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Biosketch

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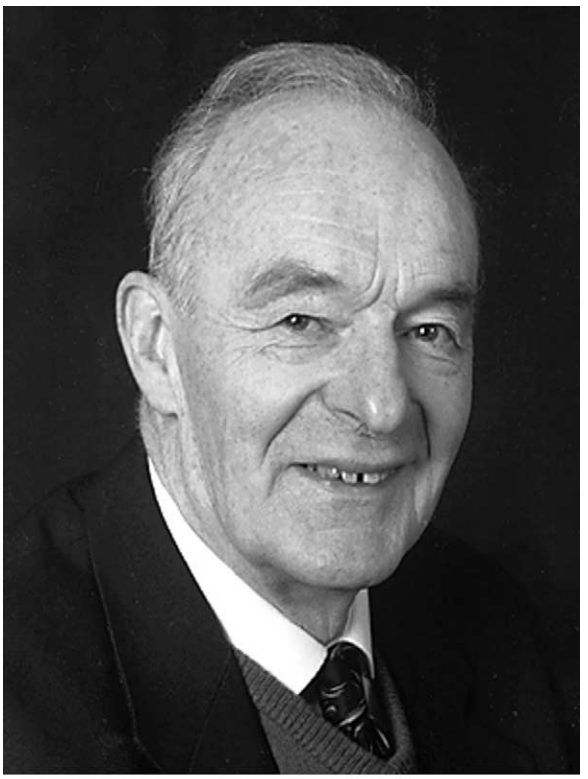

Andrew Knox Galwey

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On the day that I completed the paid-employment phase of my career, I was in South Africa, a tourist on Table Mountain. Most appropriately this was a part of the long-term, well-established collaboration with Professor Michael Brown that has continued, and even developed, since my retirement. A most welcome consequence of the change of status, on relinquishing the full-time job, was release from the progressively onerous and increasingly time-consuming (widely resented and regarded as largely unproductive) administrative chores that are progressively being imposed on University teachers. This enabled my priorities to be realistically reassessed. On clearing my desk, prior to departure from my former 'Ivory Tower', my CV was amongst the unreasonably large accumulation of papers, that represented the residual detritus from academic activities during 38 years at the same University. This was sent for recycling, secure in the knowledge that I would never again desire to impress a would be employer of my indispensable qualities, or participate in the impenetrable lottery that has been my experience of promotion exercises that appear to be conducted behind very closed doors and without meaningful accountability. All this is a characteristically prolix statement that I possess no conventional CV but here will informally summarize my chemical career experiences in the form of an autobiography, perhaps better described as a premature autoobituary.

I was a reluctant chemist. In 1950, aged 17 (I was born on 13.3.33), during what turned out to be my last term at Midhurst Grammar School (Sussex, UK), I approached the Headmaster with the request: ''I have no interest in chemistry, I do not understand chemistry and I wish to drop chemistry from my future timetable''. The reply was an uncompromising negative and ''No!'' for me meant more unwelcome chemical studies. So I left school and entered a profession (?) that then was every school boys dream: building steam railway engines (a commodity for which the current market is hardly buoyant). However, it soon became apparent that studies in Night School were impracticable because of the early-morning start in the engineering workshop. I, therefore, pressed by economic realities, transferred to the only alternative employment I could find which, perversely, was appointment as a Laboratory Assistant for F.W. Berk and Co.,

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Chemical Manufacturers. However, to my considerable surprise, I found that work in an industrial chemical laboratory was interesting and, in time, became a more than acceptable prospect as a possible career. I registered for a degree at (what was then called) The West Ham College of Technology and was able to attend (and enjoy) the final year as a full-time student. This lead to graduation in 1955 with the London University Degree of Honours B.Sc. (Special Chemistry).

I was qualified to proceed to research. To satisfy a desire to sample the Academic World and to determine whether I was capable of making some small contribution towards advancement of the subject in which I had learned theories formulated by others, I applied to register for a higher degree. In the stimulating environment of The Imperial College of Science and Technology (University of London), I studied under the inspiring and thoughtful supervision of Dr. Patrick W.M. Jacobs (later Professor). I was introduced to the complexities and problems of solid state chemistry, finding an interest that has continued unabated throughout my long research career. This first investigation was concerned with the thermal decomposition of ammonium perchlorate, then of much interest, catalyzed through support by funding from various rocket research programmes. My thesis, ''Some Reactions of Solid Perchlorates'', was successfully submitted to The University of London, admitting me to the degree of Ph.D. in 1958. A remarkably similar title thesis, ''Some Reactions Involving Solids'', but with somewhat extended content, gained me the degree of D.Sc., University of London, in 1973.

