

STOVEL, JOSEPH BRUCE

IN MEMORIAM

Joseph Bruce Stovel was born February 21, 1941, in Montreal, to Samuel Rodger Stovel and Elizabeth Robb Stovel. After graduating as Gold Medalist with his BA in Honours English at Sir George Williams University in Montreal in 1964, his MA in Honours English at the University of Cambridge in 1966, and his Ph.D. Magna Cum Laude in English at Harvard University in 1970, Bruce was Assistant Professor at Yale University 1970-75, Associate Professor at Dalhousie University 1975-85, where he served as Department Chair, and Professor of English at the University of Alberta, where he twice served as Associate Chair and Supervisor of Graduate Teaching Assistants. He retired on June 30, 2006, as Professor Emeritus, to become, in his own words, a patron of the arts.

His special area was literature of the eighteenth century, particularly fiction and comedy. He published essays on Richardson, Sterne, Smollett, Burney, Austen, Lennox, Scott, George Eliot, Kingsley Amis, Margaret Drabble, Brian Moore, Mordecai Richler, and Margaret Laurence, but his special love was Jane Austen. He co-edited two collections of essays on Austen and contributed to *The Cambridge Companion to Jane Austen*. He co-founded the Edmonton chapter of the Jane Austen Society, co-hosted a Jane Austen Society of North America Annual General Meeting at the Chateau Lake Louise in 1993, and contributed to many JASNA AGMs and local chapters in Edmonton and elsewhere.

Bruce was a dedicated teacher, and was awarded the Students' Union Teaching Award, the Faculty of Arts Teaching Award, and the University of Alberta Rutherford Teaching Award. As much as he achieved academically, his greatest impact was felt at a personal level. He was a beloved husband and father, teacher and colleague, musician and friend. Bruce was an enthusiastic presence on campus and on the local arts scene, and he was a generous volunteer in academic, artistic, and humanitarian causes.

Bruce loved blues music as much as literature, and he worked as a volunteer at the Yardbird Suite, where he organized Blues events. Beginning in the mid-1990s, he co-hosted with his son Grant "Calling All Blues," a weekly Blues program on CJSR, the University of Alberta radio station, as well as contributing to CKUA. Following his early career as a journalist reporting for *The Montreal Star* and *Canadian Press* in the early sixties in Montreal, he wrote a Blues column titled "Long-Distance Call," and reported on the Edmonton Folkfest, the Edmonton Bluesfest, and the Chicago Bluesfest.

He died suddenly on January 12, 2007. He will be much missed and deeply mourned by his loving wife of forty-two years Nora Foster Stovel, his son Grant Foster Stovel, and his daughter Laura Elizabeth Stovel and son-in-law Rod Girard, as well as his brother Robb Stovel and his sister Margaret Surridge and their families.

A celebration of Bruce's life will be held at the University of Alberta Faculty Club on Thursday, January 18, beginning at four o'clock. In lieu of flowers, please consider making a donation to a scholarship in his memory. If you do wish to do so, send a cheque made out to the University of Alberta, with the name Stovel in the memo line, to the Attention of Elisabeth Whitlock, 614 Humanities Centre, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, T6G 2E5. All donors will receive tax receipts as well as information on precisely how the money will be used.

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