

**A tribute to Professor Alan Rogers
from the UEA UNESCO Chair**

April 2022

It is with great sadness that we heard the news of Alan Rogers' death on 5th April 2022. Alan was appointed Visiting Professor in the School of Education and Lifelong Learning in 2005, and actively engaged in teaching, supervision, research and policy development since that time. He was a founding member of the UEA Literacy and Development Group and contributed greatly to the establishment of the UEA UNESCO Chair in Adult Literacy and Learning for Social Transformation, remaining a key member of the core organising team. In 2006, Alan was instrumental in setting up an MA course in 'Adult literacy, lifelong learning and development: international perspectives' – consisting of three separate modules on literacy policy, literacy practice and literacy theory. The course involved visiting local adult literacy projects in Norwich, so that students could reflect on concepts of literacy and adult learning in relation to policy and practice. Several of these MA students went on to conduct innovative research in this area at PhD level.

Before moving into international development, Alan had a long career in local history – and developed a strong interest in medieval history. He taught history in the Department of Adult Education at the University of Nottingham for over 20 years – and became Director

of the Institute of Continuing Education at Magee University College in Londonderry, Northern Ireland in 1980. In 1985, he set up his own NGO, Education for Development, working on adult literacy and development training and research projects for over 13 years. Many of us here at UEA worked with him during this period – including on the DFID-funded Community Literacy Project Nepal, which developed theoretical ideas on literacy as a social practice as the basis for a national adult literacy programme. Alan also brought together many policy makers, practitioners and researchers in adult literacy and numeracy through his Uppingham Seminars. These were held on an annual or biennial basis, in his then home-town of Uppingham (later in Reepham, in Norfolk). Rather than having paper presentations, the agenda would be set by the group of around 30 invitees on the first evening around a chosen theme. This was an unusual opportunity for a group of busy policy makers and academics to have an open-ended discussion, offering an important resource in this field: <http://www.uppinghamseminars.co.uk>.

There are not many of us who can claim to have written an academic 'best seller'. Alan's 1986 Teaching Adults book was and is just that - having



*Brian Street's presentation
at UEA conference, 2005*

*Cover page: Seminar
"New ways of researching literacy",
Kabul, 2018*

heached an impressively diverse audience of researchers, adult educators, policy makers and facilitators across the world. Alan had a great gift for writing about (and talking about) complex ideas in an accessible and engaging way – and practising what he preached about adult learning! His students will not forget having to rearrange the room furniture from lecture style to small groups every time they had an MA session with Alan.

Above all, as a founding member of our UEA Literacy and Development Group, Alan played an essential role in the establishment and development of the UEA UNESCO Chair programme. In particular, he strengthened our research direction and capacity building activities in informal learning and literacy, and the professional development of literacy facilitators – both continuing themes within his research and publications.

The new Bloomsbury series edited by Alan (and Anna Robinson-Pant) on Adult Literacy, Learning and Social Change will be a rich tribute to Alan's intellectual influence and drive. It is a pity that he just missed seeing the first two books published in this series by former UEA students Ahmmardouh Mjaya and

Fusheng Jia – and at the time of his death, he was finalising a volume (co-edited with Jules Robbins) on Adult Learning and Social Change in the UK: National and Local Perspectives.

We will all miss Alan's incredible intellectual energy, support and friendship which continued until the end. Only last month, he was saying how much he enjoyed working with our PhD students and was keen to continue his supervisory role despite many health issues. Alan was also a constant mentor to many early career researchers and practitioners in the field of adult learning/literacy, particularly in Ethiopia and other countries where there had been little qualitative research in this area. This booklet gives just a glimpse of how Alan touched so many people's lives.

The UEA UNESCO Chair will hold a memorial event in the Autumn as an opportunity to reflect on and celebrate Alan's remarkable contribution to adult literacy and adult education – in the UK, our UNESCO Chair partner countries and many other contexts across the world. Please contact unesco.chair@uea.ac.uk if you would like to receive further details.

