A. Alan Eddy (1926–2017)

Many members of the Society will fondly remember Professor Alan Eddy of the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology (UMIST) who passed away suddenly but peacefully at the end of October at his home in Disley. It will surprise nobody who knew him that, despite his almost 91 years, he was active and enjoying life very much to the full right up to the end (enjoying a lunch party with friends at his house on the day he passed away). Very privileged members will remember Alan and Susan’s parties for which they were rightly famous!

Alan was born in St Just in Penwith, Cornwall in 1926; his father was an assayer in the tin mines and his mother, Ellen, was a schoolteacher. Alan’s father was laid-off several times, which led to him training as an accountant – later joining Burroughs Adding Machines. His mother’s profession and his father’s experiences left Alan with an acute sense of the ‘added value’ of education and the difference that scholarship funding made to his own life. Alan won a scholarship to Devonport High School in Plymouth and was evacuated to the relative safety of Penzance during the bombing. He next won an Open Scholarship to Exeter College, Oxford, to study chemistry and two additional scholarships enabled him to live comfortably. Alan found the academic environment stimulating, but his time at Oxford was not all spent in academic work: he rowed competitively for Exeter College and enjoyed athletics. One of Alan’s typical dinner party recollections was when he and an unknown Roger Bannister went down to the Exeter running track to be greeted by the groundsman. He looked them both up and down and, nodding to Alan, said – you look like you have potential – at the same time dismissing Roger Bannister’s prospects of ever making it up he did, and Alan became a pioneer in the study of how molecules were transported into cells. He was particularly concerned with the role of ion gradients, including those of protons, in transport processes. Alan was one of the first people to adopt, and promote, Peter Mitchell’s chemiosmotic hypothesis.

Alan published much of his research in mainstream biochemistry journals, especially the *Biochemical Journal*, of which he was a champion. After retirement, he carried on working at the laboratory bench himself and published several papers in his ’70s and ’80s. He was working on a manuscript on the *TOK1* gene product when he died – Tok1p is a yeast outward-rectifier potassium channel of the plasma membrane, which has two pore domains in tandem.

Alan also remained a valued mentor for many PhD students and a respected and inspirational scientist. He will be sadly missed, but we can all celebrate a truly remarkable and inspiring life.

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Further reading