

Donald E. Hattin

June 24, 2016

BLOOMINGTON—Dr. Donald E. Hattin, Professor Emeritus of Geology at Indiana University, 87, beloved husband and cherished father, passed away June 24, following an acute cerebral hemorrhage.

The son of Edward Hattin and Una W. Hattin, Don was born in 1928 in Cohasset, Massachusetts, and grew up in the neighboring seaside town of Scituate, where he maintained lifelong friendships.

As a boy, Don was never at a loss for something interesting and exciting to do. During his adolescent years in Scituate, he was a very proud and active Eagle Scout, worked at a local produce farm, a small grocery store, and with lobster fishermen. These experiences provided a lifetime of skills and never ending stories. Many of them were retold in his book, *Tales of a New England Boyhood*.

While in high school he met and fell head over heels in love with Marjorie Elizabeth Macy, who remained the love of his life. Last summer they celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary by dancing to “Sentimental Journey,” “their song” throughout their long and happy marriage.

Don began his college studies in 1946 at the University of Massachusetts, where he soon discovered his love for geology ... and college high jinks! He graduated with a BS degree in 1950, but the highlight of the year was his marriage to Margie. In the fall of that year he and his bride headed west to Lawrence, Kansas, where he studied stratigraphy and paleontology at the University of Kansas, earning a master’s degree and PhD in 1954 under the

tutelage of his mentor, Raymond C. Moore. During his college years and whenever he was away doing field work, he and Margie shared a loving correspondence. Don relied heavily on these letters while writing his memoir, *Pathway to a Professorship*.

In 1954, Don joined the faculty of Indiana University as an Assistant Professor of Geology. He taught for one year before being called to active duty during the Korean conflict. Serving as a Lieutenant in the US Air Force, Don was assigned to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio. He was later transferred to the Icing Research Establishment on Mt. Washington, New Hampshire, and eventually attained the rank of Captain. He returned to Indiana University in 1957. In 1960 he was named Associate Professor of Geology and in 1967 received tenure and became Professor of Geology. He continued teaching at I.U. until his retirement in 1995. As Professor Emeritus, Don continued to visit his office weekly, collaborated on papers, maintained a "Rock of the Month" display, and enjoyed Friday morning coffee with colleagues.

During his career at Indiana University, Don authored or co-authored over 100 scientific publications on numerous topics ranging widely across his fields of study. His knowledge of chalk deposits in Cretaceous strata around the world led him to be affectionately known as "Dr. Chalk." Don was involved in the naming of a fossil genus and 13 species during his career, and was also extremely honored to have a genus and five species named after him.

He was the recipient of numerous teaching awards, but his students will always remember Don for his irrepressible enthusiasm for geology, which he shared in the lecture hall and while leading adventurous and challenging field courses throughout Kansas, Colorado, New Mexico, the Florida Keys, and the Bahamas. Don was especially proud of the establishment of the Donald and Marjorie Hattin Special Field Course Fund. This fund subsidizes students taking non-required geology field courses. This summer, students are utilizing these funds to study in the Great Rift Valley in Tanzania.

Even with his countless professional accomplishments, Don's family was his

greatest joy. Family adventures included numerous summer camping trips. Crisscrossing the country, with pop-up camper in tow and a canoe christened “Kwitchurbelyakin” on the car roof, the Hattin family explored most of America’s National Parks. Many trips were punctuated with a surprise ride on one of America’s historic steam locomotives. A Dad who always had time for his kids, Don created a backyard paradise that included a playhouse with a trap door escape, a pond, large fruit and vegetable gardens, and most memorably, a giant snow-dinosaur, nicknamed “Big Bluey.” Beach vacations always featured one of Don’s intricate sand castles creatively carved with popsicle sticks.

As the family matured, Don and Margie were proud of their children’s accomplishments, fostered by Don’s continual encouragement. Never allowing distance to matter, Don, Margie and the family maintained tight bonds, with many happy family gatherings and continued travels together. Don’s three grandchildren affectionately nicknamed him “Boomp,” a name quickly adopted by the entire family.

