

Remembering Bob Alden

1937 - 2016
Tribute to a Visionary

PART 2

Eulogy for **Bob Alden** by **Raymond D. Findlay**

*M*ore than half a century ago I first met Robert Thomas Harold Alden—Bob to everyone he met. He was a teaching assistant at the University of Toronto while I was an undergraduate. It didn't make for a propitious beginning. Bob took pleasure in bossing me around! I joined Bob in a Master's degree program, as both of us were in electrical power. The powers that be assigned Bob and me to desks facing each other with no divider between. Put two argumentative souls together and

Bob fixed the problem, substituting a corrected version of my abstract that met with approval—all without telling me—so that we could graduate together. That's a measure of the man he was.

expect fireworks. On one occasion, Professor Smith didn't have his glasses on when he read out the attendance. Prof. Smith wondered who this Ruth person was. That provided us endless opportunities to tease Bob, all of which he accepted with grace.

And somehow, we worked together over the next few years until Bob thought that I might get ahead of him so he applied himself as did I. We pushed each other. Sometime later, in 1968, we both submitted our Ph.D. theses. At this time I was teaching at the University of New Brunswick. As it happened there was a problem with the abstract of my thesis. As time was nigh for the final submission, Bob fixed the problem, substituting a corrected version that met with approval—all without telling me—so that we could graduate together. That's a measure of the man he was.

Bob was born in Oxford England on March 7, 1937, and later insisted that he had immigrated to Canada with his family via

(Continued on page 12) >>



I met Bob Alden in the early '80s when I was treasurer of the then Region 7, before it became IEEE Canada. I considered him a close friend, with a connection between us that strengthened over the years the IEEE Canadian Foundation evolved. We were frequently welcomed to his home for planning the future of the foundation, and the occasional overnight stay.

Bob helped develop a streamlined process for the financial reporting to the foundation Board, to highlight the important data required to make informed decisions. He was passionate about supporting students—that being an imperative for the foundation. He promoted the idea of support for women in engineering before WIE was embedded in the IEEE, and he endowed an annual award for WIE honouring the memory of Judy Clift.

I will miss Bob's energy and enthusiasm in all that he did for his family, friends, the foundation and his community. ■

Luc Matteau, Peterborough Section,
IEEE Canadian Foundation Treasurer

Bob Alden made many contributions to IEEE and IEEE Canada. But what I remember him most for was his advocacy of the internet and e-mail. Since he was a power engineer, this seems quite remarkable. He was passionate about history, and developed much of that section on the IEEE Canada website. He also gave much to the IEEE Canadian Foundation, accomplishing major goals.

Bob was an exceptional mentor and coach. He was patient and always positive. Bob was completely unpretentious, and never put himself at the forefront. He took on roles in local section activities as well as at region and international. All levels of IEEE were important to him. ■

Dave Kemp, Winnipeg Section,
IEEE Canada President, 1998-1999
VP Grants, IEEE Canadian Foundation

Bob Alden might be considered in some respects as a father to all of the Canadian IEEE members today. For as long as I have been an active member, which is over 30 years, I have known Bob, or at least known of him. He has encouraged many, many volunteers to remain active, and to move into bigger, more responsible roles. He was a leader in his own volunteering. Before the world discovered the internet, Bob was using it for IEEE. He taught many of the volunteers how to move into the digital age, helping Region 7 to be one of the most progressive IEEE Regions in the '90s. Bob was always active in Region 7, first in various Region positions, then in higher level IEEE positions as VP Regional Activities, and later in the IEEE Canadian Foundation, which he chaired for years. He encouraged many to participate in the Foundation. Under his leadership many grants were provided to help Canadian engineers. Bob will be remembered as a Canadian IEEE leader with strength and vision. ■

