

# In Memoriam

“Bill” Carter

The recent death of Professor R.W.G. “Bill” Carter has deprived the field of coastal research of one of its brightest stars. His many friends and colleagues will, no doubt, eagerly testify to the breadth and quality of his research, and indeed, his published work will remain testimony to his abilities.

We were privileged to have Bill as our mentor while students at the University of Ulster in Northern Ireland. To teaching, as indeed to every task, Bill applied himself with undaunted enthusiasm. We remember the energetic young lecturer performing a little ballet as he pranced back and forth across the lecture theater, making darting forays to the blackboard to chalk up wave equations, refraction patterns, and rapidly executed sketches of beach erosion horror stories.

When the time came to work on our dissertations and theses we could appreciate how Bill could strike that wonderful balance not often attained by research supervisors—the balance between spoon-feeding and abandonment. While we were left to our own devices, we nevertheless knew that Bill would always be there to help with serious obstacles to our work. We recall an incident when one of us took ill just prior to a planned day in the field at Bill’s beloved Magilligan Foreland along the northern Irish coast. Bill volunteered to make the trip, and on a cold, cold, blustery January morning, he waded until neck-deep in the freezing Atlantic Ocean, holding a transit rod with all his might while very energetic waves were breaking all around and, indeed, over him. We were studying nearshore sediment flux at the time and on returning to the beach, rather than complain about the bitterly cold water, he resounded “these data should tell us a lot about sediment transport during storm events.” Such a response typified Bill’s love and devotion to his work, and on that cold January morning, we marvelled at the enthusiasm of a truly remarkable individual.

Consequently, we emerged from the learning process with confidence, assurance and a sense of humility. For that we are thankful to Bill.

Although we write of Bill as our mentor, we mourn the loss of a generous, caring and loyal friend who always made time in an incredibly busy schedule to talk to us about work, our problems, and whose first question on the trans-Atlantic phone link was to ask about our families.

We are deeply saddened by the loss of our teacher and friend. When we walk the beaches of Nova Scotia, Cape Cod, Donegal or his beloved Magilligan Foreland, Bill is with us in spirit.

John Shaw  
Greg Stone  
Phil Lowry