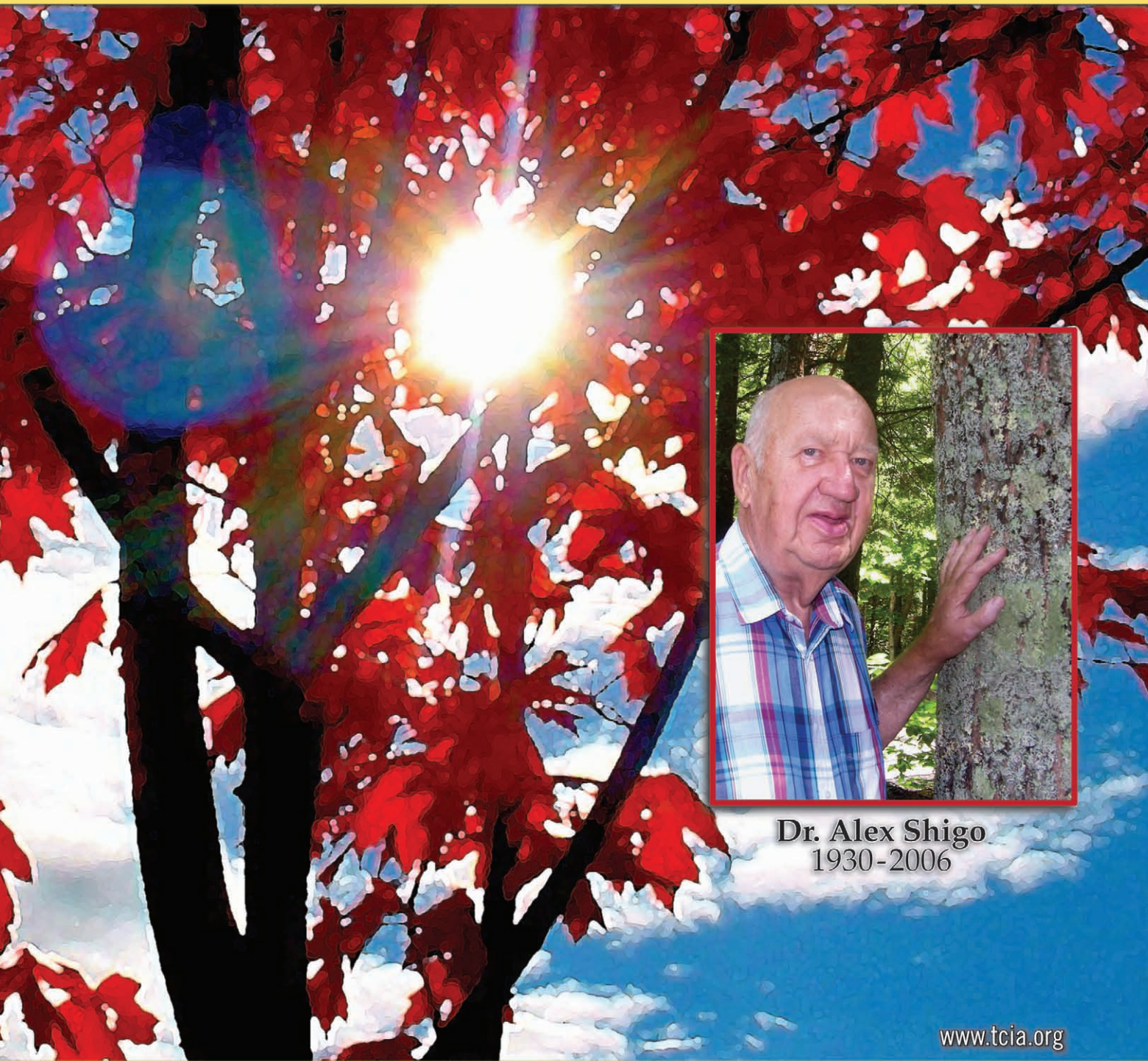


TREE CARE INDUSTRY

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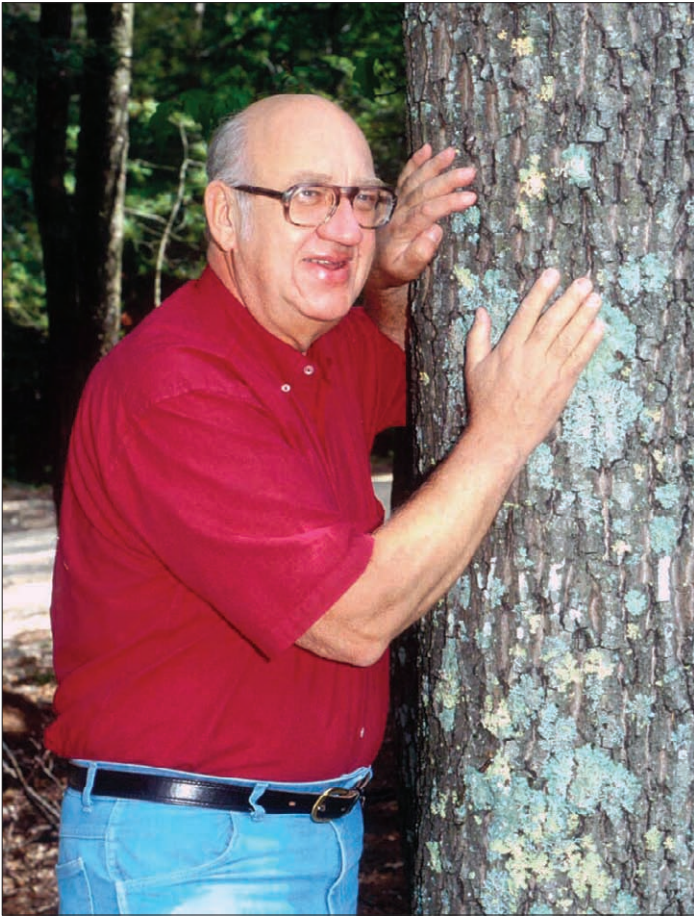
Volume XVII, Number 11 - November 2006



Dr. Alex Shigo
1930-2006

A Tribute to the Legendary Dr. Alex Shigo

May 8, 1930 - Oct 6, 2006



“I believe that once you begin to understand how the tree system works, you will have answers that are much better than I can give you.”

Alex Shigo
Modern Arboriculture

By Cynthia Mills

In the first weeks of arriving at the National Arborist Association in 1999, I kept hearing about the amazing Dr. Al Shigo. Shortly thereafter, I heard him speak for the first time and was completely captivated. I really had to listen to follow the Renaissance man as he tied in topic after topic to the study of arboriculture. I had no idea how my liberal arts background could be tied so powerfully to trees until then. He had me mesmerized and helped begin my love for this industry and its people.

I was soon to engage in a ritual that thousands of arborists and students from all over the world have come to love over the years – a visit to Al and Marilyn’s lake house.

Board members Rusty Girouard and Tim Johnson were my companions on this first trip. I have had a photo in my office for years of us eating lobster and steamers together. That evening I was tutored in the magic of a man who was to become a dear friend, along with his partner in life, Marilyn.

Over the next eight years, I was to be the recipient of many notes, phone calls, photos, and trips back and forth to Al and Marilyn’s home or the lake house. Sometimes Mark Garvin and I would drive there to get ideas about articles for *TCI* magazine and to listen to Al’s guidance on where the profession and industry needed to go. This would always include play time with his beloved dog. Mark would sneeze a lot, and then we’d come back with pages and pages of notes. We never had to ask Al what his opinion was. You only had to arrive and be a willing audience for his never-ending insights about the world he loved.

My husband joined in the fun and the gastronomic delights of hospitality in the Shigo home. What struck us, and anyone who had the pleasure of Al’s company, was his insatiable curiosity – not just about trees but about people and any possible topic that could come up when two or more people were gathered together.

Al gave us so many gifts. Yes, he taught us how to think differently about trees and their care. He encouraged us to be professional. He did the research that allowed him to show us the “how” behind the many questions we asked him that usually started with “but why?” He gave us the joy for years to come of recording his wisdom in multiple forms so we can access his work and therefore keep him close to us. He encouraged us – no demanded of us – that we keep pushing harder and harder in the field of arboricul-



With the big trees in California.

ture. He taught us that life is not something to be lived – it's something to be attacked; every moment of every day. He proved over and over again that people are not something to just let pass by us. Every single person out there has something we can be curious about and interested in. After all, he was interested in each one of us. He showed us the joy of a lifetime love affair with Marilyn and how to live in a relationship that perpetuates the constancy of family. He shared his children with us and gave us insights in how to treasure those who will come behind us. He included us in the joys of great company, tasty food, and the love of a good bottle of wine.

