

# Robert L. Fleisher

We are saddened to report that Dr. Robert London Fleisher, micropaleontology consultant and former editor of *Micropaleontology*, passed away in Houston, Texas, on July 22, 2016, at the age of 72.

Bob graduated from the Montgomery Blair High School of Silver Springs, Maryland in 1962, and went on to attend Amherst College in Massachusetts. Bob majored in Geological Sciences at Amherst, graduating in 1966, and entered the PhD program at the University of Southern California, where he chose to work with the eminent planktic foraminiferal specialist Orville Bandy.

His PhD dissertation at USC was a milestone work on the evolution of planktic foraminifera. His abstract of a portion on that work “Towards the Classical Evolutionary Reclassification of Cenozoic Globigerinacea (Foraminifera)” – based upon wall textures – garnered him and Paul Steineck the SEPM Award for Best Paper published in the *Journal of Paleontology* in 1978 (vol. 52, no. 3). Bob also served as a shipboard foraminiferal biostratigrapher on DSDP Legs 23 and 23A, in the Red and Arabia Seas, prior to completing his doctoral studies.

After USC, the newly minted Dr. Fleisher chose to accept a position with the highly regarded biostratigraphy group at the Exxon Production Research Company in Houston, Texas, where he worked with Charlie Pflum, Jim Lamb, and Lou Stover, among many others.

After several years with Exxon, Bob was recruited by the Gulf Oil Corporation as part of its effort to reproduce the successes of the Exxon biostratigraphy group. With the teaming of Bob, George Sieglie, Charlie Ross, and Norm Norton, a superb unit came into being in Houston for Gulf. While there, Bob's major focus was on the Cenozoic and Mesozoic foraminifera of West Africa.

1985 saw the beginning of the petroleum industry ‘mega-mergers’, and Gulf was an early acquisition of Chevron. Bob accepted a new assignment with the international biostratigraphy team at Chevron Overseas Petroleum Inc., in San Ramon, Cali-



Robert L. Fleisher and P. Lewis Steineck upon receipt of their SEPM Award for Best Paper appearing in the *Journal of Paleontology* in 1978.

fornia. After some six years in northern California, Bob requested (and received) a transfer back to Houston to join Chevron's domestic biostratigraphy team, where he added to his expertise on Gulf of Mexico foraminifera. He remained there through his retirement from Chevron in 1998. Bob then became a Houston-based petroleum industry consultant, and editor of the journal *Micropaleontology*.

I first met Bob when I joined Exxon as a biostratigrapher myself in the fall of 1978. He took particular care to introduce me to every other biostratigrapher in the Exxon organization, making my own work there infinitely easier. We became associates again at the Gulf/Chevron merger, as I too had left Exxon by then. And we came to work together once more, when Bob accepted the editorship of *Micropaleontology* at Micropaleontology Press. Through all of our time together, I have never had a better colleague or friend.

I'd like to leave you with this testimony from Marie Pierre Aubry, a long time friend of Bob's: “Bob was a sensitive and sensible, generous and sincere, culturally refined and welcoming being.” That is the Dr. Robert L. Fleisher that I too had the pleasure of knowing, and will always remember.

Thomas W. Dignes PhD, FGS  
President, Micropaleontology Press



Brian O'Neil, Bob Fleisher and Tom Dignes at the 7th International Workshop on Agglutinated Foraminifera, Urbino, Italy, October 2005.