

# Donald Mortimer Williamson

Born 05.09.1924 Dewsbury – Died 23.07.2004 Dewsbury

Donald Williamson qualified MB, ChB with Honours from Leeds Medical School in 1948, and did his first house job in dermatology for Drs Ingram and Hellier at Leeds General Infirmary before entering the RAF to complete two years of National Service. Donald then entered general practice first as a vocational trainee but by 1952 had become a principal in general practice. However, Donald's first medical love was always dermatology – his interest having been fired by the time spent as a house physician with Ingram and Hellier and in 1953 he was appointed clinical assistant in dermatology at Leeds General Infirmary.

In 1956 Donald left general practice to work in industrial medicine for the National Coal Board, gaining his diploma in industrial health in 1958 and his MD on skin disease in mine workers was awarded by the University of Leeds in 1962.

Despite being appointed Senior Medical Officer to the Coal Board in 1966, Donald returned to dermatology in that year as a clinical assistant. In 1967 he was appointed Senior Registrar in dermatology at Leeds General Infirmary working with Frank Hellier, Neville Rowell and Stephen Anning. In 1969 Donald was appointed Consultant Dermatologist at Pontefract, Castleford and Goole HMC, and also at St James' Hospital in Leeds. His considerable dermatological expertise was recognised by his colleagues and he was awarded Honorary Consultant status at LGI. Donald also was appointed dermatology adviser to the Coal Board and the prison service in West Yorkshire. In 1989 he served as

President to the North of England Dermatological Society and also served as President of his local BMA. Donald greatly enjoyed his role on the Medical Appeals Tribunal on which he served.

Donald published more than 50 papers on a wide range of scientific and clinical aspects of dermatology. His early publications reflected his interest in occupational dermatology especially in mineworks.

I first met Donald in 1969 when I came to Leeds as a young senior registrar. His enthusiasm for dermatology and his dermatological literature was encyclopaedic. I was always grateful to Donald for the encouragement he always gave me and I think every dermatologist who trained in Leeds will surely remember him for his help and kindness at all times. Donald rarely missed local or national meetings. He also loved his patients and was loved by them in return.

However, Donald had many other interests. As a student he played in the university jazz band and he was often to be seen at meetings entertaining us perfectly on the piano. He enjoyed musical sessions at home with his close friend and general practitioner, John Thirnton accompanying him on the drums. He also fashioned a gavel out of wood for the North of England Dermatological Society which was used with gusto to call the meetings to order. Donald played tennis for both Leeds University and the RAF.

Donald loved Yorkshire, and the Dales in particular, where he had a cottage to which he could escape the pressure of work from time to time



Donald Mortimer Williamson

with his wife, Sheila, his family and his dogs.

Donald also loved cars, especially if they were fast and was very knowledgeable about all related motoring matters. He was also a great traveller and together with Sheila visited most parts of the world. I remember with affection many parties, dinners and reunions spent with Donald and Sheila in numerous venues around the world.

Donald will be sorely missed by us all but he will be remembered as a kind, caring and conscientious dermatologist and as a good, safe doctor. I never heard Donald say a bad word about anyone in all the years I knew him. He cared passionately about dermatology and his patients and above all about Sheila and his family.

Donald died peacefully at home from cancer and is survived by his wife Sheila, sons Hugo and Mark, and two grandchildren.

**Dr John Cotterill**

Leeds