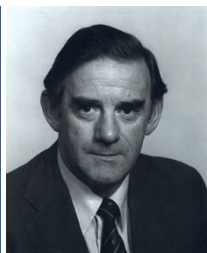


Obituaries

Obituaries should be submitted by email to Jonathan Coe at jonathan.coe@nature.com.

All submitted obituaries should be 400 words maximum in length (apart from obituaries for past presidents of the BDA where the length should be 800 words).

Content of the obituary is down to the individual author, and the approval of the family should be given for the obituary prior to submission to the *BDJ*.



Gordon Fordyce
1925–2018

Gordon Fordyce trained in dentistry at the University of St Andrews in Dundee from 1942 to 1946. After a few months of practice he was called up for national service where he treated army recruits and, after a year, was posted to Austria where he worked at the 31st British General Hospital as No 2 dentist and subsequently Senior Dental Officer. There he became responsible for trauma.

After demobilisation he wanted to practise hospital oral surgery and back in Dundee he was advised by the Professor of Anatomy that a medical qualification would not be necessary if he passed the new Fellowship in Dental Surgery examination. Thus he worked as an anatomy demonstrator while studying for part one of the exam and was then appointed as Registrar at Hill End Hospital near St Albans, and a year later promoted to senior registrar.

After his four years as a senior registrar Gordon was too young for a consultant post so he was appointed as a senior hospital dental officer. After the age of 32 he was appointed as a consultant at the Royal Free Hospital for two sessions a week and the North West Thames Health Authority agreed to upgrade him to consultant at Mount Vernon Hospital (to where the Hill End department had moved in March 1953).

Gordon Fordyce published papers relating to oral pathology, facial trauma and orthognathic surgery. He became involved in local and national dental politics; he was a section chairman and a member of the representative board of the BDA, President of the Institute of Maxillofacial Technology and President of the British Association of Oral Surgeons.

However, his major legacy to the dental profession was the introduction of vocational training for dentists. He became an elected member of the GDC and Dental Dean of the British Postgraduate Medical Federation.

He found the GDC hostile and resistant to change. It took 15 years to persuade them, many of whom were deans of dental schools, that their undergraduate training was inadequate preparation for independent practice and to persuade the government to provide funding. The first vocational training pilot started in Guildford in 1977 and it became mandatory in 1988.

Gordon Fordyce retired from clinical work at Mount Vernon in 1988 but remained Chairman of the Department of Health Vocational Training Committee until 1992. He was awarded the Queen's Silver Jubilee Medal in 1977, OBE in 1988 and the John Tomes Medal by the BDA in 1990.

Andrew Sadler



Robin M. Basker
1936–2017

Robin Basker OBE, Emeritus Professor of Dental Prosthetics and former Dean of University of Leeds School of Dentistry died in November 2017 aged 80 after a long struggle with Parkinson's disease.

After graduating from the University of London in 1961, where he was an active member of the shooting club, Robin married Jacquie Bowles to whom he was happily married for 56 years. They had two daughters, Sally and Kate, and two granddaughters, Robyn and Laura.

Following a period in practice, in 1963 he became a lecturer in dental prosthetics at

Birmingham University where he gained his DDS. In 1978, Robin was appointed to the newly established Chair in Dental Prosthetics in Leeds, where he radically updated the undergraduate prosthetic curriculum focusing on clinical relevance. He published many clinical papers, including a series in the *BDJ*, often on the problems of gerodontology. In conjunction with John Davenport and others he produced particularly successful books on denture design.

Professor Basker became Dean of the School of Dentistry in 1985, and contributed to the running of Leeds University by serving on the Senate and many other internal committees.

He also represented the University on the GDC for almost 15 years and during this long tenure he was Chairman of the Education Committee. It was a period of significant change to the delivery of primary dental care, expanding the role of the dental nurse. Additionally, he was active in the British Standards Institution, and was an international expert on dental materials at conferences around the world.

Robin was awarded the BDA's John Tomes Medal for outstanding services in 2000, and was President of the BDA's Yorkshire Branch. On retirement from the University in 2000, he was awarded the OBE. Shortly after this he was elected Chairman of the Lindsay Society for the History of Dentistry.

He and Jacquie enjoyed a shared love of music and were participants in Harrogate Choral Society's productions. They were keen gardeners, and they were also humorous and generous hosts to their friends and colleagues.

It seems poignant that there is a sad post-script to this obituary, as within a month of the passing of Robin, Jacquie also died of pancreatic cancer which she largely overlooked during Robin's illness. Having lost both parents near Christmas we extend our sympathies to the Basker family.

Stuart Robson and Jim Ralph