Short Narrative of C. G. St. C. Kendall’s Professional Career and Life

Christopher George St Clement Kendall has multi authored with students and colleagues some 497 scientific publications: 9 books; 121 refereed papers; 165 abstracts of talks and posters at national and international meetings; 18 unpublished reports; and 220 published book reviews.

Married Diane Lynn with two children, Alda Elizabeth, married to Deec Cummings-Kendall, and Emma Sarah, married to D.J. (Darryl Joel) Evans and they have two children, Amy Leigh and Connor Owen.

His publications in geology cover a wide range of interest in particular conceptual depositional models. They detail and predict surface and subsurface geometries, composition, and textural character of carbonate, evaporite and siliciclastic sedimentary rocks. These include Holocene though Mesozoic, Paleozoic, and Proterozoic aged rocks located in the Arabian Peninsula, North, Central and South Africa, SE Asia, Australia, the Gulf of Mexico, Central and South America. Other publications include computerized sequence stratigraphic simulations of carbonate and clastic systems as they relate to eustatic, tectonic and sedimentation controls.

His career mixed both oil industry and academic studies. Research and teaching of sedimentary stratigraphy and the effects of relative sea level rise and fall on the sediments of marine and coastal settings and their relationship to the occurrence of petroleum. In 2010-2017 he was chief editor of SEPM’s STRATA world premier web site on sequence and sedimentary stratigraphy with illustrations including slide-show presentations for the industry and academia http://sepmstrata.org/. He built and maintained the site visited by thousands worldwide each month.

Christopher’s life started as the first white baby born at the Lady Margaret Hospital in New Delhi on the 22nd of January 1938. His family, expecting the outbreak of war with Germany,
sailed from Bombay 20th May on the P&O SS Britannia for Liverpool. Aged 4.5 months to 4 years Christopher lived in his grandparents homes at Llynon Hall in Anglesea and at Lordship Park in London (1938-42). When the Nazi Blitizes started he was evacuated to a free spirited eccentric nursery school in Burnham on Sea with pupils from middle class professional families from Bloomsbury run by Miss. Margaret Gwendolen Lewis and Mrs. Sanders. Aged 4-8 (1942-46) Christopher spent time with bucket and spade on Burnham beach excavating trenches and building sand castles. His forehead was scarred by collisions with lampposts when not paying attention on walks and collecting wounds, later to be sutured at the local hospital. He wrote his mother and sent her still preserved artwork he produced, soldering on with begging letters for toys he needed. He was visited by his Aunt Margery and Uncle Keith Matthews, the latter died shortly after the visit when his Armstrong Whitworth Whitley V bomber crashed. Meanwhile his father, an electrical engineer, William G.St.C. Kendall, served in the army from 1942-45 in North Africa and then in Italy in 1945 and his mother, Daphne S. Kendall, was a UK mail censor. His father was demobbed from the army in 1946 and sailed with Christopher, aged 8-9 (1946-7), and Daphne to Iraq. Christopher's great uncle, Conrad M.DeCourcy, had founded the Faiha trading company to exploit Iraq’s booming oil industry and income. The company employed Christopher's father to sell electric generators and extend the electric power grid of Baghdad. Arriving on the Iraqi Shatt al Arab delta, Christopher was given a date by an Arab and overnight succumbed to amoebic dysentery. Alarmed by his diarrhea, fever, and rapid descent into incoherence, his mother saved his life by quickly moving him to hospital in Basrah by motor boat. Recovered, he enjoyed the life of an expatriate kid in 1946 swimming everyday at the Alwiya Club and mixing with the offspring of diplomats. 

