

Robert Jehu Bull

Dr. Robert Jehu Bull, 1920-2013, professor of church history 1955-1991, Director of the Drew-McCormick expedition to Tell Balatah (1955), Director of the Joint Expedition to Caesarea Maritima (1971-1996), and husband of Drew University President, [Dr. Vivian A. Bull](#). B.A. & D.Litt., Randolph-Macon College; B.D., Divinity School; Ph.D. and S.T.M., Yale University. The [Robert Jehu Bull Prize](#) was founded in his honor. According to Michael Bressman in *Drew Today*:

He was at home in the Middle East.

When Robert Jehu Bull arrived at Drew as an instructor of church history in 1955, the Theological School's curriculum included one semester of coursework on the topic. By the time he retired as a full professor in 1991, that had been expanded to four semesters, an unmistakable sign he had impressed upon his colleagues the importance of church history.

Bull, husband of Drew President Vivian A. Bull and father of two sons, Camper '91 and Carlson, passed away on Saturday, August 31.

"History was so much more than dates and events to Dr. Bull," says Virginia Samuel-Cetuk, interim dean of the Drew Theological School and a former student of Bull's. "He had the singular ability to connect his students to the men and women who preceded them in the church centuries earlier. He radically changed my view of history—and that has made all the difference to me."

But it was as an ardent archaeologist that Bull, director of the Drew University Institute for Archaeological Research from 1968 to 1990, is best known in far-flung parts of the globe.

Bull began his archeological work in 1955 with the Drew-McCormick expedition to Tell Balatah (Shechem), Jordan. He worked at the site, which included a dig at Mount Gerizim, over several years.

From 1971-1996, Bull served as director of the Joint Expedition to Caesarea Maritima, a city in Israel built by King Herod more than 2,000 years ago. In 1980 the team found a series of crypts.

"It took courage and ingenuity to reach them," reported the Christian Science Monitor. "The American scholar [Bull] and a select backup crew had to crawl 280 feet through a maze of underground vaults originally built by Herod to serve as warehouses for his once-bustling seaport. They inched their way through pitch darkness, wearing oxygen masks and scooping away vast accumulations of sand in their path."

Bull was the author of more than 30 scholarly articles on topics ranging from the founders of the United Methodist Church to the world's earliest irrigation systems in the Middle East. He was the general editor and co-author of several volumes reporting on Caesarea Maritima.