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Introduction

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LAST YEAR, when Paddy Creaven announced that he would retire from full-time academic practice, a large group of his friends/collaborators met in Buffalo, New York, to honour his many contributions to the field of academic cancer pharmacology, both as a friend, innovator and collaborator. Dr Creaven's career has spanned the development of modern cancer pharmacology, from a time when a conceptual framework outweighed the available data to the present, characterised by a burgeoning knowledge of the molecular biology of drug resistance, and an emerging understanding of structure–function relationships. This symposium edition consists of papers presented at the Patrick J. Creaven Symposium at Roswell Park Cancer Institute and honours Dr Creaven's many contributions to the field.

A brief review of Dr Creaven's extensive curriculum vitae attests to his activity and presence through the past quarter century of anticancer drug development. He has studied in detail the pharmacology of most of the compounds described in this edition of the *European Journal of Cancer* and many more: fluoropyrimidines, other antimetabolites,

camptothecins, epipodophyllotoxins, platinum complexes, as well as a series of biological agents, including chemopreventive agents and polyamine inhibitors. His work has been characterised by meticulous attention to detail, with early phase drug development regularly being characterised by the investigation of mechanisms of response and resistance and the pharmacology of the compounds being tested. In addition, Dr Creaven has demonstrated the high principles of good fellowship, making his time and resources available to his many collaborators, generously giving his time and honest counsel freely. When challenged on matters of ethical principle, Dr Creaven has never hesitated to do the right thing, placing patient safety and investigator honesty ahead of corporate benefit. A quiet personality has hidden a keen sense of humour and a diverse set of interests, including Gilbert and Sullivan performance skills, extensive family activities and a devotion to physical fitness. We salute the career of Patrick J. Creaven, certain in the knowledge that retirement will only make available more time for productivity and creative thought.