Obituaries

Paul Hocking
1948 - 2018

Paul Hocking was born in 1948 and grew up on a mixed farm near Exeter in Devon. He read agriculture at Reading University and obtained a postgraduate Diploma in Genetics at Edinburgh University in 1970. From 1970 to 1977 he worked for a secretariat providing services to cattle breeding societies. His work on a selection programme for dairy shorthorn cattle formed the basis for his PhD awarded in 1978 by Reading University. After 3 years lecturing at Reading he spent the next two years as a research fellow at the Animal Research Centre in Ottawa. It was there that he started to transfer his genetic interests from cattle to poultry. In 1983 he joined the Nutrition Department at the Poultry Research Centre in Edinburgh with the remit to study the topic of feed restriction in breeding birds. He remained there for the rest of his career seeing many changes, with the centre by the time of his retirement having been absorbed into the Roslin Institute and subsequently the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Science in the University of Edinburgh.

Paul quickly made a name in what became known as the 'broiler breeder paradox'. The large body of work that defined the reproductive biology of broiler breeders and its control by feed restriction made him the go-to person for broiler and turkey breeder reproductive and welfare research. All Paul's work was characterised by well-designed experiments and careful conclusions that led to sound understanding. This standing was recognised by the European Food Standard agency, with him serving on their Panels on Animal Health and Welfare of broilers and broiler breeders and in judicial reviews in the UK on breeder welfare. Paul embraced the genomic revolution and was in the forefront of setting up the populations needed to identify genes for Mendelian and quantitative traits in poultry. He found new applications for his talents in understanding eye defects and disease susceptibility. His review, published in the WPSJ in 2008, on foot pad lesion scoring remains high in the cited papers list. Paul was diligent in carrying a piece of work through to its completion and was author or co-author of over 200 papers. He was a sought-after speaker and had travelled around the world on his reputation - travelling was something he much enjoyed. His work was recognised by the award of the Gordon Memorial Medal in 2013 giving his widely acclaimed lecture on the subject of 'The unexpected consequences of genetic selection in broilers and turkeys: problems and solutions'.

Paul made a huge contribution to the committees and societies in our science community. He was a prominent figure in the UK branch of the World Poultry Science Association (WPSA). He served as its President and played an important role in several of the Poultry Science Symposia organised by the Branch. Paul also made a major contribution to the European Federation of WPSA. He was Vice President from 2006 to 2010 and the UK representative on Working Group 3 (Genetics). He organised the 7th Symposium of the Group in Scotland. He was a Council Member of British Poultry Science and in 2010 became its Joint Editor.

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Paul was popular with his colleagues and with his thoughtful, friendly demeanour was a welcome collaborator on many projects. His unique style of after-dinner jokes has been imitated but not matched. His service to the science and community that underpins such a major industry has left a lasting legacy. All these things, except the jokes, were recognised when Paul was elected to the International Poultry Hall of Fame at the World Poultry Congress in Beijing in 2016. He was a great scientist, contributing hugely to poultry research, as well as a friend and mentor to many.

Paul had latterly decreased his work load to part time, preparatory to moving back to his roots in Devon. He had started his new life there, much preferring the milder climate to that of Edinburgh. It is a great pity that the rapid onset of a cancer deprived him of more years of retirement. He leaves a wife, Denise, son Chris and daughters Michelle and Jenny. He will be much missed by them and his many friends and colleagues around the world.

Dr Ian Dunn and Professor Colin Whitehead

Donald McQueen Shaver

12 August 1920 – 28 July 2018

One of the first Canadians inducted into the International Poultry Hall of Fame, Donald Shaver, founder of Shaver Poultry Breeding Farms Ltd., has died, a few days short of his 98th birthday. Donald Shaver was born and grew up in Galt, now part of Cambridge, Ontario. As a teenager he kept chickens in the backyard of his urban home, and in a vacant lot next door.

He joined the Canadian army in the second World War, achieved the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, and was part of the force that liberated The Netherlands in 1945.

After the war, he extended his interest in poultry breeding and established a hatchery and feed mill in Galt. He assembled a large collection of White Leghorn lines purchased from other breeders and began crossbreeding experiments that led to the development of the Shaver Starcross 288. The outstanding performance of this hybrid encouraged Shaver to expand his operations and begin selling parent stock to franchise hatcheries in Canada and the United States. He built a larger hatchery and established a breeding farm adjacent to his home on the outskirts of Galt. By the mid 1960's new farms were added, and a much larger hatchery, as the business expanded around the world.

