

Obituary

BRUCE HOSEGOOD BURNS, formerly Consultant Psychiatrist, Hollymoor Hospital, Northfield, Birmingham

Dr Bruce Burns died on 26 September 1986 after a short illness at the age of 54. Born in Bristol in 1931, he was educated at the City of Norwich School and graduated in medicine from Bristol University Medical School in 1956. In the early days of his career he was interested in obstetrics and gynaecology and obtained the D(Obst)RCOG qualification in 1959. However, after having fulfilled his National Service obligation as clinical officer in obstetrics he commenced psychiatric training as registrar at Barrow and Glenside Hospitals, Bristol and was later senior registrar in the University Department of Psychiatry in Manchester. He was appointed consultant psychiatrist at Hollymoor Hospital, Birmingham in 1968 and thereafter worked at that hospital, and later also at the Lyndon Clinic in Solihull, where he fulfilled the duties of Medical Director for many years. He soon gained a high reputation for his excellence as a clinician and as an extremely able and enthusiastic teacher whose skills were enhanced by an extensive and authoritative knowledge of the literature. He was for many years postgraduate clinical tutor at his hospital and his contribution to its academic and teaching activities were held in great respect and esteem by his colleagues.

Bruce was active in research and in contributing to the literature of his speciality throughout his career. He was awarded the doctorate in medicine by Bristol University in 1967 for work on psychogenic breathlessness, and other research interests were concerned with sedation threshold, evaluation of new antidepressant drugs, and with lithium prophylactic therapy in the management of affective disorder.

An active and valued involvement with the administrative aspect of the service was reflected in his membership of many local and regional medical committees. During 1976 he was president of the psychiatric section of Birmingham Medical Institute. He was elected to Fellowship of the Royal College of Psychiatrists in 1986.

Bruce was always ready to share his extensive knowledge of the specialty with his junior colleagues, and he will be remembered with gratitude by the many psychiatrists he helped to train. His colleagues will treasure the memory of a dedicated, learned and caring doctor whose high reputation was justly deserved. He had the gift of inspiring friendship, affection and goodwill, and his enthusiasm and commitment were an inspiration to those associated with him. These qualities won him a wide circle of friends who will grieve over the loss of a loyal and generous companion. He is survived by his wife, Lynn, and the daughter and three sons of his first marriage.

TWF

JAMES ROBERTSON MATHERS, formerly Medical Superintendent, Rubery Hill Hospital, Birmingham.

Dr James Mathers, a retired psychiatrist, died suddenly on 15 November 1986 aged 70 years.

James was born in 1916. His parents were missionaries in the Belgian Congo and they both died during his childhood. He was brought up by his aunt who lived at Kinross in Fife. He was educated at the Blue Coat School at Horsham and went to St Andrew's University where he graduated MB ChB in 1938.

During the last war he served in the RAMC where he met his wife Margaret who was a nurse. They married in 1944 at Poona. After leaving the army he specialised in psychiatry and took his DPM in 1949. He joined the consultant staff at Hollymoor Hospital in 1950 and became deputy superintendent there. In 1960 he became superintendent at Rubery Hill Hospital until he retired in 1971.

In 1962 he joined the Institute of Religion and Medicine and became increasingly interested in this aspect of his work. He ran a doctor-clergy discussion group and initiated courses in pastoral studies. He was appointed honorary lecturer in pastoral studies at the University from 1964 to 1983 when he retired to spend more time with his wife who was ill.

He retired from Rubery Hill Hospital in 1971 when he was 55 years old so that he could devote more time to lecturing and writing. He moved to Hay on Wye but returned to lecture in Birmingham every week. He was much in demand as a public speaker to doctors, clergy, nurses and social workers. He published several papers and articles in pastoral care and the relationship between medicine and religion and the work of the hospital chaplain. His opinion was sought by working parties on exorcism and medical ethics. He was essentially a transdisciplinary thinker involving medicine, religion, social and biological aspects of medicine.

James was a very quiet and unassuming man. He was very patient and always ready to listen to people. He had many friends among his students and colleagues. He had a very happy married life but sadly had to look after his wife who died before him in July 1986. He is survived by one son, Peter and one daughter, Alison.

The University of Birmingham celebrated his life work on Friday, 27 March 1987 with a thanksgiving service at St Frances Hall followed by a memorial lecture given by Professor Tony Dyson of Manchester University.

GES

REGINALD WARREN MEDLICOTT, Emeritus Professor, 11 Kew Grove, Raumati Beach, New Zealand

Professor Reg Medlicott died at New Plymouth on 9 September 1986. He was 73.

Reginald Warren Medlicott was born in Waimate in 1913. He was educated at Waitaki Boys' High School before qualifying at the University of Otago Medical School in 1938. He gained his MRACP in 1947 and was elected FRACP in 1958, FRANZCP in 1963 and FRCPsych in