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Obituary–Dr.Henry Wilde

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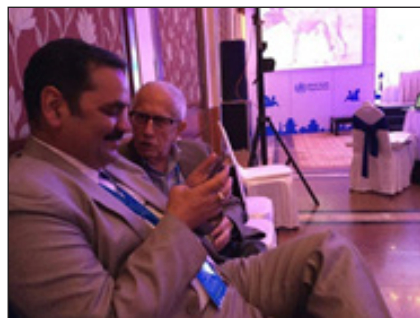


Dr Henry Wilde
(1927–2024)

The night of June 6, 2024, was difficult for me as I got a message on Skype from the wife of Dr Henry Wilde that he had passed away in the morning at 7:30 a.m. I paid my homage to him and went into thinking mode.

Dr Henry Wilde, a pioneer in the field of rabies, was born in Prague, Czechoslovakia in 1927. Life changed for him as a teenager with the German invasion of the Czech Republic during World War II. I had been in touch with him for over a decade to collaborate on the low-cost protocol for dog bite treatment. It was humble of him to have supported me from beyond the borders in the interest of humanity. He was so concerned and down to earth that he even came to pick me up at Bangkok airport when I flew there for a World Health Organization (WHO) conference on March 19, 2018. That was my first meeting with him and it brought us closer as collaborators in research.

Dr Wilde was like a lion in the field of rabies and had the guts to call a spade a spade objectively. He was a soldier, so he was strict in his life and conduct. Fond of friends and collaboration in science, he did pioneer work/ experiments for low-cost Intradermal Rabies Vaccination (IDRV) and localized wound infiltration of Rabies Immunoglobulins (RIG). He was soft-hearted for patients, especially with children, but was very strict when it came to work and research. While working with him on only local wound infiltration of RIG, I found him to be a tough mentor when at work, but cheerful in the evenings.



In my last meeting with him on March 29, 2024, at his home in Bangkok, Dr Wilde wasn't able to recollect many things in life, but when I talked about rabies - he smiled, laughed, and said it out loud - rabies. His words still echo in my ears, and I found him so passionate about rabies research.

Rabies was his passion till his last breath. Dr Henry's wife was his love to survive. He loved his cat and was fond of drinks with friends and having some "Dirty Talk" with them, as he always laughed it off.

My condolences on behalf of all Indians to this Doyen of Rabies; May his soul rest in eternal peace.

Dr Omesh Kumar Bharti

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