

Obituary: Robin West Matthews



Robin Matthews died on August 16th 2020. He was born in 1944, completed his school education at the King's Lynn College of Further Education in 1964, then went on to the University of Newcastle where he graduated B.D.S. (Hons.) in 1969. After House Surgeon appointments in Newcastle, he joined the Newcastle Oral Anatomy Department in 1970 under Professor Tonge and was awarded a Ph.D. in 1973 for his work on salivary secretion. He spent a post-doctoral year in the Department of Anatomy at the University of Oregon Dental School in Portland, Oregon, after which he returned to clinical work and joined the Department of Oral Medicine in the Dental School of the University of Bristol. There he held appointments until 1999, first as a lecturer and then senior lecturer. During these appointments he was also, at different times, Lecturer in Dental Radiology in Bristol, Senior Lecturer in Dental Pharmacy at the University of Bath, and an Honorary Senior Registrar and Associate Specialist in Oral Medicine with local health authorities in the Bristol area. In the University of Bristol, he was Dental Clinical Dean from 1987 to 1992 and Director of Graduate Dental Studies and Dean of Graduate Studies in the Faculty of Medicine from 1992 to 1995.

In 1999 he left Bristol and was appointed as Professor, Director of Dental Studies and Honorary Consultant in Oral Medicine, at the University of the West Indies, where he helped to restructure their dental school. He remained in Trinidad until his retirement from full-time academic appointments in 2002.

Robin enjoyed and excelled both in his clinical work and in administration but was also much involved in research, particularly on salivary function. His Ph.D. and some of his first publications were on this subject. In Bristol, he spent much time working

with Kanti Bhoola and his colleagues in the Pharmacology Department on salivary kallikrein and kininogenases, and spent 6 months in 1981/2 working on a salivary project as Visiting Research Fellow at the University of Alberta. His first paper, in 1973, was on the 'Effect of Fluoride and other Trace Elements on Calcium Phosphate Precipitates', which was work he did with Professor Neil Jenkins in Newcastle. Most of his extensive publications were on clinical topics, and included three books on: 'Dental Local Anaesthesia', 'The Removal of Teeth with Forceps' (with C. N. Bell), and 'History of Bristol Dental School'.

He is survived by his wife, Margaret and their two children, Paul and Claire.