

Dr Michael Ford 1930 - 2016

Older members of IRDG will be sorry to hear that Mike Ford, former technical director of PerkinElmer, died on April 10 aged 86. Mike was a strong supporter of IRDG especially in establishing the long-running Christmas meetings at Kings College where he did his PhD with Professor George Wilkinson. He joined Perkin-Elmer in the USA in 1956 and moved back to the UK when manufacturing of the Model 137 Infracord and instrument development began in Beaconsfield in 1957. As technical director he led the development of a string of very successful grating spectrometers and oversaw the transition to FT instruments which put other manufacturers, Beckman in the USA and Pye Unicam in the UK, out of the business. Mike's contributions to the development of spectroscopy ranged from the development of pressed disc methods for solid sampling to the introduction of FT instruments for routine use. He was also a pioneer in the use of computers in spectroscopy. Mike's wider interests included motor racing and skiing. In retirement one of Mike's outstanding achievements was completing the 100km South Downs walk in just over 24 hours at the age of 80.

Below is Mike at the 1983 IRDG Christmas meeting and completing the 100km walk in 2010.

