OBITUARIES

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James Mourilyan Tanner

Paediatrician who formulated scales for child growth and development

Jim Tanner, former professor of child growth and development at Great Ormond Street Hospital, invented the eponymous scale that measures growth and development in childhood and adolescence. His broad academic interests were where growth, education, health, government policy, and socioeconomic theory overlap. His charts adorn the walls of general practices and school health clinics around the world. Similarly, he formulated the stages that define puberty. He was among the first to treat growth retarded children with human growth hormone, and he wrote influential and widely cited books on growth. "Over a career that spanned half a century Dr Tanner helped bring the study of human growth into the era of modern biology," said the *New York Times* in 2005 ("With his bells and curves, human growth science grew up," www.nytimes.com, 1 Mar 2005).

JONATHAN PLAYER/THE NEW YORK TIMES/REDUX/EYEVINE

Paediatricians and school health clinics can now chart a child's growth in relation to the average, and see how growth lags and spurts

Before Tanner, child growth charts were of a "one size fits all" nature. Tanner's charts, made with colleagues at the Institute of Child Health and Hospital for Sick Children, Great Ormond Street, took account of the variations in a child's speed of growth. They allow paediatricians and school health clinics to chart a child's growth in relation to the average, and see how growth lags and spurts.

Jim was born into an army family and was a boarder at Marlborough college, spending holidays with his family in China and Egypt. He studied engineering and modern languages intending an army career, but when his soldier-brother was killed at the start of the war he decided on medicine.

Olympic games

Short of money and unable to afford Oxford or Cambridge, he won an athletics scholarship to St Mary's medical school in London and for this was expected to coach the team, as he'd done at school. He was the fastest British runner in the 110 metre hurdles in 1939 and was expected to represent Britain in the 1940 Olympic games, which were cancelled because of the war.

In 1940 he won a Rockefeller Foundation scholarship to Pennsylvania University in a scheme to help 30 UK medical students finish their studies away from the stresses of war. Here he did his first research study, constructing standards for normal cardiac output with a ballistocardiogram, using his fellow students as guinea pigs. He also married Bernice Alture, a student at Philadelphia women's medical college.

He qualified in 1944, did a nine month internship at Johns Hopkins University Hospital, and returned to Britain, where he did two years' army service in the wartime Maudsley Hospital at Mill Hill and a returned prisoner of war rehabilitation unit in Kent.

In 1946 he took a junior job as demonstrator in Oxford University's anatomy department under the legendary biologist Professor Sir Wilfred le Gros Clark. He taught an undergraduate course on children's growth, probably the first in Britain. At the end of his two year appointment he was approached by the Ministry of Health with funds to start a study on child development, based on the occupants of an orphanage in Harpenden, Hertfordshire. The study had been initiated to observe the effects of malnutrition on growth. Under Tanner it evolved into a long term study, with the same subjects being weighed, measured, and photographed. He charted puberty by measuring genital size and pubic hair quantity from photographs. Professor David Barker of Southampton University said, "He deserved fame, particularly for his studies of puberty. He should have been made a fellow of the Royal Society."

Based at the Sherrington school of physiology at St Thomas' Hospital under Professor Sir Henry Barcroft, he recruited as his coworker Reg Whitehouse, a former army medical corps warrant officer. They were close collaborators until Whitehouse retired 30 years later. Towards the end of the seven years he spent there, Sir Alan Montcrieff of Great Ormond Street set up a birth to maturity study that included psychological development. In 1956 he joined Montcrieff and resumed clinical work by establishing a growth disorder clinic. He was appointed professor in 1966 and remained there for years after his nominal retirement as emeritus professor in 1985.

He was among the first to use human growth hormone clinically and to select the small number of UK children to be treated with human growth hormone from cadavers. After some patients around the world died from an infectious contaminant in 1985 he stopped the treatment, resuming it in the 1990s when genetically engineered hormone became available.

International honours

In 1977 Tanner cofounded the International Association for Human Auxology, for the study of human growth. He held visiting professorships at Harvard and Texas, wrote classic books including *A History of the Study of Human Growth* (1951) and *Foetus Into Man: Physical Growth From Conception to Maturity*. He received many international honours, and published more than 100 papers.

He was a tall, handsome, and highbrow man with many cultural interests. He was, said Professor Barker, "wonderful and under-recognised and the basis of our knowledge of growth is due to him." Colleagues from around the world held a festschrift in his honour on his 75th birthday in 1995. When he was 80 he decided to retire, citing the fact that opera singers retire when they still have an audience and ignore the public protests. In retirement he converted an old stable in Devon into a home and made a garden out of a swamp. He sang with choral societies, played golf, and visited galleries and museums.

Bernice became a leading figure in general practice. She died in 1991 and a year later he married Gunilla Lindgren, a Swedish educationalist whose doctoral degree he had examined some years earlier. He leaves a daughter by Bernice.

James Tanner, professor of child growth and development (b 1929; q 1944 MBBS St Mary's and MD Pennsylvania; 1946 DPM, 1953 PhD, 1972 FRCP, 1973 FRCPsch), died from prostate cancer and stroke on 11 August 2010.