In mid-July with his maternal grandmother, Edith Matthews, Christopher left Iraq for the UK.
by sea. From Suez, the ship turned north, ignorant of any danger, to dock at Haifa. Over-night
gunfire and explosions could be heard as Zionists battled the British Army and local Police,
marking a notable and particularly violent moment in Jewish and Palestinian history. Arriving in
England Christopher's schooling at Dean Close School in Cheltenham began. He attended the
Junior School through ages 9-13 (1947-51), and the Senior School through ages 13-18 (1951-
56). Mentored by the Headmaster of the Junior School, Christopher developed skills as a bird-
watcher and bird song identification. More extrovert, and unafraid to speak out, Christopher was
beaten at irregular intervals at both schools, killing little respect he might have had for authority.
Lacking hand eye coordination he was useless at ball games but he also acquired self discipline
and organizational skills to extend his knowledge of Physics, Chemistry, and preparing him for
University.

Arriving in the UK Christopher and his grandmother first stayed with her son Dudley
Matthews and his family. living in Dudley’s mother-in-law’s home One Cook’s Folly Road in
Clifton, Bristol. Dudley had recently been repatriated from a Japanese prisoner of war camp.
Away from Dean Close School Christopher mostly spent time with Edith Matthews. She, gypsy
like, lived wherever close relatives invited her to stay, till in 1951 her son Dudley purchased her
30 Ridgeway Road, Long Ashton to the west of Bristol.

Also early after their arrival, Christopher and Edith Matthews spent a short visit to
Christopher's paternal grandmother Phillis Kendall, her sister Charlotte Beardsmore and their
cousins William and Lizzie Crosse at 40 Park Road in Hunstanton in Norfolk. Edith then moved
in with her sister, Christopher's Great Aunt Alice Wallace-Cox’s flat 3 in 20 Redcliffe Square in
Earl’s Court in London. In 1948 Edith Matthews became nanny to the children of her son in
law’s sister Olwen Brogan, for a month or two living in the Georgian home of 5 Belvoir Terrace
in Cambridge. Christopher joined her during one of his holidays living with his uncle, aunt, and four children. This and other visits exposed him to his irascible uncle, Denis Brogan, who was the world’s first professor of political science with a lifelong transatlantic career which helped the Anglo American war effort against Nazi Germany. Denis was rewarded with a Knighthood from Queen Elizabeth for public service, and the French Legion of Honor. His wife, my father’s sister Lady Olwen Phillis Frances Brogan meanwhile was an archaeologist who excavated Roman ruins in Libya, North Africa and France.

The declaration of Israel’s independence in 1948 and consequent turmoil caused Christopher’s mother to return to the UK. She became a fashion model for Charles Creed and Vogue. She caused a stir when she attended Christopher’s school Speech Day dressed in full model regalia and his fellow pupils were all a twitter.

In July to August 1950, Christopher's mother took him on holiday to Madrid in Spain where her enamored host was Colonel William Ewen Shipp Jr., a former US military attache in Baghdad. Christopher developed a taste for scrambled eggs rich a mix of olive oil and butter, Spanish cold cut meats, and attended many Madrid Bullfights and became an expert on Prado Museum Art Gallery viewing the paintings of Goya, Rembrandt, Dürer, Titian, Murillo, Velasquez, El Greco, Hieronymus Bosch, and Peter Bruegel. On the flight back to the UK Christopher ate food in the Bordeaux airport restaurant that caused an attack of amoebic dysentery so he was taken from the plane directly to the London Isolation Hospital, where identified as a carrier of amoebic dysentery, he was confined for some six months till cured.

Aged 18-20 (1956-58) following his schooling Christopher was drafted into the UK military for National Service. His first year of service was was spent in Cyprus guarding military camps under construction and hunting for EOKA, Greek Cypriots seeking to join Cyprus to Greece.
When searching among its bush covered hills for Greek independence patriots, he carried a valuable childhood lesson with him which was if a rabbit does not move, you don’t see it. His second year was at Bulford Camp on Salisbury Plain with the 16th Light Ack-ack training with Bofors’ anti-aircraft guns.

