



In Memoriam: Graham Scoles, PhD



Graham Scoles was a professor at the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Canada, and one of the first people to work on developing molecular marker assisted breeding in oat. A list of his publications can be found [here](#).

The following is an excerpt from [the funeral announcement](#) published by the Saskatoon Funeral Home:

“Graham was born in a small village in Norfolk England. Graham’s mother, Sylvia Scoles, passed away when Graham was only 17. At the time, all they knew was that she had health issues related to high blood pressure and kidney problems. Graham’s father remarried which then added 3 siblings, Brian, Susan and Joan to join his sister Lynda and him.

Graham attended the University of Reading, followed by a one year work experience at the Plant Breeding Institute in Cambridge, UK, which piqued his interest in plant breeding.

In 1973 Graham was encouraged to come study Agriculture at the University of Manitoba, where he graduated with a MSc and a PhD with his thesis in cytogenetics.

Graham worked his entire career of 39 1/2 years at the University of Saskatchewan beginning in 1979, and retiring in December 2018 and he loved his work! During his time there he had the pleasure of supervising many of his students to achieve their MSc and PhD degrees in Agriculture.

While at the University of Saskatchewan, he developed and taught a number of different undergraduate and graduate courses, co-developed a molecular marker assisted breeding program with barley and oat as well as supervised a large number of graduate students. Graham served as Department Head for a number of years and for fourteen years, as Associate Dean,



Research and Graduate Studies, for the College of Agriculture and Resources. This involved overseeing a number of large research infrastructure projects and included three years as interim Dean. After being tucked away in administration, in the last few of years prior to retirement, Graham had the opportunity and pleasure to interact with students again.

While on sabbatical in Australia in 1986, he became ill and was hospitalized where he was diagnosed with Polycystic Kidney Disease, which explained the illness which his mother had had.

After returning home to Saskatoon, Graham was under the excellent care of his nephrologist, Dr. Ahmed Shoker for over 34 years. Graham started 18 months of dialysis before he was fortunate enough to receive his first kidney transplant in 1992, thanks to the generous donation of an anonymous donor. That kidney served him well for many years. In 2019 he was again extremely fortunate to receive a second kidney transplant after again having had dialysis. These 2 kidney transplants changed his life and he was able to live and enjoy his life to the fullest! Until his passing, Graham served as the coordinator of the Saskatoon branch of PKD Canada.

We enjoyed our many trips to England to visit Graham's family and often took short trips to various places in Europe. We greatly enjoyed our sabbatical time in Canberra, Australia and two other long stays in Adelaide while Graham did research. A very memorable trip was Graham's invitation to the Mongolian State University of Agriculture, (now renamed Mongolian University of Life Sciences) to help celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2008.

Graham was respected for his honesty, kindness, integrity, encouragement, patience, optimism and his acceptance of his many health issues. One of our friends said that although Graham was a brilliant man, he was humble, never arrogant.

He had had a triple bypass, a ruptured appendix, in addition to his two kidney transplants, and suffering a mild heart attack in 2013 while we were in England. Rather than stay there for treatment he wanted to fly home to Saskatoon. A few days later when we were home in Saskatoon, he suffered a stroke which left his dominant right side permanently compromised. Graham had what the Finnish called *sisu* (seesoo), a spirit of determination, grit, resilience! He recovered well enough to walk with a cane and continue his work for another five years. During this last illness this summer, he understood that his transplanted kidney would not recover due to having contracted sepsis, he simply said, "It can't be helped."

Graham's passing will leave an enormous emptiness in our hearts and our lives. He was a humble, brilliant and devoted husband to his wife Teri, father to his sons Jason and Michael (Rebekah) and granddad to his beloved granddaughters, Rachel and Sarah. Graham will be deeply missed by his siblings Lynda, Brian (Karen), Susan (Bill), Joan and their children, as well as by his many wonderful friends and colleagues. He was predeceased by his mother, Sylvia Scoles (1968), his father Raymond Scoles (2022) and his second mother, Jean Scoles (2025)."

Graham was, indeed, a lovely man, and will be missed by the scientific community to which he gave so much.