

# Mr D. H. Shepperd

## Past president: 1978-1979

Douglas Shepperd died on June 12 1996, his 80th birthday, and with his passing the dental profession has lost one of its great characters.

Douglas qualified in 1939 and went into the RAF in 1940. This was shortly after his marriage to Peggy, whom he had met as a medical student at Kings. He was demobbed with the rank of squadron leader in 1946 and set up in practice in Wimpole Street, having obtained operating sessions at the Sutton General Hospital. In the same year he was also employed at the London Hospital, as a 'demonstrator' of conservative dentistry.

Douglas played an important part in the clinical education of dental students at the London Hospital for 35 years and ran the phantom head course there for more than 20 years. He remained convinced that the initial steps into clinical dentistry required a certain discipline and this gave rise to many legends with the passage of the years. However, Douglas succeeded where many would have failed and his criterion remained clinical excellence. In the words of his colleague Francis Fish, the Dental School's historian, 'He imprinted intake after intake with a brand, deep and sometimes a little tender, which its recipients bore gratefully for many years'.

An enduring image of Douglas, as an annual clinical meeting approached, is one of him hurrying down the hospital corridors, half-moons on the tip of his nose with his white coat streaming behind him. Douglas never did anything at half speed. In recognition of his services to those meetings he was elected President of the London Hospital Dental Club in 1976. Two years later he received national recognition when he was elected President of the British Society for Restorative Dentistry.

Douglas retired from the London in 1980 and he and Peggy made their house in Port Navas near Falmouth their full-time home. Douglas went out in style. His friends had been invited to the house for his birthday party and having made sure they all had their champagne glasses filled he slipped upstairs but never came down. It was exactly the way he would have chosen to go.

He was an excellent teacher of the old school, a skilled clinician, a wonderful companion, full of joie de vivre a friend in deed. He will be missed by all that knew him and our deepest sympathies go out to Peggy, John and Andrew and all his family at this time.

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