Christopher's mother established that his A and O level exams qualified him for financial support at university from the London County Council. He was invited to interview for an undergraduate position at I.C. (Imperial College) and rejected as field geology was assumed to be physically too tough for him. Christopher remembered his ex-headmaster saying he would recommend qualified Dean Close pupils for entry to TCD (Trinity College Dublin). He visited the headmaster who assured Christopher that within the week he would be accepted and be in Dublin at TCD soon. Sure enough, in October 1958, aged 20-24 (1958-62), he was off to TCD to acquire a 1st class honors degree in geology.

In his last year at TCD he, Sir Patrick Alexander d'Estoteville Skipwith, 12th Baronet, and Jalik Kaulback, planned a TCD expedition to Kharg Island at the Northern end of the Persian Gulf. Jalik's father had been a contractor building of the Oil Terminal on the Island of Kharg, persuaded the NIOC to house the TCD expedition in the oil terminal on the Island and provide local marine and land transport. The expedition members raised the finance their journey to Iran, and acquired dive equipment and underwater cameras to record their efforts. They took the Orient Express across Europe to Istanbul, a train to Erzurum and bus to Tabriz and train to Tehran and a plane to Kharg. They spent the summer diving around Kharg and Khargu and mapping their marine settings and their surface geology.

As students of Professor D.W. Gill at TCD and their expedition to the Persian Gulf, Patrick and Christopher were invited to take PhDs at IC. So aged 24-28 (1962-1966) Christopher
mapped parts of the Holocene Geology of Abu Dhabi, contributing with other members of IC team to the major advances in the understanding of carbonate and evaporite geology in the 1960s. They enabled the determination of the depositional settings of modern and ancient carbonate and evaporite facies and the causes of their diagenesis. New paradigms associated with sabkha cycles of stacked intertidal and supratidal sediments in ancient sediments, aided the search for hydrocarbon reservoirs in the Middle East and World Wide.

Aged 29-30 (1966-68) Christopher, with his PhD, acquired a Harkness Post Doctoral Fellowship to UT (University of Texas). Here, applying concepts he had learnt at IC, he studied the Permian strata of West Texas and New Mexico. When first at UT, Christopher rented an apartment overlooking the east of the UT Football Stadium, now the site of LBJ’s fountain. Then he moved into Mrs. Hillsborough’s house at 1900 Rio Grand with Roger Kolvoord, Robert H. Fakundiny, John Gries. Subsequently they moved to yet another house owned by Mrs. Hillsborough on Congress St 5 minutes from Scholze’s Garten in Austin. Later in the year Christopher’s mother joined him in Austin and they rented house in SW Austin.

On the Austin UT campus lunch time August 1, 1966 Christopher was introduced to America’s preoccupation with guns when Charles Joseph Whitman, the "Texas Tower Sniper", spent over 96 minutes indiscriminately shooting people, killing 16 adults, an unborn child, and wounding 31 others before police Sergeant Ramiro Martinez and Patrolman Houston McCoy reached the top of the UT Library towe. They killed Whitman and carried his bloody body past a cheering Christopher and other UT students.

Aged 31-32 (1969-1970) with a Sydney University Post Doctoral Fellowship studied the Holocene marine settings of Edgecomb Bay to the lee of the Great Barrier Reef, Bass Straits, Shark Bay and the Gulf of Carpentaria. Christopher used to body surf at Whale Beach and even
made a terrifying surf boat trip. He was a patron of Martin's Bar on Oxford Street in Sydney, frequented by artists, their students, evolving to actors from theater groups, their production crew, filmmakers, journalists and the hoi polloi of the Sydney middle class like Christopher an academic geologist and hipster who thought he was living beyond the fringe, enjoying its ambiance. Lived across the Paramata Road from the university in an apartment in Glebe, then moved a year later to a tiny exotic one room apartment on Musgrave Street overlooking Mosman Bay.

