
Obituaries

Alan Maiden, formerly Consultant Psychiatrist, Child Guidance Clinic, Worcester

Alan Maiden, formerly a consultant in child and adolescent psychiatry in Mid and South Worcestershire and Bromsgrove and Redditch Health Districts, died in May 1993 shortly before his 57th birthday.

From his school days, Alan's high degree of genuine intellectual curiosity and wide-ranging cultural interests were recognised. By the time he joined the West Midlands training scheme in child and adolescent psychiatry, he had prepared himself by postgraduate training in paediatrics and in psychiatry at the Bethlem Royal and Maudsley Hospitals and the Tavistock Clinic (where he met his wife Diana, an educational psychologist). During his 13 years as a consultant, despite battling with long-standing ill health, his contribution was valued by his patients, their families and professional colleagues. His warmth, sensitivity and unassuming personality together with his intelligence and integrity combined to give him a special clinical astuteness. One of his great disappointments was that lack of finance prevented the development of a day/in-patient service for Worcestershire. Following a cerebro-vascular accident in 1986 associated with a hemiplegia and severe dysphasia, Alan had to take early retirement.

He was devoted to his family - his wife and three, now adolescent, children who with his parents survive him.

EDNA M. IRWIN

Ramon Francis Norris, formerly Consultant Psychiatrist, Highcroft Hospital, Birmingham

Ramon Norris was born on 23 February 1935 and died suddenly on 10 December 1992. He was educated at King Edwards Grammar School, Handsworth, Birmingham and graduated MB ChB Birmingham University Medical School in December 1958.

While holding a short service commission with the RAF he spent two years at Headquarters British Forces, Gulf Peninsula, and one year as surgical assistant to Sir Peter Dixon, Princess Mary's Royal Airforce Hospital, Halton. He was awarded the General Service Medal.

After the RAF Norris decided to specialise in psychiatry and held various appointments at All Saints Hospital, Birmingham and at the Uffculme Clinic, Moseley, Birmingham. He came

to Highcroft Hospital in May 1967 as senior registrar and was appointed consultant in 1978. He was elected MRCPsych in 1971.

Norris was much a local man having lived his life in Birmingham. He understood the local community and its social and ethnic structure. He valued practising at local level in the primary health care setting and established friendly relationships with a number of general practitioners in the district. He was well known for his rapid and incisive response to requests for guidance from GPs who were frequently faced with the difficulties of treating their patients in their homes. Again, his advice was always straightforward and incisive. These aspects of his work will be greatly missed by those who sought his advice.

At Highcroft Hospital Dr Norris gave much of his time to serving on various committees and he played a key role in developing the psychiatric services of the hospital. For three years he was Chairman of the Psychiatric Division. He will be missed by his clinical colleagues and staff at Highcroft Hospital where a trust fund has been established in his name.

R. H. F. NORRIS

Ernest Wynford Rees, formerly Honorary Consultant Psychiatrist, Wessex Regional Health Authority

Ernest Rees studied medicine at St Thomas' Hospital, London and qualified MRCS Eng LRCP Lond in 1936.

From 1939-46 he served in the RNVF as a Neuropsychiatric Specialist, reaching the rank of Surgeon Lieutenant Commander. After demobilisation he took the DPM Eng in 1946 and was elected a foundation fellow of the College in 1971.

He later worked at the Roffey Park Rehabilitation Centre where he became Deputy Medical Director and was Consultant Psychiatrist at the Holloway Sanatorium, Virginia Water.

After retirement he lived in the Isle of Wight.

Michael Justin Tarsh, formerly Consultant Psychiatrist, Bowden House Clinic, Harrow

'Larger than life' is the description that immediately comes to mind about Michael Tarsh. Physically tall and bulky, he was also expansive in personality, 'upfront' in his actions, and not one to suffer fools quietly. His father was a doctor who switched in mid-career to the Bar, where his mother also qualified, and this example was no doubt influential in Michael's

increasing involvement over the years in medico-legal work.

