

Al was born in Toronto—one of six children—and experienced the difficult years of the Depression. His father was a milk salesman and not in good health, and Al had to get up early to help his father with the milk route when he could. He was unable to complete his high school education as he had to go to work to help support the family. He took the route of a vocational training. He graduated from the Toronto Western Technical School in machine drafting and in 1937 became an apprentice in the tool and dye trade where he remained until 1941. During his apprenticeship years he attended night school to upgrade his education, and in 1942 he combined his junior and senior matriculation exams on the same day that he wrote university entrance exams. He was successful in being admitted to the University of Toronto Medical Faculty in 1942 and graduated in 1947. Following one year of internship in Toronto, he went west to enter general practice in Youbou, Vancouver Island, where he stayed for 2 years.

In 1950 he entered a UBC surgical residency training program at the Vancouver General Hospital, which he completed in 1954, then entered his general surgical practice in Chilliwack, where he remained until his retirement in 1989.

Al was the first general surgeon to practise in Chilliwack. He was part of a now-disappearing generation of surgeons who practised before and after the introduction of medicare. Prior to his arrival, surgical care was provided by general practitioners and itinerant surgeons who would come up from the city for emergency or previously arranged elective surgery. Al therefore provided a much needed service and rarely had any time off for the first eight years he was in Chilliwack, until the arrival of a second general surgeon, Dr Henry Pauls, who provided a welcome relief.

Al's patients were his primary concern. He was considerate, kind,

warm, and a concerned master surgeon who worked long hours and was highly regarded by his colleagues. He was gentle in disposition, quiet and unassuming in manner, wise in counsel, and tireless in devotion to duty. He achieved an improvement in patient care in Chilliwack.

His memberships in professional associations were many: fellow of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada, fellow of the American College of Surgeons, member of the American College of Surgeons Provincial Advisory Committee, president of Surgical Section of BC Medical Association, Member of BC Surgical Society (he was chairman for two years), member of the Executive of the BCMA for 15 years, and chairman of the Reference Committee of BCMA for three years. In 1988 he was awarded an honorary senior membership in the Canadian Medical Association. In other professional activities he was twice president of the Chilliwack Medical Society, president of the Upper Fraser Valley Medical Society, chief of staff at the Chilliwack General Hospital, and District 7 representative to the Board of Directors of the BCMA for 15 years.

In community affairs he was a member of the Chilliwack Rotary Club since 1960 and President in 1964 and awarded as a Paul Harris Fellow by his club. He had a special interest in the work of his club in the Student Exchange Committee and he and Linda hosted 15 students over many years and kept in touch with them after they returned home, with some returning later for further visits. He had a lifelong commitment as an elder in the Community of Christ Church, where he was local pastor from 1990–95. He was a founding member of the Chilliwack Golf and Country Club (high handicap) and a life member of the Chilliwack Museum and Historical Society.

In his leisure time he fitted in bowling, golfing, photography, cross-

country skiing (in his younger days), woodworking, and gardening. Al and Linda's garden was so beautiful that it was part of a community Rotary Garden Tour. For many years they also hosted a Christmas party for Chilliwack Hospital medical staff with sumptuous food, joyous carol singing, and the warmest of hospitality. They traveled extensively in Al's retirement years.

Albert and his first wife, Mary, had two daughters and a son—Susan in Ottawa, Barbara in Tsawwassen, and Stuart in Revelstoke—and with his second wife, Linda, he had one son, Christopher, in Langley, and six grandchildren. A great joy for Al in 2006 was taking the whole family on an Alaska cruise.

Albert was short in stature, but a giant in living, and his imprint on his profession and community will long be remembered.

—Archie Young, MD
Chilliwack

—Henry Pauls, MD
Chilliwack

Dr Claude Henry Cronhelm 1934–2007

Claude Henry Cronhelm died at age 73 in December 2007 of metastatic malignant melanoma.

Claude was born in Belfast, Northern Ireland, and graduated in medicine from Queen's University, Belfast. In 1959 he immigrated to St. John's, Newfoundland, where he served his surgical internship and then worked in the Newfoundland Cottage Hospital System. While there he met and married Sandra. In 1963, upon completion of his OB/GYN residency at the Royal Victoria Hospital in Montreal, he received his FRCSC and moved to Vancouver.

