

**A small selection of excerpts taken from Emails from Professor Sue Povey's former colleagues in different spheres, several of whom had become personal friends.**

**Lynda Donald (Canada, PhD student 1968-1971)**

*I clearly remember Prof (Harry Harris) coming in to the lab and announcing "Wait until Sue Povey gets here". At the time, she was in Algeria with the Save the Children Fund, selfless good work that marked her whole life-----I dreaded meeting her, but a very nice woman wandered into the lab looking for coffee one morning....and so a friendship began. I think I met all of her dogs, and one extra when Neil and I were visiting (to dog walk), so she borrowed an extra dog from a friend – that way we would each have one! That was Sue – totally fair to all – but the dogs ruled the house.*

*When we went to see her in September (2018), she was obviously needing help herself but insisted that feeding the birds with her specially concocted mixture was a priority. The only time she admitted a health problem to me was years ago after a weekend of hiking in the Lake District, when she was unable to climb the stairs at the Galton, and so took the lift up one flight. Our visit was happy reminiscences of similar "adventures", less frequent when they involved trans-Atlantic travel. And from husband Neil Holliday: .....She engaged in many activities to benefit the elderly and less fortunate, but always exhibited feelings of guilt in the face of offers of help made to her. She was a genuine, quietly humorous, self-effacing and scientifically-talented human being who will be greatly missed by those who were privileged to have her as a friend or colleague.*

**Cay Kielty (Emeritus Professor Manchester, Former PhD student)**

*First and foremost, she was a fantastic supportive PhD supervisor, and her support undoubtedly set me on my career path in Manchester. I remember various great trips to Gene Mapping conferences, including Oslo which was terrifically exciting for me. I particularly remember a long road journey with her in her mini from Cheddington to Edinburgh (another Gene Mapping meeting) via an overnight stop in her beloved cottage in Shap (which she kindly also made available to Jim and me on several other occasions). I remember long conversations about walking in the Lakes and her exploits in Iceland and other places, and the great importance of 'good boots'.*

**Walter Bodmer (HUGO and more)**

*She was, of course as you well know, a pioneer with us in much of the early mapping we did using somatic cell hybrids and was key to the establishment and maintenance of the gene nomenclature committee. Always friendly, unassuming and extraordinarily helpful.*

**Ian Craig (HUGO and more)**

*She was unflagging in her efforts to make sure everything she did had been done to the very best standard. She could be fierce in her defence of her principles and I can remember her taking on the entire HUGO Council over some issue. I think it was to do with an aspect of nomenclature and I am pretty sure that she was prepared to resign if Council members didn't come to their senses.*

**Cathy Abbott (Edinburgh, Former Post Doc)**

*Patients were at the heart of so much of her work. Nobody in her lab at the time will ever forget her beloved niece Katheryn, and the impact of her death at the age of 13 from AIAT deficiency. Sue was, of course, shattered, but used her experience to push forward with prenatal diagnosis for AIAT, making personal connections with many other affected families.*

**Gavin Kelsey (Babraham, Former PhD student)**

*I was thinking of Sue very recently when I was casting my mind back to when I first learnt about that peculiar and distressing gestational abnormality the hydatidiform mole..... Nor, that I would now be looking at DNA methylation abnormalities in a patient with familial hydatidiform mole. So, science can go full circle. I think it typified Sue that she knew what was important and had a vision, and was keen to embrace new methods to answer her questions.*

**Hester Wain (HUGO Gene Nomenclature (HGNC) 1997-2004)**

*I can just picture her in my mind's eye so clearly, especially her frustration with people not wearing their name badges, particularly if they think they are important! ... which has stuck with me for years, so that I always wear mine. She was such a great leader, mentor and role model and I learnt so much working with her at HGNC for the 7 years I was there. She always showed great compassion for people and passion for science and her dogs! She always wore that thoughtful, slightly smiling expression that made her so approachable. Her story of leaving her dream of Paediatrics also stayed with me, about the little boy who died when she was in Algeria because he was allergic to penicillin; it is a story that I always keep to hand in my current role (Deputy Director of Patient Safety and Risk at the Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust), dealing with the most serious incidents in the NHS, to remind me that the impact on the doctors and other healthcare professionals can be very significant.*