Celia Desmond, Toronto Section, IEEE Canada President 2000-2001

I am privileged to have known Bob Alden as an IEEE volunteer, a colleague and as a friend. Over the years we worked on many IEEE initiatives and travelled together and this helped me to get to know him closer. There are very few people I have come to know in my entire career that are as principled, dedicated, sincere, hardworking and devoted to IEEE as Dr. Bob Alden, and I have been a member for 42 years! I admired his volunteering for IEEE, and when I couldn't meet his high standards would always say to him jokingly "I am not Bob Alden, and can never be Bob Alden." For me, IEEE is not the same without Bob Alden and I deeply miss his smile, talent and contributions. He is now in heaven most likely starting an IEEE project. Rest in peace my very good friend. ■

Robert Hanna, Toronto Section
IEEE Canada President, 2006-2007

While I knew Bob from his many active roles in IEEE Canada, and from his forward-looking Internet columns, we connected most at the IEEE Canadian Foundation. In his time as President, he developed his great vision and ensured long term success by building the IEEE Canadian Foundation into a truly national organization. Bob's leadership in preparing a solid base for our program of national scholarships, awards, prizes and grants invites all of us volunteering now on the IEEE Canadian Foundation to live up to his ideals and realizations. No matter the opportunity or challenge, Bob was always ready to cheerfully yet firmly demonstrate leadership and at the same time be an integral part of the team in carrying things to completion. ■

David Whyte, Toronto Section
President, IEEE Canadian Foundation

I met Bob Alden in 1970 when I was a researcher and teaching assistant at McMaster University. Although Bob was in a different research and teaching area, his friendly approach to students was always welcomed and very helpful.

Our paths crossed many times over the years, more often after I settled in Winnipeg with a position at the University of Manitoba in 1978. I began to see him frequently while attending Region meetings, starting in 1989 as Winnipeg Section Vice-Chair. We discovered that we shared a determination to reach out to students. Both of us were keenly aware of how important it is to build connections early with the future leaders of IEEE and industry. We often spoke of how the University of Manitoba was the site of the first McNaughton Student Learning Centre as conceived by Ted Glass, and how the establishment of many additional centres could become a key part of his vision for the IEEE Canadian Foundation. We both promoted support from IEEE of university and college student activities.

Bob's interest in developing a more comprehensive presence of IEEE Canada on the internet coincided with my work on the first handcrafted Winnipeg Section website, with thousands of pages. We shared views, as well as the architecture and design components of similar sites. Bob's passionate column "Traveling the Information Highway" in *The Institute* was read by many around the globe. Bob also elevated the level of the IEEE Canada Major Awards Program. His vision in founding the *IEEE Canadian Review* remains a very important part of his legacy.

Through his groundwork for the formation of IEEE Canada, we all owe him a debt of gratitude. Like him, I came to this great country from another continent. The unique contributions made by Canadian IEEE members in academia and industry was, and still is, worthy of celebration within the larger IEEE family.

As I got to know Bob over more than four decades, I was struck by how much he achieved by motivating others with his vision—sometimes taking years, but always with an unassuming understanding of the best interests of IEEE and IEEE Canada. He is irreplaceable. ■

Witold Kinsner, Winnipeg Section
IEEE Canada President 2016-2017

We met over forty years ago as colleagues in Electric Power Systems Engineering, and our relationship and friendship was cemented through IEEE. With a broken heart, I remember Bob's journey through life, his love, pride and affection to his family, dedication to his profession, loyalty to his friends, and above all an admirable citizen of the World. You will be remembered, Bob, and we'll meet again.

Mo El-Hawary, Canadian Atlantic Section
IEEE Canada President, 2002-2003



left to right:
Ray Findlay,
Bob Alden,
Barna Szabados,
Joseph Dableh

Remembrances from Colleagues

*Bob,
you led us through those
years, binding us together
with a wonderful friend-
ship with no separating
wall between work and
personal lives*

In my last year of graduate studies at McMaster a rookie professor in “power” appeared. Usually us grad’ students were wary of new faculty; they liked to boss us around... But Dr Alden—as we knew him—was a different vintage. As I was assigned to him as a T.A., he started by saying that he wanted to change everything about the laboratories, and teach practical modern approaches to power engineering. My task was to help him implement a set of new laboratories, which I enjoyed much more than sitting in a chair overseeing unmotivated students reading instruments randomly and filling out check-boxed laboratory sheets.