At its height, Shaver Poultry Breeding Farms Ltd. was selling breeding stock in more than 90 countries. Subsidiary companies were established in the US, Great Britain, France, and Germany. There were joint ventures in Pakistan, New Zealand, India and Barbados. The company expanded into brown egg layers and meat chickens, which were sold alongside the highly successful white egg Starcross 288. By the mid 1970's there were four breeding farms in Cambridge, and two hatcheries. Breeding development work took place in France and Great Britain as well as in Canada.

Donald Shaver was himself responsible for a large part of the Company's success and expansion. He travelled extensively, probably spending between one third and one half of his time overseas. While at home he worked 16 hours, seven days a week, and expected similar commitment from his staff.

Initially, most of the genetics input came from consultants, of which Dr R.K. Cole of Cornell University was the most active. In-house geneticists were hired beginning in the 1960's and two were employed at the time of Donald Shaver's retirement in 1985.

Early on, during a period of rapid expansion, Cargill Inc. of Minneapolis became part

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owners of Shaver Poultry Breeding Farms. When Donald Shaver retired in 1985, they became sole owners and soon sold the Company to ISA in France, and they in turn were taken over by what has now become Hendrix Genetics. This Company still maintains two of the breeding farms and a busy hatchery in Cambridge.

Shaver also established a beef breeding business and it became quite successful, selling frozen semen and embryos internationally. However, when one case of mad-cow disease occurred in Alberta in 1995, the international market shut down and the beef business closed.

After retirement, Donald Shaver maintained his lifelong advocacy for sustainable agriculture. He made his final presentation on this topic in 2016. He was involved as a Director in energy, insurance, communication and manufacturing. He was Chairman of Canada Development Investment Corporation until 2008.

Among many awards, Donald Shaver received honorary doctorates from the Universities of McGill, Guelph and Alberta, and was an Officer of the Order of Canada. He is survived by two sons and two daughters, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

John Brake

1952 – 2018

NC State University's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences lost a world-renowned poultry science expert and award-winning teacher, mentor and leader on July 31, when the William Neal Reynolds Distinguished Professor, John Brake passed away.

Brake, aged 66, had a long history with NC State and its Prestage Department of Poultry Science – first as an undergraduate studying poultry and animal science and then as a Ph.D. student in physiology in the 1970s. He joined the faculty at Auburn University in 1978, then returned to NC State as an assistant poultry science professor in 1981.

Brake's research assistant Rasha Qudsieh noted that he was best known for his expertise in feed milling, enzymes, induced moulting of commercial layers, management and nutrition of broiler breeders and their progeny, processing and hatchery management. "He also developed and managed a truly singular vertically integrated broiler breeder-broiler research programme based at NC State for over 30 years," she said.

Brake wrote hundreds of scientific and popular articles that have been translated into over 10 languages, and he has consulted and presented in more than 40 countries. He held several leadership roles in his department and for professional societies, and served as poultry science's research coordinator for eight years and director of graduate programmes for 15 years.

He won many other research, teaching and international service awards, including the university's Global Engagement Award in 2016, its Outstanding Young Alumnus Award in 1986 and CALS' graduate instructor award in 2003. He has received two of the highest honours bestowed by the Poultry Science Association: He won the Merck Award for Achievement in 1995 and was named a fellow in 2006.

Pat Curtis, head of the Prestage Department of Poultry Science, said that Brake was "a friend, colleague, mentor and scholar (who) will be greatly missed by the department and the poultry industry."

John Brake was a long-time and very active WPSA member. He attended and actively participated in WPSA meetings/seminars around the globe and provided consulting service to many in the poultry industry in all parts of the world. He was a regular fixture at poultry meetings, and well known and respected by his fellow poultry scientists.

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Dr Peter E. Lake OBE, FRSE

23 September 1928 – 14 June 2018

Dr Peter Edmund Lake passed away suddenly but peacefully on 13th June 2018 aged 89 years at a care home in Annan, Dumfriesshire, Scotland. His home of 66 years had been Edinburgh where he devoted his entire working life (1951-1988) to avian research, specifically but not exclusively relating to the domestic fowl. He established a world-wide reputation in the field of artificial insemination that had wide ranging benefits for the poultry industry in Britain and around the world.

