

# Obituaries

Obituaries should be submitted by email to Kate Maynard at k.maynard@nature.com.

All submitted obituaries should be approximately 400 max words in length (apart from obituaries for past presidents of the BDA where the length should be 700–800 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.

## GARY MANNING



Gary Manning died on 18 January 2008 after a brave battle against cancer.

Typical of Gary's character, this illness was endured with optimism and a selfless interest in

other people and their problems.

Gary was very much part of a dental family having a grandfather, father, mother, uncle and sister all in the dental profession. At school he was an all round scholar which gave him an early dilemma as to the best career path to follow. Luckily he decided to study dentistry. His ability to devour books on all subjects, particularly those concerned with people motivation, added to the very particular quality of the relationship he had with his patients and to the motivation of colleagues. He never blindly followed orthodox beliefs, always challenging and testing ideas to the full. In his professional life the needs of each patient were paramount. Gary was one of the first dentists to really move away from the NHS, successfully converting his practice in Fulham in 1983 following one of his many postgraduate trips to the States. He later moved his practice to Harley Street where it went from strength to strength.

Gary also had a strong sense of right and wrong and this drove him, even in the later stages of his illness, to pursue the truth about the ultimately unsuccessful treatment of his wife Jane who tragically died of oral cancer.

Her death in May 2002 at the age of 43 left an irreplaceable hole in his life and that of his two children.

It was at this stage that he moved his practice to nearby Thayer Street to join up with a larger group of clinicians. He developed a very close working relationship with all those there.

His sense of fun, the ability to make the best of all situations, and his thirst for knowledge will be only a few of the things his family and friends will miss. He was so proud of his children Henry and Lucy, currently studying for their A levels and GCSE exams. He had been able to travel with them and guide them to becoming young people who have clear and positive views on how they want to live their lives. He was a wonderful son to June, and brother and uncle to Nick and Julie's families. At 51 his life was too short, but he brought something special into the lives of all who knew and loved him.

T. Sunnucks

## GEORGE FLEMING



Sadly, following a stroke, George Fleming died on 24 April 2008 in York District Hospital aged 90. In North Yorkshire George was very widely respected, almost

revered, following a lifelong commitment to the dental profession.

Born and educated in the Queens Park, a less advantaged area of Glasgow, he went to Glasgow Dental School, qualifying in 1939. He became Assistant School Dental Officer in the East Riding of Yorkshire before volunteering as a dental officer in the RAF in 1940. An eventful war career ensued including an interesting and exciting two years in France, Belgium and Germany

(chronicled in the *Dental Historian*). Working in areas of death and destruction had a profound effect upon his personality and strengthened his already strong Christian commitment. He returned to the Yorkshire School Service in 1947, and after the establishment of the NHS he started a part time surgery in his home in York to see patients in the evenings and Saturdays.

George never lost his rich Glaswegian brogue and dialect which always caused considerable amusement to his friends as he was a member of the English Speaking Union. Both George and his wife Jean were devout members of the Presbyterian Church and George was a Church Elder.

However, it was within his profession that his commitment was most widely respected. He staunchly fought the cause of GDPs through several NHS reorganisations with courtesy yet dogged determination.

Sadly in his final year he was devastated to lose both his wife Jean (whom he married in 1942), and his son Douglas, aged 60. We extend our sympathies to his daughters Jan and Sheila, and his grandchildren of whom he was very proud.

George was the ultimate professional man: honest, ethical, concerned for his patients and a strong believer in maintaining highest professional standards. Always a private person with a streak of fierce independence he was loyal to his friends, colleagues and especially his family.

At his funeral, his close friend the minister paid an appropriate epitaph: 'He stood up for his profession, spoke up for his profession, was never ashamed to defend a principle, and was latterly critical of successive governments about their role in devolving dental care'.

Stuart Robson