

50 Years of Microscopy Education and Research

This year marks the 50th anniversary of McCrone Research Institute (McRI). The mission of this not-for-profit educational and research organization is to increase the use of the microscope in science and technology through courses, conferences and publications. Today, it is recognized internationally as a leader in microscopy education and microanalytical research as

it continues to expand its already successful efforts on all topics related to the microscope, including forensic science, environmental pollution, pharmaceuticals, art conservation and counterterrorism.

Long before the Institute opened its doors, it existed in the activities of Walter C. McCrone. In 1948, he started the series of annual international conferences on microscopy in Chicago (now known as Inter/Micro and sponsored by McRI) and began teaching the first intensive courses in microscopy both here and abroad in 1952. His teaching activities gradually increased and, in 1960, McRI was formally organized and incorporated in the United States for scientific and educational purposes related to the use and application of the microscope.

The Institute's first courses covering polarized light microscopy were held in Chicago and London, and the first international conference on microscopy sponsored by McRI in Great Britain was held in Brighton in 1963. Harold M. Malies, whose life and work is remembered in this issue (see page 41), was responsible for bringing Dr. McCrone and his wife Lucy to England's southern coast and convincing them to choose that scenic locale for the conference's international premiere.

In the early days, the Institute might not have expanded as rapidly without the support of Walter C.



McCrone Associates, Inc. in Chicago, and McCrone Research Associates Ltd. in London. These two consulting laboratories had the staff for teaching and administrative support that was needed here and abroad. Today, after more than 20 years of independent continuous activity, McRI has all the necessary classrooms, laboratories, equipment, and full-time teachers and ad-

ministrative staff for its various educational, research and publishing activities. The Inter/Micro conference has been held and hosted regularly for 62 years, *The Microscope* journal is in its 73rd year of continuous publication, and the number of courses taught by McRI, which in the beginning averaged 20 annually, now totals more than 65 classes per year — with a total of 2,687 courses since the start — and more added each year.

With the recent achievement of 27,000-plus enrollments, McRI's reputation for high-quality microscopy instruction continues stronger than ever.

No less momentous than McRI's 50th birthday is the 350th anniversary of the Royal Society of London and the advent of modern science. This issue of *The Microscope* introduces Critical Focus, a new column by Brian J. Ford, who looks at the Royal Society's recent history from a modern microscopist's personal perspective (see page 35).

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Gary J. Laughlin'.

Gary J. Laughlin, Editor