

OBITUARY

Obituaries of any doctors will be considered for publication provided that the doctors have worked in the United Kingdom for a large part of their career. Obituaries must be submitted exclusively to the BMJ and should be up to about 400 words long. "Self written" obituaries are welcome.

D G McDOWALL MD, FFARCS

Professor D G McDowall, professor of anaesthetics at the University of Leeds, died on 25 December.

David Gordon McDowall was educated at Edinburgh Academy and the University of Edinburgh, where he graduated MB, ChB in 1957. He held house appointments at the Royal Infirmary and the Eastern General Hospital, Edinburgh, and then served three years in the medical branch of the Royal Air Force as a flight lieutenant. In 1961 he was appointed registrar at the Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh, before becoming ICI research fellow in anaesthesia at the hyperbaric oxygen unit, Western Infirmary, Glasgow. In 1962 he gained the FFARCS, and in 1967 he proceeded MD with commendation. After holding a university lectureship at the Royal Infirmary he was promoted to senior lecturer there in 1965 and then held this post at the Western Infirmary. He was appointed professor and head of the department of anaesthesia at Leeds University in 1968.

During his years in the chair Professor McDowall became an acknowledged and respected authority in anaesthesia in general and in neurosurgical anaesthesia in particular, making important contributions to the management of head injury. Chairman of the faculty of medicine at the University of Leeds, Professor McDowall was also a member of the Medical Research Council's neurosciences board.

He is survived by his wife, Monica, and daughters, Morag, Rona, and Kirsty, one of whom is a medical student and another a nurse at the Leeds General Infirmary.

RMG writes: Increasing seniority in his clinical appointment and in the university brought with it wide acknowledgment of Gordon's qualities and these, coupled with his likable personality, resulted in increasing heavy commitments in the university, where he became chairman of the board of medicine, an office he relinquished only a few months before his death. In the last year he had been elected to the board of the Faculty of Anaesthesia and was already a member of the council of the Association of Anaesthetists and of the board of the *British Journal of Anaesthesia*. A regular attendee at the Intensive Care Society and the Neuroanaesthetists' Travelling Club, he gave several papers to the Society of British Neurological Surgeons. He visited South Africa and Australia as a Sims travelling professor. Despite these commitments, he diligently carried out his clinical duties at the Leeds General Infirmary, where he was universally popular. His operating sessions always brought new faces, postgraduate students, and young undergraduates, all of whom



enjoyed his teaching and his warm companionship.

International acceptance of Gordon's work led to the establishment of close ties with academic units in various parts of the world, particularly West Germany, Japan, and America, and the research laboratory was always alive with the ideas and interests of young men from various places, working on different projects.

ARH writes: On the occasion of the meeting of the Association of Anaesthetists of Great Britain and Ireland in Glasgow in 1964 the late Dr H H Pinkerton, the then head of the department of anaesthesia at the Western Infirmary, arranged for an ICI research fellow to present a paper on anaesthesia in the pressure chamber. The subject was fully studied and clearly presented, and even 20 years later I remember the impression made on the audience. It was obvious that a new star had arisen in the anaesthetic firmament. He was Dr Gordon McDowall. He fulfilled the promise of his paper. He joined forces with Dr Murray Harper, the neurophysiologist who had developed the radioactive krypton method for measuring cerebral blood flow. Soon thereafter these workers published papers on the effect of anaesthetics on cerebral blood flow, work that has proved fundamental to an understanding of the basis of anaesthesia for intracranial surgery. Presently, the University of Leeds was seeking a professor to replace Dr J F Nunn, who had completed a four year period setting up the first academic department of anaesthesia in the city. They chose a young man whom they regarded as having considerable promise: Dr McDowall. His subsequent progress fully justified their choice, for he raised even further the status of the department. He continued to work in neurosurgery, and the observations that he and his colleagues made did much to cast light on the problems associated with induced hypotension for aneurysm surgery.

Professor McDowall was a pillar of the Neuroanaesthetists' Travelling Club, and when this organisation found it necessary to set up a steering committee to organise a joint meeting with the Association of Neurosurgical Anaesthetists of America in 1982 it was Professor McDowall who did all the hard work of obtaining the abstracts and organising the programme; indeed, the success of the meeting was largely the result of his efforts. In 1984 the success of a similar joint meeting of German, Austrian, and British neurosurgical anaesthetists held in Edinburgh was once again a testimony to his efforts.

A K SEERAM MB, BS

Dr A K Seeram, medical assistant in the geriatric unit of the Eastbourne hospitals, died on 23 January aged 56.

Arnold Karamchand Seeram was born in Guyana on 27 April 1928 and graduated in medicine in 1956 after training at St Thomas's Hospital. After postgraduate experience in Trinidad he came to Eastbourne in 1962 with a special interest in the medical care of the elderly, which enhanced the clinical skills he applied with humanity and dis-

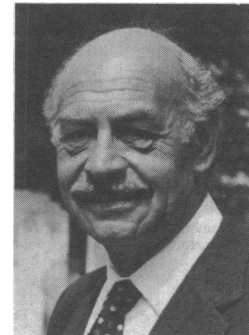
cernment. He worked unremittingly to champion the cause of the elderly, urging that they should receive at least the same standard of medical and nursing care as younger people. He earned the respect of all with whom he worked. Throughout his career he emphasised the importance of continuing postgraduate experience, and he enjoyed the response he received from junior medical staff when he gave them the benefit of his wide experience. He showed sound judgment and was a consistently loyal and reliable member of the team.

Dr Seeram is survived by his wife, son, and two daughters.—IMB.

M TROSSER MB, BS

Dr M Trosser, who was in general practice in Stevenage New Town for many years, died suddenly on 19 January, three years after his retirement. He was 64.

Michael Trosser was educated at the Grocers' School, London, and graduated in medicine at



University College Hospital, London, in 1943. After a post as house surgeon at St James's Hospital, Balham, he joined the Royal Army Medical Corps in 1943 and served until 1946. On leaving army service he became assistant medical officer at Hackney Hospital, and this was followed by an assist-

antship in general practice at Chingford. In 1952 he was the first general practitioner to be appointed to Stevenage New Town and established his practice in the first residential area of the new town. Stevenage expanded rapidly, and the birth rate was high, so after 18 months a second surgery was opened in another neighbourhood. From these early beginnings the practice developed into a busy five man group practice. In 1954 he joined English Electric (Stevenage) as medical officer, staying through the merger when BAC was formed until he retired from the post in 1971.

Mick Trosser combined shrewd common sense with a lively sense of humour and the ability to get on well with people. He showed understanding in his handling of the junior partners and could get the best out of the surgery staff. His original patients in Stevenage remained loyal to him, and he saw many first generation new towners through childhood and adolescence to marriage and parenthood. In 1974 he developed signs of myocardial ischaemia and sensibly cut down his workload. When he reached 60 he became a part time partner and was able to devote more time to his family and to his hobbies of photography and gardening. He was supported in his work by his wife, Jean, who survives him, and by his children, Sally and Simon.—RYD.