

TRIBUTE TO KENNETH C. WILSON

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Obituary by his son Bjarni

Kenneth Charles Wilson died at home in Victoria, BC, on May 14th, 2015, with his wife and children at his side.

He was born on Feb 9th, 1937, to Morris and Nell Wilson of Vancouver. An only child, he was close to his cousins, especially Marianne and Karen Tang. The Wilsons were often found at their cottage on Bowen Island – usually with guests. Ken attended Kitsilano High School, where he made many lifelong friends, graduating in 1954.

He studied Civil Engineering at the University of British Columbia, graduating at the top of the class of 1959. Awarded an Athlone Scholarship, he studied at Imperial College in London, receiving his M.Sc. in 1961. He spent two years in Vancouver working for the engineering firm Ingledow Kidd, then went to Queen's University at Kingston, ON, where he got his Ph.D. in 1965. After graduation he worked as a technical consultant, among others for the federal government in Ottawa, and the UN (through Ingledow) in Cyprus.

In 1971 he returned to Queen's. This time as a professor. A natural teacher, he was appreciated by faculty and students alike. He enjoyed a reputation for mild eccentricity, resulting from his whimsical selection of teaching materials – his use of *Winnie the Pooh*

and *Alice In Wonderland* to illustrate basic principles of engineering was somewhat out of the ordinary – and his habit of lecturing in a traditional academic gown, which earned him the nickname Batman.

While studying in London he met Vilborg Sveinbjarnardottir of Reykjavik. They married in Vancouver in 1962 and had two children, Bjarni (b. 1966) and Signy (b. 1968). Ken and Vilborg shared a love of books and travel, and over the years visited dozens of countries on six continents together, often accompanied by their friends Gordon and Dorothy Luke. They particularly enjoyed sabbatical years spent in London and Copenhagen. Their children both live in Vancouver. After his retirement from Queen's in 1999, Ken continued to consult, write, and attend conferences. In 2006 he and Vilborg moved to Victoria. His last technical paper was published in 2014.

Robert Visintainer

Ken was well known within the international community of slurry pipeline engineers and is generally considered one of the "founding fathers" in this field of study. He pioneered concepts and methods for modelling all types of solid-liquid (slurry) flows in pipelines, channels and pumps, many of which are still in use today, or upon which further advances have been built. His efforts provided a significant contribution to the mining and dredging industries, the advancement of which has impacted the quality of life for many. He was known not only for his technical advances and insightful analyses, but also for his ready wit and good humor.

Ken was a regular contributor to industry conferences and journals, lead author of the textbook *Slurry Transport Using Centrifugal Pumps*, initially published in 1992 and currently in its third edition. He was a skilled educator for engineers and students at all levels.

Allan Thomas

Ken is perhaps best known for his work in sliding bed and heterogeneous slurries. But he also contributed greatly to the knowledge of non-Newtonian slurry flow and I have been privileged to have been associated with him in that work. In the 1970's I had been testing Bingham plastic slurries in test loops. In 1982 Ken visited me in Australia and told me of his non-Newtonian flow theory and wanted to know if my test loop data supported his theory. Well it did, and the result was a joint paper in 1985 titled: "A New Analysis of the Turbulent Flow of non-Newtonian Fluids". I am proud to have been associated with Ken on this, and four subsequent papers through to 2007, which extended the theory.

Anders Sellgren

I have had the privilege of assisting Ken as a co-author in about 10 papers during the last 15 years. The subjects have varied with a concentration on near wall lift for particle sizes of 0.1 to 0.5mm, a subject raised to Ken in the early 1970s by the other giant in the field, Cliff Shook. Ken's last contribution was a paper on the historical perspective on slurry flow modelling at the Hydrotransport 19 conference in 2014.