



Dr. Ian J. Lawrenson 1933 – 2020

Class of 1951

Ian was born in Dundee on 13th June 1933 to Marion and Thomas Lawrenson. Thomas was an artist with DC Thomson for his whole working career and also a keen amateur cine-photographer, with Ian being the childhood star in three of his father's films which won awards around the world, including in the UK, Tokyo and Hollywood.

Enrolling at the School in 1938, in time for its 700th anniversary, Ian excelled academically finishing as Dux and being awarded the School's Harris Gold Medal, as well as prizes for science and mathematics.

He won a Harkness Scholarship to St Andrews University, where he read Natural Philosophy (Physics), graduating with a First Class honours degree in 1955, and securing medals in Physics and Mathematics.

In 1958, he was awarded a PhD for a thesis on Nuclear Magnetic Resonance in Solid Hydrocarbons, supported by a Sir James Caird Travelling Scholarship as one of the first researchers in the field. From 1958 to 1960, Ian was employed in the USA as a Research Associate in the Department of Chemistry at the University of Illinois, working on magnetic resonance, before securing a post in the UK National Chemical Laboratory at Teddington.

In 1961, he met Carolyn Webb, from Sydney, Australia, and they were married in 1963 in the chapel of St Andrews University, before settling down in Walton-on-Thames.

A little later in life, Ian moved to the Department of Trade and Industry in London, to act as the Technical Aide to the Chief Government Scientist and Engineer, Dr. Duncan Davies. He also became a Fellow of the Institution of Electrical Engineers and Chairman of Euromar, a pan-European body concerned with marine technology.

In 1991, Ian was honoured with an OBE for his services to the UK Government and retired from the DTI in 1993, before taking up the post of Secretary to the Hazards Forum and becoming editor of its journal. He was later elected a life member of the Forum.

He and his wife were involved in a number of local activities in Walton, in particular the Riverhouse Barn Arts Centre, where he was the first Chairman. In his spare time, Ian gained an Open University BA degree in Arts, and was an enthusiastic maker of model boats.

Ian was very supportive of the activities and careers of his son, Andrew, a computer scientist and author of a series of science fiction books, and his daughter, Dr. Jane Hoyle, a geneticist.

He was predeceased by his wife in 2018 and is survived by his two children and five grandchildren – Daniel, Christopher, Benjamin, Jasmine and Max.