



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**MAINE**

**College of Engineering**

Gorman Emeriti Brunch  
honoring

**Willem F. Brutsaert**

Professor Emeritus of  
Civil & Environmental Engineering



*Radon Love*

A tribute to the remarkable and dedicated career  
of a true master educator extraordinaire.

Saturday, October 27, 2018

Welcome to the 2018  
Gorman Emeriti Brunch  
in honor of  
**Willem F. Brutsaert - Radon Love**

The College of Engineering is delighted to have this opportunity to honor Willem D. Brutsaert, Professor Emeritus of Civil & Environmental Engineering.

Dr. Brutsaert's research deals with quantitative aspects of both surface water and groundwater. His research and professional activity is related to problems of high iron and manganese concentrations in groundwater in glaciated terrains, radon occurrence in groundwater and its removal, groundwater systems modeling, laboratory studies of phosphorus removal in partially saturated soil columns, and the effects of certain solvents on marine clays of Maine.

Willem taught 37 years in the Civil & Environmental Engineering Department from 1973 to 2010 and was a dynamic and popular professor who taught Hydraulics, Surface Water Hydrology, Groundwater Hydrology, Groundwater Modeling, and Water Resources Engineering.

While at UMaine, Willem could be seen commuting by bicycle to work, gardening, X-C skiing and (not on campus) enjoying some good Belgium beer.

Thank you all for joining us today to recognize and celebrate Willem for his service and dedication to the University of Maine and to the students of the College of Engineering.

Dana N. Humprey, Ph.D., P.E.  
Dean, College of Engineering  
Saunders Professor of Engineering  
Leadership and Management



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## College of Engineering

Gorman Emeriti Brunch  
in honor of

**Willem F. Brutsaert**

*Radon Love*

### Agenda

Brunch

Welcome

Dana Humphrey  
Dean, College of Engineering

Bill Davids  
Civil & Environmental Engineering

Willem Brutsaert  
Professor Emeritus  
Civil & Environmental Engineering

*Others are welcome to say  
a few words at this time.*

I just want to add my congratulations and compliments to Willem for his celebration on October 27. I was a PhD student in the program from 1973-76. I did not take any of his classes because the direction of my research was in a different area of environmental engineering, but he remains a prominent part of my fond memories at Maine. He set the good example for us all: knowledgeable, open, friendly, energetic, upbeat, hardworking, encouraging. He might not recall, but here are a few stories that have stuck with me:

1. Grad students were required to give seminars every now and then, and after my last seminar, Willem told me I was ready. I was heading into a career as a professor and was admittedly nervous about giving lectures. I was pretty shaky in my first seminars at Maine, and I'm not saying my last one was great or that I was really 'ready,' but Dr. Brutsaert's compliment/encouragement meant a lot to me...and still does.

2. He invited the grad students to his home one evening to have pizza and meet his family. His wife had everything laid out so we could just add the toppings and make our own pizzas. I've thought of Willem and his wife several times through the years when my students were in our home for a meal and/or we are making pizzas. I retired last year and we moved to SC this year (2018) to live on a lake. We are 30 min from everywhere, so making pizzas at home is pretty common for us now.

3. While in Maine, I lived in student/faculty housing. Willem and his family might have lived there at first, too? I only think this because one day as I was leaving the house (one bedroom apt., actually), an aluminum rod came flying through the air, almost hitting my windshield. I screeched to a stop, got out, picked up the rod and looked at the kids nearby and angrily said, "Who threw this?" A boy stepped forward, lowered his head, and said, "I did." I handed him the rod and told him to be more careful. He said, "Yes, sir." I was so impressed with that young boy! Honest, open, brave...I hoped I could be as good a parent as he had. I learned at the pizza party in note 2 above that he was Willem's son.

Willem, congratulations on a fine career and your recognition at the 2018 Gorman Brunch. Thank you for all your advice and encouragement while I was student. I went on to enjoy a 40 year career as a professor of CEE at Virginia Tech.

