

Eulogy from Craig Mudge of DEC Australia at the passing of C. Gordon Bell (May 17, 2024)

Dear Mause and colleagues

Much has been said about Gordon, including in the New York Times obit.

However, a couple of days ago, a likeable tribute from Steve Blank came by email. His remarks are attached.

Steve came to Gordon later in his career. He insightfully said that Gordon's conversations were at several levels.

For me as an engineer at DEC, it was a matter, for others, of understanding what Gordon was saying, which sometimes involved translation. I often found myself as a translator in the 1970s, much of my skill development due to co-authoring "Computer Engineering" with Gordon. The text, which I first used at Caltech, became the main post-graduate book in computer design for some years.

Gordon's love for Australia built when he was a Fulbright Scholar at the University of New South Wales in the late 1950s in Sydney; that was where he met Gwen.

In 1980 Gordon visited the CSIRO VLSI Program, the country's first microelectronics research effort, as an advisor. Later he invested in Austek Microsystems, a spinout of the VLSI Program, and was an active member of the company's Technology Advisory Board. The company produced chips for personal-computer manufacturers in the US, for Cochlear, the Australia Telescope, and the defence industry. Its Fast Fourier Transform chip formed the basis of CSIRO's Wireless LAN (WiFi) patent which yielded \$A400 million in royalties. Some twenty-five years later, after a distinguished career at DEC, CMU, NIST, a couple of multis startups, Microsoft, and investments in close to a hundred startups, Gordon and Sheridan bought a condo in Sydney, with wonderful views of the Harbour and the Bridge - to support his interests in Macquarie University (Adjunct Professor), Microsoft Research, and his seed investments in Australia.

Occasionally, we sailed together on the Harbour; his interest in the water had stemmed from an early interest in underwater photography.

He was elected a Foreign Fellow in Australia's Academy of Technology and Engineering, which gave him a platform to contribute to our country's technology development.

I miss him very much.

Regards,

Craig