

DAIMOND, ROBERT (BOB) BRIAN (1946 - 2020), civil engineer and historian

Name: Robert (Bob) Brian Daimond

Date of birth: 1946

Date of death: 2020

Spouse: Rosemary Daimond (née Clement)

Child: Sonya Daimond

Child: Anita Daimond

Child: Colin Daimond

Parent: Alfred Charles Daimond

Parent: Stella Lillian Daimond (née Ellerbeck)

Gender: Male

Occupation: civil engineer and historian

Area of activity: Engineering, Construction, Naval Architecture and Surveying; History and Culture

Author: Warren Kovach

Bob Daimond was born on 1 May 1946 in Tenterden, Kent, the youngest of three children of schoolteachers Charles Daimond (1910-1970) and Stella Ellerbeck (1908-1997). The family later moved to Wolverhampton when Charles became Youth and Community Services Officer for Wolverhampton Local Authority and where Stella eventually became the Deputy Head of St Peter's Girls School. Bob attended St Bartholomew's Primary School in Penn and Wolverhampton Boys Grammar School. In his teens he got to know his future wife Rosemary Clement through the Scouting movement. They married in 1968, and had three children, Sonya, Anita and Colin.

After leaving school Daimond worked for a year as an assistant at an engineering company before going on to read Civil Engineering at the University of St Andrews (Dundee), graduating with a BSc in 1969. He then worked as Assistant Engineer for Staffordshire County Council for six years.

In 1974 he was hired as Senior Engineer for Gwynedd County Council. He rose through the ranks to become Deputy County Surveyor in 1984 and Director of Highways in 1992. He retired in 2004 to become an independent consultant.

During his working career he regularly delivered presentations at hearings of Commons Select Committees and National Assembly Committees and was a member of various Welsh Government working groups on finance, transport, and engineering matters. He was also invited by the Institute of Welsh Affairs to chair discussions about the transport agenda for the newly formed National Assembly for Wales and to write the Transport chapter for their agenda for the first four years.

He chaired the North Wales branches of the Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE) and the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation (CIHT) and was awarded lifetime achievement awards by both institutions. He was also active in inspiring young people to pursue careers in engineering, both through ICE and CIHT and in his work with Careers Wales to develop school workshops.

Daimond developed a strong interest in the history of engineering. After retirement he became the North Wales contact for ICE's Panel for Historical Engineering Works (PHEW). He also became a trustee and chairman of the Menai Bridge Community Heritage Trust, a charity that runs a museum dedicated to the Menai Suspension and Britannia bridges over the Menai Strait. He led countless guided tours and school workshops, gave numerous lectures, and appeared regularly on TV and radio news and documentaries talking about the Menai Strait bridges. Shortly before his death he published the book *The Menai Suspension Bridge: The First 200 years*, a comprehensive history of the world-famous bridge.

The engineer **Thomas Telford** was a hero of his. For an ICE-sponsored celebration of Telford's 250th birthday in 2007 Daimond wore a nineteenth-century outfit to pose as Telford to unveil plaques, then subsequently for celebrations and commemorations.

After taking up his post in Gwynedd in 1974, Bob rapidly gained fluency in Welsh and gained a Certificate in Welsh as a Second Language (University of Wales). In his many television and radio appearances he spoke both Welsh and English. At the 2017 National Eisteddfod at Bodffordd, Ynys Môn, he was admitted to the Gorsedd y Beirdd for his services to the Welsh Language and Engineering. He took the bardic name Robat Dyfnaint, or Robert Devon, in honour of his distant Devon ancestors. He promoted engineering at the National Eisteddfod's Science and Technology Pavilion and was a member of the Eisteddfod's Science Committee.

In 2018 he was diagnosed with a soft tissue sarcoma in his arm, which led to its amputation. This occurred just as he was starting his 200-page Menai Suspension Bridge book, which he remarkably finished in less than nine months, typing with just his left hand. With characteristic good humour he declared that he could now use his Telford costume to also pose as Lord Nelson or Captain Hook. Bob Daimond died on 19 February 2020 at home in Llansadwrn, Ynys Môn.

Author

Warren Kovach

Sources

Personal knowledge and a biography compiled by his family

Obituary: **Robert Brian Daimond, (Bob) 1946-2020**, Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation web site, 24 Feb 2020

Further reading

Menai Heritage: **Bob Daimond (1946-2020)**

Wikipedia Article: **Bob Daimond**

Additional Links

Wikidata: **Q86522298**

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