

DR GERALD WILSON BLACK (1925-2019)

Former Consultant Paediatric Anaesthetist, Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children and Royal Victoria Hospital (b.1925, q.Belfast 1949, MD FFARCS FFARCSI PhD FRCPI, d. 10th July 2019)

Gerry Black was born in Belfast and completed his medical degree at Queen's University, Belfast. Following a period as a Research Fellow in the Department of Anesthesiology, University of Pennsylvania, Gerry was appointed as Consultant Paediatric Anaesthetist, the Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children in 1960, in which capacity he served until his retirement in 1990. He soon recognised the need for more intensive medical and nursing care of critically ill children and, with the support of colleagues, established paediatric intensive care in Northern Ireland.

Gerry's interest in volatile anaesthetics continued throughout his career, and his numerous publications and presentations in this field of research established him internationally as a leading authority. Research fellows who worked with him testified to his thorough preparation of his subject matter and illustrative slides. He was appointed as Honorary Lecturer in Paediatric Anaesthesia, Queen's University Belfast, in 1986.

Amongst his many achievements he was Vice-President of the Association of Anaesthetists of Great Britain and Ireland (1981-83), Vice-Chairman of the Joint Committee for Higher Training of Anaesthetists, Royal College of Surgeons, England (1983-85) and a respected Dean of the Faculty of Anaesthetists of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (1982-1985). He was a founding member of the Association of Paediatric Anaesthetists of Great Britain and Ireland, becoming President in 1985 and awarded Honorary Membership in 1995.

Gerry has been described as a delightful colleague, co-operative and generous, and totally dedicated to his work and his hospital, and I would concur with this. He was a private man, yet gregarious, and possessed a sense of humour all of his own. Many a tense moment in the operating theatre was transformed by an amusing comment from the head of the table, delivered with perfect timing.

On retirement he was able to enjoy more time at the Royal Belfast Golf Club and pursue his interests in travel, history, rugby and cricket.

Pre-deceased by his wife Dorothy (Associate Specialist in Ophthalmology), he is survived by their two daughters and extended family.

Peter Crean