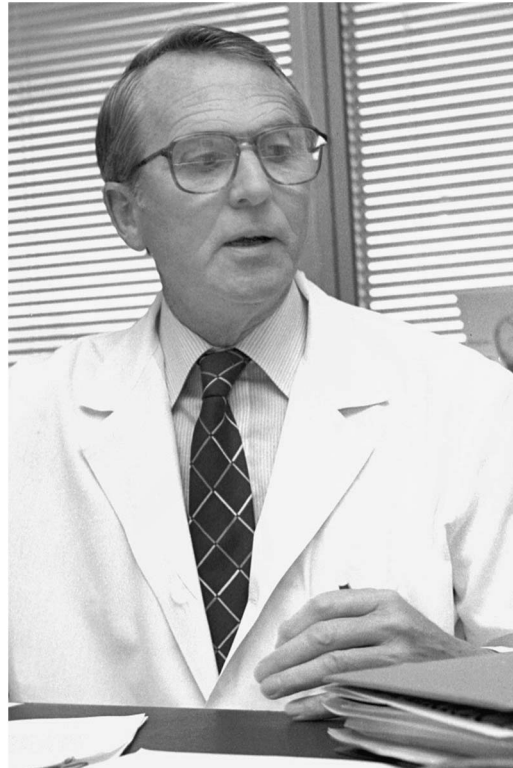


# H.J.M. Barnett, CC, MD, FRCPC (1922-2016)

Henry Barnett (Barney to his colleagues) passed away at age 94 years after a very full life “in a front seat of the greatest show on earth,” as he liked to say.

Born in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England, he immigrated to Canada at age 3 years. He became an inspired ornithologist in childhood and maintained his interest in birds and wildlife throughout his life. He graduated in Medicine from the University of Toronto in 1944 and did further training in neurology in Toronto and at Queens Square and Oxford.

He was an authority in syringomyelia, but later “crawled out of that hole in the spinal cord” (his words) to become a world leader in vascular neurology. He and epidemiological colleagues showed that aspirin was effective in preventing stroke and led the North American Symptomatic Carotid Endarterectomy Trial, showing the value of endarterectomy in symptomatic internal carotid artery stenosis. He debunked the proposed effectiveness of the external-to-internal cranial artery anastomosis. These pioneering clinical trials in stroke made him world famous and inspired numerous clinical trials in stroke that led to further improvements in the prevention and treatment of ischemic stroke. He received numerous awards, including the Companion of the Order of Canada, an honorary DSc from Oxford, the Karolinska Stroke Award from Stockholm, and numerous others from various universities and organizations.



With his colleague and friend, Charles Drake, an internationally renowned vascular neurosurgeon, he founded the Department of Clinical Neurological Sciences at the University of Western Ontario in London, Ontario, in 1972. The resultant collaboration of neurologists, neurosurgeons, neuropathologists, pediatric neurologists, neuro-anesthetists, and scientists made the department highly productive in education, research, and patient care. Weekly Clinical Neurological Sciences grand rounds were marvelous learning experiences and set a tone of excellence maintained to this day by Barnett and Drake successors. Dr. Barnett also inspired the creation of the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada through political lobbying and was the founder and first director of the Robarts Research Institute at Western, which continues as a research powerhouse.

Barney settled for nothing less than excellence and inspired generations of clinicians and scientists, not only in his field of interest, but also supported others involved in other aspects of clinical and basic neuroscience under his chairmanship. The authors of this brief obituary had the privilege of working under his leadership during a golden time of clinical neuroscience. He was an effective and uncompromising leader, clinician, researcher, and lobbyist who did so much for neuroscience and health care. We owe him our deepest gratitude.

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