

Bryant Bannister

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Notice

Bryant Bannister

1926–2016



On Friday, 15 July 2016, Bryant Bannister, Director Emeritus of the Laboratory of Tree-Ring Research and Emeritus Professor of Dendrochronology at the University of Arizona (UA), passed away in Tucson, Arizona. The world has lost a towering figure in the development and expansion of dendrochronology around the world. More to the point, his numerous friends and colleagues have lost an inspirational and far-sighted leader, a wise counselor, and an innovative and productive scholar.

Bryant Bannister was born in Phoenix, Arizona, on 02 December 1926. After a stint as an American Field Service ambulance driver with the British Army in Burma during World War II, he resumed his career as a student at Yale University where he received his Bachelor's degree in 1948. He spent the summer of 1948 as a student at the University of Arizona Archaeological Field School at Point of Pines on the San Carlos Apache Reservation, after which he matriculated as a graduate student in the UA Department of Anthropology. He

completed his M.A. in 1953 with a thesis on the tree-ring dating of the Kin Kletso site in Chaco Canyon, New Mexico, and his Ph.D. in 1960 with a dissertation synthesizing the tree-ring chronology of archaeological sites in Chaco Canyon. His foray into dendrochronology was a result of his contact with Andrew Ellicott Douglass, the founder of the science, and he became Douglass' assistant during the 1950s working on, among other things, the identification of cycles in tree-ring sequences using the cycloscope, a device invented by Douglass, and on the reanalysis of archaeological tree-ring samples from the Rio Grande Valley in New Mexico. He became an assistant professor in 1959, an associate professor in 1964, and full professor in 1965.

In 1964, after a prolonged crisis in the history of the Tree-Ring Laboratory, Bannister was appointed the fourth Director of that institution and served in that capacity until he relinquished the post in 1982. As Director, he oversaw the rejuvenation and diversification of the Lab through the

addition of several new faculty members representing different aspects of dendrochronology and the initiation of systematic expansion of dendrochronology into other areas of the globe. In 2012, he received the singular and completely appropriate honor of having the newly constructed Bryant Bannister Tree-Ring Building dedicated in his honor.

Stringent time constraints on journal publication prohibit a satisfactory acknowledgment here of Bryant Bannister's life and his extraordinary contributions to dendrochronology in general and the Laboratory of Tree-Ring Research in particular. The next (January) issue of *Tree-Ring Research* will feature a more fitting tribute to his long and productive career. We invite readers of this announcement to contribute brief thoughts and reminiscences to be considered for inclusion in the forthcoming issue of the journal. These items can be e-mailed to jdean@ltrr.arizona.edu.

—Contributed by Jeffrey S. Dean and
Ronald H. Towner