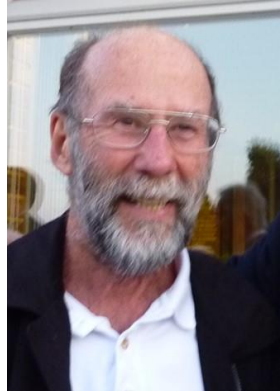


Tribute to James William Simmons



(1936-2022)

An Affectionate Memoir for Professor James William Simmons, 1936-2022. Professor emeritus at the University of Toronto.

We just learned that our colleague and close friend Jim Simmons passed away last week in Victoria BC. Jim Simmons was an important pillar of our urban commission, specifically between 1976 and 2010. Despite he never had any official presidency function, he acted as an important contributor and mentor during all these years in close collaboration with Larry Bourne and with the successive commissions. We are so sad of his disappearance and we keep him in the DNA of our commission to which his contribution was so important. Jim will remain in our memory not only through his research, which will continue to be a reference for researchers in the field of Urban Geography, but also for his friendly and affable character. We associate to his family for this very sad news.

Celine Rozenblat (Chair IGU Urban Geography Commission (2012-2020))

María José Piñeira ((Chair IGU Urban Geography Commission 2020-2024))

From an International Geographical Union, Urban Commission member

Larry Bourne, Professor Emeritus at the University of Toronto

JAMES WILLIAM SIMMONS Born on April 20, 1936 in London, ON, Jim Simmons, Professor emeritus at the University of Toronto, passed away peacefully on November 13, 2022, in Victoria, BC. Jim grew up on the family farm in Byron, ON and he fondly recounted working alongside his father taking care of their fruit trees and enjoying his mother's fruit pies. He studied Geophysics at the University of Western Ontario, and later earned an MA and PhD in Geography at the University of Chicago. For most of his distinguished academic career, he was professor of Geography and Planning at the University of Toronto engaged in research on Canadian cities and comparative urban

systems. Jim participated widely in international conferences and authored several books, numerous papers, and chapters, some of which became classics in the discipline. He also supervised a legion of graduate students, many of whom subsequently became leaders in the fields of geography, urban studies, and planning. He was an outspoken critic of thinking and writing muddled by jargon and imprecision; he was an incisive editor and earned the respect and friendship of students and colleagues alike. Many of his academic friendships were solidified during Friday lunches at the Faculty Club exploring wide-ranging conversations and enjoying a beer with friends and colleagues. Usually, Jim would steer conversation around to baseball as he was an avid baseball fan, especially of the Toronto Blue Jays. Jim was a loving husband and father, he had two children from his first marriage, and the family travelled widely on sabbatical years and holidays in a VW camper van. He instilled his love of books and maps and baseball in his daughters. After he retired from the University of Toronto, he moved with his wife to Victoria where he continued working with colleagues at the University of Toronto and the Centre for the Study of Commercial Activities at what was then Ryerson University. In Victoria, he enjoyed long walks, traveling around the city and working in the garden. Jim is survived by his wife, Shizue; daughter, Rebecca (Mike); and grandson, David; brother, Robert (June); sisters, Jo (Bruce) and Connie (Red). He was predeceased by his daughter, Sara in 2016. He will be missed by family members, and many friends and Geography colleagues across Canada and globally. A heartfelt thank you for care received from the nurses and caregivers at Hart House. Interment at Ross Bay Cemetery occurred on November 22, 2022.