I followed Bob’s idea when I joined U. of New Brunswick as assistant professor, about a year later. I began to completely redo the existing laboratories with much success. I credit this to him. Ten years later, having returned to McMaster, it was with delight that I joined Bob as a colleague. The first thing we did was to get another “Mousquetaire” to cover the area of design of rotating machines since we already covered power systems with Bob’s extensive knowledge and my involvement in power electronics. Bob travelled to New Brunswick to steal away our

mutual friend Raymond Findlay, and that was the seed for the birth of the Power Research Laboratory (PRL). Bob spearheaded its creation—fighting the administration, procuring space and funds and spending inordinate time planning its implementation. My duties were to bring in the supporting grants and contracts, and Ray was attracting graduate students, many from industry.

We invited world-class researchers to spend a year with us. These included Dr. Poloujadoff (my former professor from France) and Ronnie Belmans from the University of Leuven in Belgium. Together with the many contacts that Bob provided through the IEEE, our PRL soon became renowned world wide.

I enjoyed helping Bob develop his specialized interactive power system modules with my plotting libraries, at the time written in assembly language. His mod-

ules became an icon in his field and he kept improving them up to his retirement.

I can barely imagine how three strong personalities could harmoniously work together for over 20 years! I cannot recollect a single instant where any one of us disagreed or felt left out. This illustrates Bob’s ability to lead us through these years, binding us together with a wonderful friendship with no separating wall between work and personal lives. The PRL was a true family including staff, graduate students, and faculty.

The first time I felt a major loss was at Bob’s retirement: I had to fill his shoes, and believe me they were mighty! Many times I had to call on him to help out and give advice from his invaluable experience. We had lost a colleague, but our friendship continued. So now it is devastating to have lost a friend; but what memories we carry with us! You will stay in our hearts Bob, and the Mousquetaires of the PRL will always stay together with the legacy we left, thanks to You. ■

Barna Szabados,
Professor Emeritus,
McMaster University

I came to know of Dr. Alden and his work in power engineering from his colleagues, Dr. Raymond Findlay and Dr. Barna Szabados, while an undergraduate student at the University of New Brunswick in the 1970s. We met in person in 1982 as I started my doctoral studies at McMaster University, and was most fortunate to have him on my Ph.D. committee, along with Dr. Findlay and Dr. Szabados. I subsequently became part of this team in the Power Research Laboratory at McMaster University, staying until 1999. Our friendship only continued to grow well past my departure.

From the time I met Robert until his passing, I never stopped learning from him some of the most important life lessons, without him saying a single word. The examples he set through his own conduct and actions spoke louder than any words. Robert was one of the calmest and most emotionally intelligent persons I have ever met. His warm and pleasant smile was vividly noticeable even when dealing with the most difficult situations. During the most difficult struggles of my life, Robert was always a generous source of counsel, support and gracious advice, which had tremendous healing power and provided a solid foundation to build tenacity and perseverance.

In addition to the numerous academic and professional achievements that Robert accomplished, he will be remembered forever as one of the kindest colleagues, friend, and tireless builder of the engineering profession, unbounded contributor to The Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE), and kindest human beings that walked this earth. Myself in particular and all of his friends, colleagues and anyone who got to know him are most blessed by having him as a part of our lives. His memory will be cherished forever. ■

