

Alan Smith (1937-2017)

We were very sad to announce the death of Alan Smith on Sunday 13th August.



Alan Smith, pictured at the Earth Sciences Alumni Day in 2015

A memorial service will be held for Alan in the Chapel of St John's College at 12 noon on Saturday 10 February, 2018. All are most welcome to attend. There will be refreshments after the

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service. The chapel can be entered from both Chapel and First Court. Map of St John's College.

Alan joined the department in 1964 after doing a Physics degree in Cambridge and a geophysics PhD in Princeton. He was best known for his 1965 paper with Teddy Bullard and Jim Everett on computer fitting of the Atlantic margins. This was followed by a lifetime of widely respected papers on tectonics, particularly of the Tethyan Belt, and on the geological timescale.

Alan taught geology to generations of Cambridge undergraduates in the department and through supervisions for St John's. Through his career he taught most parts of the first year geology course, excepting only palaeontology. On department field trips he will be best remembered in Arran, Greece and Dorset, where he was contributing as usual this past Easter.

Alan has been an enthusiastic, wise and witty influence in the department for over half a century, and we and our alumni will miss him deeply. Alan and his late wife Judy are survived by their daughter Jessica, her husband Dan, and a grand-daughter Mia of whom Alan was very proud.

[Dr Alan Smith, Cambridge geologist who helped lay the groundwork for the scientific acceptance of plate tectonics](#), a Daily Telegraph obituary published on 24 August 2017.

[Pioneer of plate tectonic reconstruction, Cambridge University stalwart and stratigrapher](#), The Geological Society.