



Neil A. Croll, 1941-1981

Neil A. Croll was born 25 October 1941 in South Africa and died in Montreal, Canada, on 23 June 1981. His premature and unexpected death is a tragic loss to the sciences of plant nematology and animal parasitology. Perhaps no other person has contributed so much in creative research and leadership to these areas of science in so short a time.

It is fitting to briefly catalogue Neil's achievements and honors; to do more would require a book length biography. One can only wonder that one person could achieve so much and make highly significant contributions in such widely disparate areas.

Neil pursued his undergraduate studies at Imperial College, London University, and obtained a Bachelor of Science degree with first class honors in 1963. The years 1963-66 marked the award of a Master of Science degree in biochemistry from Chelsea College and a Ph.D. in nematode behavior from the University of London. Neil quickly gained additional honors: election as member, Institute of Biology, U.K. (1967); Fellow, Royal Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene (1969); and Fellow, Institute of Biology, U.K. (1969). In 1978, in recognition of outstanding professional accomplishments, Neil was awarded a Doctor of Science degree from London Uni-

versity. Finally, ever searching for means to more effectively achieve broader goals in parasitological research, Neil enrolled in the University of Miami Medical School in 1978 and in 1980 was awarded the degree of Doctor of Medicine.

Neil's first research paper was published in *Parasitology* in 1965, and from that time until his death the volume of his publication credits represents a period of immense activity and achievement. A compilation of these works reveals 87 research papers in peer review journals, three books (author or co-author), two contributed volumes (editor), and seven reviews or chapters in contributed volumes. His edited volume *Organization of Nematodes* (1976) and *The Biology of Nematodes* (1976) with B. E. Matthews had a profound influence on the field of nematology. Neil's several reviews on nematode behavior remain as models for creative and innovative analysis of this aspect of parasitology. At his death, there were seven papers accepted for publication and work was proceeding on a volume titled *Human Ecology and Infectious Disease* and scheduled to be published by Academic Press in 1982. It is hoped this work will be completed with the assistance of other colleagues.

Neil's professional positions and credits include the award of Marshall Scholar in Biology, London University (1963-64); Assistant Lecturer in Zoology (1964-66) and Lecturer in Parasitology, London University (1966-1974); Fulbright Scholar, University of California (1967-68); Churchill Fellow, East Africa (1969); N.I.H. invitee, Cold Springs Harbor (1972); Visiting Professor, Faculty of Medicine, Sri Lanka (1972); Director, Institute of Parasitology, and Professor of Parasitology, McGill University (1974-1978); Visiting Professor, School of Public Health, University of Teheran, Iran (1977); Director, McGill International Programs (1980-1981); Associate Professor of Medicine, McGill University (1981); and Associate, Tropical

Disease Clinic, Montreal General Hospital (1981).

He also served as executive member on the boards of the British Society for Parasitology, the Society of Nematology, the Canadian Zoological Society, and the Canadian Public Health Association. In addition he was Associate Editor for *Experimental Parasitology* and the *Canadian Journal of Zoology* and Director, Canadian National Reference Center for Parasitology.

At the time of his death Neil was holding two full-time positions at McGill University and an additional half-time position at the Tropical Disease Clinic.

His remarkable professional career leaves no doubt that Neil was a person of exceptional vigor and intellectual abilities. He was a rarity in another sense in that he had the necessary political astuteness to achieve large goals, while at the same time strongly opposing mediocrity and mental slackness. The achievements of his many former students reflect this insistence on

excellence. During 1969–80 Neil supervised 11 doctoral theses and 2 MSc theses.

Neil Croll is survived by his wife Doreen, son Alistair, 11, and daughter Rebecca, 3. It is fitting to note that Doreen, whose talents led to a successful research career with a pharmaceutical firm, also assisted Neil in his many editorial chores. The hospitality of the Croll home was open to friends and colleagues, and those fortunate enough to have visited there retain indelible memories.

In a letter dated 22 June 1981, Neil wrote, "I will be in Kuwait in November, the Caribbean in September and London probably in December. . . ."

He died less than 24 hours later. We will never know the heights to which Neil Croll would have risen if given the average life span.

*Wind whipped wisps of froth
steal silently skyward
and return from whence they came*

—BERT M. ZUCKERMAN