



**The Textile Institute remembers William (Bill) Bohm CompTI CText FTI FCFI
(1934–2026)**

It is with great sadness that The Textile Institute formally announces the death of our colleague, friend and long-standing supporter, William (Bill) Bohm CompTI CText FTI FCFI, who died on 10 July 2026 at the age of 91.

Bill dedicated more than six decades of his professional life to the clothing, fashion, education and textile industries. He made an outstanding contribution to the Clothing and Footwear Institute International (CFI) and, following its integration with The Textile Institute, to the Institute and its members. He was a highly respected professional, educator, mentor and, above all, someone who believed passionately in the importance of people, education, professional development and sharing knowledge.

Born in Grays, Essex, on 7 October 1934, Bill attended Palmer's Boys' School before studying History at St Catharine's College, Cambridge, where he gained his BA in 1957 and MA in 1963.

Bill began his career in the menswear clothing industry in 1957 with DAKS Simpson Ltd. Over the following 15 years he progressed through a series of increasingly senior roles, including Manager of the Work Study Department, Group Production Controller and General Manager of the company's Stoke Newington factory, where he was responsible for a workforce of around 600 employees.

In 1972, Bill joined the Burton Group. His roles included Factory Manager in Bolton, Regional Controller for the Lancashire factories, where he was responsible for operations involving around 3,000 employees, and Group Production Engineering Manager. His industrial career gave him an exceptional understanding of clothing manufacturing and

production, experience that would later prove invaluable in his teaching, professional and Institute work.

In 1977, Bill moved into education, becoming Head of the Department of Clothing Technology at the London College of Fashion. During his time there, he developed the BA (Hons) Clothing degree and was also responsible for a Manpower Services Commission project developing comprehensive learning packages for owner-managers in the London clothing industry.

Bill's contribution to higher education continued through his work with the Kent Institute of Art & Design, where he developed the BA (Hons) European Fashion/Product Development programme. This involved establishing partnerships between colleges and industry in five European countries. He also planned a Masters programme in International Fashion Management and carried out a European Commission-funded survey of higher education for fashion and clothing in Central and Eastern Europe, covering Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovenia.

His international academic work continued as Guest Professor for International Marketing at the Hochschule für Technik und Wirtschaft in Dresden, where he assisted with the development of an International Business Studies degree course.

Bill was also deeply involved in professional education and industry development. He served on the Board of the Clothing and Allied Products Industry Training Board (CAPITB) from 1981 to 1988 and chaired its Design 2000 Continuation Committee, which was established to consider the future needs of clothing design education in the UK.

His connection with the Clothing and Footwear Institute began in 1963. He became Chairman of its London Branch in 1971 and subsequently served on its Council and Finance and Executive Committee, as well as chairing its Qualifications and Education Committee. In 1989, he was made a Fellow of the Clothing and Footwear Institute.

Bill played an important role in bringing the CFI and The Textile Institute together. He helped initiate and plan the International Conference for Industry and Education at Cambridge in 1989, jointly with The Textile Institute. Following the integration of the two organisations in the early 1990s, Bill continued his long association with the Institute, becoming a member in 1992, serving on Council from 1996 to 1998 and contributing to the Professional and Educational Affairs Committee.

From 1997, Bill became Development Executive for The Textile Institute and was responsible for the Institute's London office and for developing the Institute's activities in the UK and Europe. For more than two decades he was a familiar and highly respected figure within the Institute, particularly through his longstanding involvement with the London and South East England Section.

Bill became, in many ways, the face of The Textile Institute in London. He was someone who seemed to know everyone, and everyone seemed to know Bill. His energy, enthusiasm and remarkable network of contacts enabled him to bring people together and create opportunities for students, academics, professionals and industry alike.

He served as Secretary to the Design Special Interest Group, the Fashion & Technology Special Interest Group and the Teachers Special Interest Group. He was instrumental in establishing the Design Special Interest Group and the Fashion and Technology Special Interest Group and helped develop the Institute's renowned Design Exhibition, which

showcased graduate talent at prestigious venues including Downing Street and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Bill also organised two major Institute events: the Parliamentary Lunch and the Roy Godden Memorial Lectures. His contribution extended to many other Institute activities, including School Teachers' Training Courses and Practical Learning Days. Through all of these initiatives, he demonstrated his enduring commitment to education, knowledge sharing, networking and creating opportunities for others.

Bill's contribution to The Textile Institute and the wider industry was recognised through a number of significant awards. He received the Textile Institute Lemkin Medal in 1972, the Textile Institute Holden Medal for Education in 1987, was made a Fellow of the Clothing & Footwear Institute in 1989, a Fellow of The Textile Institute (CText FTI) in 2006, and a Companion of The Textile Institute (CompTI) in 2010.

Bill believed that standing still was never an option. In today's terminology, he might have been described as a disruptor. a description he would, I am sure, have smiled at. He continually challenged conventional thinking and looked for new ways to move the industry, the profession and education forward. He was always looking to improve, innovate and create opportunities for others.

His legacy is therefore not simply the many programmes, events, initiatives and professional activities he helped establish. It is also found in the countless students, graduates and professionals whose lives and careers were enriched by his encouragement, mentorship and belief in their potential.

Those fortunate enough to have known Bill will remember not only his considerable professional achievements, but also a truly remarkable man. He was warm, generous with his time, enormously enthusiastic and genuinely interested in people. He had an extraordinary ability to bring people together and to make everyone feel that their contribution mattered.

For so many members and colleagues of The Textile Institute, Bill was much more than a professional colleague. He was a mentor, a friend and a constant source of energy and encouragement. His contribution to the Institute, the Clothing and Footwear Institute, education and the wider clothing and textile industries will be remembered for many years to come.

Bill's legacy will continue through the people he inspired, supported and encouraged throughout his long and distinguished career.

He will be greatly missed.

Bill is survived by his four children and their families.

The Textile Institute would like to thank the London and South East England Section, Barry Start, and Bill's partner, Carmen, for their valuable contributions and assistance in preparing this obituary.