

Memorials for scientists involved with SCOR

Sir Anthony Laughton (1927-2019)

Nominated member to SCOR for the UK and associate member of Working Group 107 on Improved Global Bathymetry.

From: <https://www.southampton.ac.uk/blog/sussed-news/2019/10/09/obituary-for-sir-anthony-laughton-frs/>



Sir Anthony, a distinguished leader of the post-war generation of marine geologists and ocean scientists, was made an Honorary Doctor of Science by the University of Southampton in July 2019. He was Director and Chief Scientific Officer of the Institute of Ocean Sciences (IOS), one of the fore-runner organisations that merged to form the Southampton Oceanography Centre (now National Oceanography Centre Southampton). He was also among the group who planned the co-location of the University's Geology and Oceanography Departments with government scientists to form one of the world's leading oceanographic centres.

Professor Damon Teagle, Director of the Southampton Marine and Maritime Institute (SMMI) who nominated Sir Anthony for his Honorary Doctorate, paid tribute to his leadership and foresight:

“Sir Anthony was a key member of the heroic generation of marine geologists and ocean scientists whose pioneering vision and achievements has inspired future generation to follow in their wake. He gave a most energetic and motivating acceptance speech for his honorary DSc, that was hugely inspirational to all present.

“He exuded a can-do attitude and also a deep enjoyment of science and endeavour. His passing so soon after the wonderful honorary degree celebrations brings great sadness, and our thoughts and best wishes are with his family.”

Sir Anthony's many other honours include the Prince Albert 1st of Monaco Gold Medal for Oceanography, the Royal Geographical Society's Founders Medal, and the Murchison Medal, Geological Society of London. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society (1986) and received a Knighthood for services to oceanography in 1987.

You can read our full story of Sir Anthony's Honorary Doctorate at:

<https://www.southampton.ac.uk/news/2019/07/anthony-laughton-doctorate.page>

Robert (Bob) Dickson (1941-2019)

Nominated member to SCOR for the UK, a full member of WG 68 on North Atlantic Circulation, and a member of the Scientific Steering Committee of the Global Ocean Ecosystem Dynamics (GLOBEC) project.

From: <https://www.lowestoftjournal.co.uk/news/dr-bob-dickson-cbe-tributes-1-6515657>



A physical oceanographer, Dr Bob Dickson was an Emeritus Research Fellow at the Centre for Environment, Fisheries, and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS) at the University of East Anglia. Dr. Dickson was heavily involved in community life around Lowestoft, from his work with the Lowestoft Players to his historical talks and volunteering efforts, until his death in December 2019.

The 78-year-old, who was born in Edinburgh, was one of the first to gain a PhD in physical oceanography from UEA, and was awarded a

Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) in 2006 after three decades with CEFAS in Lowestoft.

His wife Deanne Dickson said: "He was recognised worldwide as an oceanographer but he used his people skills to help raise funds for local causes after he retired. He was a man with many skills and interests and this was another string to his bow. He was like a dog with a bone once he had an idea and that was part of his success."

After a year-long sabbatical in California, Dr Dickson returned to Lowestoft, but his desire for travelling remained. Mrs Dickson said: "He had a bypass but we already had a round-the-world trip booked as a celebration of his retirement for a few weeks later. He felt fine and no one stopped him. He was a risk-taker and fearless, but it was a bit hairy for me."

"We visited Hong Kong and New Zealand, but we were in a hotel in Las Vegas when he had a phone call saying he had been awarded a CBE." Dr Dickson regularly hosted local history events, welcoming a range of guest speakers, with money raised going to a number of local causes, including the Lowestoft Players. He also volunteered at the Maritime Museum, as well as taking part in the British Library's oral histories project.

Karl Föllmi (1954-2019)

Nominated member to SCOR for Switzerland

From: <https://www.unil.ch/iste/en/home/menuinst/recherche/paleoclimate-ancient-live-and-ocean-circulation/karl-follmi.html>



A paleo-oceanographer, Dr. Karl Föllmi directed the research group on sedimentology and sediment geochemistry at the Université de Lausanne. His research was centered on large-scale processes during Earth's history, which have relevance to present-day environmental change. This include research on paleo-environmental change in carbonate platforms (present-day analogue: coral reefs), phosphorite deposits (carrying the essential nutrient phosphate), organic-carbon-rich deposits (sinks for atmospheric CO₂), weathering processes on the continent (as a source for essential biophile elements), major extinction events, trace-metal contaminations, and paleoclimatic reconstructions.

Taro Takahashi (1930-2019)

A member of the Scientific Steering Committee of the Joint Global Ocean Flux Study (JGOFS) and a full member of the Joint Committee on Climatic Changes and the Ocean (CCCO).

From: https://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2020-01/tos-tts012720.php



Dr. Taro Takahashi was selected as the first recipient of the Wallace S. Broecker Medal. Dr. Takahashi's six-decade research career cemented the understanding of global ocean uptake of anthropogenic carbon dioxide emissions and the biogeochemistry that drives it. Dr. Takahashi uncovered key links between the oceans and climate. His research at Columbia University's Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory helped to reveal that the oceans absorb large amounts of carbon dioxide from the air, burying it deep underwater as cold waters sink around the Antarctic and Arctic. As those waters circulate and rise up again near the equator, they release some of the stored-up carbon dioxide back into the air. He is remembered as an excellent mentor to his

colleagues and junior scientists, as well as for his strong conviction that community service is an important part of being a researcher.

