

OBITUARY

**PROFESSOR MICHAEL J. DAVIES, M.D., F.R.C.PATH.
1937-2003**

Professor Michael Davies died at home in Dorset, United Kingdom, on February 18, 2003. His name is linked to the development of Cardiovascular Pathology in England and in Europe. He was founding father of the European Association for Cardiovascular Pathology. The Society for Cardiovascular Pathology granted him with the *Distinguished Achievement Award* given "in absentia" at the 1997 Meeting.

Mike was born in London, United Kingdom, on August 22, 1937. He graduated in Medicine in 1961 at the Middlesex Hospital Medical School. After a year in Pathology in the same hospital, he became Registrar in Pathology at the St. George's Hospital and Medical School of London, where he spent all his career: Ph.D. Thesis in 1968 on *The pathology of heart block in man*, Senior Lecturer in 1969, Reader in Cardiac Pathology in 1975, Professor of Cardiac Pathology in 1977 with a personal chair and finally British Heart Foundation Professor of Cardiovascular Pathology in 1981. His mentor, Neville Woolf, introduced him to the fascinating study of atherosclerosis. On his own, he was mentor of many younger colleagues and collaborated with various skilled cardiovascular pathologists like Donald Teare, Ariela Pomerance (with whom he shared the authorship of the famous treatise *The Pathology of the heart, Blackwell, 1975*), Anton Becker, Bob Anderson.

He was a strong supporter of the method of clinico-pathologic correlations and gave major contributions to the understanding of the histopathologic substrates of acute coronary syndromes. In this regard, it was memorable the Paul Dudley White Lecture delivered in Anaheim, California in 1995 in front of nearly 3000 delegates at the American Heart Association entitled "Stability and Instability: two faces of coronary atherosclerosis",

which I had the fortune to attend. The role of metalloproteinases was anticipated as the main determinant of fibrous cup fissuring.

He wrote 189 original publications, 52 book-chapters and was editor of 9 books and 5 atlases. Not so minor was his original work on conduction system, valve diseases and cardiomyopathies.

Last but not least was the position of Editor-in-Chief of the British Heart Journal from 1991 to 1999, which he wanted to rename Heart to foster a globalization of British Cardiology. He served the British Heart Foundation as Vice-Chairman of projects Grants Committee (1992-1997) and as Assistant Medical Director for Research (1999-2001).

Mike will be remembered not only as a dear friend by also for being the one in the History of Medicine to have proven that plaque instability is the major cause of coronary syndromes and sudden death.

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