

Drs Gowd, Henniger, and Royale: Three gold medal vintages from the Okanagan

Jim Henniger, Derek Royale, and Bas Gowd were the vanguard of BC's regional colposcopy program, spending the majority of their professional lives as practising obstetricians and gynecologists in the Okanagan Valley.

J.L. Benedet, MD, FRCSC

I first became aware of Drs James Henniger, Derek Royale, and Basavana Gowd when I was a resident at the BC Cancer Institute. I often came across chart notes or letters written by one of them regarding referred patients and their problems. Their clinical assessment of patients was clear, precise, and knowledgeable. Their referrals were appropriate and spoke to their concern and compassion for their patients. They demonstrated the hallmark of an exceptional physician practitioner: consistently good clinical judgment. They were confidently competent without being arrogant. To complete the picture they were well liked and respected by patients and colleagues alike.

In the early 1970s a plan for regional colposcopy clinics to complement the Provincial Cytology Screening Program was endorsed by the Section of Obstetrics and Gynecology of the BCMA. As the need for qualified colposcopists was appreciated, each of these physicians immediately offered to help and to take any required training so as to be able to provide colposcopic services to their communities. The initial training course con-

sisted of a month-long preceptorship in Vancouver, away from their families and practices.

They personally assumed all costs and expenses as there were no training grants or assistance available—a clear and tangible example of their commitment and desire to help introduce new and better medical techniques for the women of their communities.

These regional colposcopy clinics soon became—and continue to be—three of the busiest colposcopy clinics in the province. All three individuals provided this service well past their retirement from active clinical practice and until such time as suitably trained replacements were found to continue the service.

Basavana Gowdra Gowd

Bas Gowd was born and educated in India and received his MB BS from Mysore in 1962. After immigrating to Canada he landed in Saskatoon, where he did postgraduate training in obstetrics and gynecology from 1962 until 1966. He completed additional postgraduate training in Spokane, Washington, and at the BC Cancer Institute. After completing his specialty certification he started a consultative practice in Kamloops, where he continued

to work until his retirement in 1998. Over the years he became known for his calm, friendly approach to patients and colleagues. A sensitive individual and a consummate team player, over the years Bas served on numerous hospital committees and as the head of the hospital's obstetrical department.

During the formative years of the provincial Colposcopy Clinic Program he offered to set up a regional clinic at the Royal Inland Hospital. He undertook the necessary training to become highly proficient in colposcopy as well as CO₂ laser therapy. He provided these services to the women of Kamloops and its surrounding areas until his retirement.

Over the years this regional colposcopy clinic and the services it provided became very dear to him and became a major focus of his activities. As he

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Dr Benedet is a retired Vancouver obstetrician and gynecologist. He is a past head of the division of Gynaecological Oncology for both Vancouver General Hospital and the BC Cancer Agency and was a professor in the UBC Faculty of Medicine. In 1973, he organized the Provincial Colposcopy Program and spent the next 30 years coordinating its activities.

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approached retirement, and aware that hospital funds were unavailable to replace the clinic's dated equipment, he purchased and donated a new colposcope for the clinic's use. He also purchased a computer to enable the electronic recording and storage of the patient's colposcopy findings and results, the first system of its kind in British Columbia.

In retirement he continues to perform volunteer fundraising work for a variety of community organizations and charities as well as serving on the university board.

James Henniger

Jim Henniger was born in rural BC, and after attending local public schools in the Kootenay-Boundary area he went on to the UBC. After general studies and varsity football he became a member of the first graduating class of the UBC medical school in 1954. After a rotating internship year at VGH he entered solo practice as a general practitioner in Grand Forks, BC. Jim practised there for 8 years and then he returned to VGH-UBC for a residency in obstetrics and gynecology. After successfully completing his residency, Jim started a specialty practice in Penticton, where he worked until his retirement in 1998.

For many years he provided obstetrical and gynecological care not only to women of the Penticton area but to a large area of the southern Okanagan ranging from Osoyoos to Christina Lake. For several of these years he was the sole individual providing specialist obstetrical care in this area.

Much of this care was provided at a time when there was no teleconferencing calls or air ambulance service for transport of emergency and high-risk maternal cases. The only thing between successful outcomes and disasters was the presence of a skillful practitioner like Jim Henniger.

Jim served on numerous hospital committees over the years that he was

on staff at the Penticton General Hospital. He took an active interest in the affairs of the Section of Obstetrics and Gynecology of the BCMA and could be counted on to provide thoughtful and incisive comments on many issues.

He was the first formal trainee to participate in the Colposcopy Program Mentorship Program and returned to establish and conduct a colposcopy clinic at the Penticton Regional Hospital. He has continued to provide this service until such time as a suitable replacement is recruited.

Jim embraces new ideas and techniques. His confident, competent manner benefited countless women and colleagues over the years. He has served his community and profession in an exemplary fashion.

Derek Royale

Derek was born in Manchester, England, where he spent his formative years. Prior to enrolling in medical school and graduating with an MB ChB from the University of Manchester in 1955, Derek fulfilled his National Service commitment as a tank mechanic in Her Majesty's Service. After coming to Canada, Derek first worked as a GP in Lethbridge, Alberta, for 3 years. In 1960 he came to the VGH-UBC Obstetrics and Gynecology Residency Program in Vancouver. After completing his training and obtaining his specialty certification in

1966, Derek commenced consultative practice in obstetrics and gynecology in Trail, BC. After 3 years of the smoke-eater atmosphere of Trail aggravating his asthma, he moved to Kelowna where he remained for the rest of his professional career. During those 20-plus years he became a skilled and resourceful gynecological surgeon and obstetrician and was known for his competent, caring, and friendly bedside manner. He served on various hospital committees and contributed his talents and abilities to a variety of hospital and community causes. His many friends and colleagues describe him as always willing to help.

An avid outdoorsman, Derek took advantage of his surroundings in the Kootenays and Okanagan to become a master canoeist and accomplished skier. Woodworking and building projects rounded out his interest in doing things with his hands.

In the early 1970s he undertook additional training so as to be able to provide colposcopic and laser therapy to the women of Kelowna and adjacent communities. He was instrumental in establishing the Kelowna Regional Colposcopy Clinic, a service he provided until his retirement from active clinical practice. Cheerful with a wry sense of humor, his insightful comments on a variety of issues and matters were always welcome.



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