Anna Robinson-Pant, UEA UNESCO Chairholder

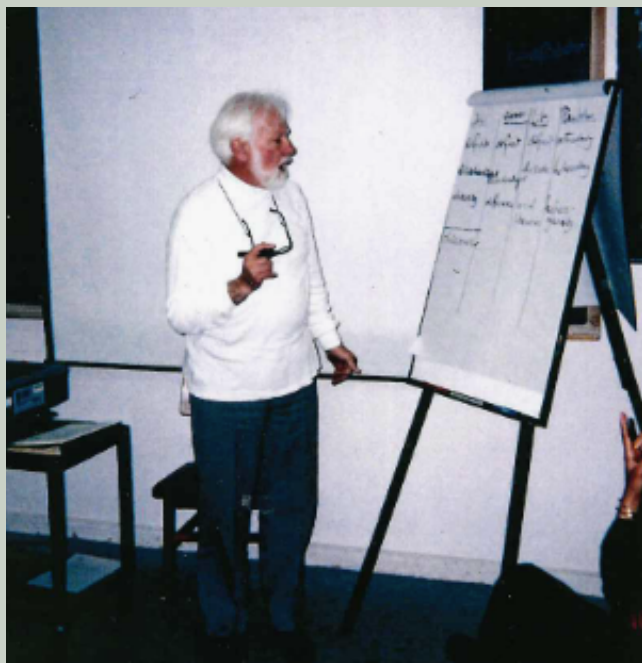
*UNESCO Chair launch
UEA, 2016*



Alan joined our School in 2005 as “Visiting Professor”, seeking a new institutional home after an already impressive career. That “visit” lasted 17 years and for those of us who joined the School after 2005, Alan was simply one of those inspiring and supportive very senior figures that the School was able to hold on to. Until that moment of 2020 when we were all sent home (due to the pandemic), Alan had been a regular presence in the EDU corridors and seminar rooms, using whatever workspace was allocated to him, advising research students, teaching, and making himself available where support was needed. I haven’t seen Alan in person since I took on the role of Head of School in the middle of the pandemic but his supportive emails kept coming as external constraints started to take their toll on our internal resources: “I greatly value my link to UEA and hope you will feel able to keep me on your books. I know something of the financial problems but hopefully I won’t cost the university anything!” (June 2021).

In November, Alan reported in an enthusiastic email: “The government are going to throw millions of pounds into retraining of the workforce and at the centre of this will be the FE colleges.....Now perhaps is the time to introduce some certificated course for these persons on teaching methods with special reference to adults. Distance learning is great for this” before adding “I am not optimistic, for universities are not noted for their flexibility and speed!!! When we had departments of extra-mural studies, adult education or continuing education, we could lay on a course of whatever length in a matter of days...” Incisive as ever in his critique of universities’ current managerialist practices - but always ready to help steer EDU towards more inclusive and equitable programmes and projects. What a legacy for a visitor!

Yann Lebeau, Head, School of Education and Lifelong Learning, UEA



Very sad to hear this. Please accept my condolences and those of the UK National Commission for UNESCO.

Thank you for writing about Alan's extraordinary achievements and legacy below. It's a great thing to leave so much positive change in the world and to help others keep making that change.

James Bridge – UK National Commission for UNESCO

We were deeply saddened by the news of the passing of Alan Rogers. The literacy team at UNESCO Headquarters would like to express our sincere condolences to his family.

UNESCO has been one of numerous individuals and organizations who have been inspired by Alan's formidable work in the field of adult education, literacy, and non-formal education. In addition to technical advice and papers he offered, we recall with gratitude his contributions through his support to the UNESCO Chair on Adult Literacy and Learning for Social Transformation established in 2016 by the University of East Anglia. Most recently, Alan was a speaker during the UNESCO webinar on 'Adult and Youth Literacy Educators' organized on 6 October 2020 to mark the occasion of the World Teachers' Day and International Literacy Day. He encouraged participants to reflect on the status, issues and possible policy, programme and research responses through sharing the perspective of Joseph, a part-time, non-career, non-trained, non-qualified facilitator in a rural village in Malawi. It added another angle to the discussion on professionalization of educators. This is a perspective for which Alan will be always remembered, together with our fond memories of working with him

Borhene Chakroun, Mari Yasunaga and Antoine Cardey – UNESCO Headquarters

I am deeply sorry to hear about the passing of Alan Rogers. We lost one of the advocates of adult education in the world. Alan will always be remembered as a dedicated scholar in adult education and literacy and a long-standing UNESCO friend. In 2020, we invited Alan to contribute to the UNESCO webinar on adult literacy educators during the World Teachers' Day celebration. During this webinar, Alan spoke passionately about the lives of literacy educators, their diverse personal and professional experiences and their persistent challenges. His dedication to this cause was remarkable.

Please accept my deepest sympathies and kindly pass my condolences to Alan's family at this difficult time.

Rakhat Zholdoshalieva - UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning

I've known Alan for many years, firstly through his writing but then in the mid-1990s working with him in his NGO Education for Development. Though this was a small NGO, its influence and impact on adult education and learning have been immense and I was continually impressed and delighted by the kinds of projects Alan was engaged with and the wonderful network of people he worked with and encouraged. Alan's approach to adult learning and education combined with his energy and enthusiasm was inspiring as well as ground-breaking. I am forever in his debt for the encouragement and interest he took in my work while we were together in the Education for Development in Tilehurst, Reading, as well as for his continued interest and challenging questions. Alan has always been there through my educational journey and now after more than thirty years he leaves a gap that cannot be filled.

