

## OBITUARY

**Kenneth A. Wright**  
1936-1992

Dr. Kenneth Wright, an outstanding nematologist responsible for much of our understanding of the functional anatomy and morphology of nematodes, died on 6 July 1992 at the age of 56.

Ken earned his B.A. and M.S. degrees from the University of Toronto in zoology; and his Ph.D. degree from Rice University in Houston, Texas, was awarded in 1962. He was a postgraduate research zoologist at the University of California at Riverside during the 1962-63 academic year and an assistant research nematologist the following year at the University of California at Davis. He returned to Toronto to take a research position in the Ontario Research Foundation between 1964 and 1966. Throughout the remainder of his professional career he held research positions at the University of Toronto, first in the Department of Microbiology and Parasitology and then in the Department of Zoology, where he was promoted to full professor in 1982. He was also a visiting researcher at Leeds University (1973), Cambridge University (1980), and the Rothamsted Experimental Station (1982-83). He served two terms as an associate editor of the *Journal of Nematology*.

Ken made contributions in research on parasite biology, life cycles, host pathology, and techniques in transmission electron microscopy. He made significant discoveries in diverse areas of invertebrate ultrastructure and cytochemistry, including the various stages of the life cycle of a leucocytozoon, pellicle and filopodium of trypanosomes, integument of acanthocephalans, attachment organs of monogenetic trematodes, gut of mites, salivary glands of

mosquitos, and nephrocytes in the gills of decapod crustaceans.

Ken's principal research interest was nematode morphology, as evidenced by the fact that 50 of his 73 published papers plus three book chapters were on that subject. His doctoral dissertation, "Cytology of the Bacillary Bands of the Nematode *Capillaria hepatica* (Bancroft, 1893)," is testimonial to his very early conviction that transmission electron microscopy was to be a very productive technology for understanding the structure of nematodes. The tenacity with which he held that conviction was to be tested by the disappointing and unpredictable results often obtained with the early techniques proven to be much more satisfactory for vertebrate tissues. As the payoff improved with the introduction of glutaraldehyde, new embedding resins, diamond knives, and improved stains, Ken continued to explore many aspects of nematode morphology, including the ultrastructure of the cuticle, chemo- and tangoreceptors, bacillary bands, neuron-hypodermis relationships, somatic muscles and their cytoplasmic bridges, pseudocoelomic membranes, buccal apparatus, and intestine and copulatory structures. He also conducted research on the processes of molting and spermatogenesis.

Whereas Ken's research was mostly concerned with nematodes parasitic in other animals, he also did research on *Xiphinema*, *Aphelenchoides*, *Caenorhabditis*, and two marine nematodes (*Acanthonchus duplicatus* Wieser, 1959 and *Deontostoma californicum* Steiner & Albin, 1933). Although his research may not be familiar to those whose interest in nematodes does not venture be-

yond their taxonomy or ecology, Ken benefitted all of nematology by his many substantive contributions to our understanding of how nematodes are put together and how they function. He had a profound knowledge of vertebrate and invertebrate ultrastructure and cytochemistry, which, combined with his ability for careful observation and intellectual prowess, has earned him a place among the best of scholars in nematology.

In May, 1992, Ken was awarded the

Wardle Medal by the Canadian Society of Zoology for the excellence of his research. Because of failing health, he received the award in absentia, and his acceptance speech was videotaped for the presentation ceremony. Ken died after several months of illness due to complications resulting from hemophilia. He is survived by his wife, Elaine, and their three children, Andrew, Eric, and Lori.

W. DUANE HOPE