**Elsbeth Bruford (HGNC)**

*Sue only passed on the baton of the HGNC on her official retirement from UCL in 2007, though she found the controversial nature of gene naming challenging at times, and often liked to repeat the quote attributed to her contemporary at Cambridge, Michael Ashburner, that "biologists would rather share their toothbrush than share a gene name"*

**Jonathan Wolfe (Former colleague)**

*The happiest period of my scientific life was our collaboration in the hunt for TSC1. Our Friday afternoon joint group meetings were for me the highlight of each week.*

**Katie Smith (TS Alliance)**

*She was an incredible person and did so much for those in the TSC community. I will never forget meeting her with all her owl jewelry in Annapolis when I started at the TS Alliance.*

**Alison Cooper (formerly TS Association)**

*She was an incredible woman who was a huge pioneer in TSC research and but also an advocate for TSC patients who were a huge concern to her.*

**Dickey Halley (TSC Collaborator)**

*I remember Sue as a unique person, who was always very generous with her attention and advice. And that I remember her great sense of humour.*

**Thiele, Elizabeth Anne (TSC)**

*For now many, many years you (Rosemary Ekong) and Sue have been my (and everyone's) 'go to' people re genetic mutations in TSC1 and TSC2, and your efforts and help have had a profound and positive impact on the lives of thousands of individuals with TSC and their families. I will so miss Sue's smile and twinkling eyes, as well as that lovely accent. I hope that both you (RE) and her family realize the impact that you have had on thousands of lives, and what an incredibly important resource you both have been for all of us.*

**Raymond Dalglish, (Leicester, Human Variome Project)**

*She was also a former external examiner for the Genetics and the Medical Genetics degrees here in Leicester. In the days when we still had vivas for students, I sat in on some of the sessions as an observer and was struck by her ability to bring out the best in students who must have been rather fearful of being grilled by the external examiner.*

**Donna Maglott (NIH, Human Variome project)**

*We always made a point to have a meal together at various meetings; or a walk-about as we did in Australia. Her dedication to sharing data and enforcing data standards will always be appreciated.*

**Mona El Ruby (Human Variome project)**

*She was and will stay as a distinguished Geneticist and a leader of guidelines for dealing with ethical issues.*

**Mireille Claustres (Human Variome Project)**

*Sue was a true "gentlewoman". What a loss.*

**Raj Ramesar (Human Variome Project)**

*She was an enormous asset to the field of human/medical genetics – and specifically to the HVP. She is part of a passing era – within which we've seen leaps and bounds in our field of medical genetics/genomics. I'm glad we had the opportunity to engage and honour her in the HVP – i.e. relating her scientific career work to the greater good that the HVP is/was on about.-- – this (message) comes from the tip of Africa.*

**Dhavendra Kumar (Human Variome Project)**

*Life cycle has to finish one day- it is best when someone is remembered for achievements and legacy. Professor Sue Povey was one of the top class human geneticists with many accolades. ....for many years she led the HUGO movement for education and ethics. I had the great fortune to work with her on genetic/ genomic education.*

**Tilli Tansey (Medical Historian, University of London)**

*She was always wonderfully helpful to us when we were planning our meetings, advising on attendees, programme etc., and advising us on editorial issues. For the GMW meeting she loaned us, for several months, her own collection of all the Proceedings volumes - I clearly remember visiting and her enthusiastic handing over of the precious volumes, accompanied by further reminiscences and asides, a generous gesture that was an enormous help.*

**Peter Harper (Genetics and Medicine Historical Network interviewer)**

*I can't think of anyone who was held in such respect and affection by such a wide range of people, scientists and clinicians alike.*