



DAVENPORT, Alan Garnett - passed away on July 19, 2009, In London, Ontario. Alan, who was 77 years old, died of complications resulting from Parkinson's Disease. All of his immediate family were with him - Sheila, his remarkable wife of 52 years, his daughters Anna and Clare and his sons Andrew and Tom.

Alan's extraordinary Journey began in Madras (now Chennai) India, in 1932, where he was born to English tea planters. Alan was sent off at a young age to South Africa, where under the supervision of aunts and uncles, he attended Michaelhouse. There he displayed an aptitude for math and sciences, a love of sports (a good tennis and squash player; average at cricket) and a strong and Independent mind. Alan left South Africa to attend Cambridge, where after some activities ~ (sports, piano playing and editor of the sports journal) he discovered engineering; completing his B.A. in 1954. His engineering passion took him to Canada, but it was there he quickly found his great love, Sheila Smith - and by 1958 he was married and had a MA in Civil Engineering. Alan returned to the UK to complete his PHD at the University of Bristol, England in 1961, studying the effects of turbulent wind on long bridges and tall buildings. He and Sheila (and their first of four children) then returned to Canada - this time for good - where he joined a small but promising engineering faculty at the University of Western Ontario, and never left.

Although still in his early thirties Alan quickly established himself as wind engineering expert pioneering the use of wind tunnels in the design of tall (and long) structures. In 1965 he founded the Boundary Layer Wind Tunnel Laboratory at Western. In the years since this time the Laboratory has tested many of the world's tallest and most challenging buildings and bridges from an engineering perspective. The Laboratory has been the primary engineering advisor for such prominent structures from the Sears Tower in Chicago, to the World Trade Center in NYC, to Toronto's CN Tower, to the Tsing Ma Bridge in Hong Kong. Beyond these applications he also has contributed to the fields of meteorology, environmental loads, structural dynamics and earthquake loading. He developed the world's first statistically based seismic zoning map for Canada. He has authored over 200 papers on these various subjects and has lectured extensively around the world. He also led and or served on a wide variety of professional and government committees. Following the United Nations resolution in November 1987 declaring 1990-2000 as the International Decade for Natural Hazard Reduction, Alan became a member of an ad hoc Advisory Committee, chaired by Dr. Press, MAE, to assist in the planning. In Oct. 1993 he was appointed Chairman for the newly formed Canadian National Committee for the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction under the auspices of the Royal Society of Canada and The Canadian Academy of Engineering. He is a member of the Canadian Construction Research Board (NRC) and on the board of Directors of the Canadian Society for Civil Engineering and the International Council for Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat. In January 1988, Alan was appointed to the Scientific Committee of the Canadian Meteorological and Oceanographic Society for a 3 year term, ending June 30, 1991. Dr. Davenport became a founding member in 1989 of the Centre for Studies in Construction at UWO. In May 1999 a partnership with the University of Western Ontario and the Insurance Bureau of Canada announced the establishment of Institute for Catastrophic Loss Reduction, a world-leading research centre dedicated to reducing the impact of natural disasters. Alan served as the Institute's Research Director.

In learned journals, Alan was the founding editor of the Canadian Journal of Civil Engineering and has been on the editorial board of six others. Alan was elected to the Royal Society of Canada In 1972. In March 1987 he became a Foreign Associate in the National Academy of Engineering. In November 1987, Dr. Davenport was elected a Foreign Member of the Fellowship of Engineering in England. Also in 1967 he became a founding member of the Canadian Academy of Engineering. In 1991, he became Vice-President of the Canadian Academy of Engineering and on June 2, 1992 he was elected President.

Dr. Davenport received numerous awards and distinctions throughout his career in recognition of outstanding service to the profession and for noteworthy contributions to the science of engineering. On May 1, 2002, Dr. Davenport received Canada's highest honour for lifetime achievement, when he was appointed a Member of the Order of Canada. The investiture took place on November 30th, 2002.

Dr. Davenport was also awarded Honorary degrees from the University of Western Ontario (2001), Carleton (1996), Guelph (1993), University of Toronto (1989), Waterloo (1986), McGill (1984), as well as the University of La Plata in Argentina (1993), the University of Bristol (1998), the Technical University of Denmark (1983), and the University of Louvain, Belgium (1979).

Alan is survived by his wife Sheila, his four children Tom (Gail), Anna (Dirk), Andrew (Tanya) and Clare (John), his brother Rodney (Betty) In addition to nine grandchildren (Ryan, Locke, Larkin, Sidney, Liam, Tate, Tucker, Thomas and Gemma). His innate curiosity, his modesty, his humour and his warmth will be greatly missed. A memorial service will be held at the Boundary Layer Wind Tunnel at the University of Western Ontario on Thursday July 23rd at 2:00 pm. Contributions can be made to the Alan G. Davenport award established for a full time international graduate student from a developing country conducting research in civil and environmental engineering. The address is: Alan G. Davenport Award, School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, UWO, London, Ontario, N6A 5B9.