
OBITUARY NOTICE

ALISON CAROLINE ELLIOTT McCARTNEY

For those who knew Alison McCartney it is difficult to accept that we will no longer have the benefit of her expertise and enthusiasm in all things to do with ophthalmic pathology and much else besides. Turning from a promising career in neuropathology little more than ten years ago, Alison rapidly became an internationally recognised authority as an ophthalmic pathologist by virtue of her exceptional intelligence, her comprehensive knowledge of histopathology in general and an unfailingly helpful attitude to those coming to her for advice. Corneal disease, especially dystrophic conditions, and melanotic ocular tumours were her principal research interests and in both she made contributions of manifest clinical relevance, publishing more than seventy research papers in the context of ophthalmic pathology. Moreover, she was an excellent teacher and a regular contributor to College meetings.

All these things are a matter of public record and are reason enough to regret her passing. But what endeared Alison to those fortunate enough to work with her and to benefit from her outstanding talents was Alison herself. She was warm, she was loyal, she

had an infectious enthusiasm for life and she sparkled. She supported those who looked to her for help with their research projects, giving of her time and energy so unstintingly that it was sometimes to the detriment of her own research. (She was at the Institute of Ophthalmology eight years before she found time to present her MD thesis based on research undertaken prior to her appointment!) No single phrase can adequately encapsulate what Alison meant to those who knew her but, possibly, generosity of spirit comes nearest.

That and the courage with which she faced the discovery that she had metastatic cancer from an unsuspected breast primary. She was a pathologist, no one could hoodwink her and she faced the virtually certain outcome head on. Only last summer she organised a highly successful meeting of the European Ophthalmic Pathology Society in London.

But even before she was a pathologist she was a wife to Peter and mother to Alex, Max and Nancy. Great as is our loss, theirs is inestimable and we extend to them our profound sympathy.