

of our first NCTM meeting in Calgary! These were the beginning of many years of NCTM involvement for me.

## The Fun of It All

There is no question that we all worked hard—but what fun we had

doing it! How exciting to meet other teachers from all around the province, to find out what was going on in other cities and towns, to hear all the good ideas everyone had and to share and exchange teaching tips! What a fortunate learning experience! What good friends we all became!

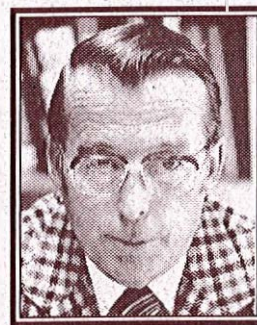
# Marshall P. Bye

- 1965–66 *Vice President*
- 1966–67 *President*
- 1967–68 *Past President*
- 1967–69 *CAMT Representative and Editor*

OF THE MANY HIGHLIGHTS IN MY career in math education, three stand out. First, I consider myself so fortunate to have worked in some interesting schools with students who, on reflection, perhaps taught me more than I taught them. Second, I am privileged to have had many outstanding colleagues who were not only interesting to work with but also are still friends today, and to have been honored by these colleagues with the Mathematics Educator of the Year Award in 1984. Third, one person stands out in my mind: Professor George Polya (1887–1985).

Professor Polya is of the *How to Solve It* fame and the man who is so often cited in current discussions on problem solving. I was very fortunate to have been his student in a problem-solving course at Stanford University in 1962. I still remember vividly this man, his discussions in and out of class and his very sensitive, caring way. Because Professor Polya lived in the same

residence that my wife Evelyn and I did, we often shared the dinner table with him and other students. This man of principles, who modestly admitted to being proficient in seven languages, believed that an author should write in the language of the country in which he or she resided at the time of the writing.



After Professor Polya learned that my wife was enrolled in French classes, he insisted on speaking only French to her. Evelyn felt she learned to speak more French from him than from the classes.

Professor Polya often employed his now renowned four-step problem-solving model in any conversation—standing in the cafeteria line, at the dinner table or during casual evening discussions—insisting in his own quiet, soft-spoken way that we start by trying to understand the issues at hand. Soon, he would have us

identifying many related problems and would urge each of us to pursue a conclusion with a well-thought plan. If we ran out of time over the dinner table, he would promptly put us back on track at our next meeting. And just when we thought we had concluded the problem, he would launch into what he considered the most important aspect of problem solving: looking back to reflect on what we, collectively, had

discovered, what we had learned in the process of working through the problems and always how we could learn more from what we had learned in doing the problem.

I will leave readers with two of Professor Polya's favorite problems (Polya 1957, 234)—favorites because they can be solved at different levels in different ways and because the look back in each leads to many rich extensions.

3. Bob has 10 pockets and 44 silver dollars. He wants to put his dollars into his pockets so distributed that each pocket contains a different number of dollars. Can he do so?



5. Among Grandfather's papers a bill was found: 72 turkeys \$\_67.9\_. The first and last digits of the number that obviously represented the total price of the fowls are replaced here by blanks, for they have faded and are now illegible. What are the two faded digits, and what was the price of one turkey?



## Reference

Polya, G. *How to Solve It*. 2d ed. New York: Doubleday Anchor, 1957.

## Edwin R. Olsen

1968–71 *Treasurer*

1969–71 *CAMT Representative*

AS TREASURER OF MCATA, I enjoyed the meetings, most of which were held in Edmonton. What I remember most were the enthusiasm and dedication with which the MCATA executive members provided leadership in communicating with math teachers in Alberta to assist

them in producing quality mathematics instruction in the classroom.

One highlight and honor I had as a member of the MCATA executive was to be Alberta's representative on CAMT. Although NCTM was active at that time, there was no Canadian association for teachers of