Out of Hours

Colin Waine:

an appreciation

12 March 1936 — 4 August 2014

"He was one of the kindest men I ever had the privilege of knowing."

This striking summary from a doctor, a former trainee, who worked with him is an eloquent tribute to the man. It captures the warmth that Colin Waine showed to all who met him and explains why, unlike many professional leaders, he made no enemies. A well-rounded man, he was devoted to his family: his wife Gwen, and two daughters Jennifer and Anna. He enjoyed reading, cricket, his large garden, and a succession of sports cars.

Colin passed the MRCGP with distinction. He was first and foremost a clinician working additionally as a hospital practitioner in paediatrics for several years. His wide clinical interests were reflected in his national work.

He threw himself into the work of the College in the North of England Faculty, becoming both Chair and Provost. He attended the College's Nuffield Course and became involved in national general practice both on the BMA's GP Committee and RCGP Council. He was one of a small group of GPs elected for over 25 years consecutively to the Council. Joining in 1974, it was in the 1980s and early 1990s that he held the biggest posts.

Colin was a conscientious committee man and a conciliatory chair, so posts followed in steady succession. He

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chaired the Publications Committee, the Communications Division, and the Clinical and Research Division, serving for years on the Council's Executive Group. He worked on the Healthier Children: Thinking Prevention Working Party, introduced the RCGP clinical series of booklets and chaired working parties on prevention, for example, *Promoting Prevention*, *Occasional Paper 22*, and hyperlipidaemia. All this led to numerous honours including the 1988 James Mackenzie Lecture, being awarded an OBE in 1990, and in 1992 the McConaghey Lecture. He was one of the few GPs ever to be elected an Honorary Fellow of the Royal College of Pathologists and received the College's highest prize, the Foundation Council Award, in 1995.

The culmination of Colin Waine's College career was his election in November 1990 to the Chairship of the RCGP Council. He fostered teamwork and built valuable bridges with other national bodies. His sense of history led him to authorise the writing of a history of the College for its 40th anniversary.

In high office, he suffered a disturbing experience when a patient complaint, in unusually complex circumstances was not upheld by the local NHS. However, the patient successfully appealed to a national NHS tribunal, which lacked detailed local knowledge. Many also felt his professional defence was not of the highest order.

What this meant for a Chair of the College Council in office had never been previously tested. Colin, however, took the most honourable possible course and decided to resign the Chairship, despite senior advice not to, which he did immediately in a moving final speech to a shaken Council. It was a tough decision to make and he did it as he held the highest ideals for the College he loved and because he thought the policy leadership of the College

would be weakened if he stayed. After this professional tragedy, he left his general practice and built a new career in NHS management as a Director in a primary care trust. Through careful networking, and like other GP leaders before him, he engineered the creation of a new Chair of General Practice in Sunderland, to support a socially deprived area, to which Professor Greg Rubin was appointed.

As Chair of the National Obesity Forum, he energetically attended meetings around the country and wrote regularly. He was a skilful teacher and was recognised with a Visiting Professorship at the University of Sunderland.

He suffered a long, painful, final illness with vasculitis/polyarteritis nodosum. Clinically alert to the end, he dictated a letter from hospital; a moving farewell to his friends and colleagues. He is survived by his wife, two daughters, and grandchildren Becky, Joe, Katie, and Henry, whom he adored.

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