

# OBITUARIES

## **EM MCGIRR**

Edward McCombie McGirr, CBE, Physician: b. 15.6.1916; d.12.5.2003. BSc Glasg 1937, MB Glasg 1940, MD Glasg 1960, MRCP Edin 1960, FRCP Edin 1962, DSc Glasg 1994.

Edward McGirr played a central role in the development of academic medicine and the National Health Service in the 1960s and 1970s. He was educated at Hamilton Academy and the University of Glasgow and held house jobs at the Royal and Western Infirmaries in Glasgow. He entered the RAMC in 1941 and served in the Far East; he later regarded these years as highly formative.

After demobilisation in 1947 with the honorary rank of Major, he returned to the Department of Medicine at Glasgow Royal Infirmary. Edward McGirr played an important role in the transformation of that department into a centre of active clinical research. He developed the application of radioisotopes to thyroid pathophysiology. His research on the enzyme defects underlying dyshormonogenetic goitre led to the award of MD with honours and Glasgow University's Bellahouston Medal. In 1961, McGirr was appointed Muirhead Professor of Medicine and built the department into one of the UK's finest for clinical research. More than 25 members of his department were appointed to chairs in the UK and overseas.

He was elected president of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow in 1970, one of the youngest to hold the post, and he played a key role in introducing a common MRCP examination and the Joint Committee on Medical Education. He was Dean of the Faculty of Medicine from 1974 until he retired in 1981.

Edward McGirr was supported by his wife Di, whom he married in 1949. They built a loving and stable home for their children, Patricia, Helen, David and Diana.

His wife predeceased him in 1996. He is survived by his four children and 11 grandchildren.

## **RE SCORGIE**

Richard Ernest Scorgie, Rehabilitation Medicine Physician: b. 2.5.1950; d. 28.5.2003. MB Edin 1973, MRCP Edin 1976, FRCP Edin 1988.

Dick Scorgie, Consultant Physician in Geriatric Medicine and Rehabilitation, Aberdeen, died at the end of May 2003, a month after having a stroke while at work. He was educated at Durham School and the University of Edinburgh. After postgraduate training in Edinburgh, he was appointed Consultant Physician in Geriatric Medicine to the West Cumbria Health District in 1980. In 1982 he moved to become Consultant Physician in Medicine for the Elderly in Aberdeen. In 1985 he spent six months as Visiting Professor and Acting Head of the

Division of Geriatric Medicine, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Canada. Before turning to geriatric medicine his research interests were mainly in cardio-respiratory disease particularly non-invasive techniques of dimensional echocardiography. On entering geriatric medicine, his research interest was the field of service delivery, including styles of geriatric medical practice, geriatric/orthopaedic interactions and the use of sheltered housing. His interest in the organisation of health services led him into several medical management posts, culminating in his appointment as Medical Director of Grampian Healthcare NHS Trust, a position he held from 1993–8. Subsequently he was Consultant in Rehabilitation Medicine with responsibility for geriatric orthopaedic rehabilitation and the prosthetic service, which he combined with his role as Consultant in Healthcare Informatics, for Grampian University Hospitals Trust.

Dick had many interests outside medicine including a lifelong interest in astronomy. He took this very seriously and had recently obtained a Certificate in Professional Development in Astronomy from the Liverpool John Moores University.

He leaves a wife and three fine sons. His colleagues in the Departments of Medicine for the Elderly and Rehabilitation in Aberdeen will miss him greatly.

## **HL CHAN**

Heng-Leong Chan, Dermatologist: b. 06.02.1941; d. 26.05.2003. MB Singapore 1965, MRACP 1969, MRCP UK 1972, FRACP 1974, FAMS 1977, FRCP Lond 1984, FRCP Edin 1992, FACP 1993, FRCP Glasg 1997.

Heng-Leong Chan was born in Kuala Kangsar, Malaya, on 6 February 1941 and spent much of his childhood in Penang. After graduation he worked briefly as a Lecturer in Medicine at the University of Malaya in Kuala Lumpur. During a spell in London he received specialised training at St John's Hospital for Diseases of the Skin and obtained the Diploma of Dermatology in 1973.

