

## Introduction



*A favourite Kewism; 'Write in haste and revise at leisure. Good writing is a craft, not an art.'*

A clinician scientist often wears a variety of different hats, including those of researcher, administrator, mentor and teacher. While other prestigious awards may specifically honour research achievements, a festschrift acknowledges the many other facets of the career of an outstanding and influential scientist. Meaning 'celebratory writing' in German, a festschrift is a unique publication devoted to the lifelong accomplishments of an exceptional scholar, and traditionally includes a symposium, followed by the publication of a compendium of papers contributed by the honoree's mentees and colleagues.

The notion of a festschrift to celebrate Mike Kew's career was conceived 2 years ago by Chris Kassianides during a visit to Jay Hoofnagle at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda. Jay's face lit up at the suggestion, and that was the signal to steam ahead. The concept was enthusiastically endorsed by others, and culminated in the Gastroenterology Foundation of South Africa symposium in Pretoria in August 2016 at the South African Gastroenterology Society congress to commemorate Mike's achievements and ultimately the publication of this festschrift. The symposium was dedicated to Mike's lifelong influence on hepatology, and some of his closest collaborators and most prominent colleagues highlighted the broad spectrum of his contributions to research on liver disease. Perhaps the most inspirational aspect was the admiration and esteem

the presenters demonstrated in describing his personal attributes. Mike brought to academia his insatiable sense of curiosity, his passion, his persistence, his determination and his dedication.

Mike Kew has had one of the most extraordinary careers in South African medicine, and is one of the best-known hepatologists of his era. The choice of a career that gives one an inner compass of purpose invariably has positive effects on one's life, and Mike is no exception. The sheer longevity and productivity of his academic career in medicine and hepatology, the magnitude of his impact and the quality of his science make Mike Kew the ideal recipient of a living celebration of his academic work.

It would be difficult for any prelude to a festschrift in honour of Mike Kew to completely cover the many notable achievements of his remarkable life and career. Mike had an enviable start to his academic career when he graduated *cum honoribus primus* and top of his class at the age of 21 at the University of the Witwatersrand. From that auspicious start, he conscientiously followed William Osler's dictum that the magic word for success in medicine is work, sustained hard work. Ever the consummate clinical and translational scientist, Mike spent over four decades at the forefront of research in hepatology. He made substantive contributions, in particular reshaping the understanding of hepatocellular carcinoma and hepatitis B virus infection in sub-Saharan Africa. Even when retirement beckoned, his enthusiasm remained undimmed, and the value of his wisdom and experience as a senior scholar was recognised and utilised by the Department of Medicine at the University of Cape Town.

One of Mike's most striking qualities was his skill and talent in directing and inspiring his many protégés. Albert Einstein opined that 'you should not use an old map to explore a new world' and this maxim underpinned his career. A good test of mentorship is the ability to inspire others, and the recognition that together, the landscape can be changed, and new knowledge brought into the world. He had an unparalleled intuition in recognising natural talent, which resulted in his recruiting and nurturing some of the best hepatologists in South Africa in the Department of Medicine at the University of the Witwatersrand, ensuring that each protégé followed a unique career pathway and that all became expert hepatologists.

There are a plethora of plaudits that describe Mike and the trajectory of his journey in South African medicine. During his career, he was the recipient of numerous national and international awards and honours, which are detailed in subsequent tributes. His contributions have left an enduring and indelible legacy. This festschrift acknowledges Mike's impact on hepatology, medicine and academia, and the profound influence he had on colleagues and coworkers. Few can equal the extent and depth of his accomplishments.

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