

Obituaries

Editor: Henry R. Rollin

ABE ADELSTEIN, MD, FRCP, Chief Medical Statistician for England and Wales; Visiting Professor London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine

Abe Adelstein who died last year, was born in South Africa in 1916. The first in his family to go to university, he studied medicine at the University of the Witwatersrand where he quickly established a reputation as being someone of exceptional intellect. The shape of his life to come was to substantiate this.

In the early 1960s he emigrated to Manchester where, with Zena and Mervyn Susser, he worked in the Department of Social Medicine. Within several years he was offered the post of Chief Medical Statistician for England and Wales, the most highly regarded in the land. He worked in that capacity until he retired in 1981. With characteristic modesty and unpretentiousness he never sought honours, but due recognition and appreciation of his involved and valued contribution brought many.

These outstanding achievements were in the context of life-long cumulative illness for which, incidentally, he wanted no sympathy, even less, pity. His family provided the foundation for his perpetual fight for survival and affirmation of his purpose in life.

His work penetrated broad horizons thus including significant contributions to psychiatry, the seminal ones being to the classification of mental illness and to the epidemiology of suicide and alcoholism. He was well known to eminent psychiatrists nationally and internationally.

ILANA B. GLASS-CROME

ARTHUR JOHN ROBINSON, Consultant Psychiatrist in Newcastle Mental Health (NHS) Trust



Arthur John Robinson was born on 5 June 1944 and died, at the early age of 48, on 15 October 1992. He was the son of a distinguished psychiatrist, Dr Charles Robinson, a former superintendent of Purdysburn Hospital in Belfast, whose obituary appeared in the *Bulletin* in September 1984.

Arthur was educated in Belfast and qualified MB BCh BAO at Queen's University, Belfast in 1968, obtaining the undergraduate prize in Social

Medicine, a portent of interests which were to emerge later in his career. After junior medical posts in Belfast, and a residency in New Hampshire, he trained at the University mental health department in Belfast before moving to Newcastle, where he completed his higher training experience. He was elected MRCPsych in 1974 and proceeded to the Fellowship in 1987.

He was appointed Consultant Psychiatrist at St George's Hospital, Morpeth, Northumberland in 1978 and three years later took the initiative of obtaining specialist training in rehabilitation at the Maudsley Hospital and in Southampton. The fruits of these excursions, and his own determination and application, culminated with the designation in 1985 of St George's Hospital as a national demonstration service in psychiatric rehabilitation, the only centre in the Northern Region to receive this accolade. He gave a considerable impetus to the multidisciplinary care and resettlement of long-term ill patients throughout the Region. As founder and Chairman of the Regional Rehabilitation Group, his advice was widely sought by colleagues, locally and nationally.

In 1988 Arthur moved a few miles south to Newcastle where he continued his interest in rehabilitation and acquired another in the management of disturbed and difficult to manage patients. He also pursued his enthusiasm for administration in which field his abilities, clarity of purpose and utter reliability were widely appreciated and led to chairmanship of a variety of key committees. In 1991 he was appointed Secretary of the Executive Committee of the North-East Division of the Royal College but, sadly, had to resign within a few months because of ill health.

Arthur was a man of vigour, warmth, good humour and directness, a private person who was constantly loyal and committed to helping the most deprived patients. Away from work he was a passionate follower of rugby, a regular attendee at Murrayfield and in recent years an enthusiastic golfer. Knowledge of the diagnosis of his final illness, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, was met with courage and determination. He discussed the disease with an openness and unblinking awareness of its implications which, when it became clear that the disease would be terminal, was profoundly moving to his friends. The cruel cutting short of a career in full flow, of the happiness of his marriage to Ann and being able to watch the progress of his sons David and Michael, of whom he was intensely proud, were accepted with immense stoicism. Arthur, always a devoted family man, is also survived by his mother and sister.

ALAN KERR