Sheila Aikman – UEA UNESCO Chair team

My first encounter with Alan was when he arrived at my office in ActionAid in 1989, asking for funding to make a film on adult literacy in Bangladesh for International Literacy Year. As he liked to remind me ever since, I was then a 'donor' (in fact I was a lowly desk officer) and he was very successful at persuading us to find the money! The resulting film, 'Letters in the Sun', was my introduction to an alternative view of literacy from the usual 'skills first' approach. His energy, drive and creativity never ceased to amaze me. A few years later, we were in the hills of Nepal conducting a scoping activity for a proposed ODA adult literacy programme. After a hard day walking and interviewing stakeholders, we retired for the night. To my amazement the next morning, Alan had not only written up his interview notes but asked for my feedback on an article he had drafted before breakfast. As well as being a compulsive writer, Alan was a prodigious reader and was always sharing new ideas, ranging from theoretical works to research-in-progress papers sent by students from around the world. He was someone who liked to take risks – whether his famously open-ended Uppingham seminars (which many people said would fail without a pre-set agenda or funding)

or his determination to run training programmes in areas where others were reluctant to go, notably Afghanistan. I learned most from Alan through our work in setting up the MA adult literacy course at UEA: his meticulous attention to detail in the course handbooks, constantly revisiting our sessions to see how we could better respond to students' interests and needs, and his ability to put across complex ideas in creative and engaging ways. Alan has been a close friend and mentor throughout my academic life. I like to think he is still looking over my shoulder, itching to suggest alternative ways of doing and thinking about adult learning, or even just to point out that I have missed a comma here!

Anna Robinson-Pant – UEA

Alan will be very much missed by colleagues, researchers and students in EDU. I very much admired Alan's energy in ensuring his research areas were firmly embedded in the School through his collaborative and leading work with so many. This will have a lasting legacy for us all.

Nalini Boodhoo – Professor of Education, UEA



*Literacy Day celebration
UEA, 2017*

"I do not wish to change the world. If I could make the life of one person better, I am happy." I can still remember these inspiring words of Prof. Alan Rogers when I joined one of his sessions with MA in Adult Education students in 2015. He was one of the inspiring professors at UEA who would generously share his time and expertise to anyone who would need his help and expert advice in the field of adult learning. He would even share his books and useful resources to us. Each time I visit UEA, he would invite me to his office and would generously give me books from his collection which have helped me greatly in my own work in the field of adult learning. He is a great professor and truly an inspiration to many particularly to his students. Though we mourn his passing, we also celebrate his life and his contribution to the lives of adult literacy teachers and the communities that we are working with. Maraming Salamat Alan! (Thank you very much, Alan!)

Gina Lontoc – University of Santo Tomas, the Philippines, UEA UNESCO Chair partner

When I met Alan Rogers for the first time in September 2017 at UEA he gave me a few of his books. He wanted to clear his rack so asked me to take them for free. With those books my luggage became very heavy. Carrying that load in a train station where renovation was going on and the escalator was not working was extremely challenging. However, I didn't want to give up. I still regret that I didn't have him sign those books.

Sushan Acharya – Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development, Tribhuvan University, Nepal, UEA UNESCO Chair partner

I have spent years sharing a work space in EDU with Alan. We were both very 'Research Active' education professors long after some of our former colleagues had quietly decided to rest on their laurels, and devote the rest of their lives to other interests. Perhaps we were both possessed by 'little demons' that prevented us from "letting go". Whatever, I was privileged to get a glimpse of Alan's continuing contribution to a globally important field of study; namely, that of adult education and literacy. His desk was surrounded by an archive of scholarly work, which he himself had helped to develop. It not only provided him with resources for his own research and scholarship but for his work as a member of various supervisory teams, which supported post-graduate research that spanned both EDU and DEV. He gave Professor Anna Robinson Pant significant support in the development of closer collaboration between the two schools at UEA. I admired the energy of Alan's commitment as a 'visiting professor' to the development of his field of study at UEA. He faced his own physical mobility problem with great courage as he made his way through corridors and buildings to attend seminars and meetings. Making his physical and intellectual presence felt in EdU was no easy task. Alan persisted throughout his lengthy visit to EDU at UEA, and his impact was such that it will be traceable for some time to come. He will be missed.

John Elliott – Emeritus Professor of Education, UEA

A tribute to Alan Rogers from an adult educator who never met him

I am currently director of the International Training and Education graduate program (ITEP) at American University in Washington, DC. I have been teaching courses on adult learning and nonformal education for 20 years. I was fortunate to complete my graduate studies under Malcolm Knowles, to study briefly with Paolo Freire just before he died, and to work for many years with Jane Vella. I never did meet Alan.