Aged 32-35 (1970-73) he became an Assistant Professor at Ohio State University studying coal measure and carbonates in the Appalachians, the Permo-Triassic boundary of Nevada and Utah, the Great Bahamas Bank, and the Jurassic of Morocco. Christopher spent most evenings at Larry’s Bar close to his home of 189 E 14th Street. He met his future wife, Diane Bowman in Larry’s Bar, proclaiming she was to be his favorite girlfriend, and married her on Bastille Day of 1973. Christopher’s second contact with US’s preoccupation with guns was after the National Guard on May 4th inexplicably killed four and wounded nine other unarmed students at Kent State. A small group of less than 50 OSU students assembled to protest with other students coming out of their class rooms as innocent bystanders to view the National Guard who appeared on campus on the Oval. Dr. Jim Collinson and Christopher were administering a lab exam for a graduate-level sedimentary petrology course when the National Guard tear-gassed the student onlookers who rushed away from the tear gas. Jim and Christopher heard shouting outside but didn’t realize what was going on until tear gas started wafting through the windows. The exam ended, some of the students to be arrested as they left the front entrance of Mendenhall.

Aged 35-38 (1973-76) he was employed as a carbonate sedimentologist and petrographer with the Carbonate Facies Group at Esso Production Research in Houston. He worked on the
Jurassic Smackover and Arab D while instructing in the field on the geology of largely carbonate outcrops of Texas and New Mexico and the Recent of the Bahamas and Florida. He and Diane lived in West University and largely socialized with colleagues from the Esso Lab.

Aged 38-39 (1977) he became Associate Director of the Earth Science Resources Institute of University of South Carolina. He and Diane made short visits to Egypt, and Tunisia and then he managed the geological study of a series outcrops in Libya, mentoring students studying the regional geology.

Aged 39-45 (1977-83) Gulf Oil Research he studied the acoustic properties of the Mission Canyon carbonates of the Little Knife Field in the Williston Basin, and Permian Basin oil field geology. Living on 9th Street in Oakmont Pennsylvania his wife gave a premature Caesarean birth to Alda Elizabeth, kept in an isolation incubator to be first dandled by her father for what seemed to be years before Diane took over. Diane then gave Caesarean birth to the overdue Emma Sarah. Both babies dramatic arrivals concentrated the minds of their parents.

Aged 45-70 (1983-2008) became a Professor at the University of South Carolina when the oil industry took a down turn. Maintained his family home at 2800 Gervais St. Taught Sedimentology, Basin Analysis, Petroleum Geology and Introductory Physical Geology while conducting research in the Carbonates of the Middle East, and Gulf of Mexico, and sediments of offshore Korea. He also jointly built the Strata Website with his MSc student Nassir Alnaji of Saudi Aramco. Later the the Strata Website was donated to SEPM and Christopher from 2010 to 2017 became the chief editor of SEPM’s STRATA. This world premier web site on sequence and sedimentary stratigraphy had thousands of visitor’s worldwide visits each month.

Aged 70-84 (2008-present) a Distinguished Emeritus Professor University South Carolina. He consulted and taught for Schlumberger in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the UAE applying high-
resolution sequence stratigraphy, facies analysis, petrophysics, and the controls on carbonates, evaporites and clastic systems of the Holocene through Mesozoic, and Paleozoic, specifically of the Arabian Peninsula and Gulf. He is currently working on a narrative of his personal life and professional career.

From the loosely translated the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam by the English poet Edward Fitzgerald

The Moving Finger writes; and having writ,
Moves on: nor all your Piety nor Wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,
Nor all your Tears wash out a Word of it.

The sphere upon which mortals come and go,
Has no end nor beginning that we know;
And none there is to tell us in plain truth:
Whence do we come and whither do we go.

And, as the Cock crew, those who stood before
The Tavern shouted--"Open then the Door!
You know how little while we have to stay,
And, once departed, may return no more.

Myself when young did eagerly frequent
Doctor and Saint, and heard great argument
About it and about: but evermore
Came out by the same door where in I went.

But if in vain, down on the stubborn floor
Of Earth, and up to Heav'n's unopening Door
You gaze To-day, while You are You--how then
To-morrow, You when shall be You no more?

Strange, is it not? that of the myriads who
Before us pass'd the door of Darkness through,
Not one returns to tell us of the Road,
Which to discover we must travel too.