Laurence Malcolm
1913 – 2001

Laurence Malcolm was the son of Professor John Malcolm, who held the Chair in Physiology at the University of Otago, New Zealand from 1905 – 1943. He studied medicine at Otago from 1931, with a break in 1932 for a family sabbatical in Britain, during which time he attended classes at St Andrews and Edinburgh universities. After completing his preclinical studies in 1934, back at Otago, he took the opportunity to enter a science-based course and achieved B Med Sci in 1935, probably a substantial contributor to his interest in fundamental physiological research. Following his graduation with MB ChB in 1938, Laurence Malcolm completed his house jobs in clinical medicine and then joined the Department of Physiology at Otago, where JC Eccles arrived in 1944.

In 1944 Dr Malcolm came to work as an exchange lecturer at St Thomas’s Medical School and subsequently was appointed as Reader in Physiology at St Mary’s Medical School. After a year spent working with Professor Chandler Brooks in New York, he was appointed to a post working with Professor W Feldberg at the National Institute for Medical Research, Mill Hill in 1953. During his time at Mill Hill he published many neurophysiological papers in collaboration with Sydney Hilton, W Feldberg and many others; his particular field was that of evoked potentials and their basis in spinal cord and brain. His mastery of experimental technique was so precise that it was an exquisite ‘art form’ to watch and learn by.

In 1959 Laurence Malcolm was awarded the Regius Chair in Physiology at Marischal College of the University of Aberdeen, where he introduced many innovative projects. One was the intercalated science degree for medical students, which continues today as BSc Med Sci, based on his own experience in Otago. He was also instrumental in building a well-respected BSc degree in physiology, the first graduates coming in 1963, and incorporated in the final year an original research project – this has given many students a ‘launch’ into research careers over the years.

In Aberdeen, Professor Malcolm was concerned for the welfare and enhancement of both staff and students. He believed that colleagues sharing their coffee break could also share ideas and solve problems in both teaching and research. His hospitality at parties at his home, House of Minmundy, was generous and warm, providing for good relations between staff and postgraduates in the department.

Professor Malcolm served as Dean of the science faculty at Aberdeen in the early 1970s, and was instrumental in developing more ‘modular’ course structures to increase the range of possibilities for students. The foundation course in physiology was designed on the basis ‘What do we expect them to know?’ for detailed analytical study in more senior years. During his time in Aberdeen
Professor Malcolm welcomed a variety of visitors from other countries – particularly South America, Stefan Mellander from Sweden and Pavel Hnik from Czechoslovakia – to the neurophysiological laboratories. He supervised a number of research assistants and postgraduate students working particularly on neurotransmitter actions as identified from evoked potential studies. Both staff and postgraduates were encouraged to travel to conferences and to work in other laboratories.

In 1975 Professor Malcolm retired early, returning to his native New Zealand, but settling in the north island with plans to grow an orchard of kiwi fruit. While his trees developed he worked at the new University of Auckland in both neurophysiological teaching and research, publishing his last paper in 1980.

Professor Malcolm maintained his interest in physiology to the end. His keen intellect ensured his enjoyment of IUPS meetings in Glasgow, UK, Prague, Czech Republic and, last of all, in Christchurch, New Zealand where he appeared delighted to meet old friends and full of life and energy, despite celebrating his 88th birthday at the Congress.

Laurence Malcolm had a wide range of interests – including hill walking and Rotary Club activities. He was actively involved as a lay preacher and vestry member in the Anglican church of New Zealand, working to form a New Zealand ‘sea of faith’ group.

Ruth Payne
Old Aberdeen, Scotland

Stanislav Tuček
1932 – 2002

Many readers will be saddened to hear that Stan Tuček died in Prague on 27 September, 2002. For the last three years of his life he had suffered uncomplainingly from leukaemia. Although not a Member he was known to the Society from his attendance as a Foreign Guest at UK meetings and as a co-organizer of our joint meeting with the Czech Physiological Society in 1998. Recently he held a grant under the Society’s Centres of Excellence Support Scheme. He had a worldwide reputation as a neurochemist and was involved in arranging and editing numerous important symposia on the cholinergic nervous system. In the mid-1960s he worked with Catherine Hebb at Babraham, and later with S-C Cheng in New York.

Despite the constraints on research in iron-curtain days, his laboratory in the Institute of Physiology in Prague was extremely productive as can be seen from the bibliography in his 1978 monograph Acetylcholine Synthesis in Neurons. His productivity continued unabated to the end of his life: he was still working on a paper during his final spell in hospital.

Friends throughout the world will want to extend their sympathy to his widow Dana, his son Martin and his daughter Lenka, in the loss of a charming, caring and courageous man.

Ann Silver
The Physiological Laboratory
University of Cambridge

Eberhard Buhl

It is with deep regret that we announce the untimely death of Professor Eberhard Buhl. After a long period of ill health his condition took a devastating turn for the worse over the New Year and he died of heart failure in the early hours of Saturday, 18 January in the Leeds General Infirmary.

Eberhard was a young man, but at 43 he had achieved more than many academics whose lives have not been cut so tragically short. After gaining medical qualification in Germany he enjoyed many fruitful years as a neuroanatomist working in institutions within Europe and as far afield as Australia. He came to the UK to work at the MRC Anatomical Neuropharmacology Unit in Oxford. In 1999 he came to the University of Leeds to fill the chair in Neurobiology. At Leeds he rapidly established one of the world’s leading neuronal network research groups and took over the reins as Head of the School of Biomedical Sciences in January 2002.

His demise is an immense loss to the University, his friends and colleagues throughout the world and his family. We extend our heartfelt condolences to his wife Dora Lozsadi.

The Neuronal Oscillations Research Group
University of Leeds

A full obituary will be published in the next issue of Physiology News.