Even though our paths never crossed, he has been a constant presence in my life and work as an adult and nonformal educator working in various regions of the world, and through his writings I have introduced his thinking and insights to hundreds of graduate students and adult educators in the field over many years. In my study is a set of shelves labelled “adult, lifelong and nonformal education”, and there among them sit a number of Alan Rogers insightful and accessible works on these subjects. In this sense, I feel he has accompanied me on my lifelong journey as an adult and nonformal educator, and for that I am very grateful.

All of us at ITEP want to recognize how Alan’s written works deepened our understanding of the distinctiveness of adult and lifelong learning, building on the early work of Tawney, Dewey, Knowles, Coady, Horton, Freire, Brookfield, Jane Vella, etc. His books and articles were regular resources for our courses. And we especially wanted to thank him for producing

one of the few books devoted to the theory and practice of nonformal education. We build our very popular nonformal education and development course around Alan’s book as the basic text. We enjoyed hearing the reference to re-arranging classroom furniture after a session in circle groups with Alan,- that is our experience too.

Our class wrote to Alan recently, offering him a gift in appreciation. In our last nonformal education course, we developed a new collection of what we called “21st Century” nonformal education case studies which complement the examples provided in Alan’s book. We were sending our case studies collection to Alan in hopes we might collaborate to keep building this collection together with his guidance. In fact, we were also writing to invite him to join us at The Highlander Research and Education Center this summer to celebrate our 40th anniversary with Highlander, established 90 years ago as a labor and civil rights learning center. We see now that, as he always intended, it is up to us, the next generations, to keep this tradition of contrarian and flexible education alive and well-documented to inspire others. To that end, one of our recent graduates has set up a web-platform to host such a living archive of nonformal education examples. In acknowledgement of our tremendous debt to Alan for all he has done, we plan to dedicate this new platform to Alan.

Michael Gibbons – American University, USA

I was so saddened to hear that Alan passed away. When I heard of this sad news, I could not believe my eyes. Alan was so wise, optimistic and approachable. I had tried many times to express how much I admired this gentleman but could not find appropriate words. However, I was pretty sure that Alan was my role model, the one I had wanted to be. I was writing up a book in the series of Adult Literacy, Learning and Social Change, for which Alan was one of the book editors. Thus, I am fortunate to have received extensive comments and detailed editing. When I felt down, I would always receive a timely encouragement, or a gentle reminder, or just a hint, indicating what I should do next. This could be an article I could read further, or just a thought in a few lines, which could be seen to have involved profound wisdom and careful thought, as I began to muse on it. Alan has left to us a treasure of spiritual and intellectual legacy, which will be benefitting many people.

Fusheng Jia – Former PhD student, UEA

I am so sorry to hear this news. Alan's vivacity and commitment will forever be an example to us all.

Elena Nardi – Professor of Education, UEA

Sad development. May his soul rest in peace.

**Symon Chiziwa – University of Malawi, Malawi,
UEA UNESCO Chair partner**

Alan was my second supervisor for my doctoral dissertation on women's literacy in Mozambique at the School of Education at UEA. Alan was a fountain of wisdom and knowledge in adult literacy. He was kind and accessible and always helpful. He was good humoured and generous with his time. He was also understanding of life events that affected my studies, such as an illness in my family, motherhood, and job opportunity. This meant that he had to stick with me for 10 years from 2003 when I started at EDU until my graduation in 2013. When I wrote to him in doubt whether I should take a job offer straight after fieldwork, he told me that whatever choice I made I should stand by it and not regret it. When in doubt I often think of Alan and this piece of advice. I admired Alan for his enthusiasm and energy, especially for refusing to age and continuing to go on field work to Africa despite declining health. Alan made a big mark on the field of adult literacy and will be remembered and missed by those who worked with him.

**Marta Einarsdóttir – Former PhD student at UEA,
UK, now Lecturer at Akureyri University, Iceland**



*Marta Einarsdóttir's graduation
UEA, 2013*

Alan was a staunch ally of ASPBAE in its work promoting transformative adult literacy policy and practice. He was the key resource person and one of the authors of ASPBAE's Beyond Literacy series - a compendium of cases studies on innovative approaches to adult literacy run by NGOs in our region. Alan wrote the synthesis of the first series which ASPBAE released in 2000 - coinciding with efforts of ASPBAE to engage the World Education for All Forum in Dakar that year. We corresponded through the years - way after that very meaningful collaboration. He would share studies or info on events on adult literacy that he thought ASPBAE would find useful as he tracked our work mainly from his base in the UK through the Uppingham Seminars and the University of East Anglia (UEA) Literacy and Development Group. My last letter from him was in 2020 - before COVID 19 upended all our lives. He was trying to find an ASPBAE article that he thought would be useful for a piece he was writing. Alan remained fully engaged and continued to be his sharp, committed, indefatigable self.

Maria Khan – Asian South Pacific Association for Basic Adult Education (ASPBAE)

It is with sadness that I mourn his death, and I ask God to have mercy on him and the patience of his family.