Joseph Dablehm, Fifth Light

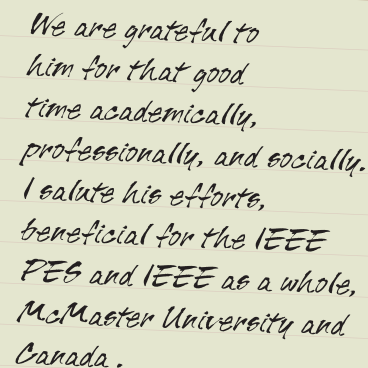


Bob's death left us with deep sadness. However, we find some condolence in remembering his remarkable achievements, great personality and sensitivity to others, as well as his brave and persistent fight against his illness. We shall always remember Bob Alden! ■

Mohamed El-Kady,
King Saud University, colleague

I joined McMaster University during the period 1974 to 1975. I had the pleasure to work under the supervision of Dr. Alden. I gradu-

ated in 1975, and am honoured to be the first student to graduate under his supervision. There were three students who started working under his supervision at this time: namely Dr. P.J. Nolan, Dr. H.M. Zien-Eldin and myself. We and Dr. Alden established a happy group. We are grateful to him for that good time academically, professionally, and socially. I salute his effort in the IEEE, which was beneficial for the IEEE Power & Energy Society, IEEE as a whole, McMaster University and Canada. ■



We are grateful to him for that good time academically, professionally, and socially. I salute his efforts, beneficial for the IEEE PES and IEEE as a whole, McMaster University and Canada.

Dr. Adel Shaltout,
Professor of Electrical Machines,
Cairo University

.... Remembrances continued from page 8 >

Bob was always a tremendous support to new volunteers at all levels of the organization. The words that best describe him are helpful, enabling and welcoming. I experienced the benefits of his support first hand as a new member of the IEEE Canada Board of Directors and as a first-time Director of the IEEE Canadian Foundation.

More outgoing than engineers often are, Bob was always the person to seek out and speak to new volunteers, providing willing answers to their many questions, and guiding them in the ways of the IEEE Canada organization. ■

Maïke Luiken, London Section,
IEEE Canada President-Elect, 2016-2017

During my tenure as IEEE Foundation Executive Director, I had the privilege of working with Bob Alden when he served on the IEEE Foundation, and several of its Committees, as Director from 2004-2009.

Bob could always be counted on to get done any job he was assigned—and in timely fashion. As one of the Foundation's webmasters, Bob worked diligently with the staff to get the first web pages up and running for what was then the newly established IEEE Foundation's Grants Committee. He was always available to provide answers to questions and was one of the most dependable people I have known.

Prior to his activities with the IEEE Foundation, I remember being introduced to Bob when he was elected as Region 7 Director of IEEE. He was a soft-spoken man and one that was very humble. One of his humblest of moments was when he was presented with the IEEE Haraden Pratt Award in 2002. Bob will surely be missed by many. ■

Fern Katronetsky,
IEEE Foundation Executive Director, 2004-2009
IEEE Staff Member, 1977-2015

Bob was highly respected and an outstanding long-term community leader who never ceased using his energy and talents to make the world around him a better place.

His vision for IEEE Canada and for the IEEE Canadian Foundation was inspiring and shared by many—his legacy will be remembered for many years to come. We miss him dearly. ■

Keith Brown,
IEEE Toronto Section,
IEEE Canada President, 2012-2013

Bob Alden. This is my memory of him, a very personal memory; as the saying goes: you will never die, as long as someone remembers you.

How can I remember all the times he was influential in my career, in my self-confident behaviour that he inspired, all the times he supported and urged me ahead?

Too many times to remember them all. This is my humble eulogy to him—a great man, educator, mentor, supporter and friend.

Our association started in the 1990s, and the one occasion I remember the most was in 1997 at the annual general meeting of the IEEE United States Activities Board (USAB), where I was attending as the liaison for the IEEE Computer Society (CS). As an American living in Canada it was a difficult position, being considered a “Canadian” and an outsider in what was a strongly USA-only-oriented group. So I was heckled and not let speak. Could it have also been my gender? A female in a group almost totally male; a group of engineers, where I was known only as a computer person, my engineering degree unknown to them?

