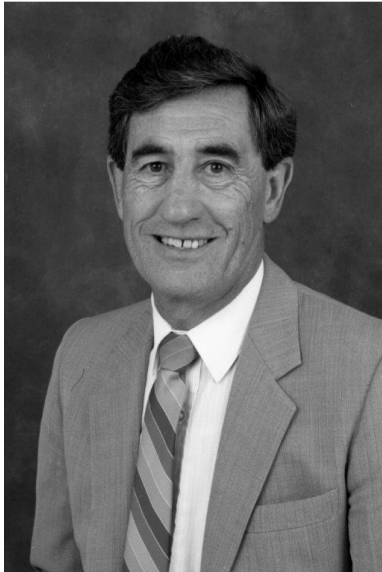


OBITUARY

Brian Ernest Tomlinson

MBChB DCH FRACP FRCP

Brian Ernest Tomlinson was born on 3 November 1928 in Gisborne. His father was a surveyor and Great War veteran who had migrated from England, and his mother was a fourth-generation New Zealander. The family moved around the East Coast area, briefly living in Wairoa before settling in Gisborne.



Brian was educated at Nelson College where he played in the top school cricket and rugby teams and was duly awarded the prize for best all-round student.

He then proceeded to study medicine at Otago University where he resided at Knox College.

He spent 5 very happy years there, sharing rooms with his school friend Peter Rothwell and together they explored much of the lower South Island by hitch hiking and, briefly, in a Model T Ford. He was on the Knox College student executive for 1951 and 1952.

His final year as a Medical Student was spent in Auckland where he met Dorothy, his first wife. He was appointed House Surgeon in New Plymouth for two years and then Medical Registrar at Waikato Hospital.

After he had a period of General Practice in Hamilton East in partnership with Russ Freeman, a 2 year locum undertaken by Peter Rothwell, recently returned from overseas study, enabled Brian to travel to Britain in 1961. There he undertook paediatric specialisation, his goal since school days, gaining a Diploma in Child Health from London. He also obtained memberships of the Royal Colleges of Physicians in both London and Edinburgh.

The young family spent time in William Goodenough House and then later in Aylesbury, where Brian was Registrar to Dermot McCarthy at Stoke Mandeville hospital. He was subsequently appointed as a visiting Paediatrician at Waikato Hospital, alongside Colin Watson and David Pullon.

Waikato Hospital was rapidly expanding and it became apparent that three paediatricians were not sufficient, particularly with the emergence of the new field of neonatal intensive care. At the other end of the paediatric age scale, Brian began to express an interest in Adolescent Medicine. He became Head of the Paediatric Department for a time and was later elected Treasurer of the Paediatric Society. He had a busy private practice and he particularly enjoyed conducting newborn baby checks.

Brian was always interested in continuing medical education and regularly travelled overseas, gathering new ideas for practice back home and identifying visiting speakers for future conferences. He actively supported Waikato Registrars who were sitting postgraduate examinations and saw some success, leading to the emergence of Waikato Hospital as a training centre of excellence. He had earlier been appointed to the post of Director of Postgraduate Medical Education at Waikato Hospital, which he took very seriously, promoting the concept of lifelong learning at every opportunity. He continued in this role for 22 years.

Brian retired from paediatrics at Waikato Hospital and subsequently undertook locums in Taranaki, Whakatane and Invercargill in New Zealand and in the UK.

Brian was a fit and active man and keen sportsman. He was awarded University Blues in shooting and tennis and continued to play tennis at home until his retirement. He worked hard in his garden at home and built several paths beside the Waikato River. He was a keen skier from student days and continued into his seventies, delighting in earning his free ski pass. He had a lengthy association with Christiania Ski Club prior to obtaining his own property near Turangi.

Soon after finally retiring Brian had an abdominal aortic aneurysm repair and after this procedure was completed he became troubled by progressive dementia. He spent his last few years in institutions, latterly in the wonderful care of the staff at Eventhorpe Home in Hamilton. He died on 13 May 2014 at 85 years of age.

Brian is survived by Joanne (his wife of 34 years), 3 sons, 2 stepchildren and 10 grandchildren. Of his 3 sons, Paul is a paediatrician in Invercargill, Matthew is an orthopaedic surgeon at Middlemore Hospital, and Nicholas is a corporate lawyer in Singapore.

A son Paul Tomlinson (Invercargill) and friend Peter Rothwell (Hamilton) wrote this obituary.