



Cecil Bruce Cropp

April 16, 2020

Cecil Bruce Cropp, known as Bruce to all, died at his home in Fort Collins late Thursday, April 16, 2020. Bruce and his wife of 67 years, Mary, recently moved to Fort Collins from the dream home they built in the Virginia Dale community of Colorado.

Bruce was an army veteran and served in Italy. He attended Colorado State University and received his Undergraduate and Masters degree there. He worked for several organizations, including Mead Johnson, the Air Force Academy, and ended up at the Center for Disease Control (CDC) on the Foothills Campus of Colorado State University in 1968. Bruce retired from the CDC in 2000 after 32 years as a Research Virologist/Microbiologist. He was an extremely successful and respected scientist throughout the world, and was known for his work on Streptococcus, West Nile Virus, Dengue Virus, Yellow Fever Virus, and many other world diseases. He was credited with work on numerous scientific publications and studies, and traveled the world for his research.

After his retirement from the CDC, he began his dream of building a mountain log home in Virginia Dale, cutting down the trees and doing a majority of the work himself while enlisting help from his children, their spouses, grandchildren and friends to complete the home. With this project completed, he was recruited to help develop and open a new Asian Diseases Laboratory

for the University of Hawaii, so he and Mary moved to Oahu. What was supposed to be a one-year position turned into a seven-year tenure, with extended excursions to Singapore and Vietnam. Upon returning home, he and Mary settled into their mountain escape.

Bruce has always loved horses! He and his father, Cecil, owned and ran a saddle stable in his early married years. Once settled into the Virginia Dale home, he decided it was time to have a horse to enjoy. Their wonderful friends and neighbors helped to fence the pasture and build a shelter for his new companion. Bruce and Mary attended a horse sale in South Dakota and found the perfect horse... a pregnant quarter horse that they named Sugar. At almost the exact same time he found out he had developed lung cancer. He was a valiant warrior against this disease, but ultimately succumbed.

Bruce is survived by his wife Mary, his children Cathi and Tom Lopez, Julie and Marty Damrell, Casey and Karna Cropp, Laurie and Steve Groves, David and Molly Cropp, Carol Cropp, 10 grandchildren, and 6 great-grandchildren.

The family would like to acknowledge and thank the very special people at Pathways Hospice Care who helped care for Bruce in his last few weeks, as well as the extremely kind and caring friends at Goes Funeral Care.

A celebration of Bruce's life will be held on a future date when family and friends can gather together safely.

Donations to celebrate Bruce's life can be made to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital at stjude.org, or Pathways Hospice Care at pathways-care.org.

Tribute Wall



“ *Cecil Bruce Cropp*

October 25, 2022 at 06:14 PM



“ *Mary and family, please accept my heart-felt sympathy after Bruce's passing. I met Bruce when I came to CDC, Fort Collins, in 1979! Bruce was part of the group of scientists - Dick Bolin, Larry Kirk, Ed Campos, Dave Muth, Jim Mathews, John Lazuick, John Brubaker, Gary Maupin and many others - that served as the backbone on which the lab's reputation of excellence was built. Bruce was special among that group not only for his caring manner and willingness to help whenever asked, but also for his ability to work with anyone, including Drs. Monath and Gubler! Their contributions below serve as a great testimony to this man. This is a wonderful picture of Bruce, capturing his friendliness and concealing his keen sense of humor. There is great sadness at his passing, but we are buoyed by the knowledge that he he was a good man, raised a great family, had a meaningful career, and still had time for his personal callings like his cabin. Those are outstanding accomplishments from an outstanding person!*

John Roehrig - May 06, 2020 at 11:42 PM

DG

“ *The Division of Vector-Borne Infectious Diseases where Bruce worked for 32 years was made up of a group of scientific, technical and administrative staff with many unique and sometimes quirky personalities. Like most such organizations, there were little clicks and dissention among some staff that created an interesting and sometimes disruptive dynamic. It is rare in such an organization, to find someone who is universally loved and respected by everyone. But we had one person at DVBID who filled that bill, Bruce Cropp! Bruce’s stature at DVBID among such a diverse group was a testament to the type of person he was, very humble, warm, honest, personable and competent. His integrity was unquestioned, and you never heard him anything bad about another person.*