All of a sudden, to my defence came Tom Cain (then the CS president), Chuck Alexander (then the IEEE president) and Bob Alden, who silenced the hecklers.

This brought the four of us together, and during the following discussion Bob came up with the idea of a project for me: to be the liaison for IEEE Canada to the USAB, and in such position start and define the parameters and the creation of the Professional Activities Committee and coordinator position.

Thanks to his insight on how to help the Institute and its Canadian branch, he helped not only me in my activities, but many more members who needed such a committee to facilitate their career path and enhance their potential.

To me he was always an example to follow — a shoulder to lean on when doubts and questions arose. He was always there to help, to encourage, to offer the chance to grow in a new direction. Bob gave me the assurance he had confidence in me, and in so doing, he made my self-confidence grow.

This is my memory of him, a friend. He gave me wings, and I still fly. ■

Fiorenza Albert-Howard, Vancouver Section

In addition to Bob's many professional and volunteering qualities, he was a real gentleman and a noble soul. On every occasion, one could sense in him a person who really cared about others. He will be missed by us all.

Branislav Djokic,
Ottawa Section

I remember Bob Alden as a very supportive, kind and wonderful person. I greatly appreciated Bob's support, understanding and kind words when I lost my mother. Bob had met her at the Congress in Quebec City, as well as at a Board Meeting in St. John's Newfoundland, and he remembered her. Bob always came up to me at the subsequent Board Meetings to ask me how I was doing. I will certainly miss Bob. ■

Mooney Sherman,
Northern Canada Section

As Director of Region 7 from 1990-91 and President of CSECE from 1993-94, I worked closely with Bob Alden in formative times. Bob was the inspiration of the idea to merge CSECE with Region 7 to form IEEE Canada. John Plant and I did much of the promotional work, with the support of Bob Alden and Ray Findlay. Following member consultation and approval within both organizations, we had a green light to proceed, and I believe the IEEE profession in Canada has and will continue to benefit from it 20 years on—a credit to Bob Alden's passion and drive.

Bob was the consummate IEEE volunteer. He took initiatives, made proposals and drove them to maturity, and he pushed and prodded the rest of us to contribute to our IEEE profession. It is often said that it is not just what one does, but what one stimulates others to do; and Bob did this so well. From a busy retirement on Vancouver Island, I have fond memories of working with Bob Alden in the '90s. ■

Tony Eastham, IEEE Region 7 Director, 1990-1991
CSECE President, 1993-1994

Bob will always be remembered for his dedication to volunteerism and his willingness to generously help other volunteers. He will be remembered for his pleasant personality and for his countless accomplishments. ■

Amir Aghdam, Montreal Section,
IEEE Canada President 2014-2015

Dr. Alden was most supportive when a couple of us approached IEEE Toronto Section with the suggestion to start a Women in Engineering Chapter. Once we got the approval and established the chapter, we benefited tremendously from Dr. Alden's unwavering support. He was truly one of a kind in his dedication to the profession as well as to IEEE. ■

Visda Vokshoori,
Toronto Section

We have wonderful memories of Bob at many of the neighbourhood parties. Always smiling, ever the gentleman and simply a kind, generous man. When there was a heavy snowfall, Bob would be out with his snowblower, icicles on his beard, clearing the sidewalk all the way down to the park to help his neighbours. He will be truly missed. ■

Sabrina Arvanitis,
Friend and Neighbour

Bob was a brilliant colleague; well spoken, committed, and creative: he was a true gem. He will be truly missed! ■

Shahram Yousefi,
Kingston Section

...Eulogy by Raymond D. Findlay, cont. from page 7 >

Australia. I always suspected he was geographically challenged. After completing his Ph.D., he took a lecturer's position at U of T before joining McMaster University in about 1971. In 1984 he formed the Power Research Laboratory at McMaster. Over the course of his career, Bob oversaw the research of 20 graduate students, and together with them produced some 75 technical papers, mostly on electrical systems design. Bob taught electrical power and machines for more than 30 years, at the University of Toronto, McMaster University, and the University of Sydney, Australia.