As life threw him a challenge or two in recent years, he became even more insistent that those of us to whom he would entrust the future must listen even more carefully. So when I coaxed him to make his last trip to keynote at TCI EXPO, I promised him we would do everything we could to make him comfortable on the way and that he was guaranteed a big audience of eager arborists. He was not disappointed.

Al was determined to make sure that the reach of his enthusiasm spanned far and wide and so when Danielle Zanzi in Italy arranged a 15th anniversary conference celebration of Modern Arboriculture, Al and Marilyn made the long journey to celebrate the work that he had begun there so many years ago. As I walked to claim my luggage in Milan, there were Marilyn and Al. We had traveled all the way to Italy together and had no idea we were on the same plane. Of course, we then had to make jokes about how funny it was that we traveled 10 hours to see each other in Italy



In 1951, a uniformed Shigo played for the US Air Force Band.

instead of 40 minutes up the road. Danielle and arborists from all over Italy and Europe were anxious to hear what the legendary Dr. Al Shigo wanted to impart. The evening's celebration at a beautiful palace that included a birthday celebration and the Mayor of Varese presenting official greetings to Al and Marilyn was the icing on the cake to honor a man whose intellect lit a fire for arboriculture across the world.

This spring, I had for the second time, the rather dubious privilege of having to follow Al in speaking. If that doesn't fit the bill of "it's a hard act to follow," I don't know who possibly could. We gathered with New Hampshire arborists at the Sugar Shack in Barrington, N.H. for what was his declared final official speech. The room was packed. I have never been so thankful in all my life that the arborists of TCIA had voted to give Al Honorary Membership. The timing of this recognition gave me the distinct honor of being able to hand deliver it from arborists all over the world to a man whom they held in such deep esteem; and to do so literally right in

his backyard in the place where he had schooled so many, many arborists and students.

Little did I know that only a matter of a few weeks later, arborists would gather from all over the world to say goodbye to a man that they loved in that very same Sugar Shack. They came from The Netherlands, Italy, Pennsylvania, Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, California, Washington, Ohio, Georgia, Maryland and so many other locations – all on very short notice. It was literally a family reunion – and once again, standing room only. Al's pictures scrolled on the screen before us, while we greeted each other and talked about how stunned we were. And then I watched absolutely and utterly amazed at how many people who normally would be somewhat reticent to speak in front of a large group of people, many of whom they



Marilyn joined many overseas trips, including this one to southwest Australia.

did not know, shared their stories of a beloved man who had changed their lives. I watched both men and women wipe tears from their eyes. I listened to neighbors, friends, gourmet cooking group pals, family members, foresters, arborists, and a student or two all share their most treasured memories of moments in time when a man whose interest in them and his love of life intersected in such a way that their lives were never the same. It didn't matter whether you were an arborist or not, each one of us claim Al for our own, in our own special way ... and he claimed us for his partners on the journey of life.

So as we celebrate the life of an extraordinary man who graced us with his gifts for an all-too-short time, we recognize that Dr. Al Shigo is a legend who lived amongst us; who loved us as we loved him; and who leaves us with his insistence that we press on and act on behalf of the trees and this wonderful profession of arboriculture.

Thank you for you, Al.



Good food, wine and company were always staples on Mendums Pond in Barrington, N.H.



Undaunted Enthusiasm

By Tim Walsh

The world lost more than a man on the night of Oct. 6. Dr. Alex Shigo was many things to many people – husband, father, brother, grandfather, uncle, friend, teacher, student, mentor, scientist, musician, philosopher.

Our loss is great, but what he gave us is greater. We have all gained in knowledge of how trees function, but more importantly, he taught us how humans should function. If all that you learned from Alex was about trees, than you missed most of what he was about. Trees are what Alex did, they were not who he was.

He taught us about living well, as all great teachers do, by example. He was kind, gentle, loving, generous, challenging, stimulating, encouraging, humorous, curious, determined, and enthusiastic. I know that we are supposed to be able to define ourselves in ten words or less, but I just could not do it for Al.

Dr. Shigo had the amazing ability to treat every person as if they were of the utmost importance to him, and it wasn't an act. He truly cared about people. One of his many motto's was "I love everybody, and if they don't love me, that is their fault." When he spoke to you, he looked at you, and you knew that he was truly interested in you. The intensity of his attention could be intimidating at times. Anyone who asked a question that they should have known the

answer to and fell under the weight of those penetrating blue eyes knows this. When Dr. Shigo was with you, he was just with you. He wasn't just pressing the flesh, signing books and moving on in the crowd.

