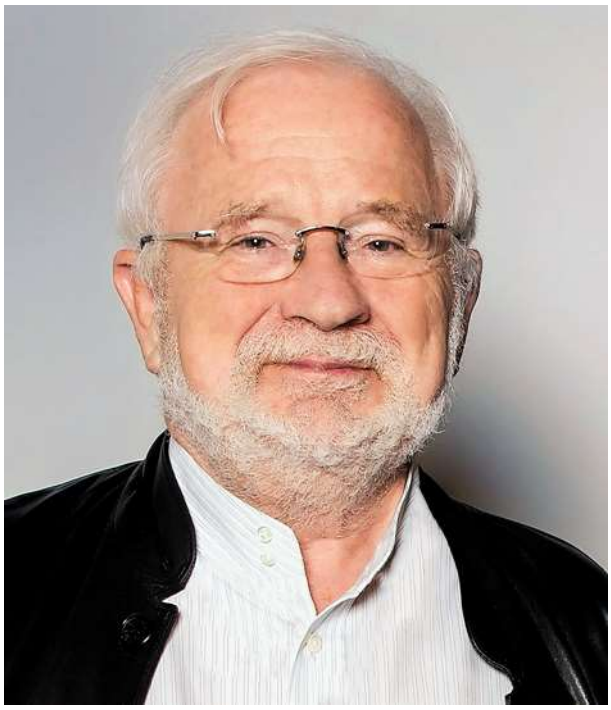
Paul M Vanhoutte (1940-2019)



Paul M Vanhoutte died in Paris, France, on 23rd August 2019, after a fall resulting in cerebral hematomas. He will be remembered as a leading figure in cardiovascular physiology and pharmacology and as a great friend and mentor by those who were lucky enough to work with him.

Paul was born and trained in Belgium (BS<MS<MD). He received postdoctoral training at the Mayo Clinic (Rochester, MN, USA), which was the start of a long term association with John T Shepherd and the Clinic. Paul`s subsequent career spanned academia, industry and three continents. He held professorial positions at the University of Antwerp, The Mayo Clinic, and Baylor College of Medicine, where he was also Director of the Centre for Experimental Therapeutics. From 1992 to 2002 Paul moved to industry as Vice-President R&D, and Director of Discovery Research at the Institut de Recherches Internationales Servier, in France. From 2003 until his death (he never retired), he returned to academia based at the Faculty of Medicine, University of Hong Kong as Distinguished Visiting Professor, Director/Founder of the Biopharmaceutical Development Centre and Head of Department.

Paul made many major contributions to Pharmacology and was awarded honorary fellowship of the British Pharmacological Society in 2006. He gave a number of prize lectures during his career including the BPS JR Vane Medal prize lecture in 2004. Named lectures in his honour have been created by the American Society for Experimental Pharmacology and Therapeutics and by the International Society for Serotonin Research (he was founder and a Past-President of this Society). He had major roles in IUPHAR (International Union of Basic and Clinical Pharmacology), chairing the Committee for Receptor Nomenclature from 1989 to 1998, was Secretary General from 1998 to 2002, and President of the Union from 2002 to 2006. He received honorary doctorates from 9 international universities and was a member of many learned societies and an honorary member of the Physiological Society.

Paul had a prodigious scientific output having co-authored or edited 36 books, published 669 original research papers, and 574 editorials, reviews or chapters in books. He was a Highly Cited Researcher (ISI) in three categories: Biology & Chemistry, Pharmacology, and Clinical Medicine with an *h*-index of 128. He has been Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Cardiovascular Pharmacology, an Associate Editor of the American Journal of Physiology (Heart and Circulatory Physiology), and was on the editorial boards of numerous physiology and pharmacology journals (e.g. Circulation, Circulation Research, Cardiovascular Research, Hypertension, Journal of Hypertension, American Journal of Physiology, Acta Sinica Pharmacologica, Journal of Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics) and of course the British Journal of Pharmacology.

Paul`s early research evolved from the control of the veins to understanding why acetylcholine is a vasodilator. This led him to investigations of the control of sympathetic neuro-effector junction and of the interaction of vasodilator and vasoconstrictor substances with the vascular endothelium. His major scientific contribution was to analyse the importance of endothelial cells in the control of the underlying vascular smooth muscle in health and disease. Paul had a world-wide reputation for his research in cardiovascular disease, vascular neuro-effector mechanisms, calcium-antagonists, and the interactions of endothelium, EDRF, EDHF and nitric oxide.

This impressive list of achievements and honours however underestimates the contribution to pharmacology he made through the great number of students and postdoctoral research fellows that he trained and influenced. Those of us who had the privilege to work with Paul will always remember his charismatic scientific leadership and guidance. We will also remember him as a great friend and mentor. He had unbounded energy and enthusiasm for science, for people and for life. He travelled prodigiously, meeting all the leading scientists in cardiovascular pharmacology and inviting them back to his lab to present their work and to talk to his pre- and post-doctoral students. He took a keen interest in the careers of the many young scientists that he mentored and inspired, helping them to work with other leading vascular biology groups. His care and interest in the success of his trainees inspired a genuine warm loyalty from all who ever spent time with him. At every major scientific conference, there would be an impromptu Paul Vanhoutte dinner attended by all the ex-trainees attending the conference. If one had a conflict with another event, it was the other event that would be missed because of the loyalty and respect Paul had earned. Similarly, something was usually organized for major award events or milestones in Paul's life. For example, for his 60th birthday a surprise gathering was held in Paris where over 100 former mentees from around the world paid their way to celebrate Paul's birthday.

He was great fun to work with and also to relax with after work. He enjoyed good company, good food, good wine and good jokes (and the occasional cigar). He had many memorable sayings such as "I feel a paper coming on" and "There are three kinds of people, those who make things happen, those who watch what happens and those who wondered what happened". He was in the first category and made good things happen for the young scientists he trained during his career and for his co-workers.

Paul will be greatly missed by all who knew him. We will remember his scientific insight and influence, his 'art-de-vivre', the seemingly impossible travel schedules, his quick wit and infectious laugh.

Our thoughts are with his wife Jacqueline, his four children and seven grand-children.

Michael Collis, Richard Bond, Michael Spedding