Bob had two daughters, Christine and Amanda, and by 1981 had met the love of his life, Judy. Bob undertook to be a step-father to Judy's two daughters Lydia and Zoe. He was significantly outnumbered on the home front! Maybe that's where he developed his powers of persuasion!

We are remembered by our accomplishments, our legacy. A sampling of the awards that Bob received will give some idea of his legacy. Most recently, in 2010 he received the John B. Stirling Medal of the Engineering Institute of Canada (EIC) for his concept, planning and implementation of a strategy that culminated in creating IEEE Canada as a member society of EIC. In 2009 the IEEE History Committee recognized Bob for his contributions to the history activities of IEEE. He was inaugurated as a Fellow of both EIC and IEEE in 2005.

In 2003, the IEEE Canadian Foundation implemented the Dr. Robert T.H. Alden Scholarship in recognition of his many contributions, particularly for the Toronto Section. In 2002 Bob was honoured with The Haraden Pratt Award, the top service award for all of IEEE. The citation referenced his "outstanding and sustained leadership in many areas of the IEEE especially in the use of electronic communication."

Let me digress for a moment to remark that one of the things that Bob was most proud of—and rightfully so—was the development of a regular column in



Bob was a significant force in establishing the IEEE Canadian Foundation, of which he was the first Vice-President and subsequently the President from 2004 to 2009. Bob also served as liaison to the worldwide IEEE Foundation.

the IEEE's *The Institute*, which is the newsletter that goes to all members of IEEE. The column was called "Traveling The Information Highway with Bob Alden" and began in 1992 and continued until 2002. This singular accomplishment introduced thousands of people to the worldwide web, taught them how to communicate effectively using it and how to make effective use of the internet. Bob also designed the first website for IEEE Canada, parts of which are still in use.

One of Bob's proudest awards was the 1999 William W. Middleton Distinguished Service Award, for challenging IEEE volunteers and staff to maximize their use of electronic communications in IEEE activities. Let me remark that this award is given only every third year.

Ray Findlay and Bob Alden at the 2002 IEEE Honors Ceremony, Toronto. Ray was IEEE President; Bob was the recipient of that year's IEEE Haraden Pratt Award.

Bob was awarded Region 7's Outstanding Service Award also in 1999.

He was awarded the IEEE Larry K. Wilson Transnational Award for exceptional leadership in the promotion of electronic mail worldwide in 1992. It is significant that most of these awards recognized Bob's leadership. We here in Canada are grateful to Bob for his vision to establish IEEE Canada. He, along with a committee of three other people, designed the IEEE Canada logo, that recognizes our merger with the Canadian Society of Electrical and Computer Engineers.

I won't go over all of Bob's positions but I will mention that as Director of Region 7, Bob decided that we needed a Canadian IEEE magazine. We still have that publication, called the *IEEE Canadian Review*.

Bob was a significant force in establishing the IEEE Canadian Foundation, of which he was the first Vice-President and subsequently the President from 2004 to 2009. Bob also served as liaison to the worldwide IEEE Foundation. Also of significance, Bob was IEEE Vice-President for Regional Activities in 1990 and 1991.

Let me remark that Bob retired from his position at McMaster University in 2001 to become a Professor Emeritus.

Bob was an avid golfer. He loved baseball, often travelling to Dunedin, Florida to watch the Blue Jays in spring training. He also listed Labrador Retrievers as a hobby, although that was mainly precipitated by his dearly beloved dog, Molly, who kept him company after Judy passed. Bob will be very much missed by all those who knew and loved him, particularly Christine, Mandy and Margaret, his sister.

Rest in peace, dear friend. ■

*Raymond D. Findlay, Hamilton Section
IEEE Canada President 1995-1996
IEEE President 2002*

Web Site

Written by Bob Alden for IEEE Canada's website, the text below is a description of the evolution of the use of electronic communication within the region.