There was a sheet of paper found near his desk with some of his thoughts on it. There were about 15 thoughts on the page but the following stood out to me:

- ♦ Believe in something!
- ♦ Always provide time for love and thinking
- ♦ Talk a lot to those you love
- ♦ Don't get cynical or intolerant
- ♦ Pursue curiosity and fun
- ♦ Ethics are the values that determine human behavior
- ♦ Students bring hope!
- ♦ Give freely of your ideas and you will never die

If we can not find the information about trees that we need in any of the hundreds of scientific publications, dozens of books, thousands of slides or the many videos that he created, I guess that we will have to find the answers for ourselves. He taught us how to look at, and touch, the trees to find the answers. He also connected many of us together so that we may share our experiences and learn together.

He also taught us to accept that we are wrong when someone shows us that we are wrong. Some of Alex's opponents viewed him as wishy-washy, because he would change his view on something if he found out he was wrong. Many people had greater respect for him because he was one of the first "experts" to publicly state, "I don't know," or "I was wrong."

He was always learning and challenging himself. He loved to be shown new things. I think that he liked it when people challenged him and could prove that he was wrong. He had no time for those that said he was wrong because his views were



(L-R) Don Roppolo and Tim Walsh flank Shigo in the shipping department of Shigo & Trees, Associates.

different or may have cause people to change what they did.

Some people were afraid that his teachings were going to cost them money. The reality was that those who truly followed what he taught, and practiced it on a daily basis, often made more money than those who did not.

As we move forward, slowly at first, but ever forward, we should remember the man and the messages. We should honor, not deify him. We should celebrate, not mourn him. We should build libraries and schools, not shrines. We should get our hands dirty digging for roots instead of merely wiping our tears. We should strive to be better people, not just better arborists.

Alex, thank you for making me a better person first and a better arborist, second. I will continue to learn and share what I have learned with others. I look forward to walking in the woods with you again. I have more that I need to do first, so please wait for me ...



Workshops in Portsmouth, N.H., became mobile outdoor labs for thousands.



Shigo spanned the world to bring Modern Arboriculture to eager groups of arborists from Italy (shown here) to Spain, Germany, Australia and New Zealand.

Below are some of the many comments we received:

Art Batson: Alex opened our eyes and mind to how a tree functions. He challenged us to not accept the obvious but made us think about tree structure, tree wounds. He was a man we all loved and respected. He said “A Tree Hurts, Too” but today we are all hurting with his passing.

Bill Kruidenier: The world has lost the equivalent of the General Sherman Sequoia. Dr. Shigo left this world in a much better place than when he entered, and due to his great work our world will continue to improve through improved tree health and environmental quality. What a wonderful legacy and gift. Alex taught us of the inter-connectedness within trees and communities (natural and human).

He challenged us as professionals to not be satisfied with the obvious – to look deeper at all issues and not to settle for what “appeared” to work in the past. Dr. Shigo called issues as he saw them, pulling no punches, upsetting many of us along the way, waking us with the call to thoughtful action and causing all to grow in our understanding of trees as a result. The profession of tree *care* owes so much to this human being – a mighty sequoia has fallen and we all can’t help but feel the aftershock.

Aaron Schauer: He spent so much of his time being told he was wrong and to quit being a pest. Yet, he continued on with focus and sincerity. He was as philosophical about his work with trees as he was scientific. He was also such a giving person. He wasn’t in it to make the money, he was in it because he believed and cared about it. He wanted things to be better for everyone. He wanted students to learn to think outside the box and to discover for themselves, not listen blindly. He knew they were the key to improving the industry because they were eager and willing to listen and weren’t affected by the idea of finances yet and business strategy. He was always

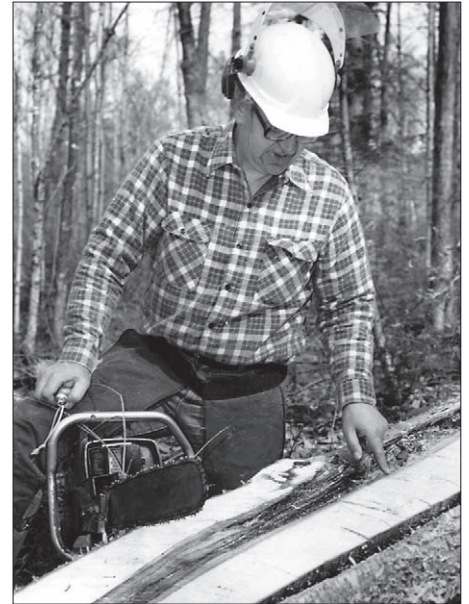
eager to do what was right and that is probably what I appreciate most about him.

