

EDITORIAL

The future of the Nigerian Field Society and its journal, *The Nigerian Field* outside the world war years has never been as delicate as it is now in 2023. There is apprehension about the winding down of the UK Branch scheduled to happen in 2025. The founders of the society, former colonialists were ardent members and wrote on their perceptions of the Nigerian and West African culture and environment in the journal even after Nigeria's independence up to the present day. Membership subscription sustained the society and the journal and the UK membership was more vibrant and contributed financially more to the running of the society than the Nigerian members. The culmination of the tremendous British contribution was the digitization and archiving of the past issues of the journal from 1931 to 2020. Most Nigerians that joined the society were influenced by their British connections such that when the British left the tempo of the society began to wane. In spite of the lofty ideals of the NFS, efforts to sell the society to Nigerians have not met with resounding success.

But the objectives of the society and the frugal management of funds, coupled with solid commitment of members are strong foundations to build on. The journal is known globally and will continue to be a veritable source of information on the Nigerian environment and culture. Such strong attributes are enough to propel the society into the future. What is now needed is to increase the Nigerian membership base and increase revenue. To this end, the Annual Business Meeting held at Ile-Ife in November resolved that the UK Branch should not be wound down and that a nucleus of diaspora Nigerians along with the remaining Britons should take over and continue running it. This becomes expedient in a situation where it is difficult to register new charities. It was further recommended that the Society participates in Nigerian Trade Fairs for more exposure to the public. To make more widely known and accessible, and to align with modern trends, we are publishing this issue online, the first time on our revamped website, www.nigerianfield.org

Our current issue has, as usual, very captivating articles. Flooding has become a worrisome global phenomenon associated with climate change. Chris Ikporukpo and Abiodun Areola in their write-up titled "Rivers of Roads and Roads of Rivers: The Character and Impact of Two Great Floods in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria", describe flooding in a part of Nigeria. We conclude the three-part exposition by Prof. John Hall on West Africa's sedges focusing this time on their tribes, history, habitat and biogeography. Philip

Allsworth-Jones in a historical/archaeological/geological perspective present unpublished data from the visit of Geoffrey Bond, English geologist based in then Rhodesia, to the tin-mining area of Jos Plateau in 1948. Prof. Cordelia Osasona, Oluseyi Olagoke (architects) describe the restoration of a church mission house built in the 19th century in Ibadan. The article illustrates pioneer missionary life in southwestern Nigeria

We have three reviews. Dr. Pat Oyelola reviews *Beyond Aesthetics: Use, Abuse and Dissonance in African Art Traditions* by Prof. Wole Soyinka. Dr. Stephen Folaranmi reviews an art exhibition titled *The End of The Beginning* by Akintayo Akintobi, South River Art Studio, 1300 Fleetwood Drive SE, Atlanta GA, USA. October 6 to November 3, 2023.

The Nigerian Environment: Past 100 Years and The Future, edited by David Okali, Mynepalli Sridhar and Chris Ikporukpo is reviewed by Olatunde Obasola.

We pay tribute to Professor Mynepalli C. K. Sridhar, 1942-2022 who was a very committed member of the Ibadan Branch of the Nigerian Field Society.

We thank our contributors and manuscript reviewers for their support. We thank our subscribers and wish them a merry Christmas and a prosperous new year.

AUGUSTINE O. ISICHEI

Ile-Ife, December 5, 2023

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TRIBUTE TO THE CHERISHED MEMORY OF PROFESSOR MYNEPALLI C. K. SRIDHAR, OM (1942-2022)

TAIWO HAMMED

Professor Mynepalli Chandra Kameswara Sridhar (M.C.K. Sridhar, for short) was born on 8th December, 1942 in the then British India. His surname **Sridhar**, a common male Hindu name in the southern states of India, is a shortened form of **Sridhara** (*Sri* = good fortune, and *Dhara*= holding or possessing) which literarily means a possessor of good fortune or wealthy or prosperous person. Also, in line with Verdic Astrology, people who bear the name Sridhar are believed to be destined to have loads of positive aspects in their lives, usually with inherent creativity, hard work and great power of organization. All these attributes perfectly applied to our dear friend, colleague, and an iconic environmental/public health scientist Prof. M.C.K. Sridhar who passed on Wednesday 23rd November, 2022, just two weeks to his 80th birthday anniversary. The sad event occurred in his home country India where he had gone for medical treatment.

