

Richard G. Lynch, M.D.

Internationally recognized experimental immunologist, 75

Richard G. Lynch, M.D., an internationally recognized experimental immunologist and former chairman of pathology at the University of Iowa College of Medicine, died at his home near Solon, Iowa, on Monday, October 12, 2009.

Dr. Lynch, was born April 9, 1934, in Brooklyn, N.Y., the son of James and Helen (Henderson) Lynch. He attended Bishop Loughlin High School and Brooklyn College, and also served as a weatherman in the US Navy from 1952 to 1956 during which he participated in seven atomic bomb tests in the Marshall Islands at Bikini.

Upon his return, he completed his education at the University of Missouri and the University of Rochester College of Medicine. After a residency in pathology at Barnes Hospital (Washington University) in St Louis, he began his research in tumor immunology, remaining on the faculty as a teacher, clinician and scientific investigator until 1981.

He came to the University of Iowa in 1981 as chairman of pathology and held that position until 1999, also serving as interim dean of the UI College of Medicine from 1993 to 1994. Until his retirement in 2004, he directed a large research laboratory, training more than fifty students, fellows, and residents, and was appreciated as a teacher, mentor scholar, and friend.

Dr. Lynch wrote the initial planning grant that resulted in NIH designation of Holden Cancer Comprehensive Center at the University of Iowa and served as a peer reviewer on numerous study sections at the National Cancer Institute. Dr. Alan Rabson, former deputy director of the National Cancer Institute, once stated that he knew of no one else in the country who had given more time to peer review for the NIH than Dr. Lynch. He was president of the American Society for Investigative Pathology and received the Rous-Whipple Award for his research. He served on the board of directors of the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology.

He loved the outdoors, especially birds, and spent much time photographing wildlife and traveling to birding destinations. After retirement, he began to write his memoirs, including his recollections of the Bikini atomic tests, which have been accepted for national publication.

In 1963, Dr. Lynch was married to Nancy Underwood in Rochester, N.Y. He is survived by his wife; daughter, Alison Abreu of Iowa City, Iowa; sons Brendan (Joan) of North Reading, Mass., and Matthew (Daniale) of Portland, Ore.; grandchildren Ishadeen Abreu, Joey Abreu, Veronica Abreu, and Luis Abreu, all of Iowa City; and a brother, James Lynch, of New Rochelle, N.Y.