Dr. Takahashi's achievements were recognized during The Oceanography Society's Honors Ceremony on February 18, 2020, at the Ocean Sciences Meeting in San Diego, California.

Trevor Platt (1942-2020)

Vice-chair of WG 73 on Ecological Theory in Relation to Biological Oceanography, the chair and a member of the Joint Global Ocean Flux Study (JGOFS) between SCOR and the International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme (IGBP), a full member of the Joint SCOR/IOC Committee on Climatic Changes and the Ocean (CCCCO) with SCOR, IAMAP, and IAPSO, and a member of the SCOR/IGBP/WCRP ad Working Group For the Global Ocean Euphotic Zone Study.

From: <https://www.mtsociety.org/2020/04/09/in-memorial-professor-trevor-platt/>



Born in Salford, England in 1942, Professor Platt first entered academia six decades ago as an undergraduate at the University of Nottingham in the UK, before going onto study for an MA at the University of Toronto; in 1970 he gained his PhD in biology from Dalhousie University, Nova Scotia, Canada. He became Head of Biological Oceanography, in 1972, and acting Director in 1976 at the Bedford Institute of Oceanography, Nova Scotia, where he had been researching phytoplankton ecology. Professor Platt joined Plymouth Marine Laboratory's team in 2008 as Professorial Fellow, where he split his time between his research and his Directorship of the Partnership for Observation of the Global Ocean (POGO).

Phytoplankton was to become the common thread throughout his future research studies, but not exclusively. His output over the decades has been prodigious with more than 320 academic publications to his name, which generated more than 22,000 citations; one paper cited 23 of his publications in its list of references.

Throughout his career Professor Platt's contributions to oceanography have been recognized in the form of numerous awards, medals and honors. These included the Timothy Parsons medal for excellence in ocean sciences, the APICS-Fraser Gold Medal, the Rosentiel Award, the Huntsman Award, and the American Society of Limnology and Oceanography's highest award – the G. Evelyn Hutchinson Award. In Canada, Professor Platt was elected to the Royal Society of Canada, and the Canada of Prix de Distinction and the Prix d'Excellence from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. He was recognized in 2014 with the award of the Jawaharial Nehru Science fellowship, to work 'on the ground' in India.

He served as the visiting Professor at some of the world's leading institutions including: the Scripps Institution of Oceanography; Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile; State University of New York; European Institute for Advanced Studies in Oceanography, Mallorca; and the National Institute of Oceanography, Cochín.

He was a firm believer in sharing his knowledge, nurturing the next generation of scientists and above all providing encouragement and guidance to countless young researchers. Many of them will have seen Professor Platt as on a pedestal, someone to be admired a true role model, but he was always ready to share his experience and debate opinions, in a quiet, considered, sometimes provocative, whilst always supportive tone.

The full obituary by the Plymouth Marine Laboratory can be read at:

https://www.pml.ac.uk/News_and_media/News/In_memoriam_Professor_Trevor_Platt_FRS

Ron O'Dor (1944-2020)

Senior Scientist for the Census of Marine Life, a SCOR affiliated project 2000-2010.

From: <http://oceantrackingnetwork.org/in-memoriam-dr-ronald-odor/>



Ron was born in Kansas City, Missouri, and his career spanned the fields of biochemistry, physiology and marine biology, with specialties in cephalopod biology and aquatic animal telemetry. He completed his undergraduate degree in biochemistry at the University of California Berkeley and his PhD in physiology at the University of British Columbia. After a postdoctoral fellowship at Cambridge University in the UK, Ron took up a faculty position in Biology at Dalhousie University in 1973. He was

Director of Dalhousie's Aquatron Laboratory from 1986-1993, Chair of the Biology Department from 1997-2000, and held short-term positions of Visiting Researcher/Scientist at various universities in Canada, the USA, Australia, China, France, Japan, Papua New Guinea, Portugal, and South Africa, until he became Emeritus Professor at Dalhousie upon his retirement in 2015.

Perhaps Ron is best known for his immense contributions to cephalopod ecology and physiology, achieved by using a suite of interdisciplinary techniques including behaviour and ecology, physiology and innovative telemetry tracking techniques. He was an ecophysiological long before the term became popular. His lab was always filled with repurposed scientific equipment tied together with wire and plumbing bits. In fact, for a time there was a "MacGyver Award" (named after the TV show hero who was always cobbling things together to save the day) in the Biology Department, but it went out of fashion after a while because Ron was in almost permanent possession of the award. One of the favourite contraptions was a squid "swim tunnel" he put together on a field trip to the

Azores made out of building supplies and a fish trolling motor. He harnessed this to observe at what current speeds squid switched between fins and jet propulsion. He famously published papers such as the "Choreography of the squid's nuptial dance" and "The incredible flying squid." One of Ron's quests was to know why squid fly – that is, squid not only swim, they occasionally fly, propelling themselves like rockets forward up and out of the water. His response to a journalist when he was asked why they fly was typical Ron: Who wouldn't want to be a rocket? Why be an astronaut when you can be a rocket?

