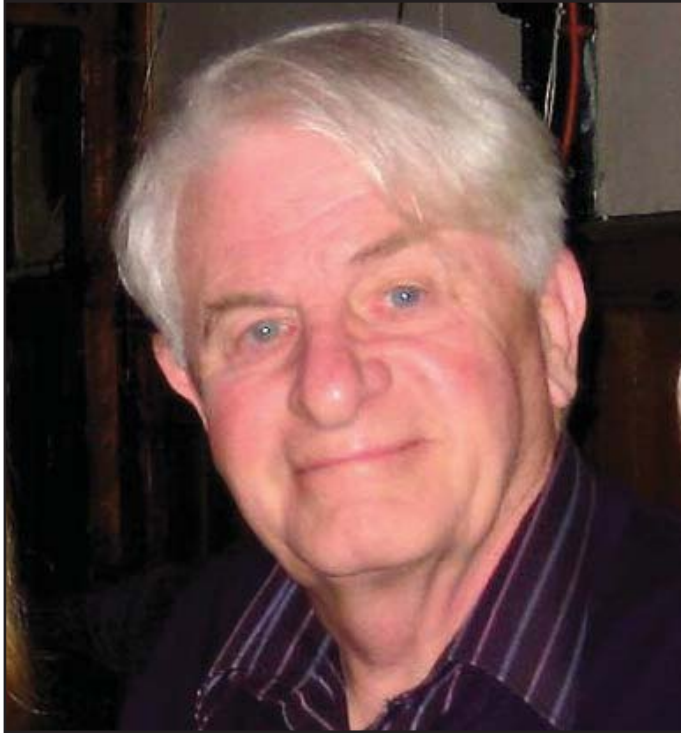


CLIFF WILKINSON (1936-2014)

GRAHAM RAND

James Clifford (Cliff) Wilkinson died on 3 July, following a long battle with cancer.



He was born in Preston, in December 1936, where he attended Preston Catholic College. His undergraduate degree was in Mathematics (with Statistics) at Manchester, 1955-58. Following that he worked for a year as an assistant engineer in the aircraft industry, undertaking data processing and statistical analysis, before becoming a mathematics master at a grammar school.

In 1961 he began the Birmingham MSc OR, where he remembers being taught by Brian Haley, Steven Vajda and Frank Benson, amongst others. On graduating, he was awarded a National Transport Research Fellowship at Liverpool University. In addition to some O.R. teaching duties, he spent three years concerned with computer scheduling of buses and their crews, before becoming lecturer in O.R. in the sub-department of numerical analysis within the department of Applied Mathematics, in 1964. In this role he taught O.R. techniques to final year maths students, as well as supervising O.R. projects, which he described as 'minor'.

A year later he came to Lancaster University, to what was then the Department of Operational Research, as lecturer, on 1 October, 1965, a year after the University, and the Department, had started. He was promoted to Senior Lecturer on 1 Aug 1971.

Cliff went to the US to visit Russ Ackoff's group at the University of Pennsylvania for a full year in 1967-8. One outcome of this was a collaboration with Shiv Gupta, which led to a paper presented at

the 5th IFORS conference held in Venice in 1969, entitled 'Allocating promotional effort to competing activities: a dynamic programming approach'.

Later his interest focussed on the operation of water supply systems, and he helped develop a multi-criteria control policy for the River Dee in north Wales. It was rumoured that the university insurers had to pay an increased premium to cover English staff and students working on a Welsh river system! Several papers were published in specialist journals such as *Water Resources Research* and the *Journal of Hydrology*, and he co-edited a book, *The mathematics of hydrology and water resources*, published by Academic Press.

He co-authored papers on water resources with David Smith who writes 'I had the honour and delight of being supervised by Cliff for both my Masters' project and my PhD - being Cliff's first doctoral student. Cliff was completely at home in the worlds of engineers, geographers and mathematicians with whom he worked; a model of interdisciplinary work. There was a sense of humour too - part of the controls on the River Dee had been given the acronym DISPRIN, so one day he suggested that the sequel should be known as PARACETAMOL, and devised an appropriate piece of jargon to fit. Such antics with words linked to his delight in crosswords, one of his hobbies in retirement.'

Following his retirement in 1990 he continued to be involved with teaching in the Department for another decade. Cliff made a huge contribution to the early decades of the department of Operational Research at Lancaster, and will be remembered fondly by former colleagues and many students, particularly those he supervised on Masters projects.

He leaves a widow, Pauline, children Jonathan, Christopher and Elizabeth, and grandchildren Patrick and Samuel.

<OR>

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