

Professor Donald Munro died in May aged 88. Donald was born in London but was always extremely proud of his Scottish ancestry and it was therefore no surprise that he chose the University of Aberdeen to study medicine. After qualification, he served in the RAMC in what was then Malaya, an experience which he much enjoyed, and his career in teaching medicine started there. He was appointed as Lecturer in Pharmacology and Therapeutics at the University of Sheffield in 1953. Apart from his Fulbright Fellowship which was spent in Boston, he remained loyal to and proud of his adopted city, becoming the first Sir Arthur Hall Professor of Medicine and also heading the Medical School for a period as Dean.

His initial research focussed on sodium metabolism in endocrine disease, but he then began a career-long series of meticulous studies on the newly discovered long-acting thyroid stimulator. Donald's group was one of the first to show that this stimulator was in fact an autoantibody, and that the levels of this in pregnant women with Graves' disease correlated closely with the probability of their offspring having neonatal thyrotoxicosis. He was an excellent mentor and fostered the career of many endocrinologists, including Pat Kendall-Taylor, Bernard Rees Smith, Colin Hardisty and Steve Tomlinson. He was a President of the Thyroid Club, the Endocrine Section of the Royal Society of Medicine and the Association of Physicians.

Donald was an exceptional endocrinologist who undertook a phenomenal clinical workload while at the same time managing to undertake pioneering studies of the highest order with technically challenging bioassays. He established the Clinical Sciences Centre at the Northern General Hospital site in 1979, which has now developed into an outstanding Clinical Research Facility, and also set up a novel computerised thyroid follow up scheme which continues to this day. It was entirely typical of his academic dedication that he chose to go on a sabbatical in Sydney to lab of Jack Martin, his close friend, after rather than before retirement; this was to complete his studies which showed that thyroid stimulating antibodies can mediate effects through calcium signalling as well as cyclic AMP. Donald was a deeply thoughtful and meticulous clinical scientist who inspired all those who met him. His wife Helen, who was a consultant radiotherapist, predeceased him; he leaves 4 children and 9 grandchildren of whom he was extremely proud.

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