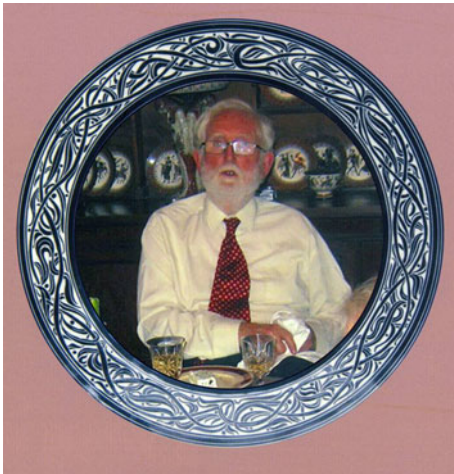


Obituary: Dr. Michael Pugh Thomas (1932–2011)

John F. Potter

Published online: 14 December 2011
© Springer Science+Business Media, LLC 2011



Dr. Michael Pugh Thomas (always known as Mike, and using the surname Pugh Thomas—for he must have been proud of his Welsh ancestry) died in late March of this year following a fairly lengthy illness, leaving a large circle of friends, all of whom will miss him greatly. Mike was a friendly, warm-hearted person always prepared to assist and help others. He applied this manner as much to his duties as an Advisory Board Member of *The Environmentalist*, to his various academic and Editorial roles, as to people.

Mike was a Liverpool man; he took both his BSc and PhD at the University of Liverpool and qualified in Marine

Biology, gradually developing a lifetime interest in water pollution and its ecology. Joining the staff at the University of Salford, Mike became a consultant for WHO. In 1966, following a research visit to the Kanji Gorge Dam, in Nigeria, his interests broadened to cover the whole environment. As a result, in 1968, he founded at the University of Salford one of the first MSc courses nationally in Environmental Resources. There he was to become the Director of this unit. He served as Editor to a leading UK environmental journal. At this time, Mike became a very energetic United Kingdom Institution of Environmental Sciences member; he became a Member of Council and Chairman of the Education Committee. This was then probably the most active of the Institution's Committees, for Mike, ever-helpful and generous, was keen to assist other Universities with the development of both undergraduate and post-graduate courses in the Environmental Sciences. He became an external examiner to many (including my own College's MSc course) and a guiding light in developments in the field. Mike was to become Vice-Chairman of Council and one of the first Honorary Fellows of the Institution of Environmental Sciences. As a consultant, Mike undertook contract work and published extensively, particularly on the subject of polluted estuaries. He also served the United Kingdom's Institute of Biology and became a Member of their Council.

Much admired in his local Liverpool circle, Mike was an enthusiastic car buff: he drove daily to Salford, and at one time owned a Rolls-Royce as his third car! A large body of his close friends attended his funeral service in the Liverpool Anglican Cathedral. He leaves them, but also his wife, Julia, to whom he was devoted, who is now perhaps fortunately in a care home unaware of his departure. The portrait of Mike shown here appears on a china plate and is the work of Julia.

J. F. Potter (✉)
University of Surrey, AW Block, Guildford, Surrey GU2 7XH,
UK
e-mail: jfpotter@btinternet.com