

Obituaries

Hugh Alexander Fleming

Founder of the East Anglian Cardiac Unit at Papworth Hospital and expert on sarcoid heart disease

Hugh Fleming was a clinical cardiologist with a scientific bent whose professional life was devoted to the care of patients. He established the cardiology service in East Anglia and was a world authority on sarcoid heart disease.

Hugh graduated in 1947 from the University of Dunedin with a distinction in pharmacology and therapeutics and was awarded a medical travelling scholarship. However, a routine chest x ray film revealed a tuberculosis lesion that, although small, dominated his life for many years as it would not resolve with the treatments of the time.

In between hospital stays, he completed house jobs in Dunedin Public Hospital, worked on the medical professorial unit as a registrar, spent time in pathology, and studied as a MRC research fellow, mainly in the basement of the department of medicine under Sir Horace Smirk. His work there was greatly supported by his future wife, Elisabeth, and not greatly assisted by Smirk, who was much involved in the writing of his book on high blood pressure and sequestered much of the literature on hypertension from the library into his home, where it was inaccessible. Hugh's work entailed creating hypertensive rats and rabbits and estimating renal function and was still being referred to by experts several decades later.

In 1950 Hugh married Margaret Elisabeth Galway after a long engagement imposed by the tubercle bacillus. His medical dean strongly advised him that a clinical career was out of the question with his medical history, but bedside medicine was what Hugh wanted, and he and his wife decided that they would risk coming to England with the help of his travelling fellowship, initially for one year.

In London he intended to study chest medicine, particularly pulmonary physiology. After his first year at the Royal Postgraduate Medical School at Hammersmith Hospital Hugh decided that he needed more hands-on clinical experience. He therefore applied for a junior house physician job with Dr Guy Scadding at Brompton Hospital. When the cardiac senior registrar developed tuberculosis, Hugh became acting senior registrar to Dr Paul Wood and thereafter cardiology was his



work. He helped established cardiology and cardiac surgery at Sully Hospital, returning after three years to the Brompton as senior registrar in cardiology.

Consultant posts were scarce, so in 1958 he was persuaded by Paul Wood to accept the post of director of the Hallstrom Institute of Cardiology at the Prince Alfred Hospital in Sydney. This turned out to be a most unhappy time, but one day he received a call asking if he would be interested in a job in Cambridge. In 1959 he became the first consultant cardiologist at Papworth Hospital and in East Anglia.

He was the first non-Cambridge graduate to be appointed to the staff of Addenbrooke's Hospital. For eight years he was the only cardiologist in East Anglia and, during that time, he made cardiology the respected specialty that it remains to this day, with 41 specialists in the region.

He examined in medicine and pharmacology for Cambridge University and in 1969 was elected a fellow of Darwin College. He continued to be active in college affairs for many years after his retirement in 1988. He served on the council of the British Cardiac Society and the British Thoracic Society and founded "Hugh's Club"—an association of cardiologists that for many years met to discuss current problems. He was much involved in the planning of the Cambridge Clinical School and, after its foundation, in the teaching of clinical students. He particularly enjoyed bedside teaching and its lesson that patients were people.

He worked long hours as a busy clinician, and his research emerged from this. He published widely, particularly on pulmonary hypertension, pulmonary embolism, and mitral valve disease. He made a detailed study of the prophylaxis against infective endocarditis and almost succeeded in establishing a trans-Atlantic agreement on policy. He became very interested in sarcoidosis of the heart and was responsible for showing that this was not the rarity that it had previously been described as but an important and much overlooked problem.

With the advent of cardiac transplantation in 1979 Papworth went through a tumultuous period. Hugh feared for the survival of the unit, but he quietly continued to devote himself to the care of the population of East Anglia with heart disease. This he achieved both in Cambridge and in the clinics that he had set up around the region—a hub and spoke model that remains one of Papworth's strengths. The cardiac service at Papworth was never compromised by transplant activity.

A few years later Elisabeth developed cancer. She died in 1983. Hugh was bereft until he realised that his former secretary, Julia Cusden, was the soul mate that he needed for the rest of his life. After an old fashioned courtship they married and enjoyed remarkable happiness.

Boastfulness was not part of his nature but he did say that he had been privileged to advise eight Nobel laureates. He put his NHS practice first and regarded private practice as a "safety valve" for when the NHS could not cope—a healthy attitude reflected in the bicycle rack that formed the parking arrangements for his rooms at his home. He was an ideal senior colleague, available to give advice and help but content to let the next generation take control.

Throughout his life he held a simple Christian belief, and for many years he actively supported Great St Mary's in Cambridge. He would have been amazed that the church was packed to the galleries for the service of thanksgiving for his life. [MICHAEL PETCH]

Hugh Alexander Fleming (b 1923; q Dunedin, New Zealand, 1947; MD, FRCP), d 5 August 2006.

Ann Faith Barker (née Arbuthnot)

Former consultant forensic psychiatrist Broadmoor Hospital and Bracton Centre, London (b 1941; q St Thomas' Hospital, London, 1971; MPhil, MRCPsych), d 19 August 2006.

