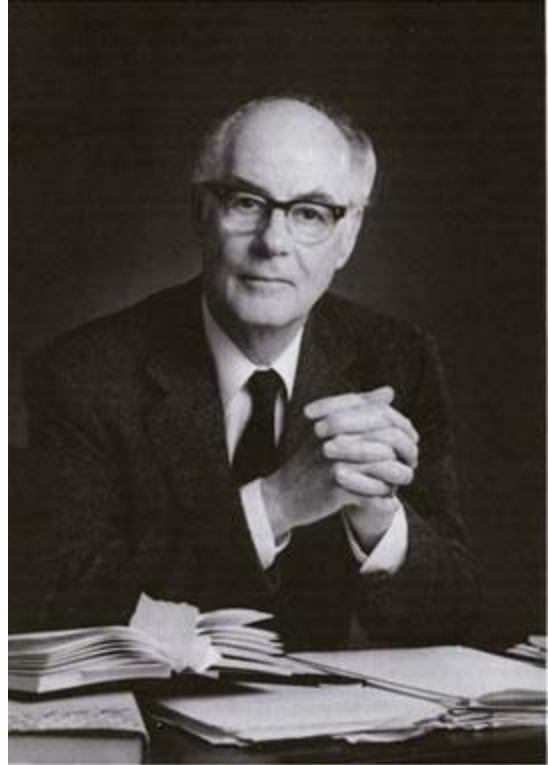


William Wellington (1920-2008)

Bill's career took him to Victoria, British Columbia, to lead the bioclimatological unit in forest biology from 1953 to 1968; to the University of Toronto, as professor of ecology, from 1968 to 1970; and back to the University of British Columbia from 1970 until 1988. At UBC, he was Director of the Institute of Resource Ecology from 1973 to 1979. Honours along the way included: Gold Medal for Outstanding Achievement in Canadian Entomology (ESC, 1968); Award for Outstanding Achievement in Biometeorology (American Meteorological Society, 1969); C.J. Woodworth Award for Outstanding Scientific Achievement (Entomological Society of America, 1979); Undergraduate Professor of the Year (Agriculture, UBC, 1978); Killam Senior Research Fellow (UBC, 1980); Professor Emeritus (UBC, 1986 -); and Fellowship in the ESC, the Explorer's Club and the Royal Society of Canada. He was especially proud of being in the Explorer's Club with all his boyhood heroes.



In 1988, Bill's colleagues and students honoured him with the publication of Memoir #146 (ESC), *Paths from a Viewpoint: The Wellington Festschrift on Insect Ecology*. The following are excerpts from that Memoir:

"I believe that the stature of Wellington in ecology will continue to grow for many years, as the real significance of [his] papers becomes more widely appreciated and the work becomes incorporated in popular textbooks." (Sir Richard Southwood)

"He turns old and tired problems into fresh intellectual challenges. I know of no one who so powerfully combines theory, deep knowledge and stunning revelations. His is a truly original mind." (C.S. Holling)

Bill was a gifted illustrator. He used this gift to great effect in lectures, switching the chalk from his right hand, where it had been writing words, to his left, which he used for drawing.

Here are several tributes from former students and colleagues.

"Bill Wellington taught that chance favoured the mind prepared with the deepest powers of observation, that no detail was inconsequential or less beautiful, and that there were no liabilities that were not actually opportunities of great advantage ..." (C.D. Rollo)

"I remember Bill as a very kind, gentle man who, when he had an interesting point to make, did so with a wonderful subtle smile and twinkling eyes. And he did the same when someone else was making an interesting point. I remember when I gave a seminar on pattern, process, and scale in Bill's graduate class on weather. It gave me a real boost to see my professor at the back of the room, grinning, and nodding, through the seminar! He really enjoyed the play of ideas." (David A. Raworth)

"Bill Wellington was a very generous, compassionate and insightful human being, who encouraged

me to enter the graduate program and study my favourite insect, the honey bee. In the summer of 1976, he actually invited me to carry out part of my field work in their magnificent garden on Adera St in Kerrisdale. The family took the presence of a beehive completely in their stride; since then, they have always made me feel welcome, for which I am deeply grateful. Of course, all of Bill's students were blessed with a wonderful "mother hen" in disguise, who kept us all on track with various academic deadlines and away from any potential pitfalls." (Daniela Bates (Cmiralova))

"Bill Wellington is perhaps best known in population circles for his work on the cyclic dynamics of tent caterpillars. His most cited paper, 84 times, is on maternal influences on tent caterpillar larvae (*The Canadian Entomologist* 1965). Earlier papers on tent caterpillars that precede Citation Index are likely to have received even more citations. Bill's contribution was to recognize that both the quality and quantity of caterpillars change over the population cycles. This behavioural and physiological variation can strongly influence the impact that the environment has on insects and therefore, counting numbers is not sufficient for understanding population cycles. His strong message was to keep the insect in insect ecology." (Judith Myers)

"Bill was probably my most important mentor. What a wonderful supportive supervisor he was – even when he gave you bad news, it felt positive. I was fortunate to stay in Vancouver and see Bill and Margret from time to time. He was always interested in my career, offering encouragement and unfailing confidence in my abilities. At the christening of our second daughter, Bill shared an analogy that he said could only be appreciated after the birth of a second child. Humans, he observed, had not evolved much beyond the salmon; they reproduced and then they died. With humans it just took longer. Besides enjoying this characteristic and distinctive wry humor, I could truly empathize with salmon at that point." (Deborah Henderson)

Bill will be remembered by his wife Margret (nee Reiss), daughter Katherine (Roy) Lepik, son Stephen (Cheryl) Wellington, grandchildren Veronica and Matthew, brother-in-law Frank (Nell) Reiss, niece Jennifer (Peter) and their children Braeden, Evan and Joel as a loving husband, father, uncle and grandfather. He had a penchant for teaching through storytelling and annual pilgrimages to Banff during the summer. His legacy includes imparting a lasting appreciation for the power of the spoken and written word, the value of careful observation and attention to detail, an enjoyment of history, the importance of hugs, and the delight of Monty Python.

Obituary prepared by Katherine Lepik, Stephen Wellington, Margret Wellington and Sheila Fitzpatrick.