In his typical modest way, Bob doesn't claim any personal credit, yet was either directly involved, or served as an advisor, in each advance. As detailed in Part I of this tribute, Bob spearheaded adoption of electronic communication by IEEE to its members world-wide. In 2002, he transitioned from a 10-year period working at the international level to leading IEEE Canada's website upgrade, serving as webmaster until 2006. ■

The electronic services committee started with a mandate to provide leadership and assistance in increasing the use of electronic communications between Sections and Chapters in Canada, and IEEE members across the world. The objective evolved to be the development of the infrastructure to support professional networking, sharing of experiences and information through electronic media.

In 1994, Canadian government support for computer networking via the CANARIE project led to the purchase and operation of a server in Ottawa under the management of Jacek and Hanna Chrostowski and the establishment of a number of electronic services such as the IEEE Canada web site, e-mail aliases for IEEE Canada members and web sites for Canadian Sections and Conferences.¹

In 2001, IEEE Canada discontinued the use of the Ottawa server, and transferred much of its content and services to IEEE servers at the IEEE Operations Center in Piscataway, New Jersey. EWH is the entity web hosting service that provides secure, managed hosting facilities for IEEE entities such as Regions, Sections, and Societies at no charge. Similarly, e-mail aliases

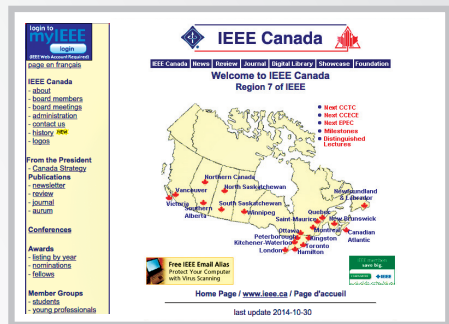


Photo: Dave Upham

Bob Alden presents a special award to volunteer Isabel Deslauriers in appreciation of exceptional services for the IEEE Canada web translation project.

for all IEEE members are now provided on an IEEE server in Piscataway that provides virus protection for all e-mail messages that pass through that server.

May 2002 saw the start of a major upgrade of the web site, which included completion of the transfer of server content on the IEEE Canada web site, the development of bilingual content, a new volunteer webmaster and a team of dedicated volunteers. This was completed by March 2004.

In the spring of 2005, a process was started to decentralize the maintenance of the web site by involving additional volunteers. At the same time, the electronic services committee was discontinued and the responsibilities for these activities transferred to the webmaster. ■

¹N.Ed. Further information on these early innovations can be found in the Winter '95 issue.

Avec le décès de Bob Alden, nous avons perdu un grand bénévole visionnaire. En tant que Président du comité des activités de traduction, j'ai travaillé plusieurs années avec lui, et je peux dire que son impact sur le bilinguisme à IEEE Canada fut très important.

Ceci grâce à son travail de terrain lorsqu'il était Directeur de la région 7 et Président de la Fondation Canadienne de l'IEEE. Il a permis une expansion de celles-ci en organisation nationale opérant dans les deux langues officielles. Bob fut un joueur clé au sein de l'IEEE. Il assistait le personnel incluant moi en tant que webmestre français au niveau de la création des services de support électronique et au niveau de la planification du site web d'IEEE Canada dans les deux langues officielles.

Il aidait aussi directement les membres individuels comme moi à réaliser l'importance des bénéfices de ce nouvelle technologie de communication.

Tu nous manqueras beaucoup Bob. ■

With the passing of Bob Alden, we lost a visionary, and a great volunteer. As Translation Activities Committee Chair, I worked with him many years, and I can say that his impact on bilingualism at IEEE Canada was very important.



Christian Pépin with his 2007 Special Award for translation.

This came about in large measure from his groundwork as Region 7 Director and IEEE Canadian Foundation President. For the latter, he expanded it into a national organization operating in both official languages.

Bob was a key player at IEEE. He assisted staff including me as french webmaster in creating electronic support services and in planning the IEEE Canada web site in both official languages.