Matthew Lang: What I will always remember about the two trips I took to meet Dr. Shigo were that not only were the sessions informative (he really made you think!) but it wasn’t a one-sided discussion. You had to get involved.

Dave Scharfenberger: There is no doubt that Dr. Shigo had the gift to not only change our entire profession (which would be enough in itself) but was also able to touch so many people on a personal and individual human level. That connection is the real gift!

Paul Buikema: Doc Shigo made me begin to think of tree care and trees in an entirely different light, with fewer facts and figures and more holistically, intelligently, preemptively. I now look at what trees do when we “care” for them, how they respond, what I can do differently. I am glad I got to shake the hand of Doc Shigo, even if it was only once or twice. I am sad that he is gone, I think we had much more to learn from him.

Nigel Smith: My first recollections of Dr Shigo was as an aspiring lecturer back in 1991. I was based at Cannington College in Somerset, as part of my teaching practice from Wolverhampton University. The Arboricultural Lecturer I was to observe was rather excited about a new publication he was to base his lecture



Way back in 1985, the principles of CODIT was clearly on display.

on, and was given a copy for reference. That publication was *Modern Arboriculture* by Dr Alex Shigo, which was to become one of the leading text books for all UK based arboriculture courses. The atmosphere in the lecture was electric, which soon spread among UK arborists, as such to this day, every course reading list includes *Modern Arboriculture* and *A new Tree Biology* as a minimum.

Whilst the Arboricultural industry has lost a well respected champion of arboriculture, and his passing sent shockwaves around the world, we must remember his life and give grateful thanks for his achievements, and ensure that we who follow have the courage, conviction and outright enthusiasm to continue the task he started.

Tim Craig: Alex Shigo’s books should be required reading for anyone involved in the care and maintenance of trees. Without Alex Shigo’s sustained attack on orthodox tree management practices we would still be stuck in the dark ages of flush cuts and painting wounds. Without Alex Shigo’s conceptual framework for examining the



A workshop in England from the early days of Shigo’s worldwide travel to promote *Modern Arboriculture*.

condition of trees and how they grow, present day arboricultural practices would be inconceivable. If you take pride in pruning trees properly, Alex Shigo's work is the reason you are always thinking about that pruning cut you just made- does it look right? will it seal over? Alex Shigo's instinct on trees is surely right; if we are to bring his philosophy to life we should look again at his ideas, which sought not to be clever but simply wise.

Mary Reynolds: I am staggered, shattered, stunned, and greatly saddened by the death and our loss of Alex. I miss and will continue to miss him terribly. Simultaneously I am compelled ([along with like-minded colleagues) to do all in our power to carry his message about trees, tree function, and tree education to new generations of students, society, and the world. Although the specifics of that path for this action are unclear, the will and the vision are absolutely clear. A daunting and exciting challenge! I want so much to be a part of it!

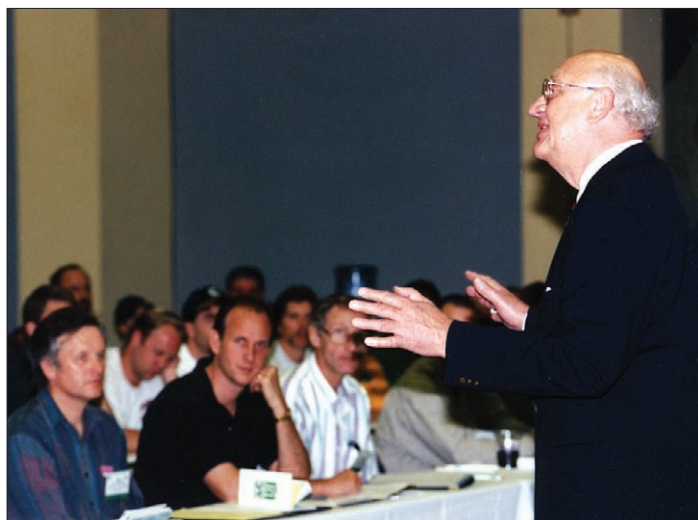
Alex, you are one of my "people roads" in life, both personally and professionally. And for that I shall always be grateful. Thank you, Alex, for the gift of being a part of such amazing minds and work connecting trees and people and ecological concepts globally. And, thank you, Alex, for all you did, for all you gave to teach us! Trees around the world are bowing their crowns in your honor. I am humbled.

