



obituaries



Sheila Will

Formerly Consultant Psychiatrist
New Craigs Hospital, Inverness

Dr Sheila Will, Consultant in Old Age and General Adult Psychiatry, died in her own home at the age of 46 on 13 September 2001; a great loss to family, friends, colleagues and indeed everyone who knew her.

Sheila attended Aberdeen University, graduating in 1978. On completing her pre-registration year, she immediately entered her chosen career of psychiatry and worked as a senior house officer and then a registrar on the Aberdeen training scheme until 1983. She passed her MRCPsych examination in 1980. During this period she rotated as a registrar to Craig Dunain Hospital in Inverness, where she would, eventually, take up a consultant appointment. She served as senior registrar in Edinburgh in 1983 and 1986, followed by 2 years part-time as senior registrar in Inverness. She was appointed full-time consultant psychiatrist in Inverness in 1988 and continued to work in the department until shortly before her death. She was involved in the provision of both general adult services and old age services for a wide area of the Highlands, including Inverness, Nairn, Grantown, Kingussie and the Isle of Skye. First and foremost she regarded herself as a clinician and her caring demeanour made her immensely popular with her patients. Her kind hearted, unassuming manner would readily put patients at ease and she kept in contact with a number of her patients long after her clinical commitment had ceased. Although primarily a clinician she took an active interest in the planning and development of mental health services, both Highland-wide and nationally. She was strongly supportive, and actively involved in the proceedings of the

Scottish Division of the Royal College of Psychiatrists as well as keeping up to date with UK-wide College developments. She served as a member of the Scottish Old Age Psychiatry Division from 1995 until 1998. On a local level she was a member of, and then secretary to, the Highland Area Medical Committee. From 1997 until 2000 she was secretary, then chairman, of the Mental Health Advisory Group – up until she became too unwell to carry on her work.

As a consultant colleague her clinical skills were exemplary. She was renowned for her hard working enthusiastic nature and her cheerful, disarming demeanour. There was not a colleague who was not moved by the fortitude she displayed in the face of illness and the ability to normalise the enormous impact this had on her family, her colleagues and herself. She was totally unselfish. Despite her illness she continued to work, where she remained ever cheerful, ever positive and continued to have a major role in the shaping and development of mental health services in the Highlands. The influence of this role will continue for years to come. Sheila was a devoted wife and mother and is survived by her husband and two children. Throughout her working life she made certain that her commitments did not intrude on her main passion – her family.

She was caring, she was compassionate, she is sadly missed.

A. G. Hay

Richard Morgan Phillips

Formerly Consultant Psychiatrist
North Staffordshire

Dr Richard Morgan Phillips, who died on August 25 2001 after a long respiratory illness, was born in 1920. He qualified



MRCS LRCP from St Thomas' Hospital Medical School in 1938. He served in the Royal Navy as Surgeon Lieutenant from 1944 to 1949. After demobilisation he worked for a year at Shenley Hospital in Hertfordshire and then returned to St Thomas' Hospital to work in the psychiatric department under Dr Will Sargent, where he achieved notoriety by driving his Austin A7 down the main corridor of the hospital. He obtained the DPM in 1951 and graduated MBChB in 1953.

In 1955 he was appointed Consultant Psychiatrist to the City General Hospital, Stoke-on-Trent, where he spent the next 28 years of his life progressively converting what had been little more than a collection of poor-law lunacy wards into a modern psychiatric unit. He played an important part in integrating what had previously been, in North Staffordshire, a divided service. Initially he was responsible, with the aid of one registrar, for 90 beds, until 1966 when one other part-time consultant was appointed. A Foundation Member of the Royal College of Psychiatrists in 1971, he was elected FRCPsych in 1972.

His opinion was increasingly sought by consultants in other specialities and he was an early practitioner of what was subsequently to become known as liaison psychiatry. He was the first Chairman of the Psychiatric Specialists Sub-committee of the North Staffordshire Medical Advisory Committee and served as, and very much enjoyed being, a medical member of the Lord Chancellor's mental health review tribunal for many years both before and after retirement in 1983. Tall and distinguished in appearance, he had a voice that was immediately reassuring to his patients and he successfully combined the art of psychotherapy with the science of pharmacotherapy – a skill that he had learned under Sargent's tutelage.

In 1955 Richard married Rosalind Barnes, herself a graduate of Charing Cross Hospital Medical School, and they had two daughters and a son. Their elder daughter, Sarah, is a qualified nurse and their younger daughter, Catherine, is a doctor in an accident and emergency service. Their son, Mark, opted for a career in commerce. Richard was a superb host and, at their home in Barlaston, he and Rosalind frequently entertained their many friends to memorable dinner parties. He was, until his health dictated otherwise, an enthusiastic golfer and he was a long-standing member of the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC).

He is survived by his wife, three children and six grandchildren.

Edward Myers, Rosalind Phillips, Kenneth Cowan