Prof. Sridhar evidently had a distinguished academic career back home in India, attending some of the topmost universities in the country for all his degrees. They include Andhra University, Pradesh State (B.Sc.), University of Barode (M. Sc.), and the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, a world-top research university, for his PhD degree. He came to Nigeria as an expatriate scholar and joined the services of the University of Ibadan, Faculty of Public Health, in the College of Medicine as Lecturer II in 1977. By dint of exceptional hard work through effective teaching and productive research activities, he soon carved a niche for himself as an international scientist in Environment/Public Health. Not surprising therefore he rose quickly through the ranks to become a full professor in 1987, just a decade in the service. With passion, he taught and supervised generations of medical and postgraduate students in various aspects of public health. He played a leading role in the establishment, growth and development of the Department of Environmental Health Sciences within the Faculty of Public Health of the university and nurtured it to a great Centre of Excellence.

The research interests and practice of Prof Sridhar cut across various aspects of environmental health and related fields, including biomedical engineering. He established and maintained over time, a formidable team and network of research students and associates. Most of their studies were on environmental pollution and waste management, water supply systems, sanitation and the epidemiology of some neglected tropical diseases. Although most of these studies were in the southwest region of Nigeria, they actually

spanned the entire country and even outside (notably The Gambia). In collaboration with his, Dr Taiwo Hammed, he established a Renewable Resources Centre (RRC) at the University of Ibadan in 2013 where over 25 viable waste to energy turnkey projects in resource conservation and recycling are showcased for ready commercialization. Prof. Sridhar was perhaps best known for his prodigious writing skills and very impressive publication record with over 350 scientific publications including papers in international journals, text books, technical reports and 12 patents to his credit. He served on the editorial board of many local and international journals, including that of the *African Journal of Environmental Health Sciences (AJRHS)* for which he was the pioneer Editor-in-Chief.

Prof Sridhar belonged to many international and national professional bodies and societies among which is the Nigerian Field Society (NFS), the oldest society on environment in West Africa (founded in 1930). He joined the Ibadan Branch of the society in the 1980s. He was an active, resourceful, and dedicated member of the society and was noted for his occasional talks and frequent contribution to the journal/flagship of the society, *The Nigerian Field*. He served in the Executive Committee of the Ibadan Branch and was the Vice Chairperson at a time. It is noteworthy that in October 2011, Prof Sridhar was invited to the Nigeria's Second ECOFAIR organized by The Ecological Fund Office, Abuja to make a presentation on one of his waste management model projects in Ibadan and environs. That was one of the many groundbreaking projects on which he earned 13 patents. Coincidentally, the President of Nigerian Field Society, Prof. I. Funso Adeniyi was the resource person invited by the organizers of the fair to discuss and review Prof Sridhar's presentation.

In view of his great service and immense contribution to NFS and the Nigerian environment, the Council of NFS in 2011 recommended him for a national award. Eventually, he and three other colleagues won the Nigeria National Merit Award (Ministry of Science and Technology). Also, at the annual business meeting (ABM) of NFS hosted by the Ile-Ife Branch in 2018, Prof, Sridhar was among the six recipients of award of excellence of the Society. It is noteworthy that the above-mentioned awards were only a few of the many local and international awards Prof. Sridhar received. It is obvious from the that Prof, M.C.K. Sridhar lived truly to his name and star. He was a born leader, a fine gentleman of calm and gentle disposition, a versatile and erudite public health scientist, an academic icon, and an environmental *Guru*. A truly devoted and loving family man, Prof, Sridhar was pre-deceased in 2021 by his darling wife and both are survived by their three children: Srilatha, Pavavi, and Prethi. Our hearts go out to them on the irreplaceable loss of their beloved parent's. We of the Nigerian Field Society will sorely miss Prof. Sridhar. We hope that his good deeds and legacy will continue to live with us and remain green and ever fresh. May God Almighty grant the gentle soul of Prof, Mynepalli C. K. Sridhar eternal rest and peace.