



## Wm. Austin Bloch, MD and Mary Frances Bloch

(Both 1910-1997)

Austin Bloch was a second generation Louisville physician, formally educated at Male High School, the Virginia Military Institute and Harvard Medical School. He and Mary Frances, a Vassar alumna from Portsmouth, Ohio, met in New York City in the late 1930's, while he was an intern and she was a medical technologist in the Health Department. They married in April, 1938 and lived for 49 years in Louisville, where Austin began his clinical practice with his father, Oscar, and later shared an office with his brother, Oscar Jr. (For several decades in Louisville, hospital pagers for "Dr. Bloch" had to distinguish among Oscar Sr., Leo, Oscar Jr., Austin, Winston and Charles: brothers, uncles, sons, nephews and cousins.)

While raising three sons and occasionally working in the office, Mary Frances found time to help organize the Louisville Philharmonic Chorus and contribute to University Women's Club activities. For most of her life in Louisville, Mary Frances regularly practiced and performed classical choral music with one or another choral group; her mother and aunt were both university-trained music teachers. Her other specialties were gardening and contract bridge, neither of which she took lightly.

Over the years, the Blochs adopted six foreign students from the University of Louisville as extended family members; one year, Mary Frances took in and rehabilitated (with much love and her legendary patience and psychological intuition) a young nephew with severe behavioral problems.

Besides his office practice, Austin loved his regular contact with medical students and house staff through adjunct clinical teaching rounds; he attended every lecture and short course he could fit in, and set aside one afternoon and evening a week for reading in the Medical Library.

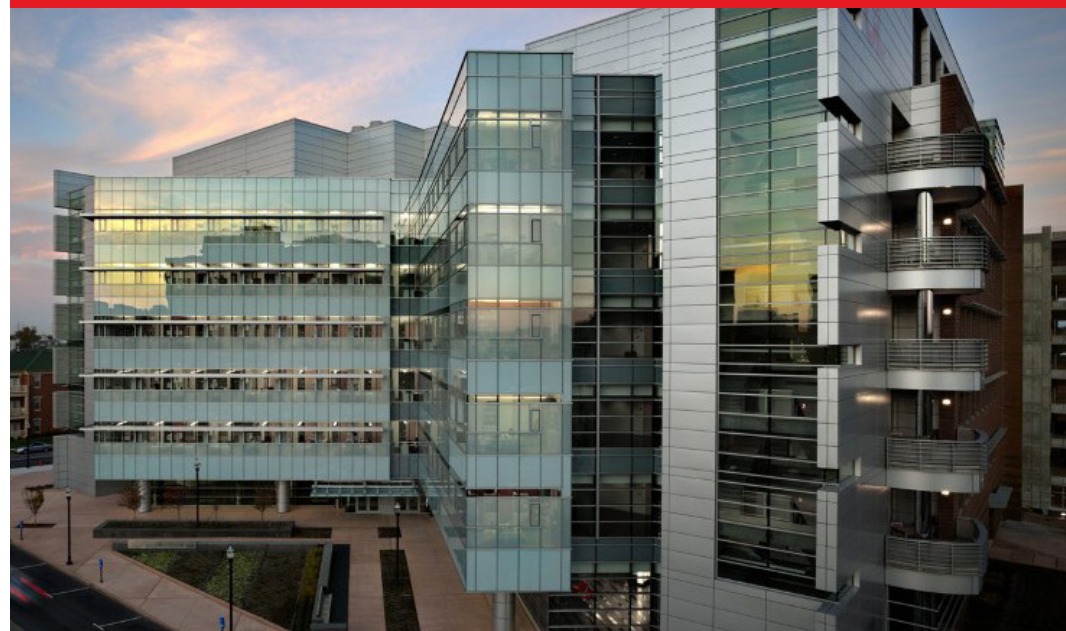
He regularly attended academic seminars at the Medical School, especially in the Biochemistry Department (a discipline which wasn't yet in existence when he first studied medicine); many faculty members were his patients and close friends.

Austin always tried to spend one afternoon a week on a family outing. Both he and Mary Frances loved boating and driving; these activities were often combined in family summer camping trips, which usually managed to include visits to university campuses, museums, astronomical observatories, and hardware and book stores.

Upon retirement from active practice, Austin changed more in direction than in velocity; he began registering for at least one undergraduate course each semester, to sample fields he'd never had the opportunity to study before (as well as to re-learn some that he had). He learned to pilot a small plane, and to make horseshoes. His mother, the niece and ward of one of Louisville's earliest lady physicians, and a Hunter College-trained schoolmarm herself, had been a life member of the English Speaking Union and Great Books Club; the familial passion for books got Austin involved in Friends of the Library, as well as adult literacy tutoring at various library branches. His spare time was spent making things in the workshop (including an interference microscope and many walking canes), escorting Mary Frances to concerts, Elderhostels and various education conferences and other trips, canoeing, birdwatching and stargazing (these latter preferably with neighbors, friends or colleagues in tow.) He lent books of shared interest from his personal library to anybody within reach: patient, relative, friend, neighbor or colleague.

