

from Imperial College of Science. Previously, Holbrook was Director of New Products and Business Development at Roche Products, a UK subsidiary of Hoffman-La Roche, where he was involved in the merger between Boehringer Mannheim's UK operations with those of Roche UK. He was also Manager, Global Business Development for Glaxo Wellcome where he was responsible for licensing, partnering and business development activities in several therapeutic areas.

People was written by
Joanna Owens

Obituary

In memoriam: **David Walter Barry 1943–2002**

by Chris A. Rallis

On Monday 28 January 2002, David Walter Barry died unexpectedly of a heart attack at the age of 58. His sudden passing was a terrible loss not only to his family, friends and colleagues, but to the many thousands of patients who have been helped by his numerous accomplishments in the field of drug development, particularly in the fight against HIV.

David was born in Nashua (NH, USA) and earned both an undergraduate degree

in French literature and a medical degree from Yale University. He decided to pursue medicine because he thought he would be a better scientist than a writer. As was often the case, David's instincts were correct!

In 1977, David commenced an 18-year association with Burroughs Wellcome Co. and its affiliated companies. At the time of his departure in 1995, he headed Wellcome's worldwide R&D activities. During his tenure at Wellcome, he played an important role in the development of the first antiviral treatments for herpes (acyclovir) and HIV [azidothymidine (AZT)].

The identification of AZT as a treatment for HIV was far from obvious. AZT had been previously tested as a cancer treatment, but was not successfully developed. David and several of his colleagues discovered that AZT was effective in combating the HIV. Their perseverance was rewarded when AZT was commercially introduced in the USA in 1987. David was also an early advocate of multiple drug-combination regimens to treat HIV at a time when many were skeptical of the benefits of such a treatment approach.

In the 15 years since the introduction of AZT, David was able to witness an evolution in the treatment of HIV from one of an acute disease to chronic disease management. Despite the introduction of >15 HIV drugs in the USA since 1987, AZT remains a widely used component in many triple combination regimens.

In 1995, David and several colleagues founded Triangle Pharmaceuticals (Durham, NC, USA) to develop and commercialize drugs to treat serious viral diseases. David made a seamless transition

from a big pharmaceutical company to a new, entrepreneurial environment and demonstrated his abilities by quickly assembling a broad portfolio and a strong management team and by continuously attracting investors to fund the company's activities. The core of his success was his ability to engender confidence and respect in any audience. He was also never afraid to think 'big' even though the company was small.

David realized that drug development was a lengthy process and a risky business. He always treated the successes and setbacks with equanimity. Fortunately, several weeks before his death, he was able to announce Triangle's plans to submit its first NDA for Coviracil®, a treatment against HIV, to the FDA in the fall of 2002. I am glad that David was able to make that announcement, and when the company submits its NDA we will be one step closer to making David's vision for Triangle become a reality.

David will continue to be an inspirational force behind our future accomplishments at Triangle and we hope to have many accomplishments to celebrate in the months and years ahead. Most importantly, however, we will be able to celebrate David's leadership and friendship and how fortunate we were to have known him.

Chris A. Rallis

*President and Chief Operating Officer
Triangle Pharmaceuticals
4 University Place
4611 University Drive
Durham
NC 27707, USA*

Free journals for developing countries

The WHO and six medical journal publishers have launched the Access to Research initiative, which enables ~70 developing countries to gain free access to biomedical literature through the Internet.

The science publishers, Blackwell, Elsevier Science, the Harcourt Worldwide STM group, Wolters Kluwer International Health and Science, Springer-Verlag and John Wiley, were approached by the WHO and the British Medical Journal in 2001. Initially, >1000 journals will be available for free or at significantly reduced prices to universities, medical schools, research and public institutions in developing countries. The second stage involves extending this initiative to institutions in other countries.

Gro Harlem Brundtland, director-general for the WHO, said that this initiative was 'perhaps the biggest step ever taken towards reducing the health information gap between rich and poor countries'.

See <http://www.healthinternetwork.net> for more information.