

The Donald McIntyre Building

Donald McIntyre was a major force in educational research and had a formidable reputation for reforming teacher education even before he moved to Cambridge as Professor of Education in 1996, after periods as a Reader at Stirling and Oxford. Cambridge, though, was the most substantial beneficiary of his energy and enthusiasm.

Donald's career spanned the development of educational research from an embryonic discipline in the late 1960s to its status today as a fully-fledged social science and a major contributor to educational policy. The first conference of the British Educational Research Association was held in Stirling in 1974 and two decades later Donald was to serve as its President. He was deeply interested in politics and was frequently consulted both by the teaching profession and by government. His contributions to the discipline's infra-structure were especially valued in his native Scotland where his achievements were celebrated through the award of honorary doctorates from Edinburgh and Dundee.

Donald was one of the main architects of the new Cambridge Faculty of Education which was established in 2001. The first stages of this saw the amalgamation of the University Department of Education with the Cambridge Institute, in 1997, a merger of two institutions with quite different traditions and cultures. Donald worked tirelessly to forge a community where different perspectives and approaches were accorded equal value and status, and where educational research and school-university partnerships were extended and sustained.

Over the period 1998-2001, Donald worked closely with Dr Kate Pretty, the Principal of Homerton College, to establish a fully integrated Faculty of Education. Underpinning these negotiations was the shared vision to establish a centre of excellence for research and teaching, to develop a graduate school of international status and repute, and to consolidate Cambridge's reputation as an international leader in initial and continuing teacher education.

On the formal convergence on 1 August 2001 of the University School of Education with the research and teaching interests of Homerton College, Donald became the first Head of Faculty, a role he fulfilled with flair, enthusiasm and vision. The New Faculty Building is a visible sign of the successful new faculty. Donald worked selflessly and with great determination to secure the resources needed to bring together the activities of the faculty on to one site on Hills Road, and the quality of the building and the resources contained within it are testimony to his foresight, his diligence and his strategic skills. But the human resources located within the faculty, the collaborative ethos prevailing here, and the determination to sustain a vision of education which enables individuals to maximize their own potential, free from the constraints of poverty, within a context of increased mutual understanding and global interdependence, is an equally remarkable memorial to Donald.

Donald formally retired from his Cambridge chair in 2004 but for him 'retirement' was a fiction; he continued to offer advice, guidance and support to numerous colleagues and doctoral students, working tirelessly to ensure that teacher education and research in Cambridge was distinctive, research-informed and innovative.

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Head of Faculty of Education
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