

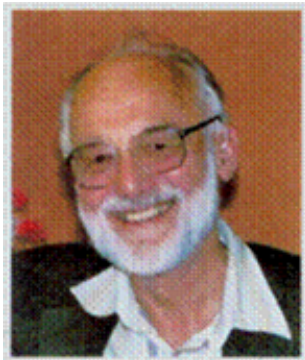
IN MEMORIAM

Dr. B. J. Selman (1934-2009): A Man and a Coordinator

The Rajshahi-Newcastle University Academic Link Programme

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Brian John Selman

Died 1st August, 2009

Born on 25 July 1934, Brian John Selman received his secondary education in England from the King Edward VI School, Southampton (1945-48) and Marlin School, Stroud (1948-53). He obtained his BSc in Zoology (1956) and PhD in Entomology (1959-64) from the University of Bristol. Part of his doctoral work was carried out in the British

Natural History Museum, London. Soon afterwards, he took the position of a Lecturer in the Department of Agricultural Biology (later Department of Agricultural and Environmental Science), University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, UK, where he continued teaching and research as a regular Faculty (1964-1999) and then as a Guest Member until 2002.

Apart from his academic responsibilities, Dr. Selman was engaged in a lot of scientific, social and religious activities. To mention only a few, he was a Fellow of the Royal Entomological Society, Scientific Fellow of the Zoological Society of London, Trustee Member of the Natural History Society of Northumbria, Overseas Student Advisor of the Newcastle-upon-Tyne University, Member (1968-1978) and Chairman (1978-2009) of the Parish Church, Governor of the local schools, Members of the Management Committees of the Hadrian's Wall Heritage Site and the Castle Eden Dene Nature Reserve.

Those who came in contact with this great man will equivocally admit that Dr. Selman was a popular, amicable and favourite Course Tutor and a competent, helpful and friendly Supervisor of a large number of under- and postgraduate students from around the world, England, Europe, Americas, Africa, Middle East, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Far East and Australia in particular. He had an overwhelming credit of publishing over

80 research articles, mostly under solo authorship and others jointly with colleagues, collaborators and students, in varied and renowned Journals including *Nature*, *J. Appl. Entomol.*, *Agric. Zool. Reviews*, *Int. Pest Control*, *Entomologia*, *Entomography*, *Entomophaga*, *J. Invert. Pathol.*, *J. Protozoology*, *J. Aust. Ent. Soc.*, *Aust. J. Zool.*, *Aust. J. Nat. Hist.*, *Lab Practice*, *New Zealand Entomologist*, *Bull. Zool. Nomencl.*, *Ann. Ent. Soc. Am.*, *Bull. Mus. Hist. Nat. Paris*, *J. Nat. Hist.*, *Bull. Brit. Mus. (Nat. Hist.)*, *Proc. Zool. Soc. Lond.* and *J. Insect Physiol.* In addition, he wrote review articles on crysomelid beetles of China and Korea, and submitted Reports to the CSIRO, Canberra, on paropsine beetles of Eucalyptus trees in Australia, to the Potato Marketing Board, UK, and on the microsporidian parasite of the grey field slug. Dr. Selman breathed his last on 1 August 2009 at the age of 75, leaving behind his beloved wife Mrs. Margaret Selman, three children named Richard, Andrew and Elizabeth, close relatives, friends and an enormous number of well-wishers throughout the globe. We earnestly pray for the eternal peace of his departed soul (Ameen).

Now, I would like to look back and focus on the pivotal role that Dr. Selman played in initiating, establishing and materializing the Rajshahi-Newcastle University Academic Link Programme that lasted for a long 14-year period from 1987 to 2001. Following the successful and brilliant doctoral studies by M. A. R. Khan (1978-81) and K.A.M.S.H. Mondal (1981-84) in the Department of Agricultural Biology, University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Dr. Selman made his first courtesy visit here to the Department of Zoology, University of Rajshahi, in 1984 to attend the Bangladesh Association for the Advancement of Science (BAAS) Conference. This led to detailed plans, instigated by the late Professor Mustafizur Rahman, to initiate a Link between Rajshahi and Newcastle Universities. The British Council-financed Academic Link thus came into existence in 1987 when Prof. Rahman first visited Newcastle for signing the Programme. The Link not only facilitated the research and training of some 15 academics and technical staffs of this Department in

Newcastle, but also opened venues for collaborative research in both Universities involving the exchange of the following Newcastle staff members in RU: Dr. B.J. Selman (thrice), Prof. R.B. Cain, Dr. R.M. Wilkins, Dr. J. Kershaw and Dr. Keith Moore, who hold academic discussions, delivered lectures, and carried out collaborative research.