**Nahla Gamal – University of Ain Shams, Egypt,
UEA UNESCO Chair partner**

Happy memories of working with dear Alan through Education for Development both in Reading with Literacy co-ordinators from Bangladesh and in Nepal with the DFID- funded Community Literacy Project Nepal, on social uses of literacy. I remember him as 'old school' but with the most open, liberal mind. He was always excited by and of course contributing to emerging new theories and practice. It was amazing to me that he seemed to trust and value perspectives offered by, then, 'new kids on the block' like me as well as those of his eminent peers. Sometimes he trusted too much - "Rachel are you free to go and work with the Government of Pakistan on their Primary Education policy?" "No sorry Alan – I know nothing about primary education!!" I remember our great, if at times mutually exasperating (!) discussions on the relationship between the learning of literacy and the social practice of literacy and how this should be presented/written about. I will remember Alan as a true gent, much valued colleague friend, great company and a lifelong intellectual force in adult education/literacy and social practice.

Rachel Hodge – formerly with the Community Literacy Project Nepal, and the Literacy Research Centre at Lancaster University, UK

Will the Turtle and the Fish Survive?

Meeting Alan for the first time in 2010 at UEA was the beginning of a new chapter of my life. At that time, I had gone to the UK to study for my MA. During our very first session I realised that I was not going to go back to Malawi as the same person. Alan was not the kind of person who would just give you the answers to the questions he asked no matter how you struggled. He always asked you 'why' until you had nothing else to say!

Then he introduced me to ethnography through the story he appeared to like most, the story of the 'turtle and the fish.' At that time, I did not see the value of this story to what I was doing until I had another opportunity to go to UEA to do my PhD. Listening to him talk in seminars I heard him retell this story time and time again. I became curious and tried to understand what it was all about. Something told me that what the Prof. (for that is what I was used to call him), was talking about in essence, was experiential research. I decided to try it only to become one of the ardent followers of the approach, all thanks to his inspiration.

His inspiration did not stop there. If there is anything that I have written and published Alan has had a hand in it. In fact, he sometimes got me involved in small project with a view to producing something for publication. This tell you how generous Alan was.

And talking about generosity, for Alan it had no limit. I once visited his house and as he took me round his home library he told me to take any book I thought was useful to me. I picked a few but he encouraged me to take more. I wondered how I was going to carry them to UEA. Reading my mind, he said "don't worry, I will put them in a carton and bring them to UEA."

As a mentor he always had some wise pieces of advice. As I run through the titles of the books in his library, I remember asking him: "Prof., have you read all these books?" His answer was not only insightful but also inspirational. He said: "Ahmmardouh, you don't read books, you use them."

What this tells us is that my life story would be incomplete without saying anything about Alan. Thus, although Alan is gone his legacy will surely live on not only through his written works but also through the lives of many of us who had had the opportunity to work with him.

Rest in Eternal Peace Prof.

**Ahmmardouh Mjaya - University of Malawi,
Malawi, UEA UNESCO Chair partner**

Working with Alan over the past few years has been a privilege in many different ways. Trying to capture in words both his personality and his academic importance has presented quite a challenge. During recent weeks, I've exchanged messages and emails about Alan with a number of people, and I hope that they won't mind if I borrow some of their comments in order to show the scope of his influence both as a respected colleague and as a friend.

Many people have referred to Alan's great significance within the field of adult education over the past decades: "Alan is a huge loss to the field"; "an impressive colleague"; "such an important figure in adult learning"; "he has certainly made an enormous contribution to adult education"; "a remarkable impact on the world of adult education and literacy"; "his support, expertise and influence".

However, anyone who ever met Alan or had worked with him directly will not only feel his loss as a colleague but also as a person. The warmth which came across in so many people's comments following his death is a true testimony to his wider impact in the world – his support and kindness were mentioned by many: "I was struck by not only his intellect but also his kindness and generosity to others"; "he shall be greatly missed"; "Alan has been very kind and supportive to me"; "seemed larger than life, always present in his ever-attuned and ever-helpful way"; 'a really lovely person'; "friend".

Alan reached thousands of people through his research and his writing. For every adult educator who read his work, there will have been dozens or hundreds of adult learners whose experience of learning will have been enhanced. To return to the words used in emails sent to me over the past few weeks, Alan "will leave a real gap"; "he will be hugely missed but what a contribution he made!"



*Adult Education100 forum
UEA, 2019*

To return to the words used in emails sent to me over the past few weeks, Alan “will leave a real gap”; “he will be hugely missed but what a contribution he made!”. I only came to know Alan in the last five years or so of his life, but he has left an impression on me which will continue for the rest of my life. I thought that I had left the world of academia behind me. Alan had other plans.

