

Professor George Houssemayne du Boulay

Following a long illness, Professor George Houssemayne du Boulay C.B.E., F.R.C.R., F.R.C.P., born in 1922, died on Wednesday 25 March 2009. Obituary by *Dr Brian Kendall*.

Following education at Christ's Hospital School and Kings College, London George specialised in neuroradiology. He held a busy consultant appointment in the National Hospital for Nervous Diseases, Maida Vale between 1954 and 1968 and at St Bartholomew's Hospital from 1954 to 1971. George was a charismatic clinician and very skilful technician as well as a dedicated and encouraging teacher. During this period he attracted and trained many young radiologists into the developing subspeciality. Throughout this time and subsequently George managed to combine a heavy service commitment with basic and clinical research.

Between 1965 and 1986 he was head of the Nuffield Laboratories, Institute of Zoology: his research continued there until 2003. His special interest was in the cerebro-vascular system. His clinical and animal research not only increased the knowledge of physiology and pathophysiology of cerebral blood flow, particularly in relation to subarachnoid haemorrhage, vasospasm and C.S.F dynamics, it lead to detailed knowledge of the vascular anatomy of mammals and the significance of variations in their anatomy to physiological responses.

Radiologists in training were encouraged to take part in this research. Those who did so had the privilege of learning from an enthusiastic expert and of seeing

application of the highest ethical principles with gentle care and kindness to patient and animal alike.

Between 1968 and 1975 George was consultant radiologist at the National Hospital of Nervous Diseases: in 1975 he was appointed as the first Professor of Neuroradiology. George oversaw the development of academic neuroradiology and during this time he laid the foundations for the current major academic department.

Over this period major developments in computed imaging reduced dependence on indirect visualisation methods using invasive technology. Though the purchase price and running costs of computed imaging were well beyond departmental budget, through George's efforts funding was provided without which it would not have been possible to maintain the standard of excellence for which the hospital was renowned.

There was great mutual respect between George and all his staff and colleagues throughout the hospital and in general. Under his influence interdepartmental research and teaching flourished and training links with British and foreign centres were established.

During this time, George was also Editor in Chief of Neuroradiology and served as President of the British Institute of



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Radiology and President of the British Society of Neuroradiology among innumerable other academic commitments. His international reputation was immense and in 1990 he was honoured by the prestigious invitation to be President of the Symposium Neuroradiologicum, testimony to the enormous personal respect in which he was held by the world's leading academic neuroscientists.

From 1985, George was Director of the Radiological Research Trust and he was also Trustee, becoming Vice President of the National Hospital Development Foundation. His tireless activity and charismatic personality ensured success in these ventures.

George leaves his loving wife Pamela, four of his sons, two daughters and fourteen adoring grandchildren as well as many bereft close friends and colleagues. He is and will continue to be sorely missed.