SSA-UWSP web site: There is no doubt that Dr. Shigo changed our lives in a single day. For all that he has done, for who he is, he remained connected to the earth and remained a genuine person. Yes, he is the Father of Tree Biology, but he is also a caring and gentle man who loves people as much as trees. This balance struck each of us and caused us to intentionally strive to be well-rounded human beings.



With Bob Felix on the road together in honor of Excellence in Arboriculture.

Jack Phillips: When I first came to know Alex, I came with a lot of questions. In the classroom, at the microscope, in the woods. I wanted answers. At some point along the way, something changed. On our walks and around the table, I wanted to know what he was thinking about and what questions he was pondering. I wanted to know what he wanted to know, what had caught his eye or ignited his imagination. I began to pay attention to the things he would put in his pocket or under the lens. I began to stop when he stopped along a path in the woods to kneel or touch something or gaze into the canopy. He liked frogs and fungi. He listened



At one of many keynote presentations for packed audiences at TCI EXPO.

to birds and Mozart. Philosophy delighted him and he acquired a taste for my Arabic cooking. Most of all, he loved Marilyn. I learned a lot from Alex Shigo. I learned where to look and how to see.

Bill Gardner: One of the things a lot of people didn't know about Alex is that he was well versed and had a love for philosophy and Greek and Roman history. My favorite thing to do with Alex was walk the dog in the woods. He would explain everything he saw in different ways. My most nervous experience was doing tree work in his backyard with John Keslick, being directed by Al and being deemed worthy when we did it right.

Alex taught me the difference between a sample and a artifact, to take what you learn, challenge it, and take it to another level. He was a great definer of terms. Al brought people together from all walks of life and brought them together for a common goal. He used to put a copy of Tree Basics of every chair and say if you can't answer the questions of this sheet, how can you call your self an arborist? Knowing him improved the quality of my life and caused me to be a better arborist.



Robert Phillips, Richard Harris and Shigo at one of their more interesting eateries.

John Muir Phillips: Dr. Shigo was invited to speak at an NAA conference in 1979 on the West Coast. It was the beginning of a long and rewarding relationship. Since that initial time, I was responsible for bringing him back to the West Coast on four more occasions. In that time I have been his driver, program facilitator, dining companion, drinking buddy and confidant. His lectures were memorable and inspiring, but we always had the most fun taking spontaneous walks in forests or chowing down in some eclectic cafe. He could eat and drink with the best of us. More than once he was suspect of places we would take him, not sure if he might get into trouble. After a while, he accepted our non-conformist ways and trusted us to take good care of him.

Alex's work was monumental and revolutionary. I know of no other tree person so widely known and respected. This is not to say that he was always popular or went without criticism. And he didn't mind that he was doubted. What did bother him was that many of the critics didn't read or listen carefully. This problem continues. Alex had a style of delivery that reflected his enthusiasm and command of the spoken word. Some accused him of being more of an entertainer than an academic professor, but he did what he did with purpose. It was his way of getting people's attention and to get them to remember at least a few key points. His texts were also unconventional and received plenty of criti-

cism. Some thought they were sloppy or lazy, but Alex called them orchestrations, designed to deliver the concepts in his logical way. Words and methodology were very important to him. They were essential in describing detail and exhibiting the ways of trees. While he would often be frustrated by those who would skip over the detail or make claims without good science to support them, he never closed the door for discussion. More than once he said, "I'll show you my data if you show me yours."

Alex worked hard to bring better understandings about trees. Those who claimed he was just building his name or selling snake oil didn't know him very well. He was driven by an unending fascination of the subjects, excitable by both the big and small parts. When he'd reach down into a rotting log and pull out some mycorrhizae, his eyes would light up and a big smile would appear. Looking up, he'd wonder how branches could grow so long and withstand the forces about them. Thanks to him, we know a little more how this happens.

At one of his lectures, a woman asked him how he'd like to be remembered. He answered humbly, "As a biologist." I think it is safe to say that he was at least that. For me, he will be remembered as mentor, father and colleague. Because I still climb and cut trees, I feel some effect of Alex Shigo almost every day. Whether it's staring at a piece of sawn log, making a pruning cut or simply feeling the wind blow branches, I feel his presence. Sometimes it's the voice of the lord and other times he's come out to play. There were only a few people in my life who have stayed with me in the background. Alex is one and I doubt that he will ever leave. In respect for his contribution to this world, I will continue to help others see what he did. Thank you Alex.

