Obituary

RAYMOND GORDON DANIELS

12 August 1928–14 January 1995

This is an appreciation of Ray Daniels, a remarkable friend and colleague. It is hard to know where to start to describe his qualities and his talents. He was a man of solid achievement, of wide knowledge and an original thinker. He was a source of inspiration and ideas to many.

The picture shows Ray in his study at his home. Shelves lined with books are all around. He had a fascinating and varied literary library, with poetry a particular passion. There were historical works. His special interest was the time of the American and French Revolutions. Tom Payne, a polymath like himself, was a particular hero from that period. There was music, there was astronomy, there were Celtic stone circles. There was much more and medicine too, of course. In the attic workroom next door to his office Ray kept the telescope that he made himself and was working on restoring several musical instruments shortly before he died.

Ray retired 2 years ago, after 19 years as Consultant-in-Charge of the Accident and Emergency (A&E) Department in Northampton. He was a pioneer there. He built up a Department where the work of all was appreciated. He believed passionately in the rightness of our nationalized health service. He was fearless in his struggles to secure better care for patients and sometimes gloomy about the effects of recent changes.

Ray Daniels was widely known and respected all over the country by colleagues in the A&E medicine field. He was Chairman of the Clinical Services Committee for 6 years. He was Membership Officer for the A&E Medicine Section of the Royal Society of Medicine up to his death. In the BAEM he will be widely remembered for the impromptu choirs which he organized to liven annual scientific meetings.

In print, Ray was the editor of the Journal Scan section in *Archives of Emergency Medicine*. His large circle of friends shared the work of searching the journals, but Ray was the one who reminded us when deadlines approached and it was he who had to prepare each issue for presentation to the printer. Ray's contributions to scientific meetings and literature were varied and imaginative. He published a paper in *Journal of the British Astronomical Society* about Jean Sylvain Bailly, astronomer and mayor of Paris before the French Revolution.¹ He also published a paper in *Journal of Emergency Medicine* on Trauma and English Literature.² He wrote a study of medical facilities on passenger aircraft, and another of the way in which the behaviour of patients can be influenced by 'soap opera' events.³ He collaborated in an analysis of collapses in A&E department⁴ and gave an entertaining presentation in 1992 about how he worked as an A&E Consultant ('I do it my way').

Ray Daniels. Reproduced by kind permission of the Northampton Chronicle and Echo.

Ray Daniel's 'way' was an exciting and varied road. He enjoyed life and company. He relished the increased time available for his family and his many interests when he retired but he missed the challenges and the routines of his work. He felt that he had lots to do still. He did not encourage his nine grandchildren to call him 'grandpa' because that sounded too old.

Ray's sudden illness and death were a great shock to all who knew and loved this vigorous and exceptional man. We shall miss him very much. I hope we can remember some of the original and very funny things he said, as well as the human dignity and social justice for which he strove.

REFERENCES

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