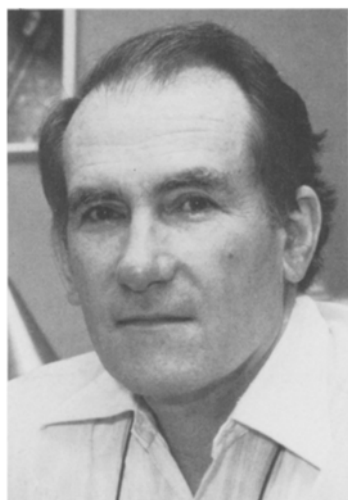


Obituary

Richard Ignacy Bartolomiej Francki (1930–1990)

Richard Francki died at home on November 14, 1990. He had suffered a recurrence of an earlier illness and in spite of being aware of the possible outcome more than a year before, he carried on with his usual diligence, hard work and flair on the goals he had set himself to within a few weeks of his death.



Those who met him last at Berlin, where he finalized the business of his term as President of the International Committee on Taxonomy of Viruses would have known that he was attempting the immense job of finalizing the 5th Report of the ICTV by November 1990. This work is now almost complete and will be a fitting memorial to his comprehensive contributions to virology.

Richard's friends and colleagues will all have different memories, but both his warm humanity and his perceptive critical abilities will be remembered by all. He travelled widely and apart from sabbaticals in the US and The Netherlands and attendance at numerous conferences world wide as contributor or organizer, he participated in scientific tours of China and Japan.

Born in Warsaw on 10 September, 1930, Richard escaped with his family to England in 1939 and undertook his schooling there. He then migrated with his family to New Zealand where he was a student at Auckland University College from 1952 to 1960, completing his study as the first Ph. D. student of Professor R.E.F. Matthews. He married Zofia in New Zealand, and took up a lectureship in the Department of Plant Pathology at the Waite Agricultural Research Institute, University of Adelaide, in 1961. He became a Senior Lecturer in 1967 and Reader in 1972.

He has served as Associate Editor of "Virology" since 1972 and of "Journal of General Virology" from 1981 to 1986. He has acted on the editorial boards of "Current Topics in Vector Research", "Microbiological Sciences", and "Physiological and Molecular Plant Pathology". He was Secretary of the Virology Division of the International Union of Microbiological Societies, 1981–1987 and was elected a Fellow of the American Phytopathological Society in 1983. He was on programming committees of the 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th International Congresses of Virology, and the 4th and 5th International Congresses of Plant Pathology.

Perhaps the most notable of his research contributions were the effects of base analogues on TMV replication, the detection of RNA polymerase in lettuce necrotic yellows virus, phenotypic mapping of cucumber mosaic virus, the role of a plant as a vector of an insect virus, and satellite RNAs. However, it is difficult to select a few specific themes from a list of 132 research papers, 35 invited scientific papers, and two books, and it is perhaps more realistic to describe him as having a very broad range of interests and skills in plant virology and an even broader knowledge and curiosity in general virology.

Richard's contributions in Australia have been to build up a major centre of plant virology in Adelaide, to supervise around 25 graduate students, to act on national, society,

and University committees, and to willingly provide advice and guidance to the many who sought it. Various colleagues have enjoyed the hospitality of Richard and his family in Adelaide, and will have realised that his family of five children was a major aspect of his life and a great credit to him and Zofia. Condolences of his friends to his family, students, and colleagues in Adelaide have been received with sincere thanks. Although one can speculate on the further contributions Richard could have made, his courage, integrity, and dedication will be long remembered.

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