



Louise Harel was born Louise Ceddaha in Algiers (Algeria) on July 9, 1925, in a low-income family: her father, a first world war hero and the manager of a small company, had been forced into bankruptcy and was hired as a low level office worker in Algiers City Hall. Louise struggled to complete her education in a difficult context, notably in 1942, when all Jewish children were by law dismissed from schools (she and her two brothers were able to remain at school only thanks to the War Cross that her father had been awarded during the 1914-1918 world war). After obtaining her “Baccalauréat” (A-level), she moved to Paris and enrolled at the Sorbonne University in chemistry, while at the same time she worked to earn her living as a high school teacher or as a technician.

With her Master of chemistry, she was offered a well-paid chemist job at the largest French carmaker company Renault, but rather chose to join a CNRS Biology lab in Villejuif, where she started a PhD and a cancer biologist career. There, she also met Jacques Harel, her husband who was a cancer scientist as well.

Louise Harel was a brilliant and very productive scientist, involved in a long list of discoveries. Notably, she was among the first to provide evidences for non-coding RNAs in mammalian cells¹ or for kinases in chromatin², and she discovered a cell-growth inhibitor of the IGF pathway³.

She was a very active member of SFC, up to her very death on August 9, 2016. Notably, she created, in the early eighties, the highly successful SFC “Club des facteurs de croissance” (Growth factor Club), the ancestor of the current “Journées Louise Harel”.

- 1: Harel J, Hanania N, Tapiero H, Harel L. RNA replication by nuclear satellite DNA in different mouse cells. *Biochem Biophys Res Commun.* 1968 Nov25;33(4):696-701. PubMed PMID: 5697274.
- 2: Blat C, Marty de Morales M, Harel L. Kinase activities in the non-histone chromosomal proteins of resting and proliferating BHK21 C13 cells. *Exp Cell Res.* 1976 Mar 1;98(1):104-10. PubMed PMID: 1253833.
- 3: Blat C, Chatelain G, Desauty G, Harel L. Inhibitory diffusible factor IDF45, a G1 phase inhibitor. *FEBS Lett.* 1986 Jul 28;203(2):175-80. PubMed PMID: 2426138.