His energy and enthusiasm for his subject never dimmed. I really miss his frequent emails which have been a feature of my life for the past few years. Sometimes he would find an article interesting and send it to me; sometimes he would forward details of an upcoming conference or webinar, heading it with a simple ‘FYI’; and sometimes of course he would email to chivy me into action over the latest step of the book we were working on together.



We will all miss Alan's critical presence sorely. He was truly, a 'critical friend' - both aspects delivered in equal measure. He was always quick to point areas where we should/ought to do better, but this was also always done without malice or rancour - a really precious quality that was somehow uniquely Alan! Something else that was uniquely Alan was his ageless quality - he had so much life and energy to give that I always forgot his age (and was taken aback if it popped up in the conversation).

Esther Priyadharshini – Associate Professor in Education, UEA

He could be mercurial, once mildly berating me by responding to an email sent on a Saturday to say that he tried to keep weekends work-free, only to email me about work the very next Saturday! But he was always, always looking for things to celebrate in the world of adult learning. Soon after he moved to Nottinghamshire, he was impressed with the county council's programme of adult learning opportunities which was posted through his door. In a note to myself and a few others, Alan wrote:

“...how on earth can we honour the hard work of those who are still organising and promoting such programmes? I take my hat off to them (or I would, only I don't possess a hat).”

Jules Robbins – Adult Education100 Norfolk, UK

I am saddened to hear about Alan and he will be greatly missed.

I did not have a lot of contact with Alan but the encounters with him I did have demonstrated not only his intellect but his kindness and thoughtfulness for others. One of my favourite moments doing this PhD was when he contacted me to see how the research was progressing, it was a warm and heartfelt moment. My particular memory of his brilliance and considerate approach to the world was when he closed the Brian Street Memorial Conference in 2019, the last time I saw him in person. The way he summed up the day and challenged us all was awe-inspiring and deepened my respect for him. I feel very privileged to have worked with him, even though it was only ever on the fringes.

Natasha Rennolds – Current PhD student, UEA

Remembering Alan...

Alan once told me a very useful analogy when I had a hard time writing my thesis. He said that I can imagine my thesis as exploring a house. Now, I am going to decide to discuss the kitchen and the dining room and their relationships, not the whole house, because I do not have enough space to write about the whole house. When I heard the news of Alan's death, I was once again reminded of this analogy. Surely, I cannot capture the vastness of Alan's impact to me as his former PhD student. As an early career scholar, I have greatly benefited from Alan's seemingly boundless commitment.

I can still remember vividly our first meeting. Anna, who was my primary supervisor, explained that she will be giving 80% of the supervision and Kate, my second supervisor, will give 20%. Alan, who was part of the team on a voluntary basis, remarked something

like, "and I will be giving another 100%. So, you have 200% of our support!". And it did feel that way – mentorship that went over and beyond the writing of a thesis. A year before I finished my PhD, Alan encouraged me to take the invitation to be BALID (British Association for Literacy in Development) Chair – a change in their leadership after 15 years and a decision that helped me grow personally and professionally. Since I finished my PhD, Alan, Anna and I have been working on my book proposal. I signed my book contract last month and it is a pity that Alan won't be around to read the final product.

Alan was always generous with his time and ideas – and was very open to listen and give advice. He will be remembered through his writing and his impact to many young scholars and facilitators he mentored.

Chris Millora – Senior Research Associate at UEA and BALID Chair



I contacted Alan Rogers for the first time many years ago to discuss my PhD dissertation and convince him to be on my PhD committee. We exchanged emails, ideas, and arguments from that time on. Although he did not agree to be on my PhD committee, he never stopped following up and checking in with me. He was truly a mentor to me and a real inspiration. His genuine interest in my work and his continuous support and encouragement were invaluable and kept me moving forward. Alan is a very dear person to me, and I will deeply miss him.

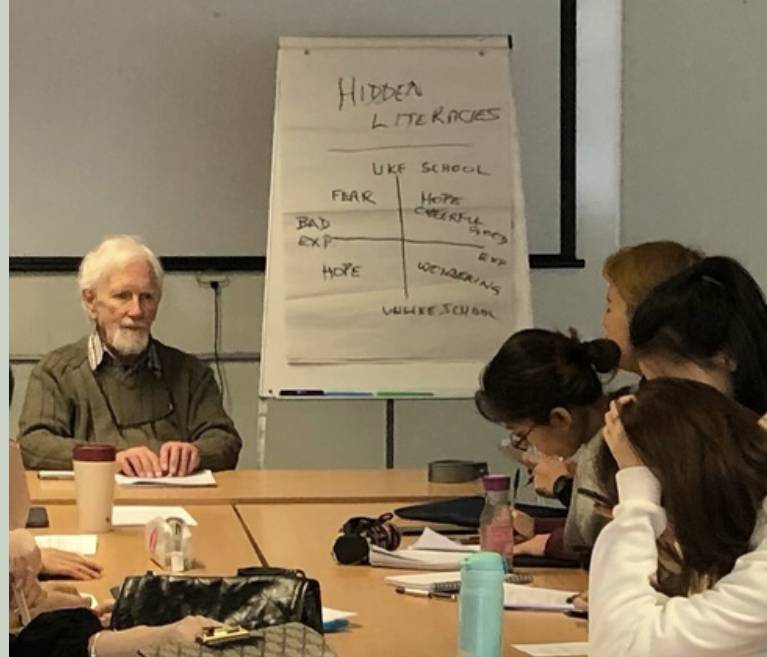
Abeer Salem – October University for the Sciences and Arts, Egypt

