



Remembering Bill Zimmerman

by BRIAN GIFFORD, SUSAN HOLTZ,
NED ZIMMERMAN AND OTHERS

Long-time clean energy activist, conservationist and Ecology Action Centre (EAC) supporter Bill Zimmerman died unexpectedly on Sept. 24, 2024 following a heart attack and COVID-19. Nova Scotia has sadly lost a lively, well-informed champion of safe, clean renewable energy, nature conservation and the arts, among other things.

Bill and Susan Hauer, his wife of 57 years, raised their son, Ned, on Great Island off Nova Scotia's South Shore near Port Medway. In 2010 they protected Great Island and Selig Island through Nova Scotia Nature Trust. You can see a short film about this here: bit.ly/GreatSeligIsland.

They joined the board of the EAC in the 1970s and Bill provided well-grounded advice on many campaigns, including the Wreck Cove Hydro Power project, Nova Scotia's potential participation in New Brunswick's nuclear Point Lepreau and later the campaign against uranium mining in Nova Scotia.

When Nova Scotia's potential involvement in nuclear energy or a suggested massive tidal power project was a public issue, Bill and Susan Holtz, the EAC's energy coordinator at the time, gave a series of well-attended, and controversial, public lectures in towns across the province. These public talks emphasized not only the environmental benefits but also the economic viability of a provincial energy policy based on efficiency, conservation and renewable energy – a radical idea then. The public discussion did eventually become broader, and the anti-nuclear campaigns were successful, along with increasing support for this new policy focus.

Bill also promoted renewables in many other ways by living what he and Susan believed. Their Great Island home, which he designed, was passively solar heated and a small windmill provided electricity.

Passive solar home designer/builder Don Roscoe recalls Bill's help in figuring out passive solar design with Don and others in the 1970s and '80s.

Bill was a wonderful advocate and resource, with a lively mind and great personality. He had a great depth of knowledge that enabled him to make invaluable contributions about energy planning and development over the years. We and many others have great respect for him and his contributions.

In addition to his work on renewables and energy planning, Bill was a Wolfville town councillor for two terms and a supporter of the arts. He helped found the Fundy Film Society that initiated the Acadia Cinema Cooperative, which formed to purchase the Acadia Cinema building in Wolfville. As a volunteer, Bill designed the new theatre and second floor smaller venue and oversaw the reconstruction project for the new cooperative that re-opened as the Al Whittle Theatre for film, live performances of all genres and as a community meeting place.

Bill, along with his wife Susan and their son Ned, was very positive and constructive in outlook and spirit, a joy to meet and work with.

Susan and Bill have been supporters of the EAC for over 50 years and Bill continued to engage in the deliberations and advocacy of the EAC's Energy Action Team.

The EAC extends our condolences to Ned, Susan and other family members as we mourn and celebrate his life.

His obituary can be found at, billzimmerman.greatisland.ca

As Bill would end his messages...Aloha.