

CAPSULE RESUME



WILLIAM JAMES is President of Computational Hydraulics International, a family-run consulting engineering company that specializes in urban water design software systems. He is also University Professor Emeritus at the University of Guelph. Bill has a B.Sc. from the University of Natal (Durban), postgraduate Diploma of Hydraulic Engineering from Delft Technological University, Holland, Ph.D. from Aberdeen University, Scotland, and D.Sc. from the University of Natal. He started his professional career as a Provincial Water Engineer in Natal, designing and constructing bridges amid crocodiles, reclamation of the St Lucia game reserve in Zululand amid hippo, and water systems for small towns and mission stations in Natal and Zululand. He has also worked as a consulting engineer in Durban and Cape Town, designing and supervising construction of bridges and buildings. With time out for graduate studies, he worked as a city engineer on water projects in Durban, and as a professor at the University of Natal in Durban. Leaving S Africa in 1971 because of political pressures, he joined the Civil Engineering Department at McMaster University in Hamilton, where he was Professor of Civil Engineering, until appointed to the Cudworth endowed chair of Computational Hydrology at the University of Alabama, and subsequently to the Chair of Civil Engineering at Wayne State University, and finally as Director of the School of Engineering and Professor at the University of Guelph. At these universities he has been principal advisor to 70 graduate students. He has been visiting Professor at the Universities of Lund and Lulea in Sweden, Queen's in Canada, the University of Witwatersrand in South Africa, and visiting scholar at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. He has presented over 100 professional workshops in Canada, the U.S., and overseas in Australia, Europe, Asia and South Africa. Dr. James' primary research involves complex metropolitan drainage and polluted surface water systems, and was presented in an invited paper at the NATO Advanced Institute in Montpellier, France. Dr. James has also specialized in the environmental design of permeable pavement. Several harbours around the world have been built with entrance resonators designed according to the principles established in his PhD thesis. His software PCSWMM is used by some 3000 users worldwide. He is listed in Canadian Who's Who and is a life member and Fellow of both ASCE, and CSCE. His recreational interests include: sailing, tennis, mountaineering (several first ascents in Baffin Island, Scotland and South Africa), hiking, canoeing (NWT and Yukon), birding and he is a class-1 rugby referee. He has visited and hiked in every corner of his adopted land, from the tip of Ellesmere Island to the tip of Pelee Island, and from Newfoundland to Vancouver Island. With his wife, he has also dabbled in Industrial Archeology, leading to the creation of the Hamilton Pumphouse Museum, and in pedagogy, particularly the use of computer assisted instruction. Still enthusiastic and outspoken, Dr. James has passionately kindled in his students a commitment to ideals of honesty and transparency in modelling, and to the fundamental need of engineers to guide politicians rather than serve them. In this regard, he routinely exposes the myth of "water shortages" (a local surplus of humans), of "sustainable development" (a ploy to excuse the irreversible loss of habitat and eco-diversity), and of "model sufficiency" (because all models are wrong it is their uncertainty that should be the focus of interest). In society, engineers are expected to be able to fix and provide for anything, but that is perhaps the very reason why they should hold back and counsel a cure to "population". A dedicated Civil Engineer who ruthlessly discriminates between truth and prejudice, he has deliberately used exaggerated showmanship to expose those who pursue the simplistic, and was amazed to be recognized with the Camille Dagenais award. He must inevitably be losing something, but hopefully not his enthusiasm for his noble discipline. (640 words)