Professor Alan Rogers wrote me within the first few weeks of starting the PhD program during a pandemic. It was unexpected as he was not my supervisor. He did not stop there, he wrote me every little while to check-in and to see how I was doing. Despite being time-zones apart and only visible on virtual calls -- I felt seen and cared for by Professor Alan Rogers. Thank you, Professor Rogers, for your care and kindness!

Theresa Frey – Current PhD student, UEA (based in USA)

I first encountered Alan's work when I was completing my Master's degree at the University of Glasgow, and read the most recent edition of *Teaching Adults*, which I referenced in my dissertation. Alan had a remarkable writing style, and had a way of explaining complicated concepts with clarity. When I started my PhD in October 2020, Anna suggested we contact Alan about becoming an informal advisor on my project, and I was thrilled that he was so enthusiastic to help advise me with my PhD. I felt so lucky to work with him, and really enjoyed our chats, he always gave insightful feedback and his advice has been so valuable to my project. He often challenged me to think about things differently, and I will really miss his insights. I also enjoyed learning with him as a member of the Literacy and Development Group at UEA, and our discussions during reading groups and other meetings. I am sad that he won't get to read my finished thesis, but I'm so grateful that I got to meet him and learn with him while I have been at UEA.

Lauren Bouttell – current PhD student, UEA



MA Adult Literacy module, UEA, 2020

This is sad news indeed. One knew that Alan's health had been failing for sometime but somehow one assumed he would always be around -- to argue, challenge, scold 😊 but above all to encourage. I admired his ability to be forthright. His passion was infectious. Few had his talent to engage with theory and practice as effortlessly as he did. He knew the Indian context well, and invariably had something insightful to say or a sharp question. The international adult education and literacy community has lost a stalwart. Alan will be missed. May he rest in peace and power.

In solidarity

Malini Ghose – Nirantar, India

Alan was a very good friend and a mentor for both of us. He was like a father figure, and even a guardian angel. He used to comfort us when we were going through bad times. He also wanted us to get our works published in reputable educational journals, and he had co-authored different articles with us. He linked us with different academia and practitioners in the field of adult literacy and education both in Ethiopia and overseas.

Alan was running an informal network of adult education/education professionals working in several countries in Africa and Asia. We were in that network as well. An article, triggered by an informal conversation within this network, is at the final stages of being published. Alan was the corresponding author and Abiy is a co-author. He recently asked the journal editors either to undertake the last bit of the copyright questionnaire filling in task themselves or to let Abiy do it on his behalf. His last email was on March 27 in which he said: 'I am off to hospital again...!'

It has been 10 years since we got to know Alan in person. He was a champion of academic welfare; he

worked so hard to bring about fairness in academia in favour of those working in the global south. His informal network and email circles, his publications, his supports, etc. are witnesses for this.

He was the one who linked us with Anna Robinson-Pant and all our activities and involvement in the UNESCO Chair Programme came due to his linking/networking efforts.

Alan leaves a big gap in our hearts and lives. We will miss him very much, and we will always remember him.

**Turuwark Zalalam Warkineh and Abiy Menkir –
University of Bahir Dar, Ethiopia, UEA UNESCO
Chair partner**

I first met Alan in the early weeks of my PhD. I felt honored. In our first conversation he advised me to disregard the adult literacy programme that I wanted to explore and instead look at what's going on in there. I was definitely not prepared for such comment but later I realised that what sounded radical was a way to challenge assumptions and it has been instrumental in my work. He had been a critical and encouraging advisor, somehow I was fearing his comments on my work but was also looking forward to receiving them because they were of great value. He accompanied me until the first full draft that he read and commented on a couple of months ago. What remains forever in me is a lesson: not to stay comfortable in an original idea but be constantly opened to context and realities inviting me to consider that my ideas may not be the relevant ones.

Hélène Binesse – current PhD student, UEA

Training on ethnographic research and adult literacy, Addis Adaba, 2013



Many will have met Alan in person, and many more through his extensive writing. For several decades he was a key figure globally on issues related to literacy and non-formal education, lifelong learning and adult education and their relationship to transformation and development.

