

Terence John Hamblin

Haematologist and expert in chronic lymphocytic leukaemia

Terence ("Terry") John Hamblin (b 1943; q University of Bristol 1967; MB, ChB; DM (Soton), FRCP; FRCPath; FMedSci), died on 8 January 2012 from colon cancer.

Near the end of Terry Hamblin's life, when he was suffering with colon cancer, he was grappling with doubts about what might have been.

In his personal internet blog (<http://bit.ly/GUlpiv>), he confided in late November 2011 to his many readers: "I am up one day and down the next. Partially, it is the dexamethasone that makes me emotionally labile. I had a weepy day yesterday as I contemplated the things I had left undone. At the end of *Schindler's List*, Liam Neeson has a scene where he looks at his luxury car and his gold ring and thinks of how many more Jews these could have bought. 'I could have done more,' he exclaims. That is how I felt."

But no one who knew Hamblin as a doctor or a colleague or a friend has any doubts about his medical contributions. Hamblin spent his adult life providing quality and caring treatment for his many patients and conducting important medical research.

Daniel Catovsky, emeritus professor at the UK's Institute of Cancer Research, says, "He was a great man, always cheerful, and the centre of attention for his jokes and anecdotes. Concern for patients was always his priority." Catovsky adds: "Terry Hamblin was one of the best minds in clinical research."

Hamblin's contributions include helping pioneer new types of treatments such as plasmapheresis, anti-idiotype therapy, peripheral blood autologous stem cell transplantation, and DNA vaccines. His most important research focused on myelodysplasia and chronic lymphocytic leukaemia (CLL). "The main contribution of Terry Hamblin to CLL research is, without question, the paper published in *Blood* in 1999 (94(6):1848-54), back to back with an American paper describing the same finding," says Dr Catovsky.

Doctors had long been puzzled why CLL progresses slowly in some people over many years, and quickly and aggressively in others. Research by Hamblin and colleagues indicated that the course of the disease was dependent on the mutation status of the immunoglobulin (Ig) gene, Catovsky said. Unmutated genes caused the more aggressive form of CLL and mutated genes the more benign form.

"These findings have been confirmed by everybody around the world and have generated



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a large area of new research in CLL based on the nature of the B cell receptor—the immunoglobulin molecule on the surface of B cells," Catovsky said. "Both papers are now citation classics and may represent one of the most original observations in this disease for a long time."

Terence John Hamblin was born on 12 March 1943 in Worcester, England. After attending school at Farnborough, Hampshire from 1954 until 1962, he studied medicine at the University of Bristol. He earned his medical degree in 1967. A few weeks later he married Diane, who was to be his wife for 44 years. He held junior doctor posts in Bristol until 1974 when, at the young age of 31, he was appointed consultant haematologist at Royal Bournemouth Hospital, establishing haematology as a clinical discipline and beginning his research. He held the position until 2003 and in 1986 he also was appointed professor of immunohaematology at the University of Southampton.

His daughter, Angela Hamblin, a doctor who is a haematology registrar in the Oxford Deanery, said that studying medicine was her father's childhood ambition. "I think it appealed to him as a career as he was naturally inquisitive about all things scientific and loved acquiring knowledge on just about anything."

He enjoyed practising medicine and doing research equally, she says, adding: "The latter allowed him to think laterally about what was going on at the molecular level to make a patient ill and why two patients with ostensibly the same disease behaved so differently, while the former reminded him why performing such research was so important."

Hamblin's honours include being awarded the Binet-Rai medal for outstanding research in CLL and being named honorary consultant haematologist at King's College Hospital, London. He was the long time editor in chief of the medical journal *Leukemia Research*. In 2008 the UK CLL Forum, which Hamblin founded, established the Hamblin Prize (<http://bit.ly/GNybQA>), to be awarded annually for "the best CLL-related publication from a UK based group."

Hamblin's Christian faith was a major part of his life. He served as vice president of the Biblical Creation Society and spent more than 20 years in leadership at Lansdowne Baptist Church in Bournemouth as deacon, elder, and lay preacher.

David Oscier, consultant haematologist at the Royal Bournemouth Hospital, describes him as "a devout Christian with strongly held beliefs which he never sought to impose on those who did not share them." He also says "Terry had a wonderful sense of humour and a large repertoire of terrible jokes. He was an enthusiastic and charming individual alive with ideas and full of energy. He loved to communicate. He loved writing."

Indeed, on 12 December 2005, Hamblin inaugurated his internet blog with the title: *mutations of mortality—Random thoughts of Terry Hamblin about leukaemia, literature, poetry, politics, religion, cricket and music*. For the next six years, Hamblin wrote regularly—and prolifically. His readers often replied on the blog with comments of their own. His entries sometimes were intensely personal, as in autumn 2008 when he revealed that "a small lymph node" had been found in his colon.

He published his last blog entry (<http://bit.ly/GSIml6>) on 6 December 2011, under the title "John 8:29-30: The Trinity." The brief blog began: "The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him. Even as he spoke, many believed in him."

Hamblin leaves behind his wife, their two daughters and two sons, and six grandchildren.

Ned Stafford

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Malcolm John Aylett



General practitioner (b 1932; q Westminster 1955; LRCP, MRCS, D(Obst)RCOG, MD, FRCGP), d 14 January 2012.

