

In Memoriam



Brian Grove Sparkes 1941-2011

Brian Sparkes, PhD, was born in 1941 in Newport, South Wales, UK, and died December 18, 2011 in St. Michael's Hospital, Toronto. After immigration to Canada in 1951 he completed secondary school in London, Ontario. Earning two degrees from the University of Western Ontario, Brian was awarded a National Cancer Institute Fellowship to study at McGill University and subsequently earned his doctorate at the University of Ottawa, and he was internationally renowned for ground-breaking research on the role of immune failure in burn injury, first at the Defence and Civil Institute of Environmental Medicine (DCIEM, now DRDC Toronto) and later with Swiss scientists at the University of Basel. For this work he received the 1994 Ambroise Paré Award in Augsburg, Germany. His work at DCIEM on the role of a naturally-occurring sleep-inducing peptide took him to Africa to study victims of sleeping sickness.

Brian's passionate interest in cancer research began even before graduate school, when his work at the Health and Welfare laboratories in Ottawa led to the first isolation of a bacterial growth inhibitor in 1968. A devoted member of the International Society for Orthomolecular Medicine for many years, he increasingly concerned himself with advising individuals of their best orthomo-

lecular and nutritional treatment options. This activity completely occupied his last few "retirement" years, keeping him from his life-long enjoyment of playing the piano, and regrettably ending with his own death from an aggressive lymphoma. Brian had a particular concern for maltreated dogs, and his deep understanding of nutritional biochemistry sometimes helped cure the diseased pets of his friends as well.

A memorial was held in Toronto, Canada, on March 3; family, friends and colleagues from around the world attended. For a comprehensive obituary honouring Brian and Orthomolecular Medicine please see: <http://v1.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/story/LAC.20120126.OBSPARKESATL/BDAStory/BDA/deaths>.

From a Tribute by Steven Carter at the Memorial:

Brian attended the Orthomolecular Medicine Today Conference for the first time in 2001 in Toronto, and every year after that—in Vancouver, Montreal, Ottawa—he was always there, in the front row, keen to learn, asking tough questions, always among the small group around the speakers following their talks. He was intent on getting new insights to help him with helping others, to tease out the subtleties of treatment for a person (or pet) he was working with.

Brian was noticed and relied upon by many conference delegates for his solid scientific grasp of orthomolecular medical concepts and practices, and for his inquisitive, searching and open mind. A dedicated enthusiast and passionate advocate of taking responsibility for your health and using diet and supplements as a first line in prevention and treatment, Brian seemed always to be on a mission, working on a case. He visited our office two or three times a year for a chat or to pick up a new book.

We also met at classical music concerts, and we shared an admiration for Anton Kuerti and other fine musicians.

Thank you, Brian, for being an exemplary seeker of truth in medicine and a devoted, caring health consultant in the service of others. We'll miss you in the front row.