

Emerita Professor Sheila M. Gardiner (1954-2022)

We are very sad to announce that Professor Sheila Gardiner died, aged 68, on the 16th March 2022.



Professor Sheila Gardiner was a leading cardiovascular physiologist and pharmacologist who enjoyed a long and hugely successful career at the University of Nottingham, where her research focused on delineating the mechanisms involved in cardiovascular regulation in normal and disordered states, with a particular emphasis on neurohumoral control of the circulation and the possible influence of neuropeptides. Her contribution to the analysis of the integrated, regionally-selective, haemodynamic responses to a variety of important interventions made a major impact on our basic understanding of physiology, thereby facilitating drug

development by providing the pharmaceutical industry with crucial, basic information.

Sheila graduated with Honours from the School of Agriculture at Sutton Bonington in 1975. Her scientific research interest was initially sparked by a summer placement in the cardiovascular laboratories at Alderley Park, where she was involved in the early research that led to the development of Atenolol as an important anti-hypertensive drug. She subsequently completed her PhD as one of the first post-graduate students in the new Medical School at the University of Nottingham in 1978, supervised by Dr Terry Bennett. Sheila later held a British Heart Foundation Fellowship, before climbing the academic ladder at Nottingham University as Lecturer, Reader and Professor. At the time of her promotion to Chair in 1993, Sheila was the youngest female Professor of Cardiovascular Physiology in the UK.

Sheila's contribution to research, both nationally and internationally, was, and remains, substantial; she currently ranks as the top female scientist of all time, based on publication number in the British Journal of Pharmacology (BJP), with 188 peer reviewed publications (papers and abstracts) in this journal alone. She was heavily involved with the British Pharmacological Society (BPS), with nearly 150 published abstracts associated with the BPS/BJP. Sheila also made a substantial contribution in developing sustained collaborations with industry throughout her esteemed career; sharing her expertise and insights with both 'big Pharma' and smaller enterprises.

In addition to her significant contribution to academic research and industrial collaboration, Sheila was heavily involved in teaching across several programmes at the University of Nottingham, ensuring that our future Medics, Pharmacists, Nurses and Researchers had the fundamentals of physiology and pharmacology in their grasp. She was a fantastic teacher, bringing energy, clarity and context to her approach. In later years, she would comment that she was happy to be seen in clinic by a Nottingham Medic, knowing she had correctly taught them the ECG. After early retirement in 2010, following diagnosis of myeloma, Sheila continued to give of her time, advising on projects, as well as ensuring the continuation of the Haemodynamics Laboratory, which she had established, by supporting the new Director; she also mentored teams within the broader School of Life Sciences. Her success in establishing mechanistic, *in vivo* physiological models which informed and shaped complementary *in vitro* approaches, and drove innovative drug discovery projects, met with global acclaim.

Sheila had several years of excellent health following her retirement, where, together with her beloved husband (Emeritus Professor Terry Bennett), she was able to explore the Derbyshire Peaks, travel Europe and the USA and enjoy time with friends and family. Sheila will long be remembered for her outstanding contribution to cardiovascular physiology and pharmacology, her industrious nature, meticulous attention to detail, and for being a magnificent teacher. She will also be remembered for her kindness, her wit and her willingness to offer help and support to those around her.

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