

OBITUARY



ALF SAMUELSSON
(1930–2005)

Professor E. M. Alf Samuelsson from Chalmers University, Göteborg, Sweden, died on the 3rd of June 2005 at the age of 75 after a lengthy illness.

Professor Samuelsson was an engineer with Professor Sven-Olof Asplund's Construction Company from 1952 to the time he joined Chalmers University in September 1954. In 1963 he completed his doctoral thesis with Professor Asplund on the subject of analysis of framed structures by use of algebraic topology. He was beloved by students, colleagues and co-workers and was known as 'Alf' by all. Through his foresight and deep knowledge in many fields Alf created a strong group in Computational Mechanics at Chalmers University, which he led until his retirement in July 1994. Under his leadership the Department of Structural Mechanics flourished and has been widely recognized for its many scientific contributions. Alf supervised a large number of doctoral students of which nine have become professors. Alf was, for many years, the Dean of Research at Chalmers and has contributed much to the University's development.

After his retirement Alf visited the Department almost every day still enjoying working and interacting with students and colleagues. He worked for Chalmers to the very end even giving his last lectures in February this year. He was always revered by his students. Above all Alf was a warm-hearted person with great humour and lived his personal motto 'Every day is a good day'. Within the Department his good company and jovial manner will be missed, especially at coffee break time where he loved relating jokes and historical stories. Through his interest in history Alf, together with his daughter Ulla, wrote a book on the early history of Chalmers with a second volume due out this autumn describing the years after Chalmers was given full university status. In 1995 Alf was awarded the Chalmers Medal in appreciation of his many contributions and years of dedicated service. Alf was elected to the Swedish Royal Academy of Science in recognition of his significant influence on the development and dissemination of Computational Mechanics in Sweden. Alf was also strongly engaged in the international scientific world, where he maintained an extensive international network. He was one of the founders of the International Association of Computational Mechanics (IACM). His contributions and dedication were essential in developing IACM as a worldwide organization. He was first the General Secretary and later President of IACM during the period 1994–1998 and has collaborated with this organization ever since.

On behalf of all Alf's friends, colleagues and students we express our great sorrow and sympathy to his wife Margareta and their daughter Ulla.

NILS-ERIK WIBERG (Alf's first PhD student)

EUGENIO OÑATE

OLGIERD ZIENKIEWICZ

ROBERT TAYLOR

In 1993, Alf was elected a Fellow of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences. This was a well-deserved recognition of his scientific work, both in Sweden and internationally.

Within Chalmers University, Alf served for several years as Chairman of the standing Faculty Committee, responsible for Post Graduate teaching. This is an exposed position, requiring much wisdom and integrity, and Alf always managed, year after year, to gain respect for his impartiality in this task.

JAN HULT