Don and Margie traveled internationally as well, including a 9-month sabbatical with the family in England in 1969, and a 1985 visiting professorship in East Germany at the Ernst-Moritz-Arndt-Universitat in Greifswald, where he and Margie lived for a month, four years prior to the fall of the Berlin Wall. Their frequent travels took them to over 20 countries, and as recently as 2014 they visited Denali National Park and sailed through the Panama Canal.

Don’s interests were many and his energy legendary. Don was a 30-year volunteer on the French Lick West Baden and Southern Railroad, where he was the fireman on the steam locomotive #97, which he lovingly helped restore. As an active member of The Indiana Society of Mayflower Descendants and an avid genealogist, Don was extremely proud that both he and Margie were Mayflower descendants. Don was also proud of Margie’s Macy ancestry, and published a biography of her grandfather, W. Ferdinand

Macy, a notable painter of Nantucket seascapes.

Don's incredible zest for life touched all who knew him, from his favorite bank tellers and waiters, whose names he always knew, to the legions of former students, colleagues, and lifelong friends he leaves behind. It was frequently said that "Don Hattin could make friends with a fence post." He was a role model and mentor to all who knew him—a man whose cup was never half full; it was always overflowing. Don's outlook on life is exemplified by the title of his forthcoming book, "Living the American Dream."

Survivors include his loving wife, "the most beautiful girl in the world," Marjorie Elizabeth (Macy) Hattin, children Sandra Belth (Jeff), Dr. Ronald Hattin (Vicki), Donna Hattin (Ric Rawlins), grandchildren Dr. Paul Whitney Swain, III (Naomi), Alan Belth, Devin LaMarche (Matt), and great-grandchildren Sophia, Allison, and Benjamin.

A celebration of Don's life will be held on Saturday, July 23rd, at 11:30 am in the Tudor Room of the I.U. Memorial Union. Reception to follow in the University Club.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Donald and Marjorie Hattin Special Field Course Fund by mailing a check to the Indiana University Foundation, P.O. Box 6460, Indianapolis, Indiana, 46206-6460. The check should be payable to the I.U. Foundation with a note on the memo line indicating that the gift is for the Donald and Marjorie Hattin Special Field Course Fund. A donation form can also be downloaded at https://www.myiu.org/file/pdf/donation_form.pdf.

Tribute Wall

LM

“ My memories of Don Hattin go way back to the mid-60s and Boy Scout Troop 3. When i was 15 years old, our Boy Scout troop went on a 50 mile canoe trip on the Boundary Waters of the U.S. and Canada. Don went with us. During that trip, I had the privilege of paddling in the bow while Don paddled in the stern of our canoe. I learned so much about canoeing and geology from Don on that 10 day trip. He was a wealth of knowlege and information on just about anything you wanted to know. And simple things, too, like when you are camping, "if you wash your dinner dishes tonight, you'll have clean dishes in the morning when you fix breakfast." His humor, enthusiasm and stories (especially ghost stories) made our trip very exciting. But the most memorable moment of that trip was when, after a pounding rain storm soaked ALL of my clothes, Don literally gave me the shirt off of his back so i could be warm and dry. That unselfish act of kindness 55 years ago left a valuable impression on me about caring and sharing that I still carry with me today. On another Boy Scout canoe trip down the Whitewater River in southern Indiana, I was introduced to a canoe named 'Kwitchurbelyakin'. When the going got tough and we started to complain, Don smiled and pointed to the name on his canoe. Then we all laughed. We always stopped to look at unusual sandbars and geological rock formations. Don's excitement about everything outdoors was very contagious. I still have it today. Rest In Peace, Dr. Hattin. You will live in our memories forever.

