

David Allen: Physician, friend, and truly good guy

David Stewart Allan, MD, FRCSC, was born in April 1944, in Vancouver, BC, to school teacher parents. As a young lad he grew up in Port Moody and its environs, and under firm parental guidance he immersed himself in his studies and excelled academically. In his grade 12 provincial exams he attained over 95% in math and physics, and he went on to UBC where, after 3 years of pre-med studies, he was accepted into the Faculty of Medicine, graduating in 1969. A rotating internship at VGH followed, and he then went on to a residency in obstetrics and gynecology in the UBC-VGH program. He successfully completed his fellowship exams in 1973 and joined the staff of the Royal Columbian Hospital (RCH), where he quickly became one of its busiest obstetricians and gynecologists. RCH became his professional home for the next 32 years. During that time he served on and chaired numerous departmental and hospital committees while conducting a large referral practice.

In the early years of his practice David became proficient in colposcopy and was one of the first individuals in BC to learn these skills. Together with the late Henry Kelsey, he was instrumental in introducing and establishing a colposcopy service at the Royal Columbian Hospital. This colposcopy clinic quickly became and continues to be one of the busiest in the province. Through this clinic he pioneered the use of carbon dioxide laser therapy for pre-cancerous lesions of the cervix and vulva.

David's many talents were not confined to the clinical arena. He was a dedicated and enthusiastic educator of interns and medical and nursing students, many of whom rated the time spent in his office and clinics one of

their most worthwhile learning experiences. These learning experiences were often extended with an invitation home for further clinical discussions carried on over some home-cooked gastronomic delight washed down with copious amounts of the appropriate wines.

David is a consummate team player and leader. His organizing skills and attention to detail were evidenced when he chaired the Hospital's Surgical Bed Allocation and Utilization Committee. Through this role he was able to see that all allocated surgical hours were optimally utilized and evenly distributed among the various surgical services, no mean feat in times of the dreaded "three Rs": restraint, regionalization, and resource reduction.

David was a founder of the DA Boyes Society, whose main goal was to develop strong links between the clinicians in all parts of the province and what was then called the BC Cancer Institute, now the BC Cancer Agency (BCAA). He was a firm believer that by making the latest knowledge and skills available to practitioners, these links would benefit all women in BC.

The Society, which is in its 32nd year, meets annually to discuss both the results of patients refereed and treated at the BCCA and new techniques and knowledge. For the first 20 or so years David personally arranged all the social arrangements for this group. The highlight of these assemblies was often the gastronomic experiences that he arranged and which often outshone the scientific presentations.

David's colleagues at the RCH also benefited from his thoughtful organizational impulses such as his initiation of a scientific journal club, open to all members of staff. The club's meetings often featured a guest speak-

er and were conducted over dinner with a carefully considered selection of wines.

David's infectious enthusiasm for good friends and wine was best characterized by the many enjoyable tours to the Okanagan, Washington, and Oregon wineries that he organized. While many were content with the tasting and consumption aspects of these tours, education was a prominent feature on these trips. He provided notes and short lectures on a variety of topics such as the production, tasting, and rating of wine. He delighted in springing unexpected oral quizzes on the group to see if they had done their homework and were paying attention. It seems true that the fruit doesn't fall far from the tree. Given David's intense interest and encyclopedic knowledge of things gastronomic and oenological, one can only hope we have the opportunity to partake in future activities of this nature.

A serious motor vehicle accident several years ago curtailed David's energy and ability to work and to perform surgical procedures of long duration, but it did not diminish his enthusiasm and his willingness to help and advise his many friends in all manner of things.

Enjoy your retirement in good health with Melanie and your family at what you have affectionately called your "u-knots" in the Floridian sun; after all, you not only deserve it, you earned it. A good example of "*Sub hoc signo superabis*" and "*Tuum est.*"

A physician, friend, and truly a good guy.

—J.L. Benedet, MD
Vancouver