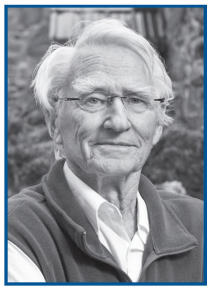
Tudor Wyatt Johnston (1932-2016)



Tudor Wyatt Johnston passed away in the morning of August 24th, 2016, aged 84. He was surrounded by family members and friends. On that day we lost an outstanding colleague, a dedicated collaborator, a superb mentor and a dear friend.

Trained in engineering (B.Eng. McGill, 1953; PhD Cambridge, 1958) Tudor was an outstanding physicist who made extensive original contributions to the theory of plasmas. After working in a private laboratory (RCA) in Montreal and then for a few years at the University of Houston, Tudor joined the Centre for Energy of Institut National de la Recherche Scientifique (INRS) in 1973 and thus became one of its pioneers, founding the group "interaction laser-matiere" and contributing his energy and passion to its activities for over three decades. His experience, notoriety and superior skills in writing grant proposals greatly enhanced the group's activities. In addition to his own remarkable theoretical contributions on laser-matter interaction and his crucial interpretation of experimental results, Tudor has incessantly encouraged, supported and participated in all the multifold efforts pursued by the laser-matter interaction team. He played a fundamental role within this group and by extension at INRS as a whole.

Tudor also collaborated with other colleagues both at INRS and elsewhere on a number of different projects, consistently with his broad scientific interests and resulting in the acclaimed book "Particle Kinetics of Plasmas" (which is still highly regarded today) and over 160 journal articles, including 23 in the greatly coveted Physical Review Letters. He was instrumental in bringing the book "Survival Skills for Scientists" to the level of a best-selling text on professional development. He remained active until a few years ago and after officially retiring in 2010, he became Emeritus Professor at INRS in 2012.

Due to his original contributions to physics and his penetrating insights, Tudor was a plasma scientist whose stature was widely recognized internationally. He was in high demand as a consultant in numerous US laboratories, associate divisional editor for major journals as well as a collaborator who was able to interpret complex experimental results and develop imaginative models with predictive properties. His work received ample peer recognition; among various honours we mention the election to Fellow of the American Physical Society in 1968.

Tudor had an incredibly lively (and loud) personality. He could talk for hours about almost anything, yet he was also a very good listener. He was always full of ideas, eager to help, extremely generous with his time and provided constant stimuli to so many of us. Mentoring and helping others, especially younger colleagues and students in writing better papers and projects, was his second nature. His interests were broad well beyond science and his presence could fill a room with energy and enthusiasm, making his absence all the much harder to bear. Tudor Johnston was a great scientist, teacher, sailor, mentor and friend. He leaves behind a memorable scientific and human legacy.

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