



Emeritus Professor John Morrison

Colleagues will be sorry to learn of the death, on 24 September 2021, of Emeritus Professor John Morrison, former Professor of Physiology. The following tribute has been contributed by John's wife, Kath.

John was born in Edinburgh, spending his formative years in Dunfermline. He read medicine at the University of Edinburgh and his undergraduate career revealed early leanings towards a career in medical science, with prizes at the 2nd MB exam in Anatomy, Biochemistry and Physiology, and an intercalated honours degree in Physiology in 1963. Following graduation MBChB in 1966, he spent a year doing medicine and paediatric surgery at the Western General Hospital Edinburgh and later undertook some locum GP work, as well as clinical assistantships in Clinical Neurophysiology.

In 1967 he was awarded an MRC Junior Research Fellowship, and he completed his PhD in 1970 under the supervision of Professor Mary Pickford FRS. In 1970 he was appointed as a Lecturer in the Department of Physiology at Leeds, quickly establishing himself as an independent researcher. He was promoted to Senior Lecturer in 1976, Reader in 1983 and to a personal chair in 1988.

John's research was mainly concerned with the spinal afferent innervation of viscera, and the influences these nerves have on autonomic and somatic functions, and in particular the Lower Urinary Tract. His research work was supported by the MRC, the Wellcome Trust and other organisations; a series of postgraduate students received training during the course of those activities, and it was a particular source of pride that many of his students became Professors or Consultants.

His international reputation was established not long after his arrival in Leeds. He regularly gave invited lectures at international meetings, and contributed numerous invited chapters to books on neuro-gastroenterology or neuro-urology. In 1985 John was invited to the Christian-Albrechts University at Kiel as a Guest Professor, and in 1986 he gave invited lectures at the Indian Science Congress, and was awarded the Mahalanobis Gold Medal of the Indian Physiological Society. In 1992 he was awarded his FRCS(Ed) *ad hominem* for his work on human pathophysiology, which involved collaborations with surgeons and physicians in Leeds and London. John was a Visiting Professor at the Tokyo Metropolitan Institute of Gerontology on three occasions in the 1990s; he was awarded a medal by the Akita Medical Society in 1995; and he was elected a Fellow of the Institute of Biology in 1996.

John's publications include two books. The first, a volume on *Visceral Sensation* within the *Progress in Brain Research* series, was edited jointly with Fernando Cervero; the other, with Micheal Torrens, on the *Physiology of the Lower Urinary Tract*, remains a landmark publication in this field. Along with these there were many invited reviews or chapters in Textbooks and Scientific or Medical Journals.

He was Head of the Department of Physiology from 1987 to 1992, and in 1989 his wife, Lynn, who had always been his strongest supporter, died of breast cancer. During his tenure of the Headship, the research profile of the department was enhanced by increased numbers of staff, postgraduate students, fellows, grant income and publication, the recruitment of teaching assistants and the introduction of computerised learning technology.

In 1997 he decided to take early retirement from Leeds, and took up the position as Professor and Chair of Physiology at the United Arab Emirates University in Al Ain. As well as a busy teaching schedule, he was involved in promoting research and was Chair of the Faculty Research Grants Committee. During his decade in the UAE he also chaired the Scientific Committee of the International Consultation on Incontinence, and also the Awards Committee of the Sheikh Hamdan Medical Foundation. In 2000 he married Dr Kath Rayfield, a former colleague, and they enjoyed a happy family life with his two step-children and four grandchildren. During their time in the Middle East they also became involved with higher education establishments in neighbouring countries, and travelled widely. He was awarded his emeritus status by the University in 2008.

In his youth John played violin, piano and organ, and was Dux in Music at Dunfermline High School in 1959. During his retirement John took up the violin and piano again, and became a member of the Sinfonia of Leeds in 2011. He was elected to the committee of that group, and regularly played in their concerts. Following the diagnosis of soft tissue sarcoma in 2018, which limited his involvement in music and travel, he began to use his iPad for Art, which provided a continuing interest and outlet.

John's funeral service will be held at 11.30am on Friday 22 October at Lawnswood Crematorium, on which day the flag on the Parkinson Building will be flown at half-mast in his memory.