

**Obituary: Ian Richard Major**

It is always sad to lose a trusted, knowledgeable and reliable colleague and friend, particularly if he is only just 59.

At school, Ian excelled at scientific subjects and a State Scholarship took him to study chemistry and zoology for a BSc degree at Durham University. In 1964 he took up an appointment at Aspro-Nicholas, Slough, where he supervised all aspects of subacute toxicity and teratology testing. After two years he left to become an experimental pathologist in the Harrogate laboratories of the Tobacco Research Council, where the carcinogenic activity of various fractions of tobacco smoke condensate was being assessed. Whilst there he developed a short-term screening test aimed at reducing the need for long term carcinogenicity tests involving mouse-skin painting. This work, published in the British Journal of Cancer during 1970, led to his being awarded an MSc degree. Also, whilst still at Harrogate, Ian developed an arguably more relevant bioassay technique using mouse lung homografts.

Following his five-year appointment at Harrogate Ian continued his tobacco smoke-orientated research for two years as Biomedical Research Group Leader in the Belfast laboratories of Gallaher Ltd. Whilst there he was involved in long-term inhalation tests, pulmonary macrophage function tests and a wide range of other tests designed to assess the tumorigenic and broncho-irritant effects of tobacco products.

After a brief spell at Lancaster University to study for, and gain, an MA in Business Analysis, Ian moved to Harwell. Between 1973 and 1979 he worked in the Pathology Section of the Medical Research Council's Radiobiology Unit under the supervision of Dr R H Mole. There the focus of Ian's research was X-ray-induced murine myeloid leukaemia. This research required specialist knowledge in the fields of haematology and histopathology and led to several important publications.

From Harwell Ian was seconded for a 14 month period to work as a pathologist at the Royal Veterinary College, where he gained experience in the pathology of a range of diseases encountered in domestic and other animals.

After returning to Harwell in 1980 the focus of Ian's research was on the radiotoxicology of radio-nuclides.

From 1981 to 1985, Ian worked as a senior pathologist at the Frythe laboratories of Smith Kline & French, where his main responsibilities concerned macroscopic, histopathological, and haematological aspects of the preclinical toxicology testing of potential pharmaceutical products.

In 1985 he moved to Saffron Walden where he was in charge of all aspects of histopathology, initially for FBC, later Schering and finally AgrEvo UK Ltd.

This brief summary of Ian's career does far less than justice to his contribution to many aspects of experimental pathology. He was a true academic of high personal integrity who, though respectful of the views of others, was not afraid to question their diagnoses when he thought they were, or might be, wrong. Apart from what has been said above, Ian had several other important strings to his bow. He developed a masterly understanding of personal computers long before they became cheap and widely available and, early on, he became a skilled computer programmer. He had a special interest in the development of systems to facilitate all aspects of his work and his advice was extremely useful in the continuing development and updating of the RoeLee 84 computer programme which is now widely used by experimental pathologists.

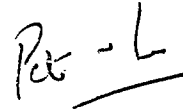
Ian's lack of a veterinary qualification was, initially at least, a handicap to his obtaining more senior positions which his talents, knowledge and wide experience merited. Be that as it may, all those who have had the privilege of working with him will remember a kind, conscientious and patently honest colleague with a dry sense of humour who has made an important and unique contribution to toxicological science, while still finding time to pursue his hobbies of painting in water colours, gardening and reading.

We offer our heartfelt condolences to Ian's wife Anne and to their son Richard.

Signed Francis J C Roe

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Francis J C Roe".

Peter N Lee

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Peter N Lee".

John S Fry

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