

PROGRESSING TOURISM RESEARCH – Bill Faulkner



*Collated and Edited by
Liz Fredline, Leo Jago and Chris Cooper*

ASPECTS OF TOURISM 9

Series Editors: Chris Cooper (*University of Queensland, Australia*),
Michael Hall (*University of Otago, New Zealand*)
and Dallen Timothy (*Arizona State University, USA*)

Progressing Tourism Research

Bill Faulkner

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Dr Michael Hall, *University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand*
and Dr Dallen Timothy, *Arizona State University, Tempe, USA*

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Preface

Despite passing so young, Bill Faulkner made an impressive contribution to tourism research, not just in Australia, but to researchers around the world.

This collection of a dozen papers is but a peek into the reporting of a life's work. It is representative of some of the innovative and cornerstone pieces that helped to change the course of the Australian tourism industry and it provides tools and models which will continue to contribute to the national interest for Australian tourism for decades to come.

For almost 20 years, I was able to work with, and learn from, Bill as he moved from researcher to the foundation Director of the BTR, then to Griffith University and on to the Cooperative Research Centre for Sustainable Tourism (CRC). His work provided such a benchmark within the industry and academe that he was named the Director of Research for the CRC and its Deputy CEO.

So many academics over the years have built protective walls around their research projects and have been very cautious about sharing their ideas and expertise. Bill Faulkner was the exact opposite. He broke this isolationist mould and so many of his capstone research works were built on an inclusive and collaborative basis. This meeting of minds and open sharing of his ideas not only produced outstanding research, but also helped develop a new crop of tourism researchers.

Bill was at the peak of his productivity and inventiveness at the point of his untimely passing. His works in progress at this time have done much to change the course of tourism research in Australia. His creation of the 'Destination Australia' programme, for example, sets the research agenda for both the CRC and Australian Tourism research at the opening of the 21st century. Bill's work on Revisioning the Gold Coast as one of Australia's premier tourism destinations has changed the way that local government will engage with the industry for many years to come.

Above all, his quiet, thoughtful and smiling presence had a special capacity to calm difficult situations and to bring people together to achieve his own predetermined agenda.

I hope that this small selection of his research publications might inspire succeeding generations of young Australians to build upon and grow both themselves and the national effort for our industry.

Sir Frank Moore, AO

Bill Faulkner: Progressing Tourism Research And Beyond

Introduction

Professor Herbert William Faulkner, known always as Bill Faulkner, passed away on 28 January 2002 after losing a year-long battle with cancer. He left behind a loving family, including his wife Shirley, his children Joanne, Ben and Catherine, and his grandchildren Bridget and Myfanwy. He is also survived by an extended family of colleagues and students who will miss greatly Bill's friendship and inspiration.

From humble beginnings, of which he was fiercely proud, Bill went on to become the 'father of tourism research' in Australia. Bill's death at the peak of his career represents an enormous loss to tourism research; one can only but imagine what his contribution would have been in the next ten years. Bill regarded himself as lucky, being paid to pursue his passion, namely, tourism research. It was a series of happy coincidences that brought Bill to this career, rather than any form of childhood aspiration. His career path is a classic example of the principles of Chaos Theory, which Bill came to favour as an explanation for many tourism phenomena. However, once he had chanced upon tourism research, Bill adopted it with a passion and gave his all to the advancement of the field.

Bill was a visionary with an enquiring mind, and his enthusiasm for research was infectious. The fact that he was so eager to share his expertise with others played an important part in the development of a tourism research culture in Australia. Indeed, one of Bill Faulkner's great legacies is the fact that there is a generation of tourism researchers in Australia whose work will be a testament to his mentorship.

This book has been compiled from Bill's extensive writings on tourism research and represents a permanent legacy of Bill's work for the inspiration of current and future tourism researchers. The aim of this collection is not to mourn his loss, but rather to celebrate his legacy. The idea for the book came from a group of Bill's colleagues and has the blessing of Bill's family and the board of the Council of Australian University Tourism and Hospitality Education (CAUTHE). Whilst this collection lives on as a permanent memory of Bill, CAUTHE, where Bill worked, will use the proceeds of the book to fund a student scholarship in Bill's name. This will

ensure that his inspiration in tourism research will live on to benefit promising young tourism researchers of the future.

The selection of papers and writings has been drawn together into four key themes to represent Bill's research. We have also added a brief introductory section to each theme to orient readers into the background and genesis of Bill's writing and thinking in the area. Reading the papers leaves no doubt that Bill was the 'father of tourism research' in Australia and his growing influence in driving Australian tourism research is clear throughout the book. We therefore hope that the book will be a valuable collection of research papers for the use and inspiration of tourism students and researchers alike. We are grateful to the publishers of the original papers and to Bill's co-authors for willingly allowing us to republish them. Mike Grover of Channelview deserves particular mention here for his ready willingness to publish the collection.