Dwayne Neustaeter: When my father passed away it was hard for me. I found it hard to express all I wanted to say. In some ways I am feeling this way now. This is the only way I can in writing express what Alex was to me:

Always faithful

Loving and living life to the fullest

Energetic, enthusiastic and exuberant

Xylophones, saxophones and clarinets

Simply seeking scientific truths



Shigo and Walt Money studying tree dissections in 1978.

Honoring the past and hoping for the future

Inward, lateral. Outward and vertical

Gladly sharing and teaching

Oboes set the note tone for the rest of the orchestra.

Dave Nordgaard: Back in 1990 I was extremely lucky to spend a day in the woods collecting samples with Alex Shigo for a three-day workshop the next day. In my book there is nothing better than a walk in the woods. Add Shigo and you would never forget it. It seems Al had a story about every tree, from roots to crowns to the big picture of how it all fits together. I will never forget his infectious enthusiasm, his energy and desire to share all that he had learned. In those four days Al transformed me from a tree cutter to an arborist. Not many weeks go by that I don't use one of Al's great stories or analogies he shared with us that week to help explain trees to a client. Your work will live forever, Al. Thank you for teaching me to understand and Touch Trees.

Don and Selina Marx: Al and I go back to the early 1960s, when we were in the US Forest Service. He was in the Northeastern Station and I was in the Southeastern Station. We both fought the same battles with Washington administrators; he trying to get funding for his wood decay process research and me for mycorrhizae and root diseases. We lost most of the battles but we won the war. Al will best be remembered for his



Working in the USFS Culture Room in 1960.

introduction of soil biology and tree physiology to arboriculture. This changed arboriculture from an art to a science. Rest well my friend you earned it, but you will be missed.

Gerard Fournier: You told us to “touch trees” and you touched our hearts forever. God bless you and keep you, your inspiration will be with me always!

Gary Mullane: All the trees are shedding tears today. How lucky we were to have such a wonderful man walk with us among the tall trees.

David Glenn: Alex you have been an inspiration and your enthusiasm has stimulated a generation of followers and supporters of arbor education around the world. New Zealand Horticulture Industry Training Organisation. Dunedin, NZ

Dr. Jeffery Iles: The unpleasant yet unavoidable truth is that trees and people have finite lifespans. Just like trees, some people grow taller than others. And in every sense of the word, Dr. Shigo was a giant. We were incredibly fortunate to have this man as a teacher and a friend. Now it is up to us to carry on.

Robert Miller: Alex was truly an inspiration as a teacher. He often said of arboriculture “Understand the tree, the rest is easy”. I took those words to heart and used them as a foundation for teaching tree management.

Tracey Mackenzie: I feel very fortunate to have had the opportunity to spend some time with him during the Sugar Shack sessions. Two years ago was very special when we toured his lab and went to his cottage (even mowed his lawn). We had a great day and I was overwhelmed by not only his incredible knowledge but also his ability to explain the complex issues of tree physiology in a way that is easily understood. I attended several of his conference sessions but walking in the woods of New Hampshire with Shigo is something I will never forget. Thank you for giving me and many other students and teachers of arboriculture that opportunity.

Perry Crawford: At the Wisconsin Arborist Association meeting in 1976, he was



there along with Bob Felix. Alex presented his findings on CODIT, tree paint and related issues. He revolutionized the way we provided tree care to people and the way we looked at trees. Bob Felix introduced me to the then National Arborist Association. Alex changed my practices and Bob changed my business. Both of them opened up new horizons and insights. In 1993 I wrote, directed and produced an eight part video series on Plant Health Care Principles. I sent the pruning video to him for feedback. His letter of approval and encouragement was another milestone. I was grateful for his feedback.

Kevin Smith: In his own words, Dr. Alex L. Shigo had three fully formed careers as a musician, scientist, and publisher. In later years, Alex maintained that his science work consisted only of dissecting trees with a chain saw and mapping the microorganisms and

