IIFET Mourns the Passing of Clint Atkinson

By Ann Shriver

Clint Atkinson passed away peacefully on May 14, 2007, at the age of 93. He had lived a very long, productive, and happy life, blessed with two sons, a wonderful wife of 60 years, Mary, and a companion, Margaret Berger, who shared his life after Mary’s passing. While his death is not unexpected, it leaves me, and probably many of you, too, very sad at the loss of a beloved friend and supportive colleague. His gentility, humility, humor, and collegiality will be much missed by everyone who had the honor of knowing him.

A few details about Clint’s life may help us to celebrate his accomplishments. Clint was born in Idaho in 1913, did his undergraduate degree at the University of Washington, and graduate work at the University of Washington, Duke University, and Hokkaido University. He began his professional life as a fisheries scientist working for the International Pacific Salmon Fisheries Commission, Bureau of Commercial Fisheries, and US Fish and Wildlife Service. He later became director of the Biological Laboratory in Seattle, Washington, and eventually Fishery Attache to the US Embassy in Japan. He served on the faculty of the University of Washington, and as a consultant on a wide variety of fishing activities. He and his sons were also involved in international commercial fishing enterprises.

Clint was the very embodiment of what IIFET is all about—his interest in fisheries trade and management carried him from government, to academia, to private industry, and across both professional and international boundaries. It was thus very appropriate that he was the first winner of the IIFET Distinguished Service Award in 1990. Clint was instrumental in the founding and early development of IIFET, and acted as a supportive colleague and mentor to Dick Johnston, to me, and to many others in the IIFET community. He attended all of the meetings through 2000, after which international travel became difficult.

As most of you know, Clint’s son Bill Atkinson died last year, and his beloved wife Mary in 2001. He leaves another son, Rob Atkinson, who lives in California.