

# Robert Gordon (Rob) Shugg, P. Geoph.

By Larry Matthews, Frank Van Humbeck and Tooney Fink

Our geophysical community lost a passionate practitioner and compassionate human being on Sept. 13, 2011 when our colleague, Rob Shugg, succumbed to a pulmonary embolism.

Rob's passion in life revolved around science, and how science might be used to better the human condition, be it energy, health or attitude. It was no coincidence that he ended up working as a geophysicist in the Calgary oil patch, where this kind of inquisitive spirit is welcomed and rewarded. Rob would want his love of science to be one of his legacies, and through the establishment of a Canadian Society of Exploration Geophysicists (CSEG) Memorial Scholarship, that passion will live on.

Rob grew up in North Vancouver, the eldest of three siblings, in a wonderful family home situated on a steep hillside at the base of the Grouse Mountain ski hill. Rob fell in love early with a broad variety of outdoor sports. His parents encouraged all of their brood to "do everything to the best of their ability", and supported this by taking the family on many camping, hiking and skiing vacations.

Rob was a sailor (he built a Sabot sailboat which introduced his entire family to a sport they all grew to love), and a hiker (climbing the Black Tusk chimney in Garibaldi Park, where he raved about the volcanic rock formations). He joined the Boy Scouts of Canada, and was awarded the status of Queen's Scout in 1965. He practiced his teamwork skills on a canoe adventure through the Bowron Lakes, and began his love of ski patrolling on Grouse Mountain. In high school Rob excelled academically, particularly in the maths and sciences, with marks always in the 90's. After graduating from Handsworth Secondary School with a multitude of citizenship and scholastic chevrons on his school sweater, Rob attended UBC where he was a member of Beta Theta Pi fraternity, graduating with a B.Sc. in Geophysics in 1970. Rob received a number of bursaries and scholarships from industry and from the Province of British Columbia—he was always grateful for these, and was a long-time supporter of the Dean of Science Scholarship fund at UBC to try to give the same opportunity to other young students. It is for this reason that a scholarship in his memory is particularly fitting.

Like many 'transplanted' Canadian graduates, Rob was attracted to Calgary where the nascent oil industry was in one of its many boom periods. As an avid skier and ski patroller, he joined the Canadian Ski Patrol System where he was active for over 20 years, including coordinating their involvement in the 1988 Olympic Winter Games. After selecting his team from 700 applicants, Rob was quoted saying "This experience proved that whether we are from Toronto or Tennessee, we're all the same kind of people who care about the same kinds of things. The intent was to create a homogenous group of patrollers - a melting pot of people who did an excellent job and exchanged ideas and learned from each other in the process." This attitude epitomized Rob's approach to teamwork in all of his endeavours.



Although Rob was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis in his mid twenties, he never let this affect his approach to life and outdoor sports. He took his young family camping in the mountains. When he no longer felt able to ski patrol, he turned his attention to teaching his children the love of skiing. As a member of Earl Grey Golf Club, he encouraged his son to take up the sport and took great pleasure from seeing the junior golfers excel. Sailing became the #1 family summer holiday. Rob and Karen also enjoyed more exotic sailing trips to destinations like Tonga and Turkey.

Rob loved to participate in the social and sports events of the CSEG. As long as his physical health allowed he attended the Ski Spree, Doodlespiel curling bonspiel and the Doodlebug golf tournament. In the past few years that he attended the Doodlebug he played in the Holeplug event, an individual competition. In this way he could meet and socialize with the other competitors even though he could not complete a full round of golf.

Rob was also a member of the Doodlebuys, a group of 'sailing' doodle-buggers that take 'adventures' sailing around Vancouver Island, Inner Passage, etc. on an annual basis. John Boyd sailed with Rob several times, as recently as three years ago. Rob always called John "Skipper" – even though John felt that Rob was the more accomplished sailor. The Doodlebuys say that the definition of a sailing race is having two or more boats in the water close to each other. They thoroughly enjoyed such competition and could usually beat any boat of comparable size (even some bigger boats) if they would just listen to Rob's instructions on sail trim and heading. The "Shugg Factor" would invariably help them win the race. Rob knew that he wasn't as sure of foot as he would like to be; but he never complained and never put himself at risk. He always enjoyed the Doodlebuys tradition.

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## In Memoriam

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of pre-dinner martinis and late-night scotch, always made a great contribution, and was always cheerful.

His geophysical career started with Mobil Canada, where Rob contributed to Mobil's exploration efforts in the Canadian Frontiers. Rob also worked in the Western Canada Sedimentary Basin, mapping areas in Northeast British Columbia such as Coles Lake and Nig Creek. From Mobil, Rob moved on to Poco Petroleum in 1989. In addition to his daily geophysical duties at Poco he contributed to the greater geophysical community as well. For example, he participated in a CSEG paper on salt dissolution in south central Alberta. Rob's long time membership of 34 years in the Society of Exploration Geophysicists (SEG) was another example of his contribution to the profession. Poco was acquired by Burlington in 1999 and subsequently by ConocoPhillips in 2006. Rob worked as a special projects geophysicist. He had a passion for testing new software, workflows and processing ideas. Most recently Rob worked on pre-stack inversion and rock physics analyses. This role provided him the opportunity to mentor other geophysicists on how to best use these high tech workflows and products to assist in their

interpretations. Rob believed in "paying it forward", and loved helping out and stimulating young geophysicists with advanced seismic analysis techniques. He always had a passion to see other people excel. He loved this work.

Throughout Rob's life certain 'themes' became apparent; things such as Rob's passion around helping others (particularly young people); Rob's 'fearlessness' in the face of adversity, his positive attitude and his search for always finding the 'facts' about any topic of discussion. These personal attributes will be the foundation that future geophysical students (who might strive for this memorial scholarship) should seek to emulate in their own careers. Anyone wishing to contribute to this scholarship fund, personally or corporately, should contact the CSEG Foundation at the CSEG office. An income tax receipt will be mailed to you. Please consider contributing to this fund if your experience with Rob guides you to do so.

Even though we have lost Rob Shugg the man, to his colleagues and friends, when we listen carefully we can all hear him say, *"Don't cry because it's over. Smile because it happened."* R

### **Dear CSEG-member,**

The **SEG Oil and Gas Reserves Committee** (SEG OGRC) has decided to go ahead and commit itself to produce a special issue of *"The Leading Edge (TLE)"* on the role of Geophysics in Reserves Estimation. This issue is planned for September 2012.

The special issue will focus on rolling out new industry guidance (PRMS Application Document and possibly COGEH updates), supplemented by several key case studies.

You may be aware that the CGF/CSEG is represented by its chair as an observer on the SEG OGRC. At the last SEG OGRC committee meeting, it was suggested that some of the CSEG members may be able to provide us with one or more excellent case studies on the use of Geophysics on Resource Estimation for Unconventionals from Canadian asset areas. Inclusion of a few case-studies on Unconventionals would definitely increase the quality of this TLE special issue.

We would therefore kindly request you to consider submitting a contribution to this TLE Special Issue. A TLE special article is typically about 3-7 magazine pages in length. A general rule of thumb is about 2500 words and 5-8 figures. Please let us know before the end of November of your intent to contribute:

**HJ.Kloosterman@shell.com or marian.hanna@iongeo.com**

Looking forward to receiving many contributions, we remain,

*Marian Hanna (CGF-CSEG Chair) & Henk Jaap Kloosterman (SEG OGRC Chair)*