Best wishes, Greg



Gregory D. Boardman, Ph.D., P.E., DEE,  
F.ASCE, D.WRE  
Professor Emeritus of Envr. and Water Resources Engr.  
Via Department of Civil and Environmental Engr.

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Willem was a kind, helpful advisor to me, and because of his knowledge and experience, he helped me obtain an MS in Civil Engineering. I don't have any unique stories to share but I do remember his warm and subtle humor and his willingness to provide a supportive ear when needed.

Ruth H (Gleim) Kelly  
MS Class of 1990

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I came to UMO in 1977 as a graduate student in civil and environmental engineering. Arriving at a new college can be a very stressful time for a young student and I will always remember the very warm reception I received from Professors Brutsaert, Frank Woodard, and Otis Sproul. Willem was an excellent teacher and a true gentleman. He was one of the best at engaging students and encouraging a learning environment.

I hope he is enjoying his retirement.  
Warm Regards  
Thomas G. McNeice  
UMO MSCE 1978

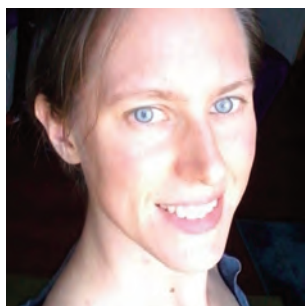
I have a photo attached from May 2006. Willem was kind enough to invite the graduating seniors from the class of 2006 to his home for an end of the year BBQ. We spent the day kayaking and enjoying some great food and friends along the beautiful coast of Maine. It was a great way to celebrate our time at UMaine before departing to our next adventures.

I regret to say I can't remember everyone's name in the photo, and I don't have many photos of the event. But in the back row, left to right, we have Kisch Peters Elsenbroek, Steve Ergmann (who was actually a mechanical engineering graduate), the one gentleman whom I cannot remember, Anna Faloon, and Lynn Farrington Frazier. Middle row left to right is Jamie Morneault, Sheena Bitetti Mason, and Willem Brutsaert. First row left to right is Colin Hubbard, Kourtney Tourigney, and Amanda Birmingham Soucier.

Thanks,

Amanda E. Soucier, P.E.  
District Engineer  
Bangor Water District





Here are three memories from Prof. Brutsaert's classes. I took several classes with him in undergrad ('07) and he was on my committee when I did my MS ('09). Please feel free to use one or more in the roast on Oct. 27.

- When I point to examples of how we abuse Excel for lack of other commonly available tools, I describe how we used Excel for numerical

groundwater modeling AND visualization of flow isolines in his groundwater class. Amazing what you can force a spreadsheet program to do!

- It felt impossible to get a 100, and was very difficult to even get into the 90s, on his exams. I remember when Mikaela Martin and I both achieved 89s on one of his tests after a herculean amount of studying. The near-victory was agonizing!

- When commenting on my thesis, Prof. Brusaert commented, "You write very...easily. Sometimes too easily." This remains one of my favorite compliment-criticisms to this day. It's one of the reasons I have taken it upon myself to hone my science communication skills.

Feel free to reply with questions.

Regards,

BS Civil and environmental engineering ('07)

MS Civil and environmental engineering, focus on hydroclimatology,  
advisor Shaleen Jain ('09)

Krista Rand, EIT

Systems Engineering PhD Student

## Some Memories of Willem from Kathie Gaianguest and Jim Gallagher

Both of us, like Willem, are retired after many years of being on the UMO faculty, but we did not come to know him until after we had retired and moved to Lamoine. Our knowledge of Willem as a teacher comes from those wonderful moments when students spontaneously would bring up his name, talking about how his teaching had made a positive difference in how they viewed the world.

We want to focus on one set of events in Lamoine that struck at the very heart of our community. Willem is a highly respected and valued part of the Lamoine community. We are not using the term community lightly here. We are more than just the Town of Lamoine, we are the Community of Lamoine.

