

Edward Monahan remembered as scientist, avid rower and leader of CT Sea Grant

Edward Monahan, the second director of Connecticut Sea Grant, was an avid rower. Photo: CT Sea Grant



Edward Monahan, professor of physical oceanography emeritus in the UConn Department of Marine Sciences and director of Connecticut Sea Grant from 1986 to 2005, passed away on June 29 at age 89.

As the second director of Connecticut Sea Grant, he led the successful effort to have UConn designated in 1988 as a Sea Grant College, the top tier of Sea Grant programs nationally.

“During Ed’s tenure, he oversaw the awarding of 85 research awards totaling nearly \$20 million; managed 19 Knauss Marine Policy Fellowships; and started a Sea Grant Coastal Fellows Program in partnership with Yale that supported 50 interns,” said Nancy Balcom, CT Sea Grant associate director. “Working for him for most of his tenure as Sea Grant director, I appreciated how he not only worked to grow our state program but also established programs like Ir-Am-Aqua, which facilitated an exchange among aquaculture researchers at the University of Galway, Queen’s University, Belfast, and the Northeast Sea Grant Programs.”

Longtime friend and colleague W. Frank Bohlen, UConn professor emeritus of marine sciences, shared the following information with the university community after Monahan’s passing:

“In addition to his administrative responsibilities, Monahan was an active, well respected research scientist and mentor who was very well known for

his work dealing with a variety of air-sea interactions and in particular the role of bubbles.

He was a thorough experimentalist, participating in more than 30 research cruises on U.S. and European vessels studying the onset of breaking waves and white capping and the associated sea-air exchange of heat and materials from the Arctic to the Caribbean. This work and subsequent laboratory experiments resulted in an extensive number of publications.

When not in the office or lab, he could often be found rowing on Long Pond in Ledyard, just offshore from the home he built. He also competed in a wide variety of rowing competitions at many locations.

He took up the sport seriously in 1990 and in 2004 published a compilation of his efforts. In May 2017 he reported that he had completed 14,872 miles towards a goal of 16,000 miles.

He was particularly proud of his founding of the Coast Week Row, an annual event on the Mystic River hosted by Mystic Seaport Museum. He loved the competition, the young and old participants and the comradery.”

“He was willing to share a story or opinion and always willing to help,” said Bohlen. “He was a valued member of the University community. He will be missed.” 