

Brian H. Conway – Obituary

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Brian H. Conway has researched Jurassic palynomorphs and a wide field of its applications in Jurassic sequences of the Southern Levant and Eastern Mediterranean, applying organic thermal maturation and palynofacies analysis.

Born 6th of March 1950; died 15th November 2012.

Academic background and professional activities:

1972: B.Sc. Univ. London. (Geology).

1973–1974: Israel, Jerusalem, Geologist at the Geological Survey.

1974–1975: England, Sheffield, Educational assistant at Univ. Sheffield.

1975: M.Sc. in Micropalaeontology, Palynology, Univ. Sheffield.

1976–1978: South Africa, palynologist for Southern Oil Exploration Corporation Ltd.

1978–1988: Israel, researcher in Jurassic Palynology at the Geological Survey.

1988: Ph.D. Univ. London (Jurassic Palynology of Israel and Organic Thermal Maturation).

1988–1989: Lecturer on Organic Maturation (M.Sc. Course) at Sheffield University.

1989–2010 Israel, Researcher at the Geological Survey Israel until retirement.

1994: Promoted to Assistant Professor in 1994.



The researcher. From 1978 until his PhD thesis in London (1988), Conway tackled the palynostratigraphy of the Jurassic system in Israel and its thermal maturity, both subjects that remained his strength during his entire career. He then widened his horizon to encompass the younger Mesozoic and Cenozoic. Later, the experienced researcher contributed enormously to oil exploration, in particular in the field of oil windows in the newly explored Mediterranean offshore boreholes. He will be remembered as a meticulous and industrious scientist preparing all pollen samples using special extraction techniques that he developed himself. Working with him was tough but rewarding. He was like the ultimate authority in Jurassic biostratigraphy when other tools would provide no reliable clues. He stood his point and after the years his determinations were found to be rock solid. Conway published 55 papers, technical reports and abstracts.

The person. Brian was born as the elder son of Sidney and Pat Conway in a loving and spirited family, living in Stratford, not Shakespeare's, but a fairly tough part of East London. He attended Stratford Grammar School that was unusual for its time, and for the area, in that it had several talented teachers who were trained to teach the Earth sciences. Doing well academically, he got interested early in geology. Later, his excellent school examination grades gained him access to Queen Mary College, University of London, where he and his boyhood friend Paul Smith experienced fieldwork and mapping together in the Mendip Hills of Somerset. In 1972, as a young tourist to Israel, Brian got a job at the GSI, just before the 'Yom Kippur' war, during which he volunteered for a few weeks to help sustain border villages. Back in England from 1974-1975 he obtained his Master's degree and from 1976 to 1978 he worked as a palynologist in South Africa. Returning to Israel in 1978, he joined again the GSI and got married soon after. Miriam, his beloved wife, and Brian raised three children, now well educated successful adults. Brian was a vivid, curious and inventive scholar. He was generous with assistance to his friends and colleagues. His life has not been paved with many lucky events. Still at an early age, his beloved wife Miriam fell ill with a serious disease of the nervous system. Brian took care of her, bedridden, with love and care until she died, seven years ago. His three children were the light of his life, and when he retired less than two years ago, Brian moved to Netanya, closer to his children and grandchildren. Brian died of a heart attack on the 15th of November 2012. We will miss a good friend, gentle and caring, with lots of interesting conversations. He trod his own path and not everybody understood him. He never pursued honors, fame, or privileges. He will be remembered as a loving husband and father, a dear friend and reliable colleague, and a careful and skillful researcher. We cherish and appreciate Brian as a scientist and as a 'Mentsh'. Be blessed His Memory. אהי'ורכזן ד'ורב

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