

James Spence Medallist 1983

JOHN OLDROYD FORFAR



John Forfar qualified from the University of St Andrews in 1941. He joined the Royal Army Medical Corps shortly afterwards and underwent commando training. In 1943 he became Medical Officer to the 47th Royal Marine Commando, took part in the Normandy landings on D-Day and the subsequent European campaign, was awarded the Military Cross, and mentioned in despatches.

He obtained his postgraduate education in paediatrics in Dundee and Edinburgh, and in 1948 was appointed senior lecturer in child health at his old University of St Andrews and consultant paediatrician at the Royal Infirmary, Dundee. He moved to Edinburgh in 1950 and in 1964 he was elected to the Edward Clark Chair at the University of Edinburgh, a post from which he has only recently retired.

John Forfar was one of the pioneers of neonatal paediatrics in this country and a founder member of the Neonatal Society. He can be said to have established modern neonatal care in Edinburgh,

building up a highly effective team, and with characteristic energy and determination creating a hospital environment in which the team could operate successfully. In paediatrics as a whole he built up a department in which all system specialties were represented, so that Edinburgh now provides a model paediatric service.

John Forfar has been one of the most prolific contributors to the literature of paediatrics and his papers cover a wide range from basic science to social paediatrics. Two particular themes reveal his most consistent long term interests. The first is that of infantile calcium metabolism, hyper- and hypovitaminosis D, about which he first wrote in the 1950s and which he has continued to study—most recently in Saudi Arabia. The second subject is that of infection in the newborn. Like all his work his papers have combined scholarship with practical usefulness and good sense.

John Forfar is a born teacher and lucky are the large number of young paediatricians who have received some or all of their postgraduate education in Edinburgh. One of his most important contributions to both teaching and the practice of paediatrics has been the text book edited jointly by him and Professor Gavin Arneil, but the format of which was conceived and designed by John Forfar in 1964.

Finally, John Forfar is a leader of paediatrics. He has been President of the Association of Medical Professors and Heads of Departments of Paediatrics. He has served as Chairman of the Clinical Group of the Association of British Adoption and Fostering Agencies. Most importantly, he has been Chairman of the Joint Paediatric Committee of the Royal Colleges of Physicians and the BPA from its inception. In this post he has had a key role in British paediatrics, and because of his foresight and wisdom and the high respect in which he is held by general physicians as well as by paediatricians, he has accomplished much. His work on the training and career structure for clinical medical officers and senior clinical medical officers will, I believe, prove to be of lasting importance.

Paediatrics is general medicine and in awarding the medal to John Forfar we may be honouring the last survivor of a dying breed—the academic who like the late Sir James Spence is also a general physician.

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John Forfar, we are proud to award you the 1983 James Spence Medal, the British Paediatric Association's highest honour, for your outstanding contributions to the advancement of paediatrics.

James Spence Medallists

1960 Professor A A Moncrieff
1961 Professor R A McCance
1963 Sir F Macfarlane Burnet
1964 Professor L S Penrose
1965 Dr Cicely D Williams
1967 Professor R R A Coombs

1968 Dr Mary D Sheridan
Dr D W Winnicott
1969 Dr G S Dawes
1970 Professor D V Hubble
1971 Dr W W Payne
1972 Dr R C Mac Keith
1973 Professor C A Clarke
1974 Dr J Bowlby
1976 Dr D M T Gairdner
1977 Professor R S Illingworth
1978 Dr S D M Court
1979 Professor K W Cross
1980 Professor J M Tanner
1981 Dr Elsie M Widdowson
1982 Dr D MacCarthy

Erratum

Reference range of plasma creatinine in the newborn infant in the first month of life. *Arch Dis Child* 1983; **58**: 212-5.

The equation printed on page 214 is incorrect and should read:

$$\log e \text{ creatinine} = 6.400 - 0.3026 \times \log e \text{ age in days} - 0.04927 \times \text{gestation in weeks.}$$

The authors P T Rudd, E A Hughes, M M Placzek, and D T Hodes apologise for their error.