

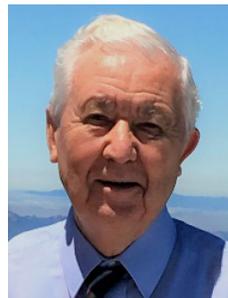


November 10, 2017

Ralph Harold Thomas — In Memoriam

The National Council on Radiation Protection and Measurements (NCRP) was saddened to learn of the death of Ralph H. Thomas, one of the true pioneers in the field of accelerator health physics, on October 21, 2017 at the age of 84.

Ralph was born November 27, 1932 in the working-class town of Reading, Berkshire, England. He spent much of his early life in the vicinity of London and never fully lost his U.K. accent. Ralph earned a BSc in physics and a PhD in nuclear physics at the University College London. Always a scholar, he received a number of other degrees in the United States and United Kingdom over the succeeding years and was a Certified Health Physicist and Registered Engineer (California).



Dr. Thomas worked for a number of years at Harwell in the newly established Rutherford Laboratory (1960 to 1968). He was involved with shield design and skyshine studies for the 50 MeV proton linear accelerator and the 7 GeV proton synchrotron (Nimrod) while there. Ralph moved to the United States in 1968 and in 1970 he became the Head of the Health Physics Department at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (LBNL) and held progressively higher positions at LBNL until his retirement in from the University of California 1993, which included a stint at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory as the Head of the Hazards Control Department. During this period, he participated in the first acceleration of heavy ions at the Bevatron (LBNL) in 1970, which was a pioneering facility in the United States for research in the treatment of cancer in humans using protons and heavy ions.

Ralph Thomas was a Council member from 1990 to 1996, Consociate Member (1996), and an advisor to Scientific Committee (SC) 6-5. He chaired SC 46-8 that authored NCRP Report No. 144, *Radiation Protection for Particle Accelerator Facilities*, in 2003. Ralph also served on other NCRP, International Commission on Radiological Protection, and International Commission on Radiation Units and Measurements committees for more than 20 y. He authored many scientific publications with more than 250 papers and a dozen books. The now rare and highly sought-after *Accelerator Health Physics*, written jointly with his close colleague at LBNL H. Wade Patterson, is but one example.

Ralph was an active member and leader of many organizations. He was a Fellow of the Health Physics Society (HPS), the Society of Radiological Protection, the Institute of Physics, and the Royal Society of Health. Ralph was the 2003 G. William Morgan Lecturer for HPS and received the HPS Distinguished Scientific Achievement Award in 2004. As one of the Founders of the HPS Accelerator Section and its first President, Ralph received even higher recognition from the HPS when he received the 2011 Founders Award. Ralph was also an Honorary Member of the Australian Radiation Protection Society. Ralph was a member of the Editorial Board of the journal *Radiation Protection Dosimetry* and was its Book Review Editor for several years. Ralph continued to lecture, consult, write and edit until about 2010.

He was a dedicated family man who rarely missed his children's concerts (a family very into music thanks to his encouragement), plays, and sporting events. He was a gardener, lover of classical music, and an avid reader of all subjects. He spent the last 10 y of his marriage, which began in 1958, home caring for his beloved wife Mavis Waldegrave Thomas, who passed away in 2005.

Ralph is survived by his three children and nine grandchildren. Ralph Thomas was the consummate English gentleman and a true man of letters who is sorely missed by his family, many friends, and a mighty host of professional colleagues.