

### **Robert Moskovic CEng MIMMM 1947–2016**

Robert Moskovic was the son of Jewish Holocaust survivors – his mother miraculously survived Auschwitz. He began to train in metallurgy in Košice, in what was then Czechoslovakia. He decided to stay in the west when he was in London and learnt, from his mother, that the Czech border was sealed after the Soviet invasion following the Prague Spring.

On settling in the UK, his intellectual ability allowed him to complete a degree in Metallurgy at the University of Sheffield in two years, and a PhD at Darwin College, Cambridge, where he met his wife Valerie, a fellow PhD student. After working with Wiggins at Hereford, Robert joined the Central Electricity Generating Board (CEGB). Robert continued to work for the CEGB and its successors, operating the Magnox nuclear reactors until his retirement in 2014.

Robert worked in several areas, contributing to the understanding of the fracture of steels, effects of neutron irradiation and safety of graphite reactor cores. A requirement for the safe operation of the Magnox reactors was the adequacy of the margins against brittle fracture – these were sensitive to the embrittlement of steels and weld metals by neutron irradiation. Robert brought a new rigour to the field, using statistical techniques – including Bayesian approaches and survival statistics – to predict effects of neutron irradiation on fracture toughness. His work was scrutinised and accepted by the technical community. Today, the findings of Robert's work are incorporated in the materials data recommendations that underpin the safety cases of UK civil nuclear reactors.

Robert would explain the subtleties of his work in a characteristic style, using thought-provoking questions to put the onus on us to think and understand. Robert was a rigorous, modest and rewarding colleague. He had a substantial international reputation in his field, particularly with the European Structural Integrity Society, where he was Chairman of the technical committee on the probabilistic analysis of material property data. At the end of the operating lives of the Magnox reactors, the focus of many safety cases concerned the graphite core, an area to which Robert made a significant contribution.

Apart from his work, Robert enjoyed conversations, particularly on European history (he was knowledgeable), a range of sporting activities that included skiing, mountain walking, cycling, swimming and circuit training, and board games – chess and go (he set up a go club at the University of Sheffield). He leaves his wife Valerie, son David, and a grandchild.