

INF Geoffrey Harris Memorial Lecture.

This commemorates Geoffrey Wingfield Harris, FRS (1913-1971), the 'father' of neuroendocrinology.

Harris showed through a series of elegant experiments that 'the hypothalamo-hypophysial portal vasculature is necessary for the maintenance and control of normal activity of the anterior pituitary', contrasting this mechanism with the direct neural control of the posterior pituitary. He proposed that 'of the many possibilities' to explain these effects 'the most likely seems to be that nerve fibres from the hypothalamus liberate some humoral substance(s) into the capillaries of the primary plexus in the median eminence and that this substance is carried by the portal vessels to excite or inhibit the cells of the pars distalis' (Harris GW, 1955; Neural Control of the Pituitary Gland. Monographs of the Physiological Society 3, London: Edward Arnold, 298pp).

Harris' papers are archived at <http://www.umi.com/hp/Support/Research/Files/54.html> Obituary: Harris, Geoffrey Wingfield. Royal Society Biographical Memoirs (1972), 18 309-329, by Marthe Vogt.

The Geoffrey Harris Memorial Lectureship, first awarded in 1974 to Sawyer in New Delhi, was the highest honour of the International Society for Neuroendocrinology (ISN) and continues to be recognized in this manner by the International Neuroendocrine Federation (INF) which succeeded the ISN when it was dissolved in 2000. The honour recognises major contributions by the lecturer to the advancement of knowledge in neuroendocrinology.

Lecturers are, in chronological order:

CH Sawyer (USA) 1974
R Guillemin (USA) 1976
BT Donovan (UK) 1977
B Flerko (Hungary) 1979
SM McCann (USA) 1980
J Meites (USA) 1981
E Knobil (USA) 1982
WW Vale (USA) 1984
KJ Catt (USA) 1985
T Hokfelt (Sweden) 1986
S Nakanishi (Japan) 1988
L Martini (Italy) 1990
B Halasz (Hungary) 1992
D deWied (Netherlands) 1994
M Palkovits (Hungary) 1998
MG Rosenfeld (USA) 2002
R P Millar (UK) 2006

The texts of the last two lectures were published in *Frontiers in Neuroendocrinology* as will be the 2006 Lecture. The INF Executive nominates the Lecturer, after consultation with the Program and Local Organising Committees of the International Congress of Neuroendocrinology, inviting up to three names. The INF provides an honorarium for the lecturer.