

John Lyndon McLeod Hawk

8 November 1942–25 December 2022



Emeritus Professor John Lyndon McLeod Hawk was born in Auckland, New Zealand on 8 November 1942. He was brought up with his younger brother Richard in Hamilton, New Zealand by their parents Charles and Dorothy.

In his final year at Hamilton Boys' High School, John was awarded a national scholarship as the top languages scholar in New Zealand. This achievement was recognised with a large article and photograph in the *NZ Herald*. John was invited to return to Hamilton Boys' High School in later life, selected as one of their top alumni to be given an award and asked to give an inspirational talk to the schoolboys. From high school, John left to study physics at Auckland University, before attending medical school at Otago University in Dunedin. His early career took him to St Mary's in London, where he was offered a fast-track role towards a dermatology consultancy at St John's Institute of Dermatology, St Thomas' Hospital and King's College—a world-leading dermatological unit. John was appointed consultant in 1979, finalised his training at Harvard University in Boston and rose to Head of the Photobiology Unit, where he ran a department of about 30 people for more than 20 years. In 1988, he was a founder of the British Photodermatology Group, and was a founding member of the American

Photomedicine Society. He served as President of the European Society for Photodermatology and Congress President of the World Congress on Cancers of the Skin. As well as delivering numerous key-note speeches at high-profile conferences outlining his latest research, he wrote multiple scientific papers, book chapters and books. John also ran a successful private practice in Windsor until he finally retired in 2019.

His work as a doctor was both a career and a vocation; it was his life's work and his passion. He helped people—he changed peoples' lives for the better. Beyond the titles and roles, objectively speaking, he reached the pinnacle of his profession. John was regularly featured in the news talking about matters of public concern relating to sunlight and damage to the skin. He was a doctor to high-profile patients who would come from across the globe to manage complex conditions of the skin. He advanced his field materially with research from him and his teams, inspiring colleagues who respected him hugely. The words spoken around the room at his retirement Festschrift are not something that anyone there would forget.

His generosity towards his patients was also notable, regularly offering free advice or service for those in need. Many patients became friends, not just because he was a good doctor, but also

OBITUARY

because he was a good man with a wonderful (almost unique) sense of humour. He was very proud to be nominated for honours for his work, but unfortunately it came too late.

Beyond his work, John remained a staunch sports fan all his life, particularly of rugby and cricket, and anything involving New Zealand. A fine athlete in his youth, he played for St Mary's

medical school and scored many tries as a tall and speedy winger.

John passed away on 25 December 2022, after valiantly battling idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis for longer than he was expected to. He leaves behind Lorna, his wife of nearly 50 years, sons Simon and Tim, and grandchildren Ben, Marnie, Amelie, Darcey and Clemmie.

AUTHOR INFORMATION

This obituary was compiled by John's sons, Simon and Tim, and his wife Lorna, in loving memory.
