
Obituaries

Christopher Wathes BSc PhD FIAGR E OBE

1952 – 2016



It is with regret that we announce the sad death of Christopher Wathes, OBE on 6th May 2016, a long term member of WPSA UK.

Christopher was emeritus professor of the Royal Veterinary College, London, former Chairman of the Farm Animal Welfare Council (FAWC) and a friend and colleague of many working in the field of animal welfare both in UK and globally.

Throughout his career, Christopher was an advocate for pragmatism in the approach to understanding and improving animal welfare. Christopher was a believer in evidence based decisions as well as plain common sense. I was privileged to work under Christopher's Chairmanship of FAWC and during that time he oversaw its revised strategy at a time of economic constraints, always resisting attempts to compromise or diminish the independence and influence of FAWC. His development of the concept of a 'good life' and a 'life worth living' for all farmed animals kept for food production gave all involved a template on which to assess provisions and requirements for assessing welfare, and more importantly improving standards. Christopher was justifiably proud of any measures that could enable animal keepers and legislators to monitor and improve welfare. The concept of a 'life worth living' is a fitting and lasting legacy for his hard work and dedication.

During his earlier career he headed up the bioengineering division of the Silsoe Research Institute in the 1990s where he undertook work concentrating on animal's preferences in their environment and its importance in achieving the best facilities to keep livestock. His move to the Royal Veterinary College in 2005 allowed further development of his interests in animal welfare and ethics from the animal's perspective, which was the bedrock of his time chairing FAWC. At all times during his career Christopher showed a passion for animal welfare but also cared a lot about people. He encouraged good thinking and wanted those around him, students, peers and friends to grow and succeed.

He faced his latter health issues with stoicism and courage, but was clearly frustrated that it impacted on his lifelong skills of communication.

He was proud and deserving of the prestigious award this year from the Universities Federation for Animal Welfare (UFAW) with their Medal for Outstanding Achievements in Animal Welfare Science, presented posthumously, to his wife Claire, recently.

Christopher will be sadly missed by all who knew him and worked with him. He certainly demonstrated how to have a 'life worth living' and his legacy is that animal welfare has benefited from his considerable efforts and that he enriched the lives of people who knew him.

Stephen Lister, WPSA UK

Dr George W. Barbour



On June 5, 2016, the Lebanon Branch of WPSA lost one of its very dear and most loyal members. Dr Barbour received both his BSc. and MSc. degrees from the American University of Beirut in 1982 and 1984, respectively. He then moved to the USA where he received his PhD from the Ohio State University in 1989. After this, he spent two years as a post-doctoral fellow at the University of Alberta and a further two years as a post-doctoral fellow at the University of Saskatchewan in Canada. Dr Barbour returned to Lebanon in 1994 where he worked in the poultry industry for two years and then in 1996 he joined the Lebanese Agricultural Research Institute (LARI) as a research scientist in poultry nutrition. He was also teaching on a part time basis at the Holy Spirit University of Kaslik from 1996 to 2001. He then moved to teach also part time at the Lebanese International University while continuing his research activities at LARI. Dr Barbour has published many scientific and extension papers on the nutritional evaluation of local grains and oil seeds which is of value to poultry producers and feed manufacturers. He was a member of the Honour Society of Agriculture (Gamma Sigma Delta), American Poultry Science Association and the World Poultry Science Association. He attended most World's Poultry Science Association congresses as well as American Poultry Science Association annual meetings. He has published many scientific and extension papers and provided numerous services to poultry producers and feed manufacturers in Lebanon and the region. Dr Barbour was one of my graduate students when he was working on his MSc. degree. I remember him as very hard working and meticulous in his work and always questioning things. He had the true spirit of a scientist.

Dr Barbour is survived by his wife Marwa Michel Boushi and is going to be dearly missed by all his friends, relatives and colleagues here and abroad.

*Nuhad J. Dagher, President
WPSA-Lebanon*