When I became director of DVBID, Bruce came to me and said he had been Tom Monath’s technician and that he would like to work for me as well. I didn’t know Bruce well, but was aware that Tom thought the world of him. So I said yes; that began my 31 year relationship with Bruce. We worked together for 12 years at DVBID, and after he took a few years off to build his dream house, another 7 years in Hawaii and Singapore, where he helped me build those programs. In addition to our research projects, he trained technical staff from many countries from Asia, Tropical America, Africa, Europe and the US. Not surprisingly, the trainees, as well as the Hawaiians, Vietnamese and Singaporeans he worked with and trained, all loved Bruce dearly; he had an amazing ability to bond with people he worked with, regardless of their origin.

I have always said that if your employees do a good job, they make both you and your institution look good. Bruce did that superbly and was a major contributor to CDC’s, and to my success. I know we will all miss him.

Duane Gubler - May 01, 2020 at 08:07 AM

MC

“ My condolences to Mr. Cropp's family and friends. I didn't know Mr. Cropp but reading through the comments on the tribute page, and the CDC announcement of his passing I wish I had known him. We are grateful and indebted to him for his military and public service. If I can amount to quarter of the positive impact Mr. Cropp had both professionally and with those close to him, it'll have been a life well lived. Rest easy, Mr. Cropp.

Michael Calevski - April 30, 2020 at 02:06 PM

TF

“ I met Bruce in 1998, when he was visited NIHE, Vietnam and he shown me how to used microscope to taken great picture of fluorescent. He was also enjoyed to ride motorcycle with me in Hanoi. When I started my master course in CBNU (South of Korea), he was cheerful with me as well as sent to me the Virology book around 2000. In later, I had a chance to work with him for couple years in UH-it was fantastic time to me, he was guided me a lot of techniques such as virus isolation, plaque assay and VNT. In the down time, we had a lot of activity and fun with him and Mary. It was great time of me and my family to reminded about him. We admired him greatly and We know he will be missed by his family and close friends. Rest in peace Bruce.

Thang Truong and Truong Family - April 29, 2020 at 02:48 PM

CS

“ When I started to work at CDC in 1983 I was quite envious of Bruce. Because he had the use and custody of an electron microscope that I would have given blood to work on. He did let me touch it, but alas, my remit at CDC was not E.M. Virus pictures aren't very pretty anyway...

Later I was amazed at his sense of humour when he very proudly told me that he had irritated Patricia Webb to the extent that she had called him "a retarded A-rab".

Later still. when Tom, Patricia, Gary and I were assigned to work on getting mosquitoes off the hook with respect to AIDS, he cheerfully yielded the EM preparation lab to us, and generously allowed PAW and me to store our masses of product in his freezer across the corridor.

There aren't many like Bruce: Competency, decency, and most of all friendly good humour with his fellow workers. And I'm not envious of the microscope any more!!

Christine Sykes (some knew me as Happ.)

Christine Sykes - April 28, 2020 at 01:04 PM

MF

“ Bruce was a man of integrity, dedication and quiet reliability. One day he called me from his CDC laboratory to report a mistake committed by one of his young protégées. He calmly advised me to evacuate the building and call the fire department. I did not hesitate for even one second to follow his guidance, knowing that he was a scientist to be trusted and that his experience and insight were offered in the most professional and caring sentiment. I admired him greatly and I know he will be missed by his family and close friends.

