Dr. Laing Ferguson



***Passed on: December 25th, 2013***

**FERGUSON, DR. LAING - 1935-2013**

It is with deep sadness that the family announces the passing of Dr. Laing Ferguson on December 25, 2013 at the age of 78, after a lengthy illness.

He is survived by his wife Joyce, sons Neil (Elizabeth), Andrew (Marlyn), Kirk, four Grandchildren Jonathan, Liam, Caleigh and Hillary, and his brother Bill and family in Scotland.

Born in Dunfermline, Scotland, Laing graduated from the University of Edinburgh in 1957 with a BSc Honours geology and in 1960 with a PhD in Palaeoecology. After a two year Postdoctoral Fellowship in Edmonton Alberta and time spent working in the Arctic, Laing accepted an Associate Professor position at Mount Allison University in Sackville, N.B. in 1962. Laing became the Head of the Geology department from 1973 to 1995, holding the Sir James Dunn Chair from 1982 onwards. He was awarded the title of Professor Emeritus from Mount Allison University in 1999.

During his time at Mount Allison he sat on many boards and committees including the Senate and Board of Regents. Laing was also a Fellow and Member of various Geological / Paleontological societies and associations. Laing was heavily involved in the Atlantic Geoscience Society, on the Executive and acting as President in 1982.

The fossil cliffs in Joggins N.S. were a large part of Laing’s life. He took many students there on field trips as well as many public groups and organizations. In 1988 Laing wrote “The Fossil Cliffs of Joggins”, a popular book that was reprinted several times. Laing was also involved in the committee that succeeded in getting the fossil cliffs designated a UNESCO World Heritage site. In recognition of Laing’s significant and continued contribution to the Joggins Fossil Institute he was made an Honorary Lifetime Member and named a “Keeper Of The Cliffs” in 2009.

A human rights activist, Laing helped found the Canadian National Section of Amnesty International in 1973, becoming the second President in 1976. He was also very involved in the local Sackville group. A lifelong philatelist, Laing enjoyed working on his stamp collection, as well as gardening, and he appreciated a good single malt.

Laing was on the Citizens Advisory Committee of the Dorchester Penitentiary for many years, acting as chair of the committee several times. Laing was a long time Rotarian and was awarded a Paul Harris Fellowship in 2009.

The family would like to thank the doctors, nurses and staff at the Drew Nursing Home in Sackville for their care of Laing in recent years. For those who wish, donations to Heart & Stroke Canada, Amnesty International Canada or the charity of your choice in his name would be appreciated.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Campbell’s Funeral Home, Sackville. A memorial service will be held at the Mount Allison University Chapel on Saturday, January 11, 2014 at 2 pm.

<http://www.campbellsfuneralhome.com/obit/dr-laing-ferguson/>