

Timothy Gordon Cooke

Breast cancer surgeon, researcher, and medical educator

Tim Cooke was St Mungo professor of surgery in the university of Glasgow and clinical director of surgery. He was a breast and gastrointestinal specialist, laboratory and clinical researcher, and a major contributor to medical education and led the provision of breast services and surgical oncology in the Glasgow region. He spearheaded an interdisciplinary approach to cancer care and did a great deal to tailor treatment to individual patients. Regarded as a true visionary, he was heavily involved with NHS reorganisation in greater Glasgow, a task which required vision, tact, and tenacity, qualities which his colleagues unanimously agreed he had in abundance.

Tim was born in Birkenhead, Liverpool; his father was a sales consultant and his mother a ward clerk. He originally planned to study zoology but decided instead on medicine when he saw the care that his ailing grandmother received. He received his secondary schooling at the Birkenhead Institute, where Wilfred Owen, one of his heroes, was educated, and he shared Owen's anti-war sentiments throughout his life.

He spent a year working with the international development charity Voluntary Service Overseas in Ghana before entering Liverpool University Medical School. He qualified in 1973 and did five years surgical training there. In 1978 he took a research fellowship in the university surgery department, based at the Royal Liverpool Hospital, where he studied how the biology of individual breast tumours related to clinical outcome. This was the subject of his MD thesis in 1980, and the Royal College of Surgeons awarded him a Hunterian professorship for this work. However, he remained a surgeon first and foremost.

In 1980 Tim moved to Southampton as lecturer in surgery, and here he extended his research to colorectal malignancy. Three years later he moved again, to a senior lectureship at Charing Cross and Westminster Medical School. In 1986 he returned to Liverpool, again as senior lecturer, and with his lifelong mentor, Professor Sir Bob Shields.

By 1989, said his colleague Professor Roy Rampling, he was ready to lead an academic department. He could have gone for several opportunities in the United Kingdom and overseas, and chose the St Mungo chair in Glasgow.

Tim's research contributions were many and varied. His early work on oestrogen receptors helped provide the rationale for hormone treatment in patients with breast cancer. He supervised research into positivity for human epidermal growth factor receptors types 1-4 (HER1-4), which paved the way for the use of trastuzumab (Herceptin) in patients with HER2 receptors.

He published 200 research papers, was a member of several editorial boards, and contributed to several books. An active member of the British Breast Group, which meets regularly to review research and treatment (and also to dine), he also served on committees for cancer funding and policy.

Tim supervised 25 postgraduate students and was an examiner, including of postgraduates, for 13 universities at the UK and abroad. He believed that the best way of learning was self enquiry and spearheaded the introduction of problem based learning into the UK curriculum. He enhanced the standing of Glasgow medical school.

He was a good teacher and cared about medical education. He was an active member of many committees, notably the West of Scotland surgical training committee. He gave innumerable guest lectures and

brought a huge amount of research funding to his department: £2.4m in the last four years alone.

In all his academic and managerial commitments he remained a clinician at heart, advocating the contribution of surgery to the cure of cancer. But he was a team player, being one of the first cancer surgeons to implement multidisciplinary team working, a practice now regarded as mandatory in cancer management.

Tim lived a full life both at work and outside it. He was widely read and had many intellectual pursuits. A great family man, he took his wife and six children

sailing, riding, and skiing. He completed the London and Liverpool marathons, played tennis and squash, and wore out several mountain bikes and his friends. He supported Liverpool Football Club and was a regular at the Kop in their glory days of the 1960s and '70s and could recall every game. He took up the saxophone when he was 50 and played it with enthusiasm. A bon

vivant and wit, he was often too convulsed with laughter to deliver the punchline of his many jokes.

Tim died aged 60 in a road traffic accident on the way home from a sailing holiday. He is survived by his wife, Lynn, an orthopaedic surgeon; three daughters; and three sons.

Caroline Richmond

Timothy Gordon Cooke, St Mungo professor of surgery, University of Glasgow (b 1947; q Liverpool 1973; MD, FRCS, FRCGlas), d 20 July 2008.

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UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW

Matthew Kenyon Alexander



Former consultant pathologist South Warwickshire Hospital Group (b 1921; q Liverpool 1944; DPath, FRCP, FRCPath), died from lung cancer on 28 August 2008.

Having qualified, Matthew Kenyon Alexander (“Ken”) joined the Royal Army Medical Corps, serving in India and rising to the rank of captain. Leaving the army, he was an assistant clinical pathologist at Cambridge from 1948 until 1950, when he was appointed a registrar at the United Liverpool Hospitals. He moved to Warwickshire in 1955, living in Stratford upon Avon and retiring in 1985. In the 1960s he pioneered the introduction of computer applications to laboratory procedures. He was a gifted writer, and his poems were published, won prizes, and were broadcast. He leaves a wife, Pegi; six children; and 10 grandchildren.

