

## David L Yudilevich

1930-2006

David L Yudilevich, my mentor and colleague, passed away in London on Sunday 28 May 2006 in the presence of his family and close friends. David's children, Jessica and Ivan, were at his bedside, and he was moved by his grand-daughter, Susanna, reading to him. His funeral was held in Golder's Green and was attended by close family friends and academic colleagues from the UK and Chile.

David was born in Santiago, Chile on 15 June 1930 and received his MD in 1957 from the Universidad de Chile. After three and half years postdoc in the USA, David returned to the Medical School in Santiago until, on 11 September 1973, the Chilean radio announced that a military coup was taking place. An unsigned letter from Hugh Davson enabled the family to sail from Valparaiso to Britain to begin collaborative research with Laurence Smaje at University College London, with the support of Doug Wilkie, the Jodrell Professor and Head of Physiology.

In 1974 David was appointed as Professor and Head of the Department of Physiology at Queen Elizabeth College, University of London. As Head of Department from 1974–1985, David always encouraged research-led

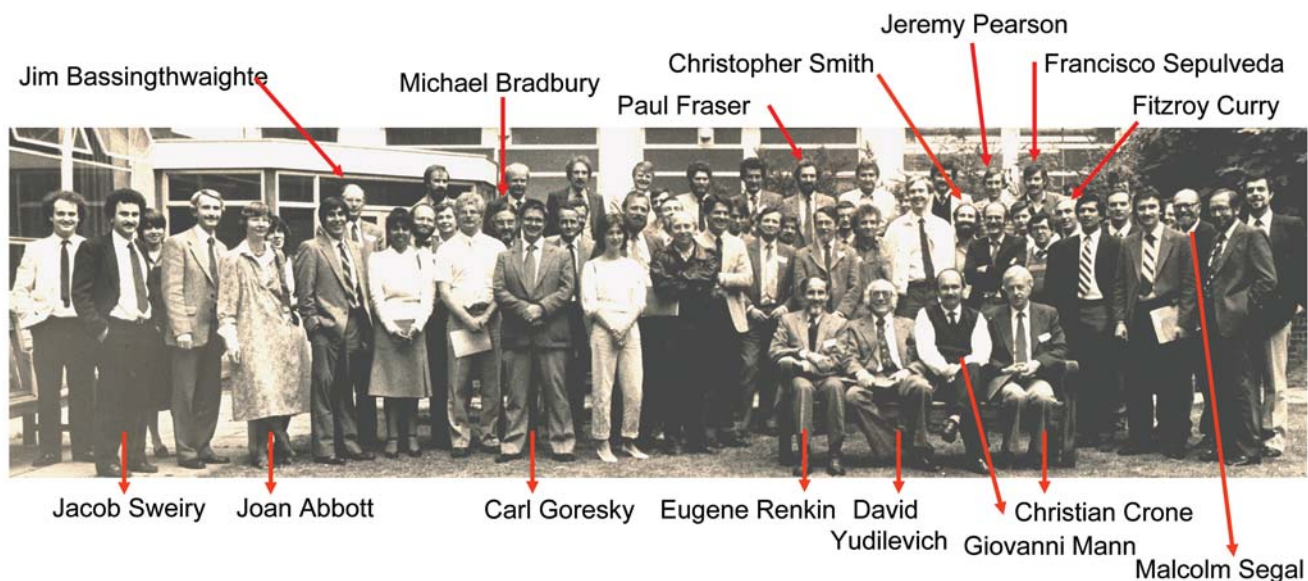


**Above:** David scanning the horizon in the Andes in Chile.

**Below:** David hosting an International Symposium, *Carrier-mediated transport from blood to tissues*, held at Queen Elizabeth College in 1984.

teaching initiatives and appointed Simon Howell to a Readership in Physiology and Christopher Smith and Giovanni Mann to Lectureships in Physiology. Under his leadership, the Department of Physiology at Queen Elizabeth College prospered and hosted meetings of The Physiological Society. Following the merger of Queen Elizabeth and Chelsea Colleges with King's College London in 1985, David stepped down as Head of Department and Peter Baker, FRS became Head of the merged Department of Physiology.