Dr Lake had a degree in Zoology from Birmingham University (1949), a diploma in Agriculture from Christ's College, Cambridge (1950) and a PhD in avian reproductive physiology from Edinburgh University (1955). In 1951 he took a post as a Scientific Officer in the Reproductive Physiology Department at the Poultry Research Centre in Edinburgh, a body of the UK Agricultural and Food Research Council. He was to be based there all his working life ultimately being appointed Acting Head of Station.

In the post-War period there was a rapid expansion in the poultry industry as a source of cheaper food and this could not be sustained through traditional farm breeding methods. Peter Lake and colleagues pioneered work on the biochemistry and physiology of the production and function of the spermatozoa of domestic birds (especially chickens and turkeys). He recognised the importance of artificial insemination not only for the exponential growth of the poultry industry but also to enhance the quality and size of the product through selective breeding. This required much experimentation in the collection, storage and transportation of the spermatozoa. In 1952 Dr Lake spent a study year at the National Institute for Medical Research, Mill Hill, London with Professor A.S. Parkes and Dr C. Polge who had discovered the use of glycerol for freezing spermatozoa. In 1960 Dr Lake spent a sabbatical year on a Lalor Foundation Fellowship at the University of California, Davis with Prof. F.W. Lorenz and Dr F.X. Ogasawara. This was a life shaping experience from which many friendships and partnerships developed, underlined in 1989 with his election as a Fellow of the Poultry Science Association of America.

Throughout his career Dr Lake wrote or contributed to scores of scientific articles, books and reviews including in1978 (with J.M. Stewart) a key work for the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food entitled 'Artificial Insemination in Poultry'. He travelled widely in support of colleagues around the world and to attend numerous poultry congresses usually as a speaker or lecturer. In 1980 he spent three months in Japan as Visiting Professor in Animal Science at Kyushu University, advising many poultry breeding centres.

Upon his retirement as Head of the Reproductive Physiology Department in 1988 Dr Lake was proud to receive the Order of the British Empire from the Queen in recognition of his lifetimes work. Previously he was also honoured with the Fellowship of the Royal Society of Edinburgh in 1982 and the Fellowship of the Institute of Biology in 1984.

Post-retirement in 1989 he took up a Nicholas Memorial Fellowship at Cuddy Farms in Ontario, Canada advising this multi-national turkey breeder and in December 1989 he concluded his career by accepting a United Nations FAO commission to assist the poultry breeding industry in Albania.

Dr Lake married Mary Bennett in 1954, who, over 56 years, was an indispensable part of his success and happiness. They had 4 sons, Michael, Martin, Christopher and Kenneth. Peter missed Mary badly after she passed away in 2010 and Michael also pre-deceased

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him. Peter is survived by three sons and nine grandchildren. Apart from work and family his great passion was rugby which he enjoyed as a player and referee.

Péter Földi

Péter Földi, 75, has passed away Monday, August 27th, 2018, following a long-term serious illness. He was Consultant and before the General Secretary of the Hungarian Poultry Product Board. After his graduation as an agricultural engineer on the Agricultural University of Gödöllő he was working in various positions on the experimental farm of the University for 10 years. From 1980 to 1995 he worked at the Hungarian Ministry of Agriculture, between 1991-1995 as Head of Department. From 1995 he was the General Secretary of the Hungarian Poultry Product Board and the secretary of the Association of the Hungarian Layer Hybrid Breeders and Egg producers. From 2010 he was consultant for the Hungarian Poultry Product Board.

He was member in the Poultry Department of the Hungarian Veterinary Association. He was one of the editors of the Hungarian Poultry magazine as well. He represented Hungary at the International Egg Commission (IEC) for years. This organisation awarded him with a special prize in 2007.

He was the Secretary of the Hungarian Branch of the World's Poultry Science Association (WPSA), and he was Treasurer of the EUWEP and EEPTA as well for years. He was given several state, ministerial and sectoral awards such as 'For Hungarian Poultry Sector' award (2016) , 'Újhelyi Imre' (2011), and 'Életfa' award (2013), when he was 70.

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