Matthew Alexander

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David Christopher Bruce Bissett



Former general practitioner Beaufort, Ebbw Vale (b 1950; q Birmingham 1972), died from malignant melanoma on 8 July 2008. Originally practising in an affluent area in the West Midlands, David Christopher Bruce Bissett moved to the Welsh valleys. He was

senior partner at a young age and a trainer for most of his career. Known for his sense of humour, he also became prone to severe depression, which led to his premature retirement in 2003, though he continued to work part time for the army. An adopted child, he spent much time in retirement meeting his natural family. A melanoma removed in 1998 recurred seven years later, and he died two days after seeing his daughter married. He leaves a wife, Rosemarie; a daughter; and a stepson.

Peter Slimmings

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David Christison

Former consultant ophthalmologist Glasgow Eye Infirmary (b 1915; q Glasgow 1938; DOMS, FRCSGlas, FRCOphth), died from pneumonia on 7 October 2007.

After working as a house surgeon, David Christison enlisted in the Royal Army Medical Corps in 1941 and was sent to the Far East. Captured three weeks after arriving in Singapore, he was eventually transported to Japan in 1943, and mentioned in dispatches for distinguished service in preserving life in prisoner of war camps. Once demobbed, he took up a position at Glasgow Eye Infirmary in 1946. His special interests were retinal surgery and treating squint. He was involved in the ophthalmic nursing diploma, the Glasgow Orthoptic School, and the amalgamation of the Tennent Institute with the infirmary at Gartnavel General Hospital. He leaves a wife, Margaret; three children and 10 grandchildren.

Alistair Rennie

John Christison

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James Hamilton Fairley

Former general practitioner Caversham, Berkshire (b 1927; q Oxford/St Bartholomew’s Hospital, London, 1953; DObstRCOG, DCH, MRCGP), d 11 May 2008.

After qualification and house jobs



at Barts, James Hamilton Fairley (“Jim”) spent two years working in general practice in Corrawa, New South Wales, Australia. Returning to the United Kingdom, he joined a practice in Caversham, where he spent the rest of his professional life. A dedicated family doctor, he set and achieved high standards for himself and his practice. He was proud of his Scottish ancestry and enjoyed playing the bagpipes. Predeceased by his wife, Poula, he leaves two children and three grandchildren.

Patrick Anderson

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Patrick Adrian Hopkins

Former general practitioner Chorlton, Manchester (b 1927; q Birmingham 1951; DObstRCOG), died from complications of oesophageal cancer on 29 July 2008.

Patrick Adrian Hopkins did his internship in Birmingham and Davyhulme before two years of national service in the Royal Air Force followed by four years as an assistant in general practice. He and his wife set up a small practice in Chorlton (Manchester) and lived over the practice premises—unusual even then. He retired in 1985. One of his outside interests was chess, which he had played for his university. He leaves a wife, Sheila; two children; and four grandchildren.

M J Egginton

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Hugh Owen Hughes

Former general practitioner Bolsover, Derbyshire (b 1916; q Middlesex Hospital, London, 1939; OBE), died from metastatic bowel cancer on 8 October 2007.

After qualifying with the conjoint diploma, Hugh Owen Hughes joined the Royal Air Force

Volunteer Reserve. He spent six years in service, largely in the Far East, and was awarded a military OBE and mentioned in dispatches. After demobilisation, he worked at the Bland Sutton Institute at Middlesex Hospital in haematology before entering full time general practice in Bolsover, where he practised for 25 years. Latterly he worked as a medical officer with the Department of Health and Social Security in Cardiff for 10 years before retiring from medical practice. He leaves a wife, Margaret Maureen; three children; and six grandchildren.

John Hughes

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David Staig



Former ophthalmologist Royal Berkshire Hospital, Reading (b 1928; q Oxford/Westminster Hospital, London, 1955; MA, DO), died from haemorrhagic stroke on 1 July 2008. Born in India, where his father, Sir Bertie Staig, was in the Indian Civil Service, David Staig qualified at Oxford in the same year as Roger Bannister. A man of considerable skill with anything requiring careful fine workmanship, such as woodturning, David determined to become an eye surgeon. The finals of the FRCS eluded him, but he had a successful career in the eye department at Reading and regular outpatient sessions at Moorfields. He also established a private contact lens practice.

Of a nervous disposition, he became increasingly reclusive but remained supportive of others. The death of his longstanding friend and ophthalmological colleague, Dr Rachel Need, in 2007 was a severe blow.

Peter Brunyate

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