

Robert Edward Matthews



Bob Matthews died on 9 October 2004 at the age of 87. Born on 15 July 1917, he was educated at Maidstone Grammar School and entered Guy's as a dental student in 1935. Graduating in the summer of 1940, he then continued at Guy's as a House Surgeon during which time the Blitz on London began.

In 1941 Bob entered the Royal Navy and was commissioned a Surgeon Lieutenant RNVR in the Dental Branch, thus beginning a lifelong interest in the Senior Service. He saw service at HMS COLLINGWOOD, at the Royal Naval Barracks at Chatham, HMS PEMBROKE and at HMS DUKE, the Radar Research Station in Malvern. It was at HMS DUKE that he met Margaret Palk, a WRNS whom he married in 1944.

His final appointment was at HMS BULL, the naval base at Mas-sawa on the western coast of the Red Sea. It was from here that he went by road into the desert and the Eritrean mountain regions. Supported only by an Army Sergeant, he worked in Field Hospitals, often acting as anaesthetist for general surgeons. He frequently recalled the appallingly hot climate at sea level, contrasting it with the freezing cold in the hills.

On demobilisation in 1946, Bob entered general practice in Maidstone in partnership with John Cox, a fellow Guy's man. He also returned to Guy's as the Administrative Registrar, a two day a week appointment to oversee the general administration of the dental hospital.

Soon after HMS PRESIDENT was re-commissioned as the Headquarters of the London Division of the RNVR, Bob resumed his naval service as a dental officer. He was able to combine his weekly 'drills' with his administrative duties at Guy's.

David William Alexander Johnston



It is with great sadness that I record the death from cancer of Dave Johnston on 23 January 2005. He was 55 and had fought this illness for the last 18 months of his life.

Dave was born, brought up and received his schooling in Newcastle. He was the son of a very well known and popular local general medical practitioner.

He entered Dundee University Dental Hospital and School in 1967 and rapidly established himself as one of the most popular dental students of that time. He will long be remembered as one who was fully committed to all aspects of student life; indeed his peers' comments in the 1972 Yearbook preceding his graduation describe Dave as 'a very happy guy and one of the friendliest in the class with always a smile for everyone'. A larger than life character, he was noted for his flamboyancy of dress, good looks and long flowing blond locks, which forced the establishment at Dundee Dental Hospital to review acceptable practices in relation to length of hair permitted for dental students.

On graduation Dave at first worked in general dental practice in London before moving for a spell to South Africa. On returning to the United Kingdom, he worked briefly in Cheshire before establishing himself in partnership with Val Smernicki, and later with Dave Samson, in Dundee. Dundee and its surrounding area always had a very important place in Dave's heart. The dental practice quickly gained a reputation for high quality dentistry based on total commitment to patient care. When illness forced Dave to discontinue

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During the mid 1960s the planning of the new dental school in the Guy's Tower was beginning to take shape and in this Bob became heavily involved. However, it soon became clear that two days per week were insufficient and it was decided that a full time administrator was necessary. Bob then left Guy's and concentrated his activities in his practice in Maidstone with sessions at Reed's International Paper Mill.

Meanwhile his commitments with the naval reserve continued, first with promotion to Surgeon Lieutenant Commander and then to Surgeon Commander and Senior Dental Surgeon of the London Division. He retired on age in 1964 but still maintained his naval connections at HMS PEMBROKE until the Chatham base was finally closed in the mid 1970s.

Bob retired from practice in 1977 at the age of 60 following coronary bypass surgery and enjoyed 27 years of retirement though sadly, his beloved Margaret died in 1992.

Bob was liked by all who met him for his kind disposition and equable temperament; he was always cheerful and helpful.

He is survived by daughters Rosanne and Sheila, his son Brian and seven grandchildren, one of whom, Thomas, is in his third year at Cardiff Dental School.

Bob's many friends and colleagues throughout the profession and in the Navy will wish to extend their sympathies to his family.

M.N. Naylor

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clinical work his major contribution to patient dental welfare in the region was sorely missed.

Outside his considerable time involved in dentistry, Dave established himself as a leading light in many of the City of Dundee's business and charitable organisations including Round Table, 41 Club, Rotary and the Bonnetmakers Association of the Nine Trades of Dundee. His leisure interests invariably centred on sport with a healthy commitment to football, running (including marathons) and more notably golf.

Shortly after his graduation Dave married Elspeth and in time had two daughters, Zoe and Natalie. Dave was a totally devoted husband and father and latterly a very loving grandfather to Zoe and Dominic's son Luca. At this time all our thoughts are with his family, including his mother and sister who are now based in Florida, USA where Dave and Elspeth spent so much of their vacation time and owned their own property.

The enormous turnout at Dave's funeral in Dundee represented the great esteem in which he was held in dentistry and in Tayside and the incredible number of people who were privileged to be friends with such a talented, jovial, compassionate but most especially thoroughly humble guy.

M. Collins