



Robert Henry Dott, Jr. (June 2, 1929 – February 27, 2018)

The geologic community sadly lost one of the giants of sedimentology and the history of geology of the 20th century- a renowned teacher, scholar, author, mentor, and humanist. Robert (Bob) H. Dott, Jr. died February 27, 2018 in Madison, WI after battling lymphoma for 11 years. Bob was born on June 2, 1929 in Tulsa, Oklahoma, son of prominent petroleum geologist Robert H. Dott, Sr. after attending elementary through high school in Norman, OK, Bob graduated from the University of Michigan with a B.S. in 1950 and an M.S. in 1951. He and his wife, Nancy (who died on January 13, 2018), were married on February 1, 1951. Bob completed a Ph.D. working under Professor Marshall

Kay at Columbia University (1955), an early proponent of continental drift.



During two years of active duty in the U.S. Air Force, Bob participated in several Arctic research projects. After the Air Force, he worked in the petroleum industry in Oregon and California for three years. In 1958 he accepted a faculty position at the University of Wisconsin from which he retired in 1994 as an Emeritus Professor. Bob's academic career focused primarily on sedimentology, tectonics, and the evolution of the Earth. He conducted research in southwestern Wisconsin on Cambrian and Ordovician siliciclastic successions, around Wisconsin's famous Baraboo Hills, in southwestern Oregon, Tierra del Fuego, South Georgia Island, and Antarctica.



The Dott classification of sandstones (1964) is still widely used today. In 1971 Bob co-authored, with Roger Batten, a classic textbook of earth history, *Evolution of the Earth*, (now co-authored with D.R. Prothero in more recent editions). Bob was very active in professional societies, including SEPM, GSA, and IAS, and served as President of SEPM from 1981-1982. He was co-convenor of the First SEPM Research Conference held in 1980 in the Baraboo Hills of Wisconsin, which was entitled "Cratonic Shelf Sedimentation: The Orthoquartzite-Carbonate Suite Revisited". Bob was awarded Honorary Membership by SEPM in

1987, as well as the Twenhofel medal from SEPM in 1993, and in 2001 he received the Laurence L. Sloss Award in Sedimentary Geology from the Sedimentary Geology Division of the GSA. Bob was also the national chair of the History of Geology Division of the GSA, and in 1995 received the Division's Mary C. Rabbit Award for exceptional scholarly contributions of fundamental importance to our understanding of the history of the geological sciences. In April 2011 he received the American Geological Institute's Marcus Milling Legendary Geologist Medal and was named a Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters Fellow in 2011.

During his career, Bob also developed a deep interest in the history of geology. He created a course in the subject and published studies of several important geologists, including James Hutton, father of modern geology. After retiring from teaching Bob continued to contribute to the history of geology and to the knowledge of Wisconsin geology. In 2004 he and co-author John W. Attig published the *Roadside Geology of Wisconsin*.



Over his 36 years on the faculty at the University of Wisconsin, Bob worked with 60 MS and PhD students, and post-doctoral fellows. Bob and his graduate students studied sediments deposited in nearly every environment from ancient Sahara sands to deep seas. It was common for Bob to keep up

with, or even stride past the graduate students in the field, especially climbing up hills, earning him the title of “mountain goat”. Bob was the ideal mentor; he continued close relationships with many of his former students up until his death. He

was a model that many of his former students and their academic progeny have tried to emulate. He left a lasting legacy in sedimentary and historical geology and is deeply missed

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