



Thomas A Angus (1916 - 2005)

Emeritus Member, Joined SIP: June 12, 1967

After having served in World War II as a bombardier in the Royal Canadian Air Force stationed in England, Tom Angus returned to Canada with a Distinguished Flying Cross and enrolled himself as a Biology Major at the University of Guelph. In the summer of 1945, Tom, along with Art Heimpel, worked as a summer student at the Insect Pathology Research Institute in Sault Ste. Marie, Canada and started examining various spore-forming bacteria for their insecticidal activity. It was then that he discovered that the bacterium isolated by Berliner from Thuringia induced paralysis in the silkworm. Thus began his illustrious career as a pioneering Insect Pathologist who laid the groundwork for all the recombinant technology using the crystal toxin from *Bacillus thuringiensis*. Tom later went to McGill University and obtained a Ph.D. in Microbiology, returned to The Insect Pathology Research Institute, and worked alongside Ted Bird and Don McLeod. They were often referred to by their fellow scientists as the “three wise men”. Although the parasporal crystal in Bt was observed by Ishiwata in Japan, Steinhaus in the US and Hannay in London, Ontario, it was Tom who showed that the crystal was toxic to the silkworm and was responsible for rapidly inducing paralysis. Tom in his typical self-effacing style described it as the “fortuitous excellence of this group that resulted in the pieces of the puzzle coming together”.

He was a founding member of the Society for Invertebrate Pathology in 1967 when he also served as a Trustee. Tom was President of the Society in 1976-1978.

Tom Angus passed away on June 16th at the age of 89 in London, Ontario, Canada. All his friends and colleagues have fond memories of Tom and cherish all the wonderful stories he used to relate. He was a history buff and had a superb command of the English language, a combination that made him a “raconteur par excellence”. Once when a group of us were walking with him past the Plains of Abraham in Quebec City, Tom described in graphic detail the battle that took place. It was like listening to the “Ancient Mariner”!

Tom was an unpretentious simple person who was liked by all around him. He will be remembered as a wonderful human being and a meticulous scientist.

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