*Les McCord
Bloomington, Indiana*

Les McCord - July 24, 2019 at 07:42 PM

TA

“ *Indeed we have lost a father and a knowledge hub*

Tatenda - February 24, 2018 at 02:00 PM

AT

“ I have so many great thoughts and memories about Don Hattin. His smile, his laugh, his quick wit, the twinkle in his eye, how much he loved and cherished Marge, and how much he loved people. Working as his Assistant Instructor was one of the highlights of my time at IU. I have such admiration and love for him. We were always playing pranks on each other in the geology building. I remember the time I put fake poop on his drawings and he followed up by stuffing all my desk drawers with packing popcorn. It was never dull working with Don.

I want to leave you with one final thought about Don Hattin. When I open an account on the internet, and I have to pick three security questions, I want to make sure that they are something I will remember and something that does not change. So I always pick – if its available – what was the name of your favorite teacher? That answer will never change. I always put “Hattin”.

Ann Petricca Turbeville - August 16, 2016 at 05:54 PM

JS

“ A favorite personal memory is snorkeling with him in the Bahamas. I would only try to keep up with him. While underwater, he would point at something with a straight and determined index finger (albeit crooked) and then we would all lift our heads out of the water while he rapidly took his snorkel out of his mouth to tell us what we were looking at. We would nod our heads in an acknowledged reply. Each fish, coral, algae or depositional feature was more interesting than the previous. I loved it. With his enthusiasm he fed my own curiosity and taught me to wonder. He never tired of teaching and I never tired of listening to him. I am so grateful and proud to have been a student of Dr. Donald E. Hattin. He will be so missed. Jayne Sieverding

Jayne Sieverding - July 26, 2016 at 12:25 PM

RM

“ My deepest condolences to the Hattin family. When I a young student at IU Don Hattin was one of the first teachers I encountered, being full of knowledge and enthusiasm. Although he regularly flooded us with handouts in his classes, he was still a very respected and likeable teacher.

On one occasion he simply invited me to cook a German dinner for him with some fellow students at his kitchen in his house. He could make friends with everybody at an instant.

I saw him last time in February last year in Bloomington, still vivid and caring about Marje. He described in very simple, friendly and touching words the passing away of a fellow teacher. Thanks Don ...

*Roland Merkl
Landshut, Germany*

Roland Merkl - July 25, 2016 at 09:59 AM

PD

“ Dr Hattin was definitely one of my favorite Geology professors at IU Bloomington and a fine teacher. I'm truly sorry to learn of his passing.

I'll always remember one evening when a few of us were staying late in the Sed-Strat lab working on a lab assignment sifting sediments when we got a bit punchy. Our giddy laughter over something or other was apparently echoing down the hallway. Suddenly, Dr Hattin appeared in the doorway, sternly telling us that we were having "...much too much fun in the Sed-Strat Lab! This is serious work!", he admonished. He then vanished as suddenly as he had appeared. After a stunned second, we started laughing even harder. I'm convinced, given his wry sense of humor, that this was exactly the effect he wanted & was in fact, quite pleased we were having so much fun sifting sand!

My sincerest sympathies to his entire family. I knew his daughter Sandy while I was growing up in Bloomington where we shared a love for horses, so a special note of sympathy to Sandy.

Peggy Wang, DO - July 23, 2016 at 01:46 PM

NK

“ Don Hattin had a greater influence on my career (and, hence, my life!) than anyone else during my educational experience. He was meticulous in his geological work, and paid strict attention to proper procedures in the field, laboratory, and writing. It all seemed to come naturally to him, and he inspired me to work to reach the same levels. I completed my doctorate under Don in 1973. I hope I was then able to transmit at least a measure of those habits to my own students and other people with whom I worked (and still do). Those people all know me as a detail man, just like Don was, and that served me well. Thank you, Don! Rest in Peace.