Bill Faulkner

Bill was born in Bowral on 19 April 1945. His tertiary education began with a Teacher's Certificate at Sydney Teachers' College, followed by an undergraduate degree in geography by correspondence at the University of New England (Armidale), which he completed in 1973 with first class honours. He was awarded the university medal for his honours thesis. Following this success, Bill was offered a scholarship to undertake a PhD at the Australian National University (ANU), which he completed in 1979.

Public Service and the Bureau of Tourism Research

After obtaining his PhD, Bill accepted a lectureship at the University of Wollongong teaching *Welfare Geography and Social Behaviour in Urban Space*. He left the university in 1981 to join the Bureau of Transport Economics as a principal research officer in the Social Factors Section, before moving to the Department of Sport, Recreation and Tourism as Director of Research and Development in 1983. It was during this period that Bill wrote his first paper on tourism research, a refereed conference paper presented at the Institute of Australian Geographers conference in Brisbane in 1985, entitled 'Policy Oriented Tourism Research: A View of Future Needs'. In April 1987, Bill was promoted to Acting Assistant Secretary, Sports Facilities and Events Branch. This position no doubt fostered his interest in event tourism, which later became one of his research specialisations and is an identified research theme in this volume (Chapters 4-6).

In September 1987, the Bureau of Tourism Research (BTR) was established as an intergovernmental agency jointly funded by the Commonwealth and States/Territories. Its primary functions were to provide a national focus for the collection, analysis and dissemination of tourism

data, and to conduct or co-ordinate research on priority issues in the tourism field. Bill Faulkner was appointed as the inaugural Director of the BTR and his task was to set up the organisation and to ensure that it met its objectives. During Bill's six years as Director he established the BTR as the most authoritative source of tourism statistics and associated research in Australia and substantially enhanced the quality, availability and use of tourism statistics and research in Australia.

Although Bill enjoyed his time at the BTR, a growing sense of discontent in relation to the politics of running a government bureaucracy, funding, and the type of research that he was able to conduct, prompted him to seek a return to university life. His discontent was exacerbated in 1992 when an evaluation of the BTR's performance and future directions recommended that a substantial increase in resources was necessary to ensure delivery of quality tourism research to support the tourism industry. However, this increase did not eventuate and instead, additional funding was directed to destination marketing bodies. As a result, Bill used several outlets to vent his frustration at what he described as 'advertising fundamentalism'. One of these papers is republished in this volume (Chapter 13).

Griffith University

While at the BTR, Bill developed strong connections with academic researchers in tourism whom he had met at various conferences, and there were many that he came to regard as close friends. He actively sought a move into academic life where he would have more freedom to pursue his research interests. In early 1993, Bill accepted a position as Associate Professor and Head of School in the School of Marketing at Griffith University.

Soon after his appointment to Griffith, he moved to the School of Tourism and Hotel Management at the Gold Coast campus of the university. In this position, he specialised in teaching Tourism Research Methods, an area in which he had substantial theoretical and practical expertise. In this role he established the Centre for Tourism and Hotel Management Research at Griffith University, which enabled him to concentrate more heavily on research and consulting activities.

In the early 1990s, as a consequence of the increasing number of Australian universities commencing education programmes in the fields of tourism and hospitality, the Council of Australian University Tourism and Hospitality Education (CAUTHE) was formed. The prime purpose of CAUTHE is to consolidate and represent the needs and interests of the various universities. Bill became an active member of CAUTHE and was instrumental in its early development. Along with Phillip Pearce, Robin Shaw, Robyn Bushell, and Gary Prosser, Bill played an important role in having tourism research recognised under the Australian Research Council (ARC) funding programmes. These efforts were important in

underpinning the subsequent successful application to fund the Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) for Sustainable Tourism. Bill became the national Chair of CAUTHE and convened two of its annual conferences in 1994 and 1998.

In the mid 1990s, Bill took on the primary supervision role for a number of honours and PhD students at Griffith and before long he had attracted a small but dedicated band of female students who became known as the 'Faulknerettes'. These students remember Bill with huge affection due to the important and willing role that he played as an inspirational mentor. As well as working with each of his PhD students individually on their specific topics, Bill took additional time out of his busy schedule to organise regular symposia, gatherings at which all of his students would come together to discuss conceptual and practical matters relating to research.