When the Census of Marine Life (CoML) - a 10-year international effort undertaken to assess the diversity, distribution, and abundance of marine life – formally launched in 2000, the breadth and depth of Ron's interests and sense of humor made him the obvious candidate for Chief Scientist. He moved to Washington DC to take on this role from 2000-2010. Ron took a big gamble on the CoML and did an unsurpassable job in recruiting, stimulating, connecting, and communicating, in Nova Scotia, across Canada, and around the entire planet. Out of the CoML grew a dream of Ron's: the idea to build a global network of acoustic receivers and oceanographic sensors in all the ocean regions of the world to track keystone tagged animals along migratory routes. And hence was born the Ocean Tracking Network (OTN), headquartered at Dalhousie University and launched as a Canada Foundation for Innovation International Joint Venture Project in 2008. Fast forward to today and the work of many dedicated personnel who made it happen: OTN is now a global research, conservation and infrastructure platform and one of Canada's National Research Facilities, focused on understanding aquatic animal movements and survival in relation to changing environments in order to enable better stewardship of the world's aquatic resources. OTN also has been foundational to the birth and growth of other major oceans initiatives and research at Dalhousie. For his work with the CoML and the OTN Ron was named Canada's Environmental Scientist of the Year by Canadian Geographic in 2009.

Ron was also a valuable mentor to students, postdoctoral fellows and other trainees. He was known for encouraging students to visualize the puzzle as a whole before trying to put the pieces together, and to learn the importance of resourcefulness - the ability to take the tools you have at your disposal and adapt them to solve a problem at hand. One past student described how the defining moment of their research career came when, after much pondering and discussion of how they could study the relative roles of hydrodynamic drag and gravitational forces in the feeding and swimming dynamics of larval scallops, Ron saw a Request For Proposal from the Canadian Space Agency for work on the NASA space shuttle. Voila: a simple solution – blast the larvae into space to eliminate gravity and see what they did. It was another Ron moment where a tool was adapted by a resourceful mind for an unconventional purpose. But they did it: "Scallops in Space." Students fondly remember that Ron was kind, gentle, smiled ALL the time, could speak on an incredible breadth of topics, and always wore a suit jacket with his signature turtleneck.

And finally, with students and colleagues alike, Ron was a social animal, working the fifth-floor lounge or rooms at conferences, bouncing ideas and jokes around with a smile and clap on the shoulder. The weekly Biology Departmental seminars and associated BioBeer were essential events for him and an opportunity to discuss ideas and foster the social cohesion of the Department.

Ron will be sorely missed but always remembered. He will be remembered for his big ideas on big science, the use of cutting-edge technologies, for his ready smile and laugh, for his inventiveness worthy of MacGyver, and for his kindness and humanity. Ron leaves behind his loving companion Janet, who tolerated his idiosyncrasies and brought out the best in him for 52 years. He also leaves two children, and four grandchildren. For those of us in the science community who knew him as a

colleague, teacher and friend, the world is a bit dimmer, and science less fun, than it was just yesterday.

George Hemmen (1926-2020)

The first Executive Director of SCOR from 1972-1980 (called Executive Secretary then). He also served the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR) for more than 27 years, first as Assistant Secretary then as Executive Secretary. In the picture below, three generations of SCOR Executive Directors. George Hemmen (center), Liz Gross (left) who took over from George in 1980, and Ed Urban (right) who took over from Liz in 2000.

From: <https://www.scar.org/general-scar-news/george-hemmen/>



George Hemmen was a meteorologist, who began his career in the Antarctic with the Falkland Islands Dependencies Survey (FIDS, which later became the British Antarctic Survey) as a meteorological observer at Admiralty Bay in 1952–53. He served as Base Leader at Deception Island in 1953–54. On his return to Britain, he planned to retrain as a surveyor but, in 1955, he was appointed by FIDS to the post of Stores Officer to organise the Royal Society Antarctic Expedition, which established Halley Bay base in 1956 as the major Antarctic contribution by Britain to

the International Geophysical Year.

In 1962, while a full-time employee of the Royal Society, George was seconded part-time as Assistant Secretary to the then Honorary Secretary of SCAR, Gordon Robin. By 1970, it was recognised that there was a need for an Executive Secretary for SCAR and George took on that role in August 1970 until his retirement on 30 September 1989.

In addition to working for SCAR, George also served as part-time Executive Secretary of the Scientific Committee on Oceanic Research from 1972 to 1980. In 1972, Hemmen Ice Rise, located off the northwest corner of Berkner Island in the Ronne Ice Shelf, was named for him. In 1985, George was awarded the Polar Medal for his outstanding contribution to Antarctic exploration and research.

An excellent lecture by George Hemmen about "Scientists abroad" at the Royal Society website can be found at: <https://royalsociety.org/science-events-and-lectures/2010/scientists-abroad/>