

Barrie R Jones

Leading ophthalmologist who influenced clinical research and practice

Professor Barrie R Jones, who died on Wednesday 19 August, had a profound influence on modern ophthalmology.

As well as excellent clinical judgment, Barrie Jones had a highly developed sense of curiosity and would allow no obstacle to stand in his way. Professor Norman Ashton, head of the department of pathology at the Institute of Ophthalmology, London, is alleged to have described him as being “like an oak tree growing up through concrete.”

Professor Douglas Coster—professor of ophthalmology at Flinders University, Adelaide—worked with him at the Cornea and External Disease Service, Moorfields Eye Hospital, London: “The ability to focus intently on important and emerging issues and to get to a point of tangible contribution quickly was one of Professor Jones’ attributes. He established several groups that were international leaders in fungal, viral, and chlamydial eye disease and were also among the leaders in corneal transplantation. The standing of the groups attracted fellows from all around the world, many of whom went on to establish major reputations in ophthalmology. I could never claim to know what made him tick. He had a drive that set him apart. Often he was working in a number of disparate fields at once, assembling willing collaborators around London and the rest of the UK, and indeed the world.”

Coster found Barrie Jones a shy man “but a showman nevertheless.” Never a self promoter in the manner of so many latter day rock star doctors, he was a most energetic promoter of his cause, which was the eradication of preventable blindness.

In addition to his influence on the conduct of laboratory based clinical research, Barrie Jones brought about fundamental changes in clinical practice in the United Kingdom. He insisted on the use of the operating microscope by all trainees at Moorfields, so that his arrival on the consultant staff spawned a new generation of microsurgeons. It was during his own training at Moorfields that he insisted he was known as “Barrie Jones,” after a senior member of staff inquired after his lateness for a ward round.

Barrie Jones also realised that ophthalmology would only progress by encouraging subspecialisation. In this regard he had a powerful ally, Lorimer Fison, a close colleague at the hospital who was already committed to the modernisation of retinal detachment surgery. Moorfields soon boasted specialists in every branch of ophthalmology, such as external eye disease, oculoplastics, and oculomotor disorders. Barrie Jones himself was especially interested in surgery of the eyelids, often deformed by trachoma, and, similarly, in the microsurgery of the lacrimal drainage system, into which he introduced a new operation, canalicular dacryocystorhinostomy.

Barrie Jones came to the UK in 1951 to train further in clinical ophthalmology before eventually being appointed professor of clinical ophthalmology at the University of London in 1963. Born in Silverstream in New Zealand, on 4 January 1921, he obtained a degree in natural sciences at Victoria University of Wellington, before studying medicine at the University of Otago, Dunedin. After qualifying, he began his clinical training in Wellington before returning, in 1950, to Dunedin as registrar in ophthalmology under Professor Rowland Wilson. Wilson had been in charge of the Memorial Institute for Ophthalmic Research in Cairo, Egypt, and had done important research on trachoma.

It was this training in New Zealand and his experience at the Institute of Ophthalmology in London that led Barrie Jones to study eye disease resulting from infection, but in particular those caused by *Chlamydia* species. He conducted research on numerous field trips to the Middle East and elsewhere, thereby

making a major contribution to the eradication of trachoma throughout the world. His wife Pauline made a massive contribution, accompanying him on numerous field trips where she was a vital part of the research team.

Not surprisingly, the demands on his time sometimes became overwhelming. Not only did he take to working in the station waiting room on his way home from Moorfields in the evenings, but he soon developed, perhaps unfairly, a reputation for absent mindedness.

From 1975 onwards, Barrie Jones set about realising the achievement of his life’s ambi-

tion—to make a major contribution to the eradication of world blindness. In 1980, he relinquished the chair of clinical ophthalmology at Moorfields, which he had occupied for 17 years, and spent time teaching preventive ophthalmology worldwide. In 1981 the International Centre for Eye Health was formally opened with Barrie Jones its first director. This enabled him to research the control of onchocerciasis in Africa. He eventually

retired in 1986, becoming an emeritus professor at the University of London.

In 2002 he and Pauline finally decided to return to New Zealand. The International Centre for Eye Health, now based at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, continues to thrive.

Barrie Jones was the recipient of many awards and honours, both in the UK and worldwide, including the CBE; the Gonin Medal, the highest award in international ophthalmology; and the King Faisal International Prize for Medicine. He leaves Pauline, their daughter, Jenny, and sons, Graham, Andrew, and Peter.

Peter K Leaver

Barrie R Jones, ophthalmologist (b 1921, Silverstream; q 1947, Dunedin), died 19 August 2009 from pneumonia.

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Lawrence William Bowen



Former senior hospital medical officer Saxondale Hospital, Nottingham (b 1920; q Guy's Hospital, London, 1946; DPM), died from pulmonary oedema and *Clostridium difficile* infection on 16 July 2009.

