

Professor Jane Plant, CBE died in London on 4th March 2016, aged 71

Dr. Qintao Liu, March 2016

It is with tremendous sorrow to announce that our advisor, Professor Jane Plant, CBE, FEng, FRSE, FIMMM, FRSM, FGS, FRSA, FRGS, CEng, CGeol, died at home in London in the morning of 4 March 2016, aged 71 and after fighting breast cancer for 30 years.

I first met Jane when I was appointed as a Member of UK Advisory Committee on Hazardous Substances in 2006, while she had been chairing the Committee since 2001. The Committee had statutory status and was supporting UK Chemicals Strategy and Policy under Defra as well



as UK Chemical Stakeholders Forum and the Environment Agency. Before REACH entered into force, we already started to work on difficult cases of hazard and risk assessments of chemicals, including metals, nanomaterials, pharmaceuticals and endocrine disrupting substances; many of these have now become decision basis on chemicals of concern by ECHA. Jane was an excellent Chair who was not frightened to take on difficult issues. In addition to speciality areas, she made sure the Committee was balanced with the most capable scientists from academia and industry, with male and female; old and young. I remember her saying "I am 'colour blind', all I want is merit and integrity". Jane left the Committee in 2008, but we continued to

work together through PhD projects co-funded by Imperial College and AstraZeneca. She also became my mentor and friend.

Before I knew Jane, I already heard about her and saw her as a highly successful and very intelligent female model. There is no doubt of that. Jane has made outstanding achievements in science, ranging from physics, earth science to environmental, health, herbal medicine and food therapy, particularly in treatment of cancer and depression. Jane is a true multi-disciplinary scientist, and in each area, she has made the highest possible achievement. Jane was one of the first few females who studied physics in 1960s and graduated with 1st Class honours degree in geology (special geochemistry). She became Chief Scientist for British Geological Survey (BGS) in 2000 and a Professor of Geochemistry in Imperial College London from 2001.

After I got to know Jane, I found Jane a kind, humorous, strong and charismatic person with integrity and principle. I sometimes wonder how all these qualities could be used to describe one person, but it still understated her. On one hand, she is an internationally renowned scientist and a role model, on the other hand, she is also a loyal Christian, a loving wife, mother and grandmother. Among all of these, her story to fight cancer is the one I find most moving and intriguing. Like all scientists, she spent years to study and work as a bench scientist; her biggest achievements were actually made after she was diagnosed with breast cancer in 1980s. Instead of slowing down and being beat by cancer, she wanted to find out what factors could contribute to breast cancer. So in addition to a full time job with BGS and

a part-time job with Imperial College, she also investigated causes of breast cancer and how to treat it without using aggressive radiotherapy, chemotherapy and cancer drugs. She developed herbal and food therapies, not only helped treat her own cancer to live a full life for more than 30 years afterwards, but also used by many breast cancer patients worldwide and helped them recover and extend quality life (1-8). Her popular science book “Your Life in Your Hands” has been sold for millions of copies and has now been translated into 15 languages, including Korean and Chinese.

I feel very lucky to get to know Jane as a scientist, a business woman and a friend. Jane’s spirit in serving science and in finding truth of chemical and health risk assessments, will remain with us at Prefusion. We will remember her forever.

1. Plant, J.A. 2000. Your Life in Your Hands. Virgin. Sales > 4 million worldwide, translated into 15 languages, 2nd edition in 2003.
2. Plant, J.A. & Tidey, G. 2001. The Plant Programme. Virgin Books.
3. Plant, J.A. & Tidey, G. 2003. Understanding, Preventing and Overcoming Osteoporosis. Virgin Books.
4. Plant, J.A. 2004. Prostate Cancer: Understanding, Prevent and Overcome. Virgin Books.
5. Plant, J.A. & Tidey, G. 2005. Eating For Better Health. Virgin Books. 2nd edition in 2010.
6. Plant, J.A. & Stephenson, J. 2008. Beating Stress, Anxiety & Depression. Piatkus Books.
7. Jane A. Plant (Editor), Nick Voulvoulis (Editor), K. Vala Ragnarsdottir (Editor). 2011) Pollutants, Human Health and the Environment: A Risk Based Approach. Wiley-Blackwell.
8. Djamgoz, M. & Plant, J.A. 2014. The 10-Step Plan to Help You Overcome and Prevent Cancer. Vermilion, Ebury Publishing.