civil Engineering Branch
- Contributing member of many other notable organizations.

At the age of 79, Armstrong reduced his works hours, starting at 9:30 a.m. instead of 6 a.m. At the age of 85, he decided to retire. Armstrong's firm sold its Engineering Division and it currently operates as Stantec Consulting. Upon his retirement, all of the survey files were give to the Municipalities where he had worked. Many of these reports are still in use today in consulting offices and municipal records.

Russell Armstrong is one of the most respected Consulting Engineers in southwestern Ontario. Throughout his 60-year career, he shared his expertise and dedication to over 30 municipalities who continue to refer to his reports.