After qualifying, Lawrence William Bowen ("Johnny") worked at Bromley and District Hospital, then at Cardiff and Bristol Hospitals. His national service was spent with the British Military Hospital, Fayid, Central Zone, Egypt, as a captain, and he became a senior specialist in psychiatry. His original army secondment unexpectedly extended to 24 months, he returned to the United Kingdom to work at Fishponds Hospital, Bristol. In 1957 he took up the post of senior hospital medical officer at Saxondale Hospital, retiring in 1985. Predeceased by his wife, Helen, in 2006, he leaves two children.

David Bowen

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Joan Muriel Lilian Gabb (née Apted)

Former general practitioner Fair Oak, near Eastleigh, Hampshire (b 1917; q Royal Free 1942), d 16 March 2009. In the same year as qualifying, Joan Muriel Lilian Gabb (née Apted) married John, a doctor working in aviation medicine at Farnborough. She started in singlehanded general practice in the early 1950s and retired to Cornwall in 1984. She loved gardening and walking her dogs. She had at least 20 years of good retirement until vascular dementia overcame her, and she came to live in a nursing home in Winchester after a fall and subsequent repair of her fractured hip in 2004. Predeceased by John in 1967, she leaves two children and five grandchildren.

Richard Gabb

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William John Gordon

Former consultant obstetrician and gynaecologist Vale of Leven District General Hospital, Dunbartonshire (b 1925; q Glasgow 1947; MD, FRCS, FRCOG), d 12 April 2009.

Before specialising in obstetrics and gynaecology, William John Gordon ("Bill") gained experience in general practice in Aberdeenshire. He became doctor of medicine with commendation, and was appointed consultant obstetrician and gynaecologist in Dunbartonshire in 1960. He pioneered the prescription of folic acid in pregnancy, introduced the early reporting of pre-eclampsia, and encouraged hospital deliveries. Chairman of the BMA's Dunbartonshire division, he was active on several committees, including the medical consultative committee at the Scottish Office, and became civilian gynaecologist to the Royal Navy in Scotland. Predeceased by his first wife, Netta, in 1984, he leaves his second wife, Winifred; two children from his first marriage; and five grandchildren.

Helen Gordon

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Colin Hedderwick Hodge



Former consultant in obstetrics and gynaecology Inverclyde Hospitals (b 1920; q Glasgow 1951; FRCOG, FRCSEd), died from vascular disease on 11 March 2009.

Deferring entry to medical school in 1939, Colin Hedderwick Hodge joined the Royal Navy instead. He served as a sub-lieutenant in destroyers in the North Atlantic, Mediterranean, and Indian Ocean until the end of the second world war. After qualifying, he trained in obstetrics and gynaecology in Aberdeen and Glasgow. He was appointed consultant at the Inverclyde group of hospitals in

1965, where he worked until his retirement in 1985. He enjoyed teaching and was a co-author of *Obstetrics Illustrated* and its companion volume on gynaecology. He enjoyed golf and gardening on the Isle of Arran. He leaves a wife, Grace; five children; and nine grandchildren.

J Hodge

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Bernard Perlow



Former general practitioner Muswell Hill, North London (b 1923; q The London 1946), died from complications of diabetes and renal failure on 17 May 2009.

After qualification, Bernard Perlow was commissioned in the Royal Army Medical Corps and served overseas, mainly in Salonika, Greece. Subsequently he entered general practice, establishing a successful practice. He was one of only a few general practitioners who attended Dr John Mann's lectures on acupuncture, afterwards successfully practising acupuncture alongside conventional medicine. He was invited to lecture on acupuncture at the Royal Society of Medicine, which generated great interest at the time. Predeceased by his only daughter, he leaves a wife, Lilian.

Dennis Cowen

Martin Spiro

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Brian Turbett Smyth

Former consultant paediatric surgeon Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children and Ulster Hospital (b 1921; q Queen's University, Belfast, 1945; FRCS), d 26 April 2009.

Brian Turbett Smyth trained at Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children and the Royal Liverpool Children's Hospital and was assistant surgeon



DAVID LYNCH

at Boston Floating Hospital, United States. His special interests included urology, neonatal surgery, and the treatment of Hirschsprung's disease. With his appointment as consultant, a paediatric surgical service rapidly developed and an intensive care unit was established. A skilful yachtsman, Brian enjoyed sailing holidays among the Western Isles of Scotland. He was also an enthusiastic photographer, and the Royal Photographic Society awarded him the distinction of associate membership. Predeceased by a son, he leaves a wife, Anne, and a daughter.

Gerald Black

Harold Love

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Michael Jacob Tarlow

Former consultant paediatrician and senior lecturer Heartlands Hospital, Birmingham (b 1939; q Guy's Hospital, London, 1962; MSc, FRCP), died from pleural mesothelioma on 20 April 2009.

After house jobs and gaining an MSc in biochemistry, Michael Jacob Tarlow ("Mike") trained in London, at the Mayo Clinic, and in Aberdeen. Professionally he will be remembered for his expertise in liver diseases and paediatric infectious diseases, for his research into deafness after meningitis in children, and as a teacher. He ran a popular course for the diploma in child health for many years, as well as developing a course for the MSc in paediatrics at Birmingham University. After retiring in 1999, he built up a substantial practice as a medical expert witness. He leaves a wife, Olwynne; three children; and seven grandchildren.

J Maskill

D P Adddy

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