

Obituary

David Domenic Di Biase



David died peacefully at home in Danbury on Saturday, 30th June 2001, following a long fight against prostate cancer.

Born in 1935 in Kingston, Surrey, he attended Tiffins Boy's School and then moved on to study dentistry at King's College Hospital. He graduated with Honours, followed by a short Service Commission in the Royal Air Force 1961–1963. On completion he obtained his Fellowship and Diploma in Orthodontics. During his senior registrar training, he won the prestigious Chapman Prize.

In 1971 David was appointed Consultant Orthodontist at Southend General Hospital and Dental Tutor 1972–1976.

He relinquished sessions at Southend in 1989 to join the teaching staff in the Orthodontic Department at The Royal London Hospital.

David was an outstanding teacher, his own enthusiasm for the subject stimulating his students whether undergraduate or postgraduate. He had an inquisitive and inventive mind, developing ideas such as 'The Southend Clasp', which is now in wide use throughout the specialty. His other particular interest was in dento-facial orthopaedics for cleft neonates. As a clinician, David was widely recognised for his outstanding abilities. He was a caring, thinking, Orthodontist, always having the patient's requirements in mind. He had an impressive list of publications, and was in constant demand as both a National and International Lecturer.

Besides his clinical commitments, he played an important political role in dentistry. His overwhelming passion was to see the divided orthodontic specialty in the U.K. united under one organisation. To this end he acted as 'midwife' to the developing British Orthodontic Society. He was the first Chairman of conference and followed as first Chairman of the newly constituted British Orthodontic Society and later as President. His greatest asset as a chairman was his conciliation ability, and without him there would be no BOS. He was also Secretary and President of the Essex branch of the BDA.

David also served on national organisations, being an elected member of the General Dental Council and he sat on the Standing Dental Advisory Committee Orthodontic Review Group.

He was recently awarded the Clifford Ballard Medal for Outstanding Services to Orthodontics.

In his personal life David had three passions, his family, art and rugby football. His name indicates that he came from an Italian background, which may explain his impressive knowledge of art. As a rugby player he played for 'King's College Hospital', 'Saracens' and the R.A.F.

He leaves behind him his beloved wife Moyra and children, Judy, Andrew and James.

David will be greatly missed by his family, friends and colleagues.

D.B.L.