Malcolm John Aylett served in the army in Hong Kong, with Shell in Sumatra, then with the Tanzanian government. He entered family practice in Wiltshire, where he introduced peer review into local obstetric practice. Dismayed at the profession's retreat from continuing personal care, he took on a small single handed practice in Northumberland. His registrars learnt the real meaning of continuing care and a wide range of basic clinical skills. He held a part time research fellowship and published widely on the community management of hypertension and blood pressure measurement, achieving his MD thesis in his 65th year. He retired to Bath. He is survived by his partner of six years, four children, and three grandchildren.

Malcolm John Aylett

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Jean Alison Renwick Boldy



Clinical assistant Lister Hospital, Stevenage (b 1925; q Edinburgh 1948; MBE), died from ischaemic heart disease on 7 April 2011.

After graduating Jean Alison Renwick Boldy worked at the Lister Hospital in Hitchin, where she met Steve, whom she married in 1952. He worked as a local GP, and Alison took a career break when her children were young, before

returning to work in the orthopaedic department until she retired in 1985. Aside from her clinical work, Alison taught on first aid courses for St John Ambulance, sat on the board of the Letchworth Garden City Corporation, and was a governor of the Heritage Foundation of Letchworth from 1995 to 2000. She was awarded the MBE for her services to the community in 1987. Predeceased by Steve, she leaves three children and seven grandchildren.

**David Boldy
Stephen Boldy
Jean Panniker**

Cite this as: BMJ 2012;344:e1431

Terence Edward O'Brien



Former consultant general and vascular surgeon (b 1941; q Liverpool University 1965; FRCS (Edinburgh)), died from respiratory complications of multiple sclerosis on 14 September 2011.

After qualifying Terence Edward O'Brien ("Terry") signed on as a ship's doctor with P&O cruise lines. He undertook his early surgical training at Northampton Hospital and returned to sea before moving to the Manchester region for further surgical training. At Manchester Royal Infirmary, he developed an interest in peripheral vascular surgery. Terry was appointed consultant general and vascular surgeon to Blackburn Royal Infirmary in 1982. In 1984 he received a diagnosis of multiple sclerosis, which affected his spine but not his brain. In 2000 he had to give up clinical practice but was able to continue working for the trust in an honorary capacity, running the surgical preassessment clinic until 2004. He is survived by his wife, Jo-Ann, and a son.

J C Tresadern

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Prabhakar Shankar Phatak



Former consultant surgeon (b 1936 India; q Nagpur 1960; FRCS), died from cardiac disease and bronchopneumonia on 24 December 2011.

Prabhakar Shankar Phatak ("Prabhu") joined Nagpur Medical College in 1954. In 1961 he came to the UK to pursue higher training in general surgery. He married Jean McKinnon in 1967. After his registrar posts he was employed as a consultant surgeon at the Whittington Hospital and later in Dudley and Luton. In retirement, he and Jean travelled extensively before being limited by ill health. In 2007 they moved from Sidcup to Abergavenny. He is survived by Jean, two children, and five grandchildren.

**Jean Phatak
Nilima Parry-Jones**

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William Ramsay

Former general practitioner, Portadown (b 1930; q Belfast 1953; MD, DPH, FRCGP), d 18 May 2011.

William Ramsay had a varied career, which included being an assistant ship's surgeon with P&O Lines and public health work in Gloucestershire, Yorkshire, and Co Antrim. He joined a general practice in Portadown, Co Armagh, where he served for 30 years. During these years he was secretary and treasurer of the local branch of the BMA for nine years, becoming chairman in 1981. He was honoured by the RCGP with a fellowship and became provost in 1991. In his retirement he continued to attend BMA and college meetings, was involved in local politics, and was also an elder in his church. He is survived by his wife, Lillian; two children; and four grandchildren.

Anne Marie Hamilton

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John Anthony Rumble



Former consultant ophthalmic surgeon Southend General Hospital (b 1930; q Sheffield 1955; FRCS), d 29 September 2011.

Before reading medicine John Anthony Rumble did his National Service with the Royal Army Medical Corps in Hong Kong, forming lifelong friendships with his immediate group. After Sheffield John spent two years with P&O on the Australia run, followed by two years in general practice before training as an ophthalmic surgeon in Birmingham, accepting a consultant post in Southend in 1967. John had great enthusiasm for classical literature, music, and poetry. He had a passion for the NHS and a social conscience that drove him to work for several ophthalmic charities in Newfoundland, India, and Cambodia.

Colin Birt

Cite this as: BMJ 2012;344:e1256

John Steven Shepherd

Former general practitioner (b 1927; q Edinburgh 1954; DCH), d 14 October 2011.

From 1956 John Steven Shepherd spent three years at Hillingdon Hospital, London, in paediatric medicine, latterly as a paediatric registrar. But as his preferred option was to work in the community, he trained in general practice and later became practice partner in Brough under Stainmore, Westmorland, where he stayed until his retirement in 1989. During his career, medical practice underwent many changes. The very basic single consulting room surgery was replaced by the Brough Medical Centre, which provided facilities necessary in a modern medical practice. But alternate nights and weekends were still "on call." In 1989 he retired to Cambridge, and he and his wife Margaret were able to pursue their cultural interests. He is survived by Margaret and their two children.

Margaret E Shepherd

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