The astounding beauty of Lamoine lies in the configuration of the hills that slope to the sea. That beauty is the product of ice-age forces that generated the eskers and the aquifer below, eskers composed of sand and gravel. Gravel companies have mined these eskers for over 30 years, leaving behind an ecological wasteland. Not only does the creation of a gravel pit generate ugliness, it changes and endangers the production of the water table.

There is only one nearly complete esker left in Lamoine. In 2012, a gravel company filed an application to mine this esker to 70 feet below road level. Willem's reaction was powerful and inspiring. Through reports and a public presentation, he informed the Lamoine community of the risks and irreversible consequences to the Town's water supply, if such a destruction of the esker were to be allowed. These presentations provided a counter weight to the hydrologists who were justifying the esker's destruction.

The problems generated by the over 25, past and current, pits in Lamoine are a hydrologist's nightmare. Willem has, for a long time, gladly contributed his knowledge and skills to help the town deal with the impact of these mining excavations.



That is part of a much larger pattern of his supporting and strengthening the ecological structure of our community. For example, Willem's 2009 hydrological study for the town has proved crucial in helping to protect the town's water resources, and has been included in the draft of the current comprehensive plan as a resource for future town planning. But there is something even more basic to what it means to know Willem.

Willem, even after all that time working in a powerful research university, dealing with its demands for knowledge acquisition and distribution, still looks at the world with wonder and curiosity. In our wide ranging conversations, he is always encouraging our reading of a book he has just finished, or our exploring a new approach we haven't thought of. We find it amazing and powerfully encouraging that Willem, with the reputation he has achieved in the sciences, still sees himself in a wondrous and complex reality of many dimensions.

## Photos

CIE faculty retreat, Spring 2002 (3 photos). In the photo in Bass Harbor. Everyone is having beer except for Willem, who is having a glass of red wine ...





