



**IN MEMORIAM**  
**Victor Gregory Burrell, Jr.**  
**1925–2009**

Dr. Victor G. Burrell, Jr., former President and Honored Life Member of the National Shellfisheries Association, known to many as Vic, passed away on the morning of December 20, 2009 after a long and gallant battle against cancer. It eventually took him, but never beat him; he continued working nearly to the end. He was predeceased by his wife, Katherine, and is survived by four daughters, eight grandchildren and twelve great-grandchildren.

Vic was an amazing person—he had several careers but the one he enjoyed most was that of marine scientist. He was born Sept. 12, 1925 in Wilmington, NC, the son of Agnes Townsend and Victor G. Burrell, and grew up in Florence, SC, not far inland from the Grand Strand beach area of the state. Vic joined the Navy in 1943, and saw action in the Pacific theatre at Okinawa and Ie Shima. After the war, he came home to South Carolina to attend the College of Charleston, a very fine but at that time small liberal arts institution, and received a B.S. degree in English in 1949. After College, Vic entered the family meat packing business, but later branched out into the charter boat business, running a fishing boat out of Little River on the SC-NC border, and the oyster business. After 15 years in business, he decided to return to graduate school in 1965, earning M.A. and Ph.D. degrees from the College of William and Mary (via the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, VIMS) in 1968 and 1972, respectively. This was a remarkable thing to do—to start over in school himself with four daughters to raise and educate. Vic and Katherine often said of their years in Virginia that they “ate” the party boat in order to survive graduate school.

I had the privilege of working with Vic one way or another for virtually all his career in the marine sciences. Vic was a life-long and avid supporter of the College of Charleston and its Alumni Association, was chosen as Alumnus of the Year by the Association in 1963 and later served as Association President. I first met him in late summer or early fall of 1964 when I entered my freshman year at the College and also met his oldest daughter, Cheri, who was in my class. In August of 1968 I left Charleston to attend graduate school at VIMS and to my surprise one of the first people I encountered there was Vic Burrell. He had recently completed a master’s degree and was embarking on a quest for a Ph.D. Over the next four years, we shared a major advisor (Willard A. Van Engel), lab space, cruises, and plankton samples and then moved back to Charleston together (our families’ belongings on the same moving van) to start our first post-graduate school jobs with the Marine Resources Research Institute (MRRI) of what is now the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources.

Although a student for all of his time at VIMS, Vic also worked tirelessly as a staff member. His motivations were simple – he had a family to feed and he absolutely loved his work. He served as field party chief for numerous cruises and other activities, and as Research Associate, Assistant Marine Scientist, and Associate Marine Scientist. Vic participated on several joint Canadian, Russian and U.S. ICNAF cruises in the North Atlantic. He also played a key role in the establishment and early days of the VIMS Sea Grant Marine Advisory Program, becoming the first industry liaison officer and then Head of Marine Extension. Thus began