



Larry Matthews Class of 2016

Larry Matthews graduated from Oroville High School (OHS) in 1969. He was a member of the Future Farmers of America, and the Campus Highways Radio program during his junior and senior years. He was a feature writer for the school newspaper, Tiger Tales, as a senior. Writing for the Tiger Tales sparked his interest in journalism.

In 1977, Larry earned his Associate of Arts Degree in social science from Butte Community College and went on to take various classes in criminal justice and management at Yuba Community College. Later on, he received FCC Third Class Radio Telephone and California Notary Public Certification.

From 1969-73, Larry served in the United States Navy. He went to Radioman School in San Diego, CA for three months and the following year was Radioman/Yeoman at Naval Transmitting Facility, Dixon, CA. In 1971, he was sent to serve in Vietnam and was on an ammunition ship for four months. The next eight months saw him on an aircraft carrier working as a Petty Officer Third Class, also in Vietnam.

Larry received numerous military honors including the Vietnam Service Medal with three campaign stars, the Vietnam Campaign Medal, the Good Conduct Medal, and the National Defense Service Medal. He was awarded the Meritorious Unit Commendation while aboard the USS Oriskany in Vietnam.

Following his military service, Larry spent seven years as a Butte County Veterans Service Representative, and nine years in Yuba and Sutter Counties where he managed a Veterans assistance/advocacy program. From 1990-2011, he was a Child Support Specialist III for the District Attorney Family Support Division/Sutter County Department for Child Support Services. He retired in July 2011.

Civilian awards also came in high numbers to Larry and included certificates and plaques of appreciation from the Butte-Glenn Veteran's Employment Committee, the Yuba-Sutter High Twelve Club, the Marysville Kiwanis Club, and the California Association of Veterans Service Officers where he was an officer for five years. Upon retiring, Larry received the Gold Resolution from the Sutter County Board of Supervisors.

Writing has always been a love of Larry's, and over the years he has authored monthly newspaper columns in the Territorial Dispatch Newspaper in Marysville, as well as individual articles on various topics also in the Territorial Dispatch. Since 1998, he has written and built 17 history-based web sites, many on Oroville area sites including Table Mountain, the Oroville Dam Train Tunnel, Larry's Feather Falls Web Site, Bald Rock and Bald Rock Dome, the Oroville High School Class of 1969 Web Site, and Historic Bridges in Butte, Nevada, and Yuba Counties.

In 2012, a representative of Arcadia Publishing saw Larry's Oroville Dam train tunnel collision history on his web site and asked him if he'd do a book on building the dam. After 15 months of intensive research, Arcadia published Larry's first book, *"The Building of the Oroville Dam"*. He dedicated the book to the 34 men who died building the dam and conducted book signings throughout the Oroville area, and in Sutter and Yuba Counties.

His second book, "*The Lost Communities of Lake Oroville*" is a pending Arcadia "Images of America" book. Research has been ongoing for the book since January of 2015 and at least 35 individuals and agencies have contributed information and photographs to the book. The publication will consist of over 200 historic photographs and is expected to be published in November 2016.

While continuing to write, Larry served his community coordinating the Yuba and Sutter Counties Dedication of the California Vietnam Veterans Memorial, coordinating and publicizing the parade and ceremony, and doing guest interviews and public appearances from 1980-88. He also served on the 45th OHS class reunion committee, creating a class roster and collecting biographical information on class members. He continues to maintain the class of 1969 web site that he created on 2008.

Larry has been referred to as one of the best historians of twentieth century history of the Oroville region.

He and his wife, Sharon, reside in Yuba City, CA.