Thanksgiving 1999



Advance Roundtable



Advance Site



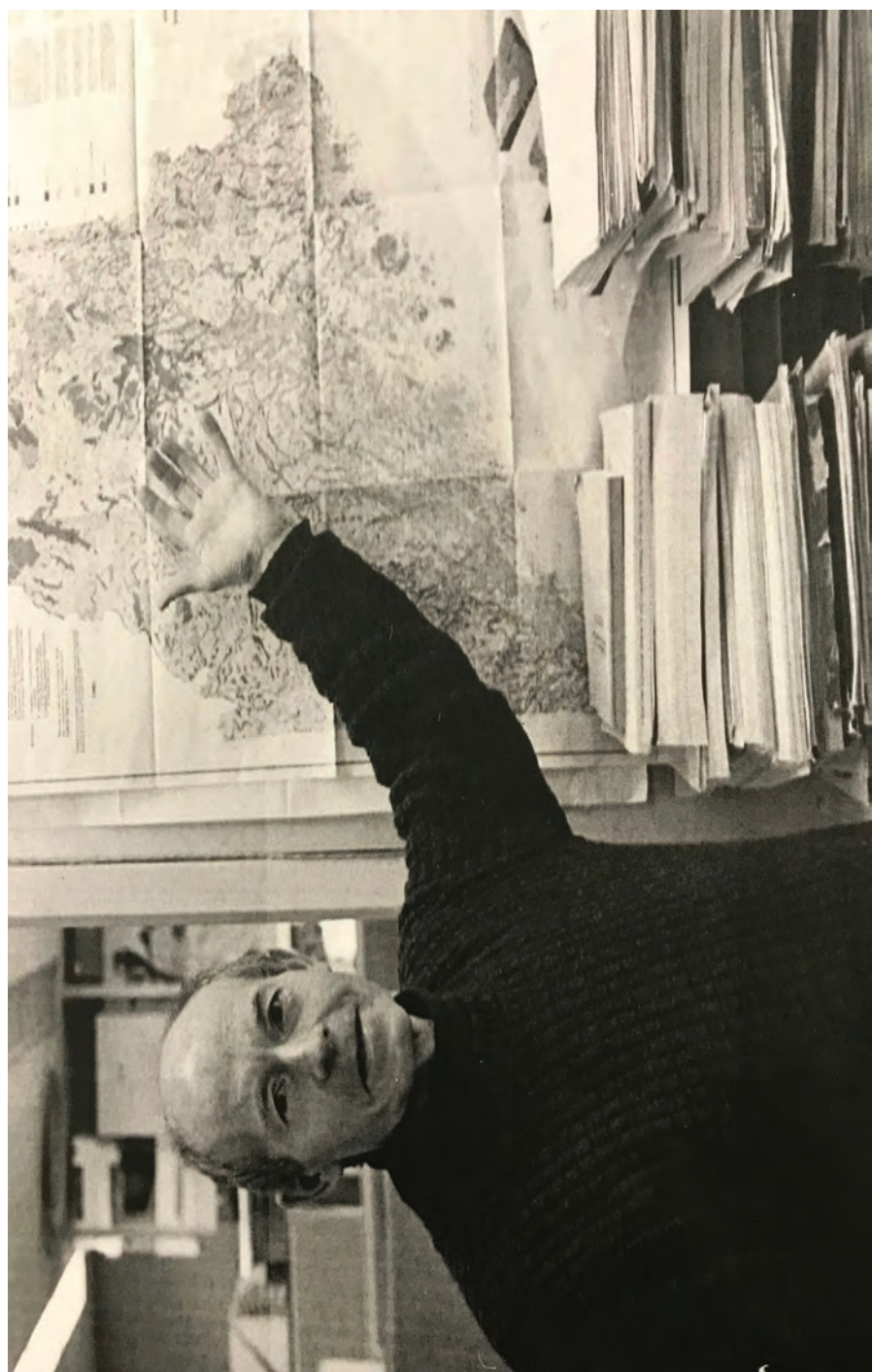
2007 Faculty Retreat





Woodard Dedication





Since 2000, the College of Engineering at the University of Maine began what has become one of our most enjoyable traditions where we celebrate the career of a distinguished emeriti faculty member at the James and Maureen Gorman Emeriti Faculty Brunch - thanks to the generous support from James and Maureen Gorman.

2000	Dick Hill (Pajama Party)	Mechanical Engineering
2001	Waldo Mac Libbey (Showtime)	Electrical Engineering
2002	George Greenwood (Cowboy Roadshow)	Civil & Env. Engineering
2003	Bill Ceckler (Confessions of an Outdoorsman)	Chemical Engineering
2004	Jerry Harmon (Physics of Subjective Reality)	Engineering Physics
2005	John Lyman(No Jokes Required)	Mechanical Engineering
2006	Carleton Brown (Threer Ringed Circus)	Electrical Engineering
2007	Karl Webster (Super Engineer)	Engineering Technology
2008	Wayne Hamilton (First Associate Dean)	College of Engineering
2009	Kim Mumme (The Renaissance Man)	Chemical Engineering
2010	Paul Camp (World of Ice & Snow)	Engineering Physics
2011	Claude Westfall (Professor Fisherman)	Engineering Technology
2012	Donald Grant (The Cal Ripken of Academia)	Mechanical Engineering
2013	Fred Irons (The Mystery Hour)	Electrical Engineering
2014	John Alexander (Canoe Rules)	Civil & Env. Engineering
2015	Charles W. Smith (Numismatic Relativity)	Engineering Physics
2016	Norman Viger (The Art of the Draw)	Engineering Technology
2017	Douglas M. Ruthven (Global Legend)	Chemical Engineering
2018	Willem D. Brutsaert (Radon Love)	Civil & Env. Engineering



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