Mel Fernandez - April 28, 2020 at 10:36 AM

AL

“ I met Bruce in 1998---my first year at the CDC. I was in the laboratory when he was the first to identify a novel paramyxovirus from Malaysia by EM--- just another day in the lab for Bruce. He taught me highly specialized virus isolation techniques as he applied them to post mortem samples taken from a little girl who died from La Crosse encephalitis in 2000. The level of care, respect and expertise he showed in handling those samples has stuck with me all these years. He was an expert's expert and such a kind, warm, humble gentleman. I have a lump in my throat with this news.
Amy Lambert

Amy Lambert - April 27, 2020 at 08:17 PM

BD

“ I met Bruce in September of 1995, my first day at CDC. He was such a kind man, great sense of humor and so willing to teach a new student fresh out of school. He was a master of many gold standard tests run at CDC. He was always in good humor and always willing to help. I still use the microscope he taught me so many techniques I still use today. I remember talking to him about his dream home and how he cut down the logs to build his home; and I definitely believe he was one reason I chose to build my own home in fort Collins as well...He always lit up when talking about this project.I always thought where does this man get that kind of strength. He was larger than life to me, and I will miss him so very much! They do not make men like this anymore.. Bruce left an everlasting imprint in my life, for which I am very thankful ! - Brent Davis

Brent Davis - April 27, 2020 at 05:50 PM



“ I am so sorry to hear of Bruce's passing and for your loss. I learned a great deal from Bruce during my early years at CDC, and I could always rely on his sense of good humor, wealth of knowledge, and willingness to set me on the right track ~ Jane Basile

Jane Basile - April 27, 2020 at 05:27 PM

BF

“ I did not know him, but his daughter Carol is a very special person to whom i send my heartfelt condolences. Losing a parent is difficult and sad. In time, warm memories ease the grief; I hope it will be so for her and for her family.

Regards and love from Barbara Fleming.

Barbara F Fleming - April 26, 2020 at 04:03 PM

BW

“ Casey and Karna, Kathie and Tom, Laurie. I am so very sorry you have lost your beloved father, Bruce. I'm thinking of you all at this difficult time. -Beth Wells

Beth Wells - April 26, 2020 at 03:07 PM

SW

“ Bruce leaves a lot of endearing memories. He was a Manitou High School classmate of mine and was a fun loving guy. All his classmates will miss him, especially at our reunions...I know I will. My condolences to Mary (also a classmate) and family.

Shirley Busch Wade - April 24, 2020 at 12:40 PM

TM

“ *Very fond memories of Bruce and me working together in our little lab in the basement of the "old" CDC. We were a TEAM! Bruce kept the place organized and I was the messy child. On one project Bruce and I worked on arboviruses of reptiles (not a particularly popular subject area). We got Timbo and Chaco viruses from Yale and tested them in cells from a variety of herps and Bruce did EM. He was so dedicated and creative. Then on a field trip I brought back a couple Natrrix black water snakes (nasty, aggressive) and Bruce set them up in an aquarium and fed them an occasional suckling mouse. A couple months later my old medical school roommate and his wife came to Ft. C and after dinner I showed them around the lab around 9PM when the lab was empty and a bit creepy. One Natrrix was not in her cage. My roommate's wife was looking in cabinet drawers just to see what stuff is in a lab, when the snake popped out of one drawer. Needless to say she got her undies in a twist. When I told Bruce the next day what happened he said, "Oh yeah, I noticed the snake had gotten out but I just figured it would probably show up next time you were in the lab"*

Tom Monath

Tom Monath - April 24, 2020 at 08:01 AM

JM

“ *Memories of Bruce's school years in Manitou Springs with the Meury Girls and many others are treasures that will live on with us. My condolences to his Family. May he R.I.P. Sincerely, Joanne Meury.*

Joanne Meury - April 23, 2020 at 11:33 PM

MS

“ Casey and family — my condolences on the passing of Mr. Cropp. Based on reading his obituary, Mr. Bruce Cropp was quite a guy. Wish I could have known him. But I now know why Casey Cropp is such a fine man — Mr. Bruce Cropp was his model!
Mike Smith

Mike Smith - April 23, 2020 at 07:36 PM

MF

“ John and I met this awesome family when Carol and Dave and Hudson and Becket moved in next door to us on "groovy Grovewood"..Have some awesome memories of parties with them at their house..We would like to just send a big hug to this entire family and let them know that our hearts are with them ...John and Mary Farrell

Mary Farrell - April 23, 2020 at 06:41 PM