Somewhat before completion of the Ph.D. thesis, with a very short CV and no credited publications, Professor Charles Kemball appointed me to an Assistant Lectureship in the Department of Chemistry of The Queen's University of Belfast, September 1957. (In 1968, Professor Kemball moved to Edinburgh University. Later, his daughter, Mary, and my nephew, David, met and married. This unusual chain of events eventually established a family connection between us.) In the early days at Belfast, I collaborated with Professor Kemball (conventions of address were more formal in those days). My interests in crystal reactivity were extended to surface chemistry through work on heterogeneous catalysts. Subsequently, these interests, singly or in combination, have dominated my research activities in chemistry, together with extensions to applications in aspects of geology and environmental protection.

After 3 years in Belfast, the rules on University appointments were changed, allowing my limited tenure post to become a permanent Lectureship and promotions to Senior Lecturer (1970) and Reader (1974) followed. I served as Vice Chairman of the School of Chemistry from 1986 to 1989 and was Head of Teaching from 1990 to 1992. I was fortunate to have three periods of Study Leave: a year (1968/1969) with Professor Peter Gray in Leeds, 3 months in Florence (1977) with Professor Giulio G.T. Guarini and 2 months (1995) in Grahamstown with Professor Michael Brown. In 1992, I suffered a potentially fatal illness, cancer of the stomach, but, thanks to the skillful surgical intervention of Professor R.A.J. Spence and his team of specialists at Belfast City Hospital, I was restored to full health and strength. As already mentioned, I retired fully in 1995, to avoid the increasingly pointless (as I saw it) pressures of enhanced administration and endless reorganizations. I believe that, having escaped the current fashion of academic overload, I can now complete more chemistry by writing in a field that has been subject of much less critical scrutiny and comparative survey than seems to me to be appropriate to maintain its coherence and to develop adequate theory. I can now set my own pressures and time-table, and work in chemistry when and as I wish to do so. These activities can now be controlled more comfortably than those imposed in my previous situation. Like so many of my friends, I find that life following retirement is so busy that one wonders when, formerly, there had been any time for 'work'.

This publication is a welcome opportunity for me to express my sincere appreciation of the uniformly high standard of input to joint collaborations that has been so generously given by those many coworkers who also have become friends. I cannot find suitable words to express my gratitude for the efforts of all the people with whom I regard it as a privilege to have worked. Their names are recorded in the Publications List below and I direct my sincere and heartfelt thanks to each and everyone who contributed to our joint 'search after truth'. This is intended to be more than a conventional appreciation and I express a positive

recognition of the importance of their contributions to publications for which credits are shared.

My most extensive collaboration, recognized by this joint presentation, has been more than 30 years of symbiotic cooperation with Michael Brown. Our slight knowledge of each others' work quickly crystallized into an efficient working relationship when it was arranged that Michael would spend a study leave, a year (1970) of research collaboration, working together in the Chemistry Department of The Queen's University of Belfast. Our background was particularly conducive towards effective research collaboration: our Ph.D. supervisors had both obtained their research doctorates supervised by the famous Professor F.C. Tompkins. (We might be regarded as 'Academic Cousins'.) Communication between us benefited from this shared heritage, as is well illustrated by a later, almost telepathic, incident of agreement on a topic of joint interest. Letters were posted by each of us, on or about the same day (in 1978, e-mail was an undreamt of luxury), both containing the identical suggestion that together we should collaborate on a study of the thermal decomposition of nickel squarate (this was later completed).

During the years since our initial and extended cooperation in 1970, collaborative research has been maintained without interruption and research publications have continued to appear at (sometimes irregular) intervals. However, despite the distant separation, our friendship and close contact has never lapsed or faltered. Overall our total output is summarized in our Joint Publication List, the output from a working friendship that has lasted for more than three decades and continues positively and unabated. It is a very real honour for me to have this opportunity to pay my most sincere tribute to a friend, colleague and coauthor of such skill and (most important) tolerance and understanding.

Shared academic interests and career patterns (we both have spent 38 years and more at the same universities) are only part of what is an extended firm friendship. Although separated by several thousands of miles, we have managed to meet at regular, though sometimes infrequent, intervals. Michael has travelled to Belfast many times. I particularly remember, and was most appreciative of, his visit in 1992 when I was in the early stages of convalescence after surgery: this was a valuable encouragement towards my recovery. I have spent some time in Grahamstown and hope to return there again. There have been the opportunities to renew common interests at conferences, in Canada, England, Germany and Italy. But also supporting our work together has been the friendship extended to both family circles, and the holiday contacts, a further meeting in Italy is in prospect to continue our joint exploration of Lake Garda. We are both appreciative of the support of our wives, encouraging our friendship and collaboration (in my case particularly including illness as well as the good times). This final paragraph is intended to recognize the significant contributions by people who are not always mentioned in the Acknowledgements in published articles (unlike the Paymaster and Laboratory Staff). I count myself exceptionally fortunate in having enjoyed the friendship of Michael and his family from the early stages of my career until, now, the sixth year of my retirement. My wish is that this will continue long.

AKG

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