

September 27, 2008

Malcolm Harris Macfarlane, 75

Malcolm Macfarlane, 75, of Bloomington, died Thursday at home.

He was born in Brechin, Scotland, to Malcolm P. and Mary F. (Harris) Macfarlane.

Malcolm earned an M.A. in mathematics from the University of Edinburgh. He came to the United States in 1956, to the University of Rochester, where he met his wife, Ellie Carman. They were married in 1957. Malcolm received a Ph.D. in physics from the University of Rochester in 1960 and did postdoctoral work at Argonne National Laboratory in Illinois.

Malcolm's professional career included research and teaching at the University of Rochester, New York, at Argonne, at the University of Chicago, and at Indiana University. He became Director of the Nuclear Physics Center at IU in 1980. He received a Guggenheim Fellowship and was a Visiting Fellow at All Souls College in Oxford in 1966-67. In 1986, he received an Alexander von Humboldt Foundation senior scientist award. He carried out physics research in Juelich, Germany, and mentored students from the University of Bonn during visits over a period of many years.

Malcolm was a member of the American Physical Society and served on numerous scientific advisory and review committees. He wrote many journal articles related to a variety of topics in physics. In his teaching, he was known for his clear, careful explanations of difficult topics and a deep commitment to helping students succeed, both on the graduate and undergraduate level. After his retirement from Indiana University, he continued to work with graduate students at IU and to serve as a consultant at Argonne National Laboratory.

Malcolm was preceded in death by his parents.

He is survived by Ellie, his wife for 51 years, and by their children, their spouses, and six grandchildren: Malcolm and Betty Macfarlane and their daughter, Sierra, of Colorado; Ken and Karen Macfarlane and their sons, Michael and James, of Maryland; Sheila and David Rice and their daughters, Jessica and Caitlin, and their son, Ian, of Alabama; and Christine Macfarlane of California. Other survivors include Malcolm's brother and his wife, Alan and Margaret, who live in Cambridge, England; as well as many nieces and nephews, and brothers- and sisters-in-law. Malcolm's grandchildren knew and loved him not only as a master storyteller, but as someone who was always deeply interested in them. He will be sorely missed by all the many family members and friends who knew and loved him.

Malcolm was a member of Evangelical Community Church in Bloomington, where he enjoyed reading Scripture. His clear enunciation, his focus on the meaning of the text, and his Scottish accent all contributed to the enjoyment of his listeners.

A funeral service will be at Evangelical Community Church at 2nd and High Street at 2:30 p.m. on Sunday, September 28, with burial following at Valhalla Cemetery. There will be an opportunity to visit at the church with the family from 1 to 2:30 p.m. Pastor Bob Whitaker will officiate. Day Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

Online condolences may be sent to the family at www.mem.com.

Memorial contributions may be sent to the Vellore CMC Board, 475 Riverside Dr. # 243, New York, NY 10027-9966, to benefit the Christian Medical College and Hospital in Vellore, India, to which Ellie's parents devoted so many years of their lives, or to Evangelical Community Church/missions program.