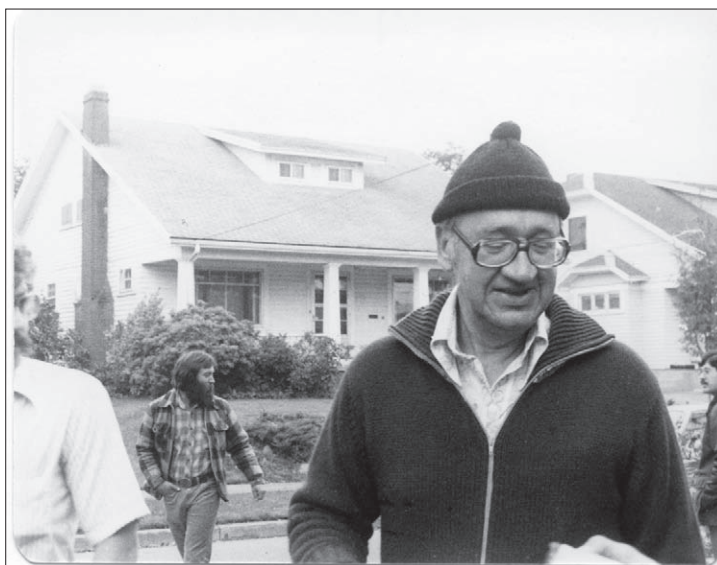
changes in quality for columns of wood discoloration and decay. For me, as a student and coworker, Alex provided the rare combination of analysis, synthesis, and a passion to teach.

Analysis is simply taking apart a complex thing. For this, Alex used an unlikely combination of chain saws, splitting mauls, microscopes, and Petri dishes. With these tools, he saw patterns of tree infection and response that did not quite fit his textbooks. So he repeated the analysis again and again until he was sure that the textbooks were very wrong. He developed a new synthesis, the putting together of isolated pieces into a new whole. Although some of his observations had already been made by others, he uniquely linked real effects to real causes. The next step was the big one – rare for a gifted scientist. He expressed this new synthesis of how trees and their many associates interact in terms that people could understand. Alex’s passion could fuel that understanding in others

and to change how we care for trees. These changes continue to improve the quality of life of both trees and people. That is an amazing legacy.

Martin Herbert: We have very fond memories of his two visits to New Zealand. One in particular was an informal night of music where he played the piano and a clarinet. Such a talented man who has left such a legacy that no one will have big enough shoes to fill.

Rob Graham: Let’s celebrate a life well lived and an enthusiasm undaunted.



A cold day in the field.

Connections ... With Trees and People

By Tom Golon

I know our friend Al Shigo is still watching over us all as we touch trees. He was the most sincere educator that I have ever known. He wanted you to learn and he worked hard at getting *you* to work hard at caring for trees with passion. He always talked about touching trees and how trees worked through a series of connections. Al touched people and connected with people – through his workshops and friendships that lasted a lifetime. Never have I seen, in any industry, an environment that creates and fosters networking and friendships as the tree industry. Al epitomized that spirit in the way he brought people together. He wanted us all to learn and pass it on to someone else.

When I was President of the Long Island Arborist Association, we had Al speak on many occasions. I would always volunteer to pick him up at the airport, just so I could spend more time with him, have dinner, and talk about trees, people and anything else that would come up.

He had a way of being inclusive of everyone in his presence. On one occasion, when he did a workshop at my company, we went out for dinner with some other local arborists and our wives. Most of the wives were not arborists nor did they have much interest in trees, except for their beauty. One of the things that impressed me that night was that even though those five or six wives were not arborists, Al made his way around the table to find out something about all of them. He had a one-on-one conversation with each of them, and made them feel included. He loved people, and everyone he came in contact with was made to feel that way.

I don't know who I liked more, Shigo the Arborist or Shigo the Philosopher. I will carry many of his thoughts with me forever. These are my favorites:

- ♦ “Your dictionary should be your best friend”
- ♦ “A professional knows dose and timing”
- ♦ “People who prune the old fashioned way should go to an old fashioned dentist”
- ♦ “Wet spaghetti bends”
- ♦ “Medical doctors take an oath not to cause harm. Tree people should take a similar oath for trees”
- ♦ “The 90 three 90 rule”
- ♦ “Sometimes we need to let trees go with dignity”
- ♦ “Education cures ignorance”

The list goes on and on and if you want to learn more, read his book, *Tree Pithy Points*.

About a week or two before Al passed away, I made a note to give him a call about a project that we were going to work on this winter. Sadly, I never made that call, though I can guess what he would have told me – “Use your knowledge and figure it out yourself.”

The industry needs to take what Al taught us and carry the torch, carry on his legacy and create passion in the hearts of those who touch trees. Al helped turn us all into professionals. He brought change and made us look a bit further to cause change ourselves. I hope Al Shigo meant as much to you as he did to me.



Whether on the computer at Mendums Pond or with one of his dogs (Toby here) in the woods, Shigo devoted his life to understanding the connections between trees and the people he met who cared for them.

