

Dirk Frankenberg
Chapel Hill, NC

Date of death: 6/9/2000

Dirk Frankenberg died of a heart attack at his Hillsborough home at age 62. Dirk was an internationally known professor of marine sciences at the University of North Carolina. A native of Concord, Mass., Dirk earned his BA at Dartmouth and his master's and doctoral degrees at Emory University. He joined the UNC-CH faculty in 1974.

Dr. Conrad Neumann, also professor of marine sciences at UNC-CH, recruited Dirk. "Dirk succeeded me as director of marine sciences and worked both very hard and very successfully to transform the marine lab in Morehead City into a major research facility with much closer ties to the University in Chapel Hill," Neumann said. "The man was full of energy and enthusiasm and popular with students."

At the time of his death, Dirk was survived by his wife, Susan; daughter, Elizabeth of Los Angeles; son, Eben of Seattle; and two grandchildren.

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The following was an AP article:

Dirk Frankenberg, an internationally known professor of marine sciences at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, died early Friday (June 9th) of a heart attack at his Hillsborough home. He was 62. A native of Concord, Mass., Frankenberg led UNC-CH's Institute of Marine Sciences from 1980 to 1993 and its marine sciences curriculum from 1974 to 1990.

He spent the last 10 years of his career writing books about North Carolina's natural beauty and helping to preserve it. His books include "The Nature of the Outer Banks" and "The Nature of North

Carolina's Southern Coast," and he recently finished editing the new UNC Press book, "Exploring North Carolina's Natural Areas." In it, he and a large group of North Carolina naturalists introduce state residents and visitors to parks, nature preserves and hiking trails.

"The best college course I ever had came not from the classroom, but from sitting in his car, listening to Dirk talk about the coast," said Watts Hill Jr., who worked with Frankenberg on two books. "I can't emphasize enough that he wasn't just a fine teacher and scientist, but also that so much of his work was dedicated to improving the lives of the people of North Carolina."

Frankenberg served on numerous boards and commissions, including the North Carolina Marine Fisheries Commission, the state's Blue Ribbon Advisory Commission on Oysters and as chairman of the Governor's Advisory Committee on the North Carolina State Museum of Natural Sciences.