

## Obituary

### Trevor Lewis Martin: 1930–2004

Gerry Martin was born on 26 March 1930 near Birmingham, and had an early and continuing fascination with microscopes. He began work at age 18 with an engineering firm, but at age 21 went to America. This was to change his life, for he met Dick West who had a company making temperature controls. This led Gerry to set up his own firm in England, in 1965, at just the time when mechanical controls were being replaced by electronic. Eurotherm became the largest control engineering company in the world, and much of its success came from his spending much time in selecting the right people to work with him, and then giving them their heads.

In 1968 Gerry created The Renaissance Trust to support work on the investigation of the causes of achievement: ten years later when he retired from his company he used the substantial fortune he received to support a variety of intellectual workers, many of them concerned with the public understanding of science.

Through this Trust, he gave generously to the Whipple Museum in Cambridge, and the Museum of the History of Science in Oxford, and in particular he funded the first three years of work which eventually resulted in the publication of the *Directory of British scientific instrument makers 1550–1851*, edited by Gloria Clifton, in 1995. This remains the Bible of all concerned with such matters. He also funded a visiting professorship in history of science at Imperial College London, and sponsored a series of symposia in the 1990s. Individually he supported various doctoral students, as well as collective work in cognitive science and computing at the University of Sussex.

I knew Gerry through my own work in the history of microscopy, and during my term as President was able to suggest to him that the Club might be a suitable beneficiary of his Trust, to allow us to publish some books on microscopical subjects. Early in 1988 he did provide the then largest sum of money the Quekett had ever received, to be used as suggested. He insisted that he remain personally anonymous, which is why no mention of him was ever made in the series of works which resulted, even though all were published at no final cost to the Club. He was elected an Honorary Member by the Committee on 20 September 1988.

Although I enjoyed many conversations with him, always coming away very stimulated by his vision and impressed by the sheer breadth of knowledge he displayed in so many areas of learning, he was a very private man and few knew him well, although he was always very approachable. I remember his saying on one occasion "If I could have a diamond point on a suitable controllable arm, I could make anything", and that was no idle boast.

There remain in the Club's Renaissance Fund ample reserves to publish another book without final cost to the Club. I am well on the way with work on this, and it will be a pleasure to dedicate this one to Gerry Martin by name.

He died on 14 January 2004, leaving his wife Hilda, a son and a daughter, and the sincere condolences of the Club are hereby offered to them. Gerry was an engineer with an acute business sense, becoming a major philanthropist who insisted on remaining in the background. He was a one-off, and a major force in his chosen fields, whatever they were.

Brian Bracegirdle