

Robert WG Hunt Obituary

From: Colour Group (GB) (announcements@colour.org.uk)

To: mrpointer@btinternet.com

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Robert William Gainer Hunt OBE – 1923-2018

After a long, full and fulfilling life, Robert Hunt died in Salisbury District Hospital, in October 2018, following a short illness.

Robert Hunt was born at Sidcup, Kent, England, on 28th July 1923. His early interest in optics was started by Professor W David Wright while Robert was studying for a BSc in physics at Imperial College, University of London, 1940-43. In 1946 he joined the Research Laboratories of Kodak Limited at Harrow. In 1953 he was awarded a PhD, also by Imperial College and again after studying with David Wright; it was here that his life-long interest in colour science in general and chromatic adaptation in particular started, especially the application to real-world situations including the viewing of photographic prints. Other interests at Kodak included devices for making reflection prints from both negative and positive images on film: he played a major part in the development of the Kodak S1 Printer for printing colour negatives and for which he held several patents. He was finally Assistant Director of Research and took early retirement from Kodak in 1982.

Robert Hunt then established himself as an independent colour consultant and his work included visiting Hewlett Packard and 3M, to train their employees in colour science - he also presented several courses at Eastman Kodak!

Robert Hunt wrote over a hundred papers on colour vision, colour reproduction, and colour measurement, and two books 'The Reproduction of Colour' now in its sixth edition, and 'Measuring Colour' now in its fourth edition – co-authored with Michael Pointer.

Robert Hunt was Chairman of the Colour Group of Great Britain, 1961-63, after playing a leading role in establishing the Group as an independent body after its spilt

from the Physical Society. He attended all the early meetings of the International Colour Association (AIC) and was President, 1981-85.

Robert was awarded the Newton Medal of the Colour Group (Great Britain), 1974, after presentation of a lecture entitled 'Sky Blue Pink' in which he showed that a colour could appear either blue or pink, depending on the colour of the illumination, and hence the chromatic adaptation. This lecture was subsequently published in the first issue of *Color Research & Application*, a Journal published by Wiley and endorsed by the Colour Group. He had 30 further papers published in that Journal, the most recent in 2012.

Robert attended his first meeting of the Commission Internationale de l'Éclairage (CIE) in Stockholm in 1951, and was Chairman of the CIE Colorimetry Committee, 1975-83. The first edition of CIE Publication 15: *Colorimetry* had been published in 1971 and it was fitting that a revision be made to report on current colorimetric recommendations. Robert Hunt chaired the Committee that produced the 2nd Edition in 1986. It is perhaps fitting that the 4th Edition, CIE 15.4 *Colorimetry* was announced the day before he died.

Robert was always enthusiastic about young people. He had a reputation of sitting in the front row at lectures and, when a student gave a presentation, he always had a positive comment to make before asking a question.

Robert's interests, apart from his work, were travelling to visit interesting places in the world, photography, and railways; but most of all his family. Robert was a man of committed Christian faith and showed great wisdom, kindness and generosity in his commitment to people. He is survived by his wife of 71 years, Eileen, his four children: Pam (my wife), David, Philip and Margaret, his twelve grandchildren, and twelve great-grandchildren.

Colour science has lost a great pioneer – he will be missed by us all.

Dr Michael R Pointer
Salisbury, England



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