

Dave Johnston: an appreciation and bibliography



On 2 October 1995, Dave Johnston disappeared while working in the field at Annagh Head, Belmullet, County Mayo, Ireland. He is believed to have been washed from the shoreline by a freak wave. Dave graduated in 1980 with a first-class honours degree in Geology from Trinity College Dublin and he returned there in 1984 having been appointed as a lecturer in the Department of Geology. In the intervening years, Dave carried out postgraduate research at Monash University, Melbourne and gained a PhD for his work on the structural controls of Uranium deposits in the Rum Jungle area, Northern territories. His subsequent research focused on the structural controls of the precious and base-metal deposits and the underlying tectonics and structure of Ireland. In recent years he published a number of significant papers on these topics and, in particular, he was at the forefront in the application of fractal and chaos theory to geological phenomena and the quantification of mineral deposits in particular.

Dave was an enthusiastic teacher and inspired many of the students and researchers who he taught or worked with. Indeed, many former students now work in a diverse range of geology-related industries. He firmly believed that academia could interact and collaborate more closely with industry to their mutual benefit. Thus, he was elected as a council member for the Irish Association for Economic Geology. In his other role as President of the Irish Geological Association he was keen to bring geology to a wider public audience. Dave talked freely to students and colleagues and liked nothing better than discussing geology over a pint after a day in the field. He was a deeply caring individual who made time to help anyone who needed it. Throughout, he remained closely attached to his home and family in North Dublin and considered himself to be very fortunate to be able to do what he loved best, geological research based in the magnificent surroundings of Trinity College.

Dave will be remembered as a lively and colourful character who enjoyed life to the full, whether it be playing rugby, scuba diving, doing fieldwork or travelling. For many years he led the singing at the late-night 'Friends of the Irish' party at the Tectonics Studies Group annual meeting. He always had a bad joke or a strange story to tell, often it was the many slightly bizarre incidents that always seemed to happen to him. These usually involved the series of clapped-out vehicles that he always seemed to own. There was the time his car rolled down a cliff in Donegal, the time his car's engine went on fire, but because he was late for a meeting at the Lisheen deposit, he threw some water on it and drove on! Anyone who knew or met Dave has a similar story to recount of his various exploits.

This volume on 'Fractures, Fluid Flow and Mineralization' is a fitting tribute to his memory. As George Sevastopulo so appropriately said at the conference held in Dublin in November 1997 to commemorate Dave's life, 'Dave would have loved to have been here'. He is greatly missed by his former students, many colleagues and friends around the world.

K. J. W. McCaffrey
School of Geological Sciences,
Kingston University, Kingston-upon-Thames,
Surrey KT1 2EE, UK

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