Claude first joined the Seymour Clinic. He then entered into partnership with Drs Bill Bie, Ken Nickerson, and later Gary Romalis. When the partnership dissolved after 31 years, Claude

Continued on page 70

in memoriam

Continued from page 69

joined Dr Henry Woo in practice. Claude was on the active staff of the Vancouver General Hospital and BC Women's Hospital and was a highly regarded clinical teacher.

Claude was a man of many interests, including ham radio, sailing, computers, gardening, photography, and genealogy, while always running a very active clinical practice. One of the highlights of his life was the year 1976–1977 when he took off to sail with Sandra and their young family to Fiji. In Fiji he worked in the OB/GYN department at the Suva Hospital and taught the medical students.

Upon moving to Langley, Claude enjoyed working in his garden and redesigning his large property. He continued to commute to Vancouver and work in his practice until his late sixties, when he slowed down and worked part-time in the profession he loved.

He was highly regarded as a clear thinking and speaking person with great judgment and highly developed surgical and obstetrical skills. He could always be counted on to speak frankly whether at medical rounds or at social occasions.

He took great pride in his family and their accomplishments and will be deeply missed by Sandra, his wife of 44 years, children Peter, Julie, and Jackie, five grandchildren, brother John and sister Jane, and his many colleagues and friends. He died the way he lived, with courage and dignity, surrounded by loving family and friends.

—Garson Romalis, MD
Vancouver

Dr Reid Townsley 1919–2007

It is with much regret that I announce the death of Reid Townsley, who died in December.

Reid was born at the Wellesley Hospital in Toronto. He was brought up and went to school in Ontario. His

father was killed in a riding accident when Reid was just 20, and in order to pay for his university fees, Reid first worked for a time in a northern Ontario gold mining camp, and subsequently did some geological surveying.

He entered Queen's University in 1938, initially, like his father, to become a geologist, but at the end of the first year decided that this was not for him, and chose medicine. In the summer vacations he worked as a bellhop on the steamer *Hamonic*, which ran passengers and freight from Windsor up the Great Lakes to Thunder Bay.

In 1942, in his fourth year, he was inducted into the army. He joined an accelerated program introduced during the war to fulfill the need for doctors in the armed services, which allowed him to graduate in July of 1943. There followed a year of internship at St. Paul's Hospital in Vancouver, and on a weekend trip, returning on the ferry from Victoria, he met Esther, who became the love of his life. They were married in 1945 and remained a devoted couple for some 62 years. Reid was shipped overseas two weeks after they were married. He was stationed in southern England, which he learned to love, and served as a medical officer in a reinforcement unit and in various hospitals.

Immediately after the war he was stationed in Holland, where first began his other passion in life, sailing, on a 23-foot gaff-rigged sloop called *Rainbows*—the beginning of several love affairs with other boats.

Following his demobilization from the services, Reid and Esther headed for Vancouver. They settled in North Vancouver where he first established a general practice. He began his career in anesthesia first as a general practitioner, but later in 1956 left his practice to take further training, qualifying as a specialist anesthetist in 1958 through the program at VGH. He returned to the North Shore and became one of the leading anesthetists in the department at Lions Gate Hospital.

Reid was an excellent anesthetist as well as being a fine doctor. I was always delighted to have him in difficult cases. He was calm, collected, and efficient, and always able to provide the special services that might be required in a given situation.

He was a quiet-spoken man, always thoughtful, with a delightfully subtle sense of humor. In addition to medicine, he had a great love of good literature, music, and art. He and Esther had traveled widely, and he was, in my opinion, an "educated doctor" and a delightful companion.

I was privileged to spend two or three sailing holidays with Reid. The first was on *Flirt*, a lovely 30-foot wooden double ender. He was an excellent sailor and skipper, and taught me most of what I know about sailing, for which I shall always be indebted.

He retired to live on Saltspring Island in 1980, where he and Esther built a lovely home, and where for some years he continued to work part-time in the hospital there. He eventually had to give up sailing, but then took up golf with equal enthusiasm. He is survived by his wife, Esther; his two sons, Frank and Rod; daughter, Mary Jane; and several grandchildren.

He was a charming companion, an excellent doctor, and altogether a lovely man.

—Guy Winch, MBCChB
West Vancouver



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