At Clifton College and Queen's College, Oxford, where he graduated BM Bch in 1957, he had the benefit of a broad education, resulting in a life-long attachment to the classical tradition. His clinical studies were at the London Hospital, and these were soon followed by a choice of psychiatry, with first appointments at Long Grove Hospital, Epsom. He became a senior registrar in the general hospital setting of Sefton Hospital, Liverpool, and this return to his home society provided the opportunity for an innovative study of the social and ecological correlates of attempted suicide for which he was awarded the DM in 1967. Unfortunately – since he did not find writing easy – the work was never published.

He was elected a foundation member of the College in 1971 and proceeded to the fellowship in 1980.

In 1966, he was appointed consultant to the Salford hospitals, with mental hospital beds in Manchester. Here, he joined a comprehensive service which I had been developing, and for the next 22 years, we had a very happy and productive working partnership. He threw himself into the huge volume of clinical work with enormous enthusiasm, gaining the loyalty of many associated staff. He was also in much demand for private practice, particularly forensic, establishing many links with the legal profession who appreciated his integrity and the endless pains he would take to see that all aspects of a case were fully explored. His experience of accident cases was distilled into a fairly unique follow-up study, published in the *British Journal of Psychiatry* in 1985, which has never had the attention it deserved. Michael's capacity for seeing patients was inexhaustible, and he cheerfully absorbed much of the clinical load of our joint firm, as I was increasingly drawn into *Journal* and other outside activities. He also worked hard for voluntary organisations, particularly as consultant for an after-care hostel. He was a gifted clinical teacher, conveying his enthusiasm for psychiatry to both students and postgraduate trainees. As Editor, I valued his advice on manuscripts, particularly in his special areas of interest – automatic behaviour, transsexualism, and post-traumatic states.

Michael was unsympathetic to the changes of the 1980s in the NHS and social services, and left Salford in 1988 to become Superintendent of Bowden House Hospital, Harrow, but was not comfortable either with private medical administration, and so moved into full-time medico-legal practice. He had done a potentially important study of post-traumatic stress reactions in police, but this remained unfinished.

Throughout his adult life, Michael had struggled with weight problems, and it was the

post-operative complications of an attempt to deal surgically with this which caused his untimely death at the age of 60. His wife, Evelyn, is herself a doctor and was in charge of student health at Salford University; he is also survived by his three children and first grandchild. Michael had a huge appetite for life, in every sense, and was a generous host, pleased to be able to show guests his unique collection of pig artefacts and wide representation of original art. The great affection in which he was held was indicated by the very large numbers who came to his home for Jewish memorial prayers.

HUGH FREEMAN

John Varley, Consultant Child Psychiatrist, Birmingham Children's Hospital



Dr John Varley (FRC Psych 1978) died on 15 October 1993 from the sudden recurrence of an illness which had been troubling him over the previous year. Born in 1928, he had only recently taken early retirement from his post as consultant child psychiatrist at the Birmingham Children's Hospital to which he was appointed in July 1964. While initially his duties were confined to the George Road Child

Guidance Clinic, his appointment led shortly to the opening of the in-patient unit for children with psychiatric problems at the hospital, this being the first such unit in the West Midlands region where no such facilities had previously existed.

Before taking up his chosen specialty, John Varley had become a well-qualified doctor of wide experience. After graduating from Oxford in 1955 – having done his clinical training at University College Hospital – he undertook house officer appointments in several specialties over the next four years, obtaining his MRCP (UK) in 1959 (he was elected FRCP in 1987). He then worked at the Maudsley Hospital as senior house officer, registrar and senior registrar from October 1959 until July 1964 when he was appointed as consultant child psychiatrist to the West Midlands region.

His experience in children's psychiatry began in April 1962 while working as registrar with Dr Kenneth Cameron and later as senior registrar at the Brixton Child Guidance Centre under the supervision of Dr Wilfred Warren and returning, once again, to the children's department of the Maudsley Hospital.