Born and brought up in Sudan, Ann became a research fellow in German before studying medicine. After working as a justice of the peace she trained in forensic psychiatry. She was consultant psychiatrist at Broadmoor Special Hospital, 1990-4, and then Bracton Medium Secure Unit (Oxleas Trust, Kent) and senior lecturer at Guy's and St Thomas' Medical School. After retiring in 2001 she served on the parole board and mental health review tribunals. She was much appreciated for her helpfulness, thoroughness, and incisiveness. She leaves two daughters. [DOMINIC BEER]

Graham Davies



Former consultant general surgeon East Glamorgan General Hospital (b 1923; q Guy's Hospital, London, 1946; RD, FRCS), died from pneumonia after surgery on 15 September 2006.

Graham Davies did his national service at HMS Royal Alfred in Hamburg, being responsible for the care of both military personnel and the local civilian population. He maintained his connection with the Royal Navy as surgeon commander in the Royal Naval Reserve. In 1961 Graham was appointed consultant general surgeon covering Pontypridd and the Rhondda valleys. One of the last truly general surgeons, he operated on several of the injured children from the Aberfan mining disaster in 1966. He was an examiner at the Royal College of Surgeons, served on the Council of the Association of Surgeons, and was president of the Welsh Surgical and Rhondda Medical Societies. He leaves a wife, Felicity, and five children. [STEPHEN DAVIES, SIMON DAVIES, MICHAEL DAVIES]

Anthony Johnston Fairrie

Former general practitioner Uffculme, Devon (b 1916; q Westminster Hospital 1942; VRD), died from bronchial pneumonia and emphysema on 19 September 2006.

Anthony Johnston Fairrie joined the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve in 1943 as surgeon lieutenant, seeing active service on HMS Tweed and becoming principal medical officer at HMS Rooke in Rosyth. After a house physician and registrar job he was



chief medical officer for the *Daily Express*, *Evening Standard*, and Hulton Press, 1948-50. During 1950-67 he was a general practitioner in Essex, as well as being medical officer to two companies and part time medical officer to the Port of London. He served in the Royal Naval Reserve, 1950-72, latterly as surgeon lieutenant commander. In 1967 he took up practice in Devon, retiring in 1977 but working part time until 1987 with the Department of Health and Social Security. He leaves a wife, Ann, and three children. [NICHOLAS FAIRRIE]

Patricia Gilbert



Former senior clinical medical officer South Warwickshire and medical author (b 1928; q St George's, London, 1958; BSc, DRCOG, FRCPCH), died from a cerebral vascular accident after hip replacement surgery on 25 October 2006.

Patricia Gilbert wrote 18 books, including *The A-Z Reference Book of Childhood Conditions* and *The Textbook of Nursery Nursing*, as well as weekly for *Nursery World*. Her most recent work was a study of macular degeneration. Patricia worked first for South Warwickshire Health Authority in child welfare clinics, school medical examinations, and vaccination and immunisation programmes. By the mid-1970s she had become the senior clinical medical officer for the region. She was also a visiting senior lecturer at Warwick University and contributed to first aid training programmes for St John Ambulance and British Rail. Predeceased by her husband, Victor, in 2001, she leaves two daughters and two grandchildren. [PETER BROOKES, JENNY BROOKES, SOOZY GILBERT]

Douglas Anthony Spencer

Former consultant psychiatrist Leeds (b 1931; q Edinburgh 1956; FRCPsych), died from renal cancer on 11 July 2006.

In June 1965, aged 34, Douglas Anthony Spencer was appointed consultant at Mean-



wood Park Hospital, becoming medical director at Westwood, Todmorden, and Castleberg Hospitals from 1966. He published about 500 papers and letters on mental handicap. He was a foundation member of the Royal College of Psychiatrists in 1971, and was appointed senior clinical lecturer at Leeds University in 1984. After retirement he continued to work part time at Meanwood resettling patients until it closed in 1997. As hospitals for mental handicap became scheduled for closure Douglas recorded details of their histories and organisations, donating copies to selected libraries. He remained a medical member of the Mental Health Review Tribunal until retiring fully in 2003. He leaves a wife, Ann; two daughters; and four grandchildren. [HELEN SPENCER, WARWICK COULSON]

David Richard Kilvington Street



Former medical superintendent Rampton Hospital (b 1920; q Leeds 1943; DPM, MRCPsych), d 7 June 2006.

David Richard Kilvington Street spent his army service between 1945 and 1948 in psychiatry at Carstairs Military Hospital and Northfield Neurosis Centre, Birmingham. In 1958, at the age of 38, he became consultant psychiatrist and deputy medical superintendent at Rampton Hospital, Nottinghamshire. A few months later he became the medical superintendent, a position he held until 1974. During this time he was regarded as one of the top 10 forensic psychiatrists in the world. In 1974 he moved to Moss Side Hospital, Liverpool, until his retirement in 1980. Between 1960 and 1973 he was a collaborator in research on chromosome abnormalities and had several papers published. Predeceased by his wife, Helen, in 2004, he leaves a daughter and two grandchildren. [ELIZABETH COOKE]

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