The academic Link had an enormous impact on designing, executing and developing both under- and postgraduate courses/ curricula and research activities of this Department. The Link yielded two MScs (Professors M. Saiful Islam and Ananda K. Saha), four MPhils (Professors M. Sohrab Ali, M. Safinur Rahman, A. S. M. Shafiqur Rahman and M. Nazrul Islam) and two PhDs (Professors S. Parween and M. Mahbub Hasan). Moreover, postdoctoral and short technical visits to Newcastle included the following staff members of the Department of Zoology: Dr. R. Haque, Professors K. A. M. S. H. Mondal, M. A. Salam, M. A. Quayum, M. Sayedur Rahman, M. Mahtab Ali, Sowdagar M. Rahman, A. S. Bhuiyan, Mr. M. A. Kasem (Museum curation and Taxidermy, jointly with Sanderland University Museum) and Mrs. I. A. Chowdhury (Lab techniques). The Link encompassed as well as encouraged various research subjects ranging from invertebrate pathology, use of microbes in the control of stored products and mollusc pests, to the use of pesticides, chemosterilants, phytochemicals, growth hormones and pheromones to control the field crop and domestic pests. It also investigated areas like biodiversity, ecology of soil organisms, invertebrate taxonomy and freshwater invertebrates, uses of molecular and cell biology in agriculture, gamma-irradiation to protect stored grain products and museum curation.

Owing to the successful continuation of the Rajshahi-Newcastle Link with the Zoology Department, another academic Link was established with the Centre for Environmental Research (later Institute of Environmental Science, IES) with the financial support from the British Council and Overseas Development Administration (ODA), aiming at a broad cooperation in applied environmental research involving other Departments of RU. Thus academics from the Institute of Biological Sciences (IBSc, Prof. K. A. M. S. H. Mondal), Departments of Botany (Professors Muzahid Hossain, G. Kabir, M. A. Haider), Geography & Environmental Science (Professors M. S. Alam, S. R. Alam Rumeel), Geology and Mining (Prof. Golam Sabbir), Chemistry (S. M. Monzurul Alam

Apollo), Statistics (Prof. Saidur Rahman), Economics (Dr. M. A. Wadud) and the Centre for Environmental Research (Professors M. I. Juberi and M. A. Mannan) contributed towards the selection of dwarf wheat tolerant to heat and drought stress, use of GIS software and modelling to study land use changes, soil chemistry and environmental problems in the Barind Tracts. This led a series of visitors here in RU from Newcastle (Drs R. Payton and M. Adie; Mr. Julian Barr and Mr. D. Wise), Sterling (Dr. William Jones) and Durham (Prof. Silhouette and Dr. P. Dixon) Universities. Outcome of the visits culminated in a book on *Land Water Interface* published by the UPL. Another point worth mentioning here is that Prof. Nazma Sultana, Department of Mathematics, RU, visited Newcastle University as spouse of Prof. Safinur Rahman, and while working with Drs M. Luff and R. Shiel, she developed useful software (*GWBAS/C*) for Probit analysis extensively used in Biological sciences.

To witness and evaluate the steady progress and development of the academic and research arena of this Department, it had been our pleasure to welcome Dr. Selman in RU in three separate occasions under the Link. It is needless to emphasize here that aside from the personal, familial, socio-cultural and historical exchange of views and ideas between two countries and eastern vs. western societies, Rajshahi-Newcastle Link played a magnificent role in boosting up the academic, technical and research faculties of this Department. The Link also contributed a lot to the modernization of our teaching-cum-research laboratories and in the enrichment of our Departmental Library. Today we gratefully acknowledge the untiring efforts and challenging venture of late Dr. Selman, whose ideas and contribution towards accomplishing the ultimate shape of the Link Programme will remain well-documented in the history of the Zoology Department, RU, for ever.

Acknowledgements: The author is thankful to Professors A. R. Khan, K. A. M. S. H. Mondal, M. A. Mannan and Selina Parween, for providing vital information contained herein, to Mrs. Margaret Selman for sending us a list of publications of her husband, and to late Dr. Selman for his welcome message on the eve of celebrating the Silver Jubilee of this Department (appeared in *Univ. J. Zool. Rajshahi Univ.* 17-18 (1998-99): Appendix II). For providing some facts and figures for this article, the contributions of other colleagues are also gratefully acknowledged.