The Cooperative Research Centre for Sustainable Tourism

In July 1997, the Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) for Sustainable Tourism was established and based at Griffith University on the Gold Coast. Bill became actively involved in research projects during 1998 and was then invited to become Program Coordinator for a new research programme, 'Tourism Policy, Product and Business Research' that was introduced in late 1998. The decision of the CRC to become national in membership and focus meant that Bill was the ideal person to champion such a move given his expertise and contacts. It was also in 1998 that Bill's contributions to tourism scholarship and research at Griffith University were finally recognised with his promotion to Professor.

Bill's ability to draw together researchers from different disciplines and universities to form powerful research teams became well recognised and was a fundamental building block of the CRC. His creativity and capacity for sharing his expertise for the benefit of others helped develop collaborative research in a manner that had not existed previously in the tourism field. Bill liked to achieve but did not simply seek opportunities that would advance his own career; he was a master at creating opportunities for others and was extremely generous with his time for colleagues and students alike.

In March 2000, Bill was appointed by the CRC Board as Deputy CEO and Director of Research, a position that he held until shortly before his death. According to Bill, the CRC for him was like 'a dream come true'. It was large in scale, was founded upon the principle of collaboration, and had an exciting research agenda. Drawing upon Bill's research vision and his ability to form and facilitate multi-disciplinary research teams, the CRC expanded from a relatively small operation in South Eastern Queensland to a national programme involving university, government and industry partners in every state and territory of Australia. Although there was resistance in some areas to the formation of this national research entity, much

of this resistance evaporated out of respect for the vision and research expertise of Bill Faulkner. The manner in which Bill was able to harness the research expertise of quite disparate groups and craft exciting research projects to draw upon such intellectual capital was inspiring to those around him. As Deputy CEO and Director of Research, Bill worked at a phenomenal pace; not only inspiring others to work together, but also playing a very active research leadership role in many of the CRC's projects.

Bill's passion was always research, and he had a most eclectic range of research interests. Indeed, one of his big problems was that with such an enquiring mind and creative outlook, if anything, he became involved in too many projects. However, if one had to list his three key research foci, they would be destinations (Chapters 1–3), events (Chapters 4–6) and chaos theory (Chapters 9 and 10). Although it is clear that Bill's role in the CRC as Director of Research was to craft a research agenda (Chapters 13–15), he still played an active 'hands on' role in research. In this role he led two major projects that will shape future work in the field.

Firstly, Bill masterminded the ambitious 'Gold Coast Visioning Project' (Chapter 3). This project comprised five phases commencing with an audit of the destination's tangible and intangible tourism resources. This was then augmented with an assessment of stakeholder perceptions, and an analysis of broader trends to provide a context. Likely scenarios for the future were then identified, and the project culminated in a visioning workshop in which stakeholders worked together to describe their core vision for Gold Coast tourism over the next 20 years. This project was threatening to many as it involved the need for stakeholders with quite disparate needs and interests to work together. It was largely Bill's ability in this area that held the group together in the early stages of the project. The stakeholder consultation process used in this project will act as a template for other regions.

Secondly, he led a team examining the tourism impacts of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games (Chapter 6). This is yet another example of the team-based approach to research that Bill was keen to foster, and included a suite of interrelated studies that examined short- and long-term tourism impacts from a range of perspectives. The project broke new ground providing the most comprehensive examination of the Olympics ever conducted, and lays the foundation for future work on the impacts of mega-events.

The Bill Faulkner Legacy

As Bill was a person who became passionately involved in all activities that he undertook, there are few tourism academics in Australia that have not had an association with and benefited from his expertise. Bill's leadership role in CAUTHE gave him a platform to engage with other academics

from the time that he joined Griffith University and, in later years, his role in the CRC ensured that he interacted on a daily basis with academics around Australia. Irrespective of how busy he was, Bill was always prepared to spend time with students and academics alike and had that special ability to make the person to whom he was speaking feel special. His manner was never in any way condescending.

During the last 12 months of his life, Bill's poor health forced him to take more time away from the day-to-day activities of the CRC. Although this pained Bill greatly, it afforded him the opportunity to develop his visionary Destination Australia Research Agenda, which establishes a vision for tourism research in Australia over the first 20 years of the new millennium (Chapter 15). The drive for this vision arose during discussions that Bill had with senior management at the Australian Tourist Commission about the problems that Australia could face if the forecasts of inbound tourist numbers to Australia of 20 million by 2020 prove correct. The research vision that Bill created was adopted by the CRC to underpin its application for a second term of government funding. Although his health was declining quickly, Bill was not prepared to let his work stop. He set up his office in his lounge room at home and communicated with colleagues by phone or e-mail. His home became a branch office of the CRC and many meetings were held there when Bill was too ill to travel. When accused of being a workaholic, Bill replied that his work was also his hobby and he needed to pursue his hobby to keep his mind off his illness.