Austin and Mary Francis died within a day of each other, from injuries sustained in a car crash following the funeral of a close friend and former medical colleague in Versailles, Woodford County. They are survived by three sons, five grandsons, many nephews and nieces, and hundreds of grateful patients, students and friends. To these fortunates they bequeathed the indelible image of two folks who were deeply in love with each other and with life, and who treasured most in life the opportunities it offers to serve others.

## The Austin and Mary Frances Bloch Lecture Series



*40 Years from Split Genes to Convergence of Life Sciences  
with Engineering and Physical Sciences*

**Phillip A. Sharp, PhD**

Nobel Laureate

Institute Professor

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

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**Thursday, May 25, 2017**

12:00 Noon

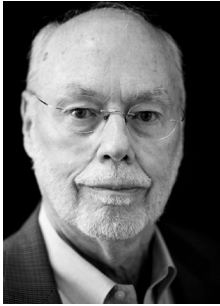
CTR Building, Room 101-102

Health Sciences Center

Department of Biochemistry & Molecular Genetics

University of Louisville School of Medicine

UNIVERSITY OF  
**LOUISVILLE**



## Phillip A. Sharp, PhD

Nobel Laureate  
Institute Professor  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
Cambridge, MA

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Phillip A. Sharp is an Institute Professor (highest academic rank) at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and member of the Department of Biology and the Koch Institute for Integrative Cancer Research. He joined the Center for Cancer Research (now the Koch Institute) in 1974 and served as its director for six years, from 1985 to 1991, before taking over as head of the Department of Biology, a position he held for the next eight years. He was founding director of the McGovern Institute, a position he held from 2000 to 2004. His research interests have centered on the molecular biology of gene expression relevant to cancer and the mechanisms of RNA splicing. His landmark work in 1977 provided the first indications of “discontinuous genes” in mammalian cells. The discovery fundamentally changed scientists’ understanding of gene structure and earned Dr. Sharp the 1993 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine. Dr. Sharp has authored over 410 papers. He is an elected member of the National Academy of Sciences, the Institute of Medicine, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the American Philosophical Society, and the Royal Society, UK. Among his many awards are the Gairdner Foundation International Award, the Lasker Basic Medical Research Award, and the National Medal of Science. His long list of service includes the presidency of the AAAS (2013) and Chair of the Scientific Advisory Committee of the SU2C Project, AACR. A native of Kentucky, Dr. Sharp earned a B.A. degree from Union College, Barboursville, KY, and a Ph.D. in chemistry from the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana. Dr. Sharp is a co-founder of Biogen and Alnylam Pharmaceuticals Inc.

## Past Presenters of the Bloch Lecture

**1999**

**C. Ronald Kahn, M.D.**

Chief Academic Officer, Joslin Diabetes Center  
Harvard Medical School  
Boston, MA

*Knockout Mice Challenge Our Concepts of Glucose Homeostasis and the Pathogenesis of Diabetes*

**2001**

**Jayanta Roy Chowdhury, MBBS, MRCP**

Professor of Medicine  
Scientific Director, Gene Therapy Facility  
Albert Einstein College of Medicine  
Bronx, NY

*Liver-Directed Gene Therapy: Crigler-Najjar Syndrome as a Model Target*

**2002**

**Donald P. McDonnell, PhD**

Glaxo-Wellcome Professor of MCB  
Chairman, Pharmacology & Cancer Biology  
Duke University Medical Center  
Durham, NC

*The Molecular Mechanisms Underlying Resistance to Antihormonal Therapy in Breast and Prostate Cancer*

**2004**

**Xiaodong Wang, PhD**

Director and Investigator  
National Institute of Biological Sciences  
Beijing  
China

*Mammalian Apoptotic Pathways and Therapeutic Applications*

**2005**

**Christopher A. Bradfield, PhD**

Professor of Oncology  
McArdle Laboratory for Cancer Research  
Madison, WI

*Dioxin, Clocks and Oxygen: Prototype Signal for a Nuclear Sensor Superfamily*

**2006**

**Cheryl L. Walker, PhD**

Robert A. Welch Professor  
Director, Center for Translational Research  
Texas A&M  
Houston, TX

*Reprogramming Our Genome: How Environmental Exposures During Development Determine Cancer Risk*

**2007**

**Steven L. McKnight, PhD**

Chair of Biochemistry  
University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center  
Dallas, TX

*Opposing Roles of the NPAS1 and NPAS3 Transcription Factors in the Control of Hippocampal Neurogenesis*

**2008**

**Nancy H. Colburn, PhD**

Scientist Emeritus  
National Cancer Institute-Frederick  
Frederick, MD

*Oncogenic Transcription Factors and Tumor Suppressing Translation Regulators as Molecular Targets for Cancer Prevention*

**2009**

**Professor Sir Philip Cohen**

Deputy Director  
Division of Signal Transduction Therapy  
University of Dundee  
Scotland  
UK

*Protein Kinase Inhibitors: The Drugs of the 21st Century*

**2010**

**F. Peter Guengerich, PhD**

Professor of Biochemistry  
Tadashi Inagami PhD Chair in Biochemistry  
Vanderbilt University  
Nashville, TN

*Roles of Cytochrome P450 Enzymes in the Metabolism of Drugs*