

EDITORIAL

Sir James Black FRS, Nobel Laureate,
Pharmacologist

On behalf of the British Pharmacological Society it is a pleasure, albeit a sad one, to introduce this supplement to the *British Journal of Pharmacology* which has been put together in order to mark the passing of Jimmy Black and to celebrate his life and work.

He was by some margin our most distinguished and celebrated member but he never lost his interest in the practical nuts and bolts of our subject. He had little time for formality and adulation but always seemed happiest talking to young colleagues about their data. His very down to earth persona made it easy to forget that he was responsible for two dramatic therapeutic advances in the introduction of β -adrenoceptor antagonists for the treatment of cardiovascular disease and the H_2 -antagonists for treating peptic ulcer and associated disorders. His record in drug discovery is unparalleled and it could be argued that all of the honours he accumulated would be more than justified had he made just one

of these major therapeutic advances. It is also noteworthy that he made both discoveries whilst working in industrial pharmacology laboratories in the UK, employing small teams of dedicated colleagues and classical *in vitro* and *in vivo* pharmacological tools.

I hope that those who are unfamiliar with his work will read this and gain an appreciation of why he was so important to our subject and to the BPS. For those who knew him and for whom he was a role model I hope that this will be a memento of a much loved and admired colleague.

Ray Hill

Conflicts of interest

RH has declared no potential conflicts.