

# The Review

## Kenneth William Cross:

an appreciation

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### KENNETH WILLIAM CROSS (BORN 1924 – DIED APRIL 2011)

BSc 1st Class Hons Mathematics (1946)  
PhD (Applied Statistics) (1951),  
FRCGP (2004)



Ken Cross is first mentioned in the second College annual report published in 1954 and further acknowledged in the following six reports. He was the statistical advisor to the original College Research Council and together with Robin Pinsent and Donald Crombie established the Statistics and Records Unit in Birmingham, now the Research and Surveillance Centre (RSC). This Unit was set up to develop recording systems for epidemiological research in general practice. Since 1948, he had worked in the department of Medical Statistics at the University of Birmingham with Professor Lancelot Hogben, where he was involved in the design of hospital medical record systems suitable for research and administrative purposes.

There has scarcely been a year since 1954, in which Ken has not been involved in the work of the RSC in Birmingham. He contributed to the statistical evaluation of the relationship between oral contraception and thrombo-embolic disorders using diagnostic indexes; a study which was to launch the Manchester Unit of the College and the oral contraception study. He advised on the College's Outcome of Pregnancy study. He was statistical advisor to the programme of Practice Activity Analysis developed at Birmingham, which included the first systematic examination of medical records to assess the extent to which doctors recorded blood pressure and smoking habits. He has made major contributions to the Birmingham Unit programme, investigating the relationship between respiratory disease and mortality

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#### Douglas Fleming

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and in particular on the importance of respiratory syncytial virus and on the estimation of excess winter mortality and hospital admissions attributable to respiratory infections. For a short period Ken's services were directly remunerated, but the majority of his contributions to the College have been made without payment. He was honoured by the College with the award of Fellowship in 2004.

#### Douglas Fleming,

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