Norman King - July 22, 2016 at 12:35 PM



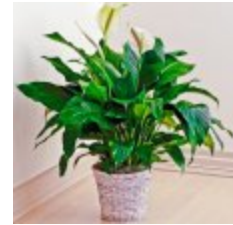
“ *Peace, Prayers & Blessings - Blue and White was purchased for the family of Donald E. Hattin.*



July 20, 2016 at 11:23 AM



“ *Love, Jenny Swift, Gus Bitar & Summar Swift Bitar purchased the Floor Plant for Sympathy for the family of Donald E. Hattin.*



Love, Jenny Swift, Gus Bitar & Summar Swift Bitar - July 19, 2016 at 07:46 PM

JF

“ Dr. Hattin was one of my favorite professors at IU. As someone else has already said, I remember him being very enthusiastic about geology and it was contagious. One time back in the early 80's he took our Sed. Strat. class down to Southern Indiana so we could test out our rockhammers before we went out to Montana. He showed us this very nice head coral specimen, about the size of a basketball, on one side of the road, then walked us across to the other side to look at the road cut. We had big classes back then so not everybody could listen to him at the same time and there were a lot of rock hammers clinking away at the rocks. All of a sudden one of the students on the other side of the road held a big round rock over his head and shouted out "Hey, look what I got !!" Dr. Hattin's face got beet red and he charged across the road, nearly got hit by a car and he was so mad I thought he was going to kill the kid. We took that coral back to IU and he made the kid donate it to the rock garden outside the Geology building. Next time I get back there, I am going to look for it and think about him.

I just want the family to know that he inspired many young Geology students and he was a great teacher.

Jim Ferry B.A. Geology 1983

Jim Ferry - July 19, 2016 at 02:06 PM

SP

“ One of my fondest early graduate school memories is Dr. Hattin's beginning of the school year field trips that he lead. They always had that obligatory stop for McDonald's coffee parentheses ("you always know that it'll be good!") Thanks, Dr. Hatten for the memories, and for the wonderful stories that you would share. You will be sorely missed and never forgotten!

Sarah PM - July 19, 2016 at 01:27 PM

RR

“ Don was also an advocate of correct pronunciation. The best example & pet peeve of his was zoology. "It's pronounced zoh-ology, because it comes from the root word 'oh-on' (oon) which means egg. Zoo (ū) ology would have to be spelled with three o's. ”
😊 ... from Ron Riepe

Ron Riepe - July 19, 2016 at 12:31 PM

EC

“ Dr. Hattin as one of my favorite professors when I was an undergraduate at IU in the early 1980s.. He taught with energy and enthusiasm and always took an interest in his students. I am saddened to hear of his passing and know he will be missed by many.

Ed Clements

Ed Clements - July 19, 2016 at 12:31 PM

RP

“ *Dr. Hattin was one of the most enthusiastic and talented geology professors I ever had . His love of the outdoors translated into one of the best field geologists I have known. Once on an extended fiend trip from IU to Kansas as we set up camp one night, a few of us cornered him and asked if we could press on to Colorado. Despite the fact that he did not have permission to do so, he agreed. We only told a few of the students what we up to. As the Rocky Mountains came into view the next day, we were still able to convince some of the more gullible students that we were still in Kansas. It was one of the most memorable field trips of my life. Don's effusive personality was a breath of fresh air. He will be sorely missed. My sincerest sympathy goes out to Margie and the entire Hattin family.*

*Ronald D. Perkins
Professor emeritus
Duke University*

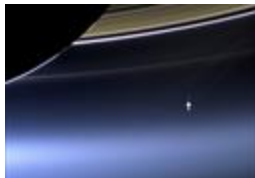
Ronald D. Perkins - July 19, 2016 at 10:51 AM

CA

“ Dear Marge and Family,

I am truly saddened by the news of Dr. Hattin's passing. I did not know him or you well, Marge, but I will never forget your kindness and enthusiasm for the natural world and your care of your charges. I am reminded of how truly fleeting our moment on this pale blue dot is. I can't honestly say I completely know what our true purpose is yet, while we are here, but Dr. Hattin was definitely a key piece of evidence in unraveling that puzzle for me. No doubt his spirit will live long in all who knew him and will have an impact on goodness and love in this tiny, lonely world.

Cliff Ambers



Clifford Ambers - July 19, 2016 at 10:25 AM

RV

“ Ross and Gemini Vandrey purchased the With Sympathy Organic Fruit and Cheese Tower for the family of Donald E. Hattin.



