

Association of Professional Engineers  
of the  
Province of Manitoba

# Merit Award

to

## JUDIT V. WEISZMANN

Dipl. Ing. Struc.Eng., P.Eng.

*The Merit Award is awarded to Judit V. Weiszmann for her pioneering achievement in the field of engineering for women and immigrants. She overcame many obstacles and endured much skepticism during the course of her career as a structural engineer. Her service to the profession has been outstanding even during times when the profession has not treated her well.*

*Born in Budapest, Hungary, Judy's interest in building construction began with her father's involvement in the construction industry. When Judy graduated from high school in 1948, it was just after the Communists had seized power. Due to her middle class background, she, initially, had a difficult time gaining admittance to the university. Eventually, after much perseverance, she graduated with her Structural Engineering degree from the Technical University of Budapest in 1954. It was during these years that Judy met and married her husband, Erwin Weiszmann, who is also an engineer and graduated from the same university.*

*After graduation, Judy worked at the Industrial Design Institute in Budapest and later became the head of the Structural Engineering Section of the Pest County Engineering Design Centre. During this time, Judy completed all compulsory courses for a masters degree but was unable to complete the degree since she and her husband left Hungary at the end of 1956, after the invasion by the Soviet Union which followed the revolution. While waiting for immigration to Canada, Judy worked as a refugee structural design engineer at the Reutte Textile Factory in Tirol, Austria, and later at the Industrial Building Corporation of Austria, in Baden bei Wien.*

*Judy and Erwin immigrated to Canada in the summer of 1957. In the fall of 1957, Judy worked for Letandre and Monti Engineering Consultants in Montreal, Quebec. The couple moved to Winnipeg in November, 1957, and she worked for Smith, Carter and Katelnikoff Architects and for Crosier, Krauss and Partners, consulting Engineers, before joining her husband in his consulting engineering practice in 1960.*

*When Judy applied for registration with APEM in January of 1958, she was advised that the Technical University of Budapest was not on APEM's list of approved universities and was denied registration. To Judy, this was merely a technicality since her university was formerly named the Royal Josef Nador Technical University of Hungary which was on the approved list. After seizing power, the Communists renamed the university for political reasons. The same Dean, professors, and library etc. were maintained. Judy's husband, who fortunately graduated prior to the name change, experienced no resistance when he registered with APEM. Judy requested that APEM write the University to get confirmation of the name change but the registrar at that time refused her request. After some years of correspondence with and refusals by APEM, she decided to comply with APEM's examination requirements for registration. Concurrently, Judy worked full-time for Weiszmann and Associates and had two children while writing six qualifying exams and a thesis. Understandably, it took her a long time to qualify for registration. During this time, Judy's idea of maternity leave was just one week, due to demands at work and also financial reasons. She was finally registered with APEM in 1969, making her the second woman, ever, to register with APEM. Judy missed being the first by one month.*

*Early in her practising years, Judy experienced several discrimination difficulties as one of the first women practising in Manitoba. Her expertise, background, and judgement were scrutinized to a higher degree than her colleagues; but she convinced her skeptics.*

*In her 40 years as a structural engineer, Judy completed over 450 projects for industrial, commercial, municipal, and residential buildings. She has inspected and reported on over 900 residential buildings. Judy has provided expert engineering opinions to the building industry, to the legal profession, and to the Courts. She has maintained many long-term customers who have learned to value her sound judgment and expertise. One of her clients has been with her for over 25 years.*

*Judy has always been interested in APEM affairs. She and her husband are familiar faces at the APEM Annual General Meetings. She has been a member of the APEM Safety in Engineering Practice Committee since its formation in 1986. She is also very supportive of the APEM Women in Engineering Advisory Committee's initiatives. For 11 years, Judy was a Board Member of the Canadian Diabetes Association.*

*Today, Judy is the only woman principal in a major Winnipeg engineering firm. She is a significant role model for young women entering the field of engineering.*