David was passionate about research and during his early career made seminal contributions to the field of capillary permeability, studying microvascular permeability in the isolated perfused gastric mucosa, heart and brain using the multiple indicator dilution technique. He was a respected and close friend of many colleagues in Chile (Francisco Sepulveda, Rosa Deves, Luis Sobreiva, Mauricio Boric, Alejandro Goic and others), USA (John Pappenheimer, Eugene Renkin, Jim Bassingthwaight, Carl Goresky, Walter





David crossing a suspension bridge in Chile

Duran, Halvor Christensen and many others), Denmark (Christian Crone), France (Andre Syrota), Spain (Salvador Peran, José Viña), Israel (Ioav Cabanchik) and UK (Michael Bradbury, Laurence Smaje, Richard Boyd, David Eisner, Clive Ellory, Richard Naftalin, Peter Baker, Peter and Linda McNaughton, Jeremy Pearson, Christopher Smith, Ole Petersen, Richard Olver, Peter Gahan, Stephen Hirsch and many others). Hugh Davson had invited David to the UK after the coup in Chile, and upon arrival with his family David immediately began investigating the permeability of fenestrated capillaries in the salivary gland together with Laurence Smaje and Giovanni Mann in the Department of Physiology at University College London.

At Queen Elizabeth College, David extended the indicator dilution technique to study carrier-mediated transport of nutrients (amino acids, glucose, vitamins, and calcium) across the maternal and fetal interfaces of the isolated perfused guinea-pig placenta (Bryan Eaton, Jacob Sweiry, Caroline Wheeler-Jones), blood-brain barrier (David Barry), salivary epithelium (Giovanni Mann, Carlos Bustamante, Stuart Wilson) and lastly umbilical vein endothelial cells from normotensive and gestational diabetic pregnancies

(Luis Sobrevia, Mauro Parra, Giovanni Mann).

David was an invited speaker/organiser of numerous international conferences, and I recall some memorable ones. David hosted an international meeting on *Carrier-mediated transport of solutes from blood to tissue*, which led to the publication of a book in 1985 edited by D L Yudilevich and G E Mann. The photograph, taken at Queen Elizabeth College, captures the international profile of this meeting! The second memorable occasion was an international meeting held in Lanjaron, Spain, which again resulted in the publication of a book in 1989 entitled *New methods in the study of transport across the cell membrane*, edited by D L Yudilevich, R Deves, S Peran and Z I Cabantchik.

David was committed to strengthening research links between Chile and Britain, culminating in his appointment as Honorary President of the Joint Meeting of The Physiological Society and Sociedad Chilena de Ciencias Fisiologicas in Pucon, Chile in November 1999.

David remained research active throughout his academic career and well into retirement. He published more than 100 articles in peer-reviewed

international journals, and during the last 10 years of his retirement enthusiastically researched the travels of Darwin and Alexander von Humboldt in Chile and South America. His unabated quest for knowledge and enjoyment of science (both bench-based and historical) is evidenced by the series of books he published in retirement on Darwin (*Darwin en Chile 1832-1835: Viaje de un naturalista alrededor del mundo*) (published in 1996 & 1997<sup>1</sup>) and *Chiloe por Charles Darwin* (published in 1998) and Humboldt (*Mi Viaje por el Camino de Inca 1801-1802*) (published in 2004<sup>2</sup>). In addition, David organised numerous stimulating symposia on Darwin and the Beagle and Humboldt's travels at venues in Chile, France, Germany, Spain and the UK. During his last visit to King's College London in May 2006, David was intending to deliver an invited keynote lecture at a symposium organised by the Cervantes Institute in Tel Aviv, Israel.<sup>3</sup>

In retirement, David's contribution to physiology was further acknowledged by awards of an Emeritus Professorship of Physiology at King's College London, Professor Titular in the Faculty of Medicine in the Universidad de Chile and Honorary Membership of Sociedad Chilena de Ciencias Fisiologicas.

David Yudilevich was a unique, lively and driven individual, always seeking to explore new horizons alone and with his close friends and colleagues. I remember with affection our travels by car through Chile and there are just too many entertaining stories about David's travels to scientific meetings.

His 76th birthday would have been on 15 June 2006, and I just knew that he could never slow down. Colleagues in Santiago gathered for a special memorial dinner to celebrate David's life on 15 June 2006. Perhaps David, standing in the Andes in Chile, with his characteristic colourful travelling bag(s), highlights his wanderlust and appreciation of science, nature, life and, above all, his family and children Jessica and Ivan.

**Giovanni E Mann**

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.universitaria.cl/consulta.pl?q=pub&c=14&id=327>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.humboldt200.cl/inca.html>

<sup>3</sup> [http://telaviv.cervantes.es/Portada\\_50\\_1.htm](http://telaviv.cervantes.es/Portada_50_1.htm)