On his return from Britain that same year, he was appointed Lecturer at the University's Department of Medicine at Singapore General Hospital. He proved to be an excellent physician with a quiet and meticulous approach to patient care that endeared him to patients, peers and colleagues alike. However, it was the effect that he had as a teacher and role model for students that stood out. Ever approachable and patient, he was an encouraging mentor, and was genuinely concerned that his students benefited to the full from his bedside tutorials and lectures. He was particularly keen to inculcate in students a durable appreciation of what he called 'medical humanities'.

In the specialty of dermatology, he proved a worthy

champion and was instrumental in the early development of this area of clinical specialisation. He would subsequently spend many years involved with specialty training for dermatology. He was a visiting scholar at the University of California in 1979 and visiting professor in dermatology at the Harvard Medical School in Boston in 1987. He was the foundation chairman of the Specialist Training Committee for dermatology and member of the parent Specialist Accreditation Board. He had also served on the Singapore Medical Council, the highest medical statutory authority for the regulation of professional and ethical standards.

The National University of Singapore appointed him Professor of Medicine in 1984. His academic contributions included over 100 publications that attest to his clinical interests in dermatological manifestations of systemic disease and adverse drug reactions. He authored two books in 1986 covering these areas, and a third, on cutaneous adverse drug reactions, in 2001. Professor Chan also contributed as editor or editorial advisor to several medical journals, both local and international. He served as Head of the Department of Medicine over two terms at the National University Hospital. More recently, Professor Chan took on the added task of formulating guidelines in clinical and research ethics and of providing a consult service for difficult cases. He was Chairman of the Research Ethics Committee and in the Committee of Bioethics at the National University Hospital, and Chair of the Committee of Medical Ethics, in the Faculty of Medicine at the National University of Singapore.

He had also been actively involved in a number of international medical bodies and was much involved in the arrangements of having the MRCP (UK) in Singapore jointly with the M Med, since 1995 and more recently with the PACES, the very first to be held anywhere (in 2001). He was Singapore's first member to serve on the MRCP(UK) Part 2 Board of the UK Royal Colleges of Physicians.

In addition, he initiated the Graduate Diploma of Dermatology in 1999 for the School of Postgraduate Medical Studies. In this, as in all that he achieved in his life, Professor Chan was thorough and persuasive without being overbearing, and a fair and balanced examiner.

The many generations of doctors he taught, trained and nurtured will always be immensely grateful to him. They will be his lasting tribute. Professor Chan was also a devoted family man and he is survived by his doctor wife, Beang Khoon and two sons. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

**B ONG, V OH and C-H CHEW**

The Obituaries Editor has been informed of the death of the following Members and Fellows about whom information is very limited. We would welcome reader contributions on these individuals, which we will endeavour to publish in a future issue.

**DR CKM THACKER**

Chandra Kant Madhayji Thacker, General Medicine: b 11.6.1923; d. 23.7.2002. MB Lond 1946, LRCP Lond, MRCS Eng 1946, DTM&H, MRCP Edin 1963 Trop Med.

**DR RJ RYDER**

Rupert Joseph William Ryder, Immunology: b. 7.2.1931; d. 4.2.2003. MB Dublin 1953, MRCP Edin 1961 Blood, MD Dublin, FRCP Irel, FRCPath.

**DR WLH JACKSON**

William Lumley Hughlings Jackson, General Practice: b. 7.10.1914; d. 15.11.2002. MB Otago 1940, MRCP Edin 1950

**DR JL WILKINS**

John Leonard Wilkins, Paediatrics: b. 13.6.1928; d. 21.2.2003. MB Lond 1951, MRCS Eng, LRCP Lond 1951, DCH 1959, MRCP Edin 1960 Child Life. FRCPH 1997.

**DR K MURRAY**

Kenneth Murray, Respiratory/Thoracic Medicine: b. 27.10.1912; d. 18.5.2003. MB Glasg 1937, MRCP Edin 1956.

**DR ALD CARNEGIE**

Alfred Lind DePass Carnegie, General Medicine: b. 1.1.1913; d. 13.4.2003. MB Edin 1936, MRCP Edin 1949, FRCS Edin 1950, FACS 1953.

**DR WG WENLEY**

William Gilson Wenley, Rehabilitation Medicine: b. 3.7.1927; d. 5.5.2003. MB Camb 1951, DObstRCOG Lond 1953, DphysMed Lond 1958, MRCP Edin 1960.