

HENRY MYERS ALTY

Consultant Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeon. Born 8th October 1929. Qualified MBChB 1958. Died 27th February 2019.



Henry Myers Alty died on 27th February 2019 aged 89, and his well-attended funeral took place in his local Church on the 22nd March.

“Harry”, or to be precise “HMA” as known to his many colleagues, was modest and above all unflappable, which are the traits that spring to mind when remembering this caring gentleman.

However, such a description belies a man of immense ability, secure within himself and always in control. He resolved many a conflict with tact and diplomacy, keeping all sides satisfied.

Harry Alty was born in Newburgh, Lancashire on the eighth of October, 1929, the eldest of three brothers. He was educated at Hutton Grammar School and then followed his father into the dental profession and obtained the BDS (University of Liverpool) in 1952. Following graduation, he commenced his Oral Surgery training at St Bartholomew’s and the Eastman Dental Hospitals. He obtained the FDSRCS (ENG.) in 1954 and the MBChB (University of Liverpool) in 1958. In 1963, he was appointed Consultant Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeon, Regional Maxillofacial Unit, Broadgreen Hospital, Liverpool, Liverpool Dental Hospital, Chester Royal Infirmary and Nobles Hospital, Isle of Man. Posts which he held until 1994.

It is a mark of the esteem in which HMA was held by professional colleagues that he was elected to significant national and local appointments. President BAOMS, Chairman Central Committee for Hospital Dental Services, Chairman Dental Subcommittee of the Central Manpower Committee DHSS, Joint Consultants’ Committee BMA, Consultant Adviser Medico-Legal aspects of Dental and Maxillofacial Surgery, President Oral Surgery Club of Great Britain, President of Liverpool and District Odontological Society.

As a surgeon he maintained a calm demeanour, regardless of the challenge or urgency of the moment. He was dextrous, slick and in control, whilst humming to himself throughout. He embraced change enthusiastically being the first to adopt the somewhat controversial method of using miniplates for the treatment of mandibular fractures and ultimately popularised their use in oral and maxillofacial surgery in the UK.

HMA’s calm demeanour and leadership also graced the committee room locally and nationally, resolving many a vexed issue with grace and determination. His seminal paper highlighting the manpower imbalance in Oral and Maxillofacial surgery paved the way to a satisfactory solution at the highest political level.

His cool head, easy manner, surgical prowess endeared him to students and trainees alike. Many owe HMA a huge debt of gratitude for his wise counsel and training opportunities.

After retiral, Harry played an active public role in institutions and causes which were important to him. He was Chairman of Governors of Bishop Martin School, Liverpool, Chairman of Council, Liverpool College and Chairman the Mersey branch of the Red Cross.

Harry enjoyed being outside gardening and walking in the Lake District. He was a keen sportsman and a sport's fan. He was a life-long supporter of Preston North End FC and a member of Lancashire CCC.

His faith underpinned all that he was, in a quiet undemonstrative way. He played an active role in the church right up to the end, as a member of his Bible study group as well as a faithful worshipper.

His beloved wife, Heather, whom he married in 1952 pre-deceased him. His son and daughter John and Fiona and his grandchildren Henry, David, Richard and Helena survive him.

Harry was kind and generous and patient. Above all he had a sense of duty and responsibility and will always be remembered as a true gentleman.

Mr John Cawood and Mr Adrian Flower