

Dr. Ian J.H. Duncan

B.Sc. (Agr)(Hons), Ph.D.
Professor of Applied Ethology
Chair in Animal Welfare

International Society for Applied Ethology, Honorary Fellow



A short biography of Ian Duncan written in 2005

Ian Duncan was awarded an honorary membership in the International Society for Applied Ethology in 2004.

Ian Duncan was born and educated in Edinburgh, Scotland. He graduated B.Sc. in Agriculture with Honours in Animal Husbandry from Edinburgh University and went on to study for his Ph.D. at the AFRC Poultry Research Centre in Edinburgh, under the guidance of Dr. David Wood-Gush. His research topic was frustration in the domestic fowl, which had the aim of finding out if hens in battery cages were frustrated. He was thus one of the first people to bring a scientific approach to solving animal welfare problems. He continued to work at the Poultry Research Centre for over 20 years on topics related to poultry welfare.

Dr. Duncan joined the Society for Veterinary Ethology in 1972 shortly after it was opened to non-veterinarians. He served as Honorary Secretary from 1974 to 1977, Honorary Assistant Librarian and Editor from 1981 to 1983, Honorary Librarian from 1983 to 1987 and President from 1986 to 1987.

From 1979 to 1988, Dr. Duncan advised the Commission of the European Communities on matters relating to animal welfare.

Dr. Duncan organized the Annual Summer Meeting of the SVE when it was held in Edinburgh in 1981, and the International Congress of the ISAE when it was held in Guelph in 1996.

In January 1989, Dr. Duncan joined the Department of Animal and Poultry Science at the University of Guelph in Ontario, Canada, and is a full Professor in that Department. In June 1990, Dr. Duncan was appointed Director of the newly established Centre for the Study of

Animal Welfare at the University of Guelph. In October 1995, Dr. Duncan was appointed to the University Chair in Animal Welfare, which is the oldest Chair in Animal Welfare in North America.

He was given the 1993 Award for Innovative Developments in Animal Welfare presented jointly by the British Society of Animal Production and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals - the first time this award had been given outside the U.K.

In 1999, his course, Principles of Farm Animal Care and Welfare was given the inaugural award by the Humane Society of the United States as being the best course in North America dealing with Animals and Society. This course is extremely popular and currently [2005] has 180 students enrolled.

In 2001, Dr Duncan was awarded the Robert Fraser Gordon medal for outstanding services to Poultry Science – only the second time that this award has gone to Canada.

Dr. Duncan was named University of Guelph Distinguished Professor in 2001, was given the University of Guelph, G.P. McRostie Faculty Award for advising and mentoring students in 2002, and was given the Ontario Agricultural College Teaching Award in 2003.

He has published over 150 scientific papers and 20 book chapters most of which are connected to animal welfare.

Dr. Duncan strongly believes that animal welfare is all to do with what animals feel. He has led this school of thought vigorously for the past 25 years, with much opposition, until the present, when it is now being generally accepted by the scientific community. His current research interests include developing methods of asking animals what they feel about the conditions and procedures to which they are subjected.

Dr. Duncan has travelled throughout the world lecturing on animal behaviour and welfare.