

## David Tait 1943-2011



David Tait died on Wednesday July 20th, 2011, aged 68. He was born, in 1943 in Falkirk, West Lothian, Scotland, attending schools there, and becoming Falkirk High School captain (head-boy) in 1960. He read Geography from 1960-1965 at the University of Glasgow, and within that programme was introduced, by Gordon Petrie, to Photogrammetry and other aspects of Surveying and Mapping. These fired his imagination. Going to ITC (then the International Training Centre for Aerial Survey, but now the Faculty of Geo-Information Science and Earth Observation of The University of Twente) in the Netherlands, on a NATO scholarship, following his Glasgow graduation, he completed a one-year postgraduate programme in Photogrammetry. He was invited to remain at ITC, as a Scientific Assistant, but also quickly became involved in editing that institute's world renowned lecture notes series.

David found his three years in ITC extremely happy and rewarding, but in 1968 was invited to return to The University of Glasgow, as an Assistant Lecturer, to help in the launching of the new BSc in Topographic Science, with Gordon Petrie, John Keates, Alan Brown and Barry Methley. This was the beginning of a thirty-year career at Glasgow University, which saw him promoted to Lecturer, Senior Lecturer and Senior Adviser of Studies. It is this last role than he will be remembered by very many students, even beyond Geomatics, as his care for them was exemplary. His main teaching responsibilities were in the areas of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing, but he also shared land surveying teaching with other colleagues, including Ian Gordon and Barry Methley, administered the postgraduate programmes with John Shearer and gave specialist courses in Civil Engineering and Archaeology. Many of his students now hold very good positions in the world of mapping and remember well his enthusiastic organization of field survey expeditions throughout the British Isles and Europe. Through the auspices of the British Council he was seconded to teaching duties in Sudan, Egypt,

Trinidad and Australia. Within Geomatics his research was focused on close range photogrammetry, and he was responsible for recording, in meticulous detail many of Glasgow's historic Alexander "Greek" Thomson buildings; he was also involved in supporting archaeological and coastal erosion studies. He has published in all three areas.

While at Glasgow University David Tait was elected to the Council of the Photogrammetric Society serving twelve years over four terms. During this period he also further utilised the editorial skills originally displayed at ITC, by becoming news editor of the ISPRS Journal of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing and then its Editor-in-Chief, from 1991-1997. As a supervisor the careful editing of his supervisees' work deserves the greatest praise. Following his retirement from Glasgow University, in 1998, David carried out the vitally important task of providing the Index (both volume-by-volume and cumulative since inception) for *The Photogrammetric Record* and further supported the photogrammetric community through his company *Giffnock Editorial Services* (GES), formed in 2000. GES specialized in helping non-native English speakers prepare scientific papers, and had a wide network of clients. During this period he was also instrumental in setting up the Glasgow Group of the *Society of Editors and Proofreaders*. Although beset with ill health, David continued his editorial functions to within a few weeks of his death.

Beyond his professional life, David married in 1974 and his children, Elizabeth and Shona, were born in 1979 and 1983 respectively. A keen scout as a teenager (becoming a Queen's Scout in 1960), this interest was carried into adult life. His children were active members of the Harlequin Theatre for Youth and David took on behind-the-scenes support responsibilities with great enthusiasm. Another community responsibility that he shouldered was his membership of the East Renfrewshire Children's Panel (Children's Panels are part of the Scottish justice system, replacing magistrates in dealings with children and young people under 16). David's hobbies tended to be active: hill walking, badminton, fishing, gardening, cooking and most recently mountain biking. The foci of many of these activities were Tayvallich (in Argyll and Bute), the Alps and Aviemore (in the Cairngorms) where the family owned a holiday home.

David died following illness philosophically borne. His funeral, on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> July, at Linn Crematorium, Glasgow, was extremely well attended and included many members of the photogrammetric community. He is survived by his wife Jenny, two daughters and three brothers. He will be greatly missed.

Jane Drummond