He also directly helped individual members like me realize the benefits of this new communications technology.

We miss you so much Bob.

Christian Pépin, St. Maurice Section

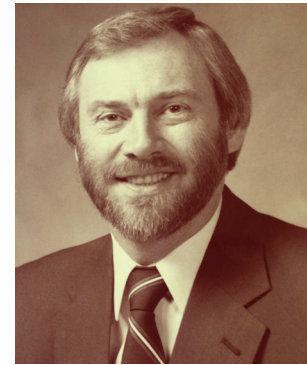


Praise from a Rival

The IEEE Election of 1986 pitted two candidates for Region 7 Director-Elect with roughly equal credentials, each commanding the highest respect.

Tas Venetsanopoulos had been CSEE President from 1983 to 1985 and had previously chaired the IEEE Central Canada Council from 1980 to 1982. Bob Alden had held various region positions, had participated in a working group representing IEEE Region 7, the CSEE and other organizations servicing the electrical engineering profession in Canada, and had served on the administrative committee of the Power Engineering Society.

In Tas' rebuttal to Bob's candidate statement¹, he chose to allocate one-quarter of his allotted 75 words to commending Bob (see last paragraph of below).



Candidate's statement:

Robert T. Alden

Active membership in IEEE is meeting other engineers, making contacts, keeping up with technical advances, learning about our ever changing business of electrical and electronic engineering (including computers!). This membership is a good deal for a couple of dollars a week. In our "Canadian Region", we have many active Sections and Chapters, we regularly hold successful conferences and trade shows, and a large number of our more experienced members contribute to the development of international standards for our manufacturing and service industries.

IEEE standards are voluntary -- they are adopted widely because they are useful; all of our IEEE activities are undertaken because they are useful to us. The role of our Canadian Regional Committee and our IEEE Canada office is to help you get the most out of IEEE. I would welcome the opportunity to represent your interests here in Canada and also as your delegate on the Board of Directors. Let's build on the successful efforts of our predecessors and make a good thing even better.

¹Bob's statement and Tas' rebuttal come from original documents kindly supplied by Kostas Plataniotis of IEEE Toronto Section. The candidates' statements and rebuttals were published in *The Institute* in the summer of 1986. Bob won the election, enabling him to lay the groundwork for creation of IEEE Canada as we now know it.

Candidate's Rebuttal:

A.N. VENETSANOPOULOS

I agree with Bob Alden's view of IEEE, its role and service provided to the electrical and electronic engineering community.

My statement, however, carries this one step further outlining the ways we can "make a good thing even better", and I aim to pursue these objectives to establish a greater Canadian identity and improve the services provided.

In my opinion, Bob will make a good Regional Director, if elected, and I wish him all the best.

Acknowledgements

It's been my great honour to oversee creation of this tribute (Parts I and II).

So very many people have contributed to it—some sharing their own personal remembrances, others providing very valuable source materials; it would not have been possible without their extensive assistance. Special thanks to Mo El-Hawary, Dave Kemp and Luc Matteau, who provided contact names of former academic colleagues of Bob's and contemporaries from when he was Region Director, as

well as insights into his volunteer contributions to IEEE, spanning 40 years.

Ray Findlay kindly gave permission to include his eulogy of Bob, and connected me to mutual McMaster colleagues.

I most sincerely appreciate the generous provision of photos by Bob's family.

My own sense of loss in Bob's passing is profound. He and I began working together in 2008 when he was IEEE Canada Awards & Recognition Committee Chair, and the Awards

Gala programme was first distributed with this magazine, whose lay-out/production I was managing at the time. Over the following years, I realized the breadth and depth of Bob's many contributions in other areas. One of these—the founding of the *IEEE Canadian Review*—shows what a magazine can achieve for both a profession and a country. I will be eternally grateful to him for this.

Bruce Van-Lane,
Editor-in-Chief, *IEEE Canadian Review*

