IPF REMEMBERS STEPHEN COX



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The International Polar Foundation was saddened to learn of the recent passing of Stephen Cox CVO, former Executive Director of the Royal Society in London and Trustee of the International Polar Foundation's UK arm (IPF UK).

Stephen came from Blackburn, England, where he was an outstanding student as a child. Following voluntary service overseas in Bolivia, he pursued an undergraduate degree in geography and a master's degree in education. On completion of his studies, he joined the British Council, where he was stationed in Warsaw, Ghana, Washington DC, and London.

In 1984 he became Assistant Secretary at the Royal Society to lead the society's international programmes, where he established links with scientists in Europe, the US and across the British Commonwealth. He later became the Society's Executive Director. In the 1990s, he was elected Director-General of the Commonwealth Institute and worked as Chief Executive of the Westminster Foundation for Democracy, helping support emerging democracies in eastern Europe and sub-Saharan Africa. He was appointed a Commander in the Royal Victorian Order (CVO) in 1997.

Stephen also found time in his busy schedule to volunteer for the British Science Association, the Council for Assisting Refugee Academics (now the Council for At-Risk Academics) and the Royal Geographical Society, where he was elected a fellow.

It is in this spirit of giving back that Stephen also volunteered to become a trustee of the International Polar Foundation's UK branch, thanks to an invitation by another IPF UK Trustee, the Australian historian, author, and Antarctic expert Meredith Hooper.

"I'm really sad to learn that Stephen has passed away," stated Alain Hubert, IPF Founder and President. "We've been honoured to have someone so distinguished and with such commitment to service as one of our IPF UK trustees. He will be sorely missed."

"IPF is very grateful to Stephen for his encouragement and support when we first launched IPF UK," stated Nighat Amin, Head of Environmental and International Affairs at IPF. "I remember clearly the welcome that we unfailingly received at the Royal Society when we had our meetings there. His passionate belief in the importance of education always made me smile."

Drawing on his vast experience in education, he provided helpful insight to IPF UK Executive Secretary Dr Liz Pasteur as she developed pedagogical content for Class Zero Emission UK, an educational initiative the International Polar Foundation created to teach young people about topics such as polar science, climate change, energy, biodiversity, and how to have a more sustainable livelihood.

"He was an excellent trustee, was witty and personable, and always offered good suggestions and encouragement," recalled Dr Pasteur. "His perceptive comments helped significantly during the development of the Class Zero Emissions workshops in the UK. He had a broad depth of experience to draw on and was very generous with his time."

"He remained a very charming, supportive and approachable person despite his achievements," remarked photographer and author Dr Jean de Pomereu, a longtime collaborator with IPF who took part in IPF UK Trustees meetings from time to time. "I was very sad to hear of his passing."

After retiring from the Royal Academy in 2011, he chaired the council of Royal Holloway University of London as well as the governing body of Atlantic College. He was also a trustee of the Frederick Soddy Trust.

Stephen remained a trustee of IPF UK until his passing.

Stephen was also an avid cricketer and published author. His works include The Commonwealth Institute: *A Tale of Two Buildings*, and *The Royal Society in Cold War Europe*.

He is survived by his wife Pauline, who was a respected educationist and Head Teacher at The Tiffin Girls' School in Kingston upon Thames from 1994 to 2010, his daughter Rachel, and his son David.