He had a distinguished University career and kept on teaching, researching and guiding dissertations for generations of students. He was a Honorary Professor of the University of Nottingham, and also close Reading and East Anglia. At the same time, he stayed close to civil society locally and globally.

His books on teaching adults, ethnographic literacy or non-formal education as an iceberg where really enlightening, influential on many debates and will continue to do so.

My most recent exchange with him was last month only. While I was researching on community learning centres in the context of CONFINTEA VII when I came across something he wrote a few years back based on his longstanding relationship to Tanzania and his evaluations of the Folk Development Colleges.

He brought his findings together with earlier work on non-formal education and the potential of CLC as local hubs for the implementation of the SDG [see below, together with a small selection of other important references]. I congratulated him for a remarkable attempt. He wrote back full of thanks, and at the same time mentioned he was not feeling well.

I do not remember when I met him first, but the photo shows Alan in front of amongst others the late Dr Om Shrivastava, Professor Paul Belanger and myself during the Uppingham Seminar in 1992. Through this series of seminars he created an open discourse and participatory atmosphere between all those in from a diversity looking at gender, generation and geography. <http://www.uppinghamseminars.co.uk/>

He followed much too soon on Professor Lalage Bown - both were champions of UK based adult learning and education with a strong international orientation.

Heribert Hinzen - Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association



*Seminar on Literacy and Language,
University of Reading, 1992*

Alan was a committed scholar and a true intellectual. In 2014, I remember coming out of Cambridge University's central library for a break. At the entrance, I bumped into Alan who had spent the entire morning trying to locate some studies he had just been made aware of. We sat at the restaurant where he listened carefully to my issues in accessing literature from the global South on activism and learning that I was writing on at the moment. Alan's response was immediate: he cited a list of texts and gave me a brief commentary on each one of them. All these texts were the latest research in the field: some were PhD studies he had examined, some others briefing papers. This discussion filled an important gap in my knowledge and set me off to complete a paper I later published. I was astonished by the range of his knowledge and his deep commitment not only to his field, but also to scholarship.



Training on ethnographic research and adult literacy, Addis Adaba, 2013

In 2015, we co-authored a paper that would be part of a BAICE thematic issue that Anna Robinson-Pant and Caroline Dyer put together. At the time, I was relatively new to UEA and generally to academia. Alan took great care to give me enough space in the development of the paper and respected our differences in perspective throughout. At the end, we both came to the conclusion that we were happy with the jointly-produced text and neither of us wanted to see another draft: 4 drafts were enough! I later found out that for some of his other writing projects, this kind of rigorous checking and reviewing was his standard mode of working.

Sypros Themelis – Associate Professor in Education, UEA

Alan initiated an informal network of adult education researchers in different areas of Africa and the following tributes came from members of this group:

It is sad news. May his soul rest in peace. Alan Rogers will be highly remembered with literacy studies in the world.

Suresh Gautam - Kathmandu University, Nepal, UEA UNESCO Chair partner

This is indeed a great lost for all of us. It saddened me a lot. May his soul rest in peace.

M. Naeim Maleki – Current PhD student, UEA

Oh, what a tragedy. Another giant oak for adult literacy has family. He was the best supervisor that I ever worked with, friendly but firm. He also ran this network diligently for years. I will surely miss him.

Joseph Matheka – Partners in Literacy Ministries (PALM), Kenya

Bad news really to me and to all of us may his soul rest in peace. He will be highly remembered with literacy work in the world.

Daro Isaiah Justin – UNESCO

I am very saddened by Prof Alan's death. He mentored me with all his love. We have lost a strong pillar in literacy.

My condolences to his children and grandchildren both of whom he introduced to me.

I express my sincere regrets for his passing on. MHSRP.

Prosperous Nankindu – Minister For Social Services In Charge of Health, Education, Women & Gender, Uganda

It is very sad news and his death is a big loss for the whole literacy family worldwide.

Shamsullah Omari – UNESCO, Afghanistan

Sorry, what a sad story you are telling us. Professor Alan has done his job till death which will remain in our hearts forever.

Tolera Negassa – Arsi University, Ethiopia

Professor Rogers's death is a great tragedy. He was a man of excellent temperament, constantly learning and encouraging others to start and continue research. Adult education lost one of its good activists, and it is hoped that his students will follow in his footsteps. We will never forget him.

Ahmad Abedi-Sarvestani – Gorgan University, Iran

It is very sad news indeed. Adult literacy program missed a big scholar and personality.

I am so sorry.

Kebede Soressa – Ambo University, Ethiopia

This comes as a quite shocking sad news.

I am so sorry for Prof Alan Rogers's loss. Alan was a wonderful person who will be so sorely missed.

His warm spirit, generosity, and professional support were a joy to all who knew him.

Mpoki Mwaikokesya – University of Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania



*Seminar "New ways of researching literacy",
Kabul, 2018*