

## Obituary: Montefiore Barak

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Monty Barak, who died recently aged 85, was born in New Zealand. After graduating from the University of Canterbury, he was awarded a Rhodes Scholarship to Oxford in 1926, where for his doctorate he worked on the electrical conductivity of non-aqueous solutions. In 1929 with a Commonwealth Fund Fellowship to Princeton University, he worked on the photochemical reaction between hydrogen and oxygen and later continued his research work at Kings College London.

In 1934 he joined the Chloride Electrical Storage Company and this appointment was to herald a long and distinguished career within the battery industry. It also meant that he took up residence in Manchester where he participated increasingly in the sporting and scientific communities. He was a keen rugby player and excelled on the tennis court. His commitment to sport was later to be reflected in his performance on the golf course and he gained the respect of an ever increasing circle of friends and colleagues.

At the same time his career within Chloride was developing rapidly and he became Director of Research in 1953. During this period the Company was developing international technical liaisons with major battery companies in Germany, America and Sweden. His contribution was invaluable in making these international liaisons effective since, in addition to his technical and scientific abilities, he established lasting friendships with his counterparts abroad.

Dr. Barak was appointed a Fellow of the then Royal Institute of Chemistry in 1947 and actively supported his profession throughout his career, developing an interest in the education of chemists and subsequently

serving on the Court of Governors of the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology. Amongst his many appointments Monty was a member of the RIC Council, Chairman of the Society of Electrochemistry and a member of the IEE Committee on novel methods of power storage.

In 1959 the British Government sponsored an international symposium on power sources. Monty was involved in establishing this conference on a regular basis and served on the Joint Services and Industry organising committee. His contribution to the advancement of battery technology was recognised when he was awarded the Booth Medal at the 1970 symposium.

In his later years Monty became Scientific Advisor to the Chloride Group. He lectured and wrote extensively on battery technology and he edited a series of books in the IEE Energy series on Electrochemical Power Sources and their applications.

Dr. Barak was a distinguished industrial chemist and he will be remembered by those who knew him for his style, charm and commitment of purpose.

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