Buckminster Fuller, 20th Century Leanardo Da Vinci

Born: July 12, 1895, Milton, Massachusetts. Died: July 1, 1983, Los Angeles, California

R. Buckminster Fuller is an American inventor, philosopher, lecturer, architect, mathematician and all round peace and environmental activist. He has been the inventor of the geodesic dome, the person who coined the phrase, "Spaceship Earth", a mathematician whose insights into the nature of the molecule had scientists name a carbon molecule as fullerenes for their resemblance to geodesic spheres.

I was luck enough to be introduced to his work early in the 1970's. I had my students at Gladstone Secondary in Vancouver, BC, in 1974, build a small 15 feet diameter geodesic dome in my classroom. It was similar to the one pictured below:

Later on that year, I moved to Duncan, BC on Vancouver Island, where I still live. I bought 7 acres of land and built two joining geodesic domes, one, a 29 feet in diameter, pictured below, and the other 24 feet in diameter.

About that time, a friend got me tickets to see Bucky Fuller live at the Royal Theatre in Victoria. It had sold out really quickly of all 1 500 tickets. He was introduced with quite a long speech about the great things that he had done, and then finally this little old man, in big glasses, walked on the stage. He would have been about 80 years old at that time. He paused, looked up at the 1 500 faces and said, "You know, I am but a simple man". He then went for three hours straight, without any notes, completely exhausting his audience. One third of his speech was a look at where we have come in history, one third was on where we can go, including a jab at the

politicians that were on the stage with him (as they were out of seats). He said, that we have enough to feed the world, give everybody in the world the same standard of living as the average North American, WITHOUT using fossil fuels. This was in 1975! The only thing holding us back, he said, “were the politicians”. The last third of his talk was pure Geometry, on the blackboard that he had on the stage. I was in heaven! I looked around and there were 1 500 people listening to a Geometry lesson!

Bucky designed the Geodesic Dome US pavilion at Expo 1967 in Montreal. I have two of his Geometry Books, where he has revolutionized many parts of Geometry, and many of his other two books. An interesting sideline to his own learning, was that he was virtually blind for the first 4 years of his life until he got the right glasses. He refers to this often as a good thing for him, for he learned more by feel, than sight. He learned triangles were strong and tetrahedrons (three-dimensional triangles) were strong, while squares and rectangular prisms were not.

I have run out of time here, but I am going to return and keep updating this post.