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John Anthony Dyde

Former clinical director of cardiology and cardiothoracic surgery, and medical director Walsgrave Hospital, Coventry (b 1935; q Cambridge/Guy's Hospital, London, 1959; FRCS), d 23 May 2010.

As well as excelling academically, John Anthony Dyde ("Tony") was a superb all round ball player, especially in cricket, hockey, and rugby football. He won a University Blue for hockey, as well as a national trial for hockey. After qualifying Tony started surgical training in Bristol and Sheffield. Having trained as a cardiothoracic surgeon at Guy's, he was appointed consultant surgeon to Walsgrave Hospital in 1972. He became clinical director and subsequently medical director, retiring in 1997. He read voraciously and pursued his love of fishing and golf until ill health prevailed. He leaves a wife, Shirley; three children; and seven grandchildren.

Barry Ross

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Thomas Gilliland Lowry

Former general practitioner Cookstown, Northern Ireland (b 1919; q Queen's University, Belfast, 1945), d 7 April 2010.

After qualifying Thomas Gilliland Lowry immediately tried to get into general practice in Northern Ireland, but practices were difficult to find just after the second world war with returning doctors competing for jobs. Eventually he got an assistant's post in England for one year before becoming a partner in a practice in Moseley, Birmingham. He stayed for 16 years, working in a deprived area, before he returned to Northern Ireland to work in rural Cookstown. In 1980 he had emergency coronary artery bypass grafting and decided to retire. He enjoyed reasonable health until his 91st year, taking pleasure in his family, golf, and gardening. He leaves a wife, May; three children; and four grandchildren.

R Lowry

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David Vincent Morgan-Jones

Former general practitioner Harrow and Ruislip (b 1919; q The London 1942; MRCP, BSc, MSc), d 11 August 2010.

David Vincent Morgan-Jones ("Vin") trained during the second world war, as a student delivering babies unsupervised during air raids. After qualifying he took over his father's practice in a mining community in South Wales, later moving to London. He was one of the first civilian doctors to use penicillin. Earlier he had written to Sir Alexander Fleming to ask for some to treat a child with pneumonia; Fleming's reply regretted that there was none to spare (*It's about a man* (*BMJ* 2010;340:c2023)). In his 70s Vin graduated BSc from the Open University and later MSc. He leaves a wife, Phyl; three daughters; and six grandchildren. A grandchild's death when cycling in London haunted him to the end.

William Marshall

Cite this as: *BMJ* 2010;341:c5348

Samuel Griffith Owen

Noted physician and medical administrator Newcastle upon Tyne and Medical Research Council (b 1925; q Newcastle 1948; CBE, MD, FRCP), d 5 June 2010.

After clinical and research appointments in Newcastle, Samuel

Griffith Owen ("Griff") was senior medical officer on troopships in the Royal Army Medical Corps. After training posts in London and Pennsylvania, he returned to Newcastle, ultimately becoming reader in medicine and clinical and academic sub-dean. He was appointed second secretary of the Medical Research Council in 1968, retiring because of ill health in 1982. His many other contributions included being on the Executive Council of the European Science Foundation. His two textbooks on cardiology ran to two editions, and he contributed and had an important role in the *Oxford Companion to Medicine*. He leaves a wife, Ruth, and four children.

Walton of Detchant

Cite this as: *BMJ* 2010;341:c5330

John North Redfern

Former general practitioner East Hull (b 1927; q Cambridge 1949), died from metastatic carcinoma of the prostate on 6 May 2010.

John North Redfern worked at the Middlesex Hospital, London, before returning to East Hull, where he worked in a busy two man partnership. A traditional family doctor, he cared for several generations of patients, having been present at the birth of many of them. His longstanding commitment and enthusiasm were recognised by his colleagues when he was made president of Hull Medical Society and later the local BMA. He was a talented sportsman, playing rugby, cricket, squash, and golf, having gained a half blue for rugby fives while at Cambridge. He leaves a wife, Anne; three children; and eight grandchildren.

Rachel Gummery
Lucy Carrie

Cite this as: *BMJ* 2010;341:c5351

Peter Stradling

Former consultant chest physician and senior lecturer Royal Postgraduate Medical School, Hammersmith Hospital, London (b 1919; q University College London 1942; MD, FRCP, FRPS), d 27 July 2010.

After house jobs in London, Peter Stradling committed himself to improving the care of patients with tuberculosis. While at Willesden Chest Clinic, he introduced both outpatient and home artificial pneumothoraces to reduce unacceptably long waiting lists for sanatoria beds. He participated in many of the early randomised controlled trials of different chemotherapy treatments and regimens. He combined his interest in photography with his development of bronchoscopic techniques to produce a textbook, *Diagnostic Bronchoscopy*, for which he was made a fellow of the Royal Photographic Society. First published in 1968, it still sells, more than 20 years after the sixth edition of 1991. He leaves a wife, Peggy; three children and eight grandchildren.

John Stradling

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