Ross and Gemini Vandrey - July 19, 2016 at 10:07 AM

RE

“ Dr. Hattin was one of my favorite Geology professors during my UG years at IU in the 80s. His energy and enthusiasm were impressive and contagious. I remember a Sed/Strat field trip to Clifty Falls in Madison, IN. After looking at fossils all day we were locked out of our vans and couldn't return to Bloomington until late that night. To pass the time, Dr. Hattin got us in an old historic mansion overlooking the Ohio River. We got some sandwiches and had good conversations. His legacy is huge and he will be dearly missed.

Rob Earle - July 19, 2016 at 09:55 AM

R1

“ Truly a great loss. When I think of my time at IU as an undergrad in the Geology Dept. I often remember Dr. Hattin. His Sed/Strat class largely influenced the studies I carried on through graduate school. I don't make it back to IU often anymore but always made sure to try to stop by his office to see if he was in - and most of the time he was! With all his energy amazingly he also only seemed to get younger every time I saw him! My favorite memory though was going down to French Lick with him and a small group (including my future wife) to paint the old steam engine they were restoring.

He was a great inspiration to me and will be missed!

Ross Vandrey - IU Class of 1989 - July 19, 2016 at 08:26 AM

Penny
Padgett

“ *Dr. Hattin was my ug advisor. He was always positive, encouraging and a wonderful soul. He was dedicated to excellence. Even when a guy tried to rob us on a field trip, Dr. Hattin was Un wavered with determination to finish the field trip. He loved the geology stop at French Lick. He really carved out a legacy at Indiana University in each student that he taught.*



Penny Padgett - July 08, 2016 at 08:13 PM

WS

“ *Dear Margie, Sandy, Ron and Donna,*

Our deepest sympathy and condolences to you and your families for the loss of Don.

He will be greatly missed by those of us who knew and loved him.

Our fondest memories are of the times together as teenagers and young adults..Our church related youth group, our marriages, etc. Memories of those wonderful times will always be with us.

All our love, Cobb and Jan

Ward Swift - July 05, 2016 at 09:54 AM



“ *Don and I were railroad friends years after his steam railroading days at French Lick. Mostly we painted the old steam locomotives. He never gave up hope that steam would run again down there. The hour and 15 minute drive from Bloomington gave time for Don to tell many stories. Those trips were a great getaway from computers.*

*-John Stigall
Bloomington*

John Stigall - July 04, 2016 at 06:31 AM



O how he loved that steam engine

Penny Padgett - July 08, 2016 at 08:19 PM

RM

“ Our condolences to the Hattin's, our dear friends and neighbors for many years.

He was a man with great pride and love for his family, and with a special place for Margie.

Don was a good friend and as good a human being as I ever met. He was a delight to be around and gave you his full attention and the conversation was always lively and literal.

Don was a great enthusiast for helping the poor and the vulnerable, as was a testament for his excitement and continuous support of the VIM Clinic in Bloomington from its beginning and throughout its existence.

We will miss you Don, and will celebrate the full life you have lived. We send our love to Margie, Sandra, Ron and Donna and to all their families.

Sincerely,

*The Haddawi Family
Chapel Hill, NC*

Rajih Haddawi M.D. - July 03, 2016 at 08:53 PM

JL

“ Don and Bob Dodd led an Oceanography course in the Florida Keys during the late 60s. While walking in shallow water studying carbonate deposition Don carried a canoe paddle, which I thought was for balance while walking in the soft mud. Turned out he used it to ward off the small sharks that periodically harassed our group.

Dave Lazor

J. David Lazor - July 02, 2016 at 10:52 AM

DD

“ I haven't known Don Hattin very long, as I became acquainted with him when I was hired by the IU Geology Department in January of 2015. I looked forward to his visits to the department, and very much enjoyed talking to him and Marge. His visits were a bright point in my day. The week before his passing, he was telling me about the dinosaur tracks at the museum at Amherst. I will miss him, as I already miss seeing his sweet, sweet wife. My condolences to the family.

Dianne Dupree - July 01, 2016 at 08:57 AM