Until three days before his death, Bill refused to give in to the cancer that was devouring him. Even in those last days, with the help of his daughter, Bill contacted via e-mail a number of those colleagues and friends with whom he was most closely associated and tidied up loose ends. A friend and inspiration to many, his legacy lives on through the many colleagues that he mentored and the research agenda that he created. Although so many people have benefited from having known Bill Faulkner, his passing leaves a huge gap in Australia's tourism research capacity. During the eulogy at Bill's funeral, one of those endeavouring to cover some of his CRC tasks commented in relation to Bill's diminutive stature, that 'it was amazing that someone with such small feet would have shoes that are so big to fill'.

It is hoped that through this collection of some of his writing, the vision of Professor Bill Faulkner, the 'father of Australian tourism research', will live on.

Leo Jago, Liz Fredline and Chris Cooper
August 2002

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Part 1

Tourism Destination Management

Introduction

Bill Faulkner's focus on destinations underpinned his approach to tourism research and provided a framework that was adopted by many other tourism researchers. This destination focus was apparent in Bill's work from the early 1980s when he was in the Department of Transport Economics and was an important theme until his death in 2002. Indeed, the title of his final contribution to Australia's tourism research agenda, published in late 2001, was 'Destination Australia'. Perhaps the many years that Bill spent working in government encouraged him to take a more macro perspective. He was strongly of the view that tourism must be managed at the destination level and that the performance of individual tourism operators would be influenced by setting appropriate structures at the destination level. A destination framework, Bill considered, encouraged a more holistic approach to tourism than is achieved by considering levels below the destination.

The first chapter in this section was written in 1992 while Bill was Director of the BTR (Bureau of Tourism Research). It examines the evaluation of tourism marketing at the destination level, underlining the great emphasis that Bill placed on the role of evaluation, particularly in relation to marketing. Having seen so many destinations waste enormous sums of money on ineffective marketing campaigns without even realising that the money had been wasted, Bill was a firm believer that all destination marketing programs must have specific and measurable objectives, and that all programs must be evaluated against those objectives after the program has been completed. This chapter describes the purpose and process of evaluation and shows how it applies to tourism promotion and marketing at the destination level.

During the 1990s, the awareness of tourism's economic potential increased substantially and was accompanied by escalating levels of competition between destinations for tourists. National, state and local governments were tending to spend substantially more on destination

marketing, notwithstanding, as Bill points out 'this increased commitment ... to tourism marketing ... coincided with a general trend toward greater fiscal restraint in the policy environment' (Faulkner 1997: 23). This amplified the imperative to ensure appropriate, effective and efficient marketing campaigns, which maximised return on investment. As a consequence of this shift, Bill revised his thinking on evaluation and applied it specifically to the marketing activities of national tourism administrations (NTAs). This culminated in the second chapter in this section.

In this chapter, the issues of 'appropriateness', 'effectiveness' and 'efficiency' have been added as key assessment criteria to the original model. The chapter provides a thorough review of evaluation techniques and presents a framework for the evaluation of NTA programs, based upon the earlier model. In recognising that the substantial lead times often involved in travel decisions make it difficult to assess the immediate impact of advertising, the chapter highlights the importance of tracking studies, conversion studies and market share analysis. Bill originally submitted this chapter to the *Journal of Travel Research* and was disappointed to receive quite critical reports from referees. Although sorely tempted to abandon it, after many months Bill decided to rework it taking into account the reviewer comments. The paper was accepted and subsequently won the prestigious annual best paper award from the *Journal of Travel Research* for its contribution to both academe and industry. Bill was delighted with this result and used the story on many occasions to lift the spirits of his students when they received critical reviews.

The final chapter in this section overviews Bill's most ambitious destination-based research project, the Gold Coast Visioning Project. For the past 30 years, the Gold Coast has been one of Australia's premier tourist locations and there were concerns about the Gold Coast's ability to meet the future needs of tourists. Bill's vision was to undertake a three-year multi-disciplinary project that identified the key facilitators and inhibitors of tourism on the Gold Coast and then to develop a suite of strategies to assure the sustainability of this destination. The project included 11 core studies and brought together more than 15 researchers from a range of universities. In order to achieve a strong sense of ownership of the final result, Bill had to consult with, and coordinate the needs and interests of four major industry and public sector sponsors and a multitude of other stakeholders. The engagement process that was developed as part of this project is now being used around Australia to prepare destination visions and management plans. It was Bill's vision and passion that convinced stakeholders to fund the CRC (Cooperative Research Centre) to undertake this ambitious project and his perseverance that kept the project on-track over the three-year period.