

Garlick, Harry William (1917-1991)

AM(1986) MBBS Melb(1941) MRACP(1949) MD(1950) MRCP(1951) FRACP(1956) FRCP(1968)

Harry Garlick was born in Cranbourne, Victoria, Australia. After attending rural schools, he was successful in gaining entry to Melbourne Boys High, which was regarded at that time as the State's premier boys' high school. He matriculated with honours in 1934. This initial academic success marked him as a young man possessing well above average scholastic ability.

Garlick entered the University of Melbourne medical school two years later and gained honours in most subjects throughout the course; he graduated with honours in medicine and surgery. While at the university he played A-grade lacrosse, both with the university and the Melbourne High School Old Boys. He did not return to this vigorous game during his sporting days; golf was his choice and he paid the same meticulous attention to it as he did to everything else he undertook.

With the advent of war he, like most of his contemporaries, had an abbreviated internship which was spent at the Royal Melbourne Hospital. After basic military training he was posted to New Guinea with the 2/13th Field Regiment. While in New Guinea, he was seen to have an interest in surgery and in 1944 he was sent back to Australia -to the surgical division of the Brisbane military hospital. After a brief stay, learning military surgery, he was sent to New Britain as officer commanding a forward surgical team. This was his final encounter with surgery.

On demobilization Harry Garlick was all too aware of the deficiencies in his formal postgraduate training and felt it necessary to spend a further two resident/registrar years at the Royal Melbourne Hospital and the Royal Children's Hospital. He then decided that he was ready to participate in higher medical training. His first encounter with academic medicine - which was not highly developed in Melbourne in the late 1940s - was as a fellow in the clinical research unit at the Royal Melbourne Hospital under the guidance of Ian Wood, later Sir Ian [Munks Roll, Vol.VIII, p.548] and subsequently as a student supervisor for the University of Melbourne. During this period, he gained his MD and his membership of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians.

This should have been sufficient to enter practice as a specialist physician but he felt the need to gain additional experience of overseas training. He made a pilgrimage to London, where he obtained his membership of the College and rubbed shoulders with famous colleagues. He spent more than a year as a postgraduate scholar at The London Hospital and by that time he was a mature physician who could practise in all branches of internal medicine. His special interest was in gastroenterology, which he maintained for the rest of his life.

On return to Melbourne, he was appointed a physician to Prince Henry's Hospital which had just become a teaching hospital of the University of Melbourne. From the time of this appointment Harry Garlick became very much involved in the welfare of students and in the development of teaching facilities. He was an excellent bedside teacher; he was sub-dean of the clinical school for nine years and dean for another three. As a physician his opinion was widely sought and he was regarded by many as a physician's physician'. He played a critical role in promoting the affiliation of Prince Henry's

Hospital with Monash University and in 1968 he was appointed as professor of the department of medicine.

There can be no doubt that Harry Garlick played a very important role in the union of Prince Henry's Hospital with the 'instant' medical school created by Monash University. Although his commitments to Prince Henry's and Monash were substantial, they were only part of the service he gave to medicine. He was a member of the Medical Board of Victoria for 22 years and for 10 years he was deputy president. He served on the administrative appeals tribunal for six years and was a member of the board of management of Prince Henry's for 16 years.

He was also very much involved in the affairs of the Australian Medical Association as a member of the Victoria branch council for 12 years and its president in 1971, when he was made a fellow of the AMA. He was also on the federal council.

It was inevitable that Harry Garlick should be associated with the RACP. He was elected as a member councilor in 1955, for two years, and returned as an elected councilor for a further period of 10 years, 1965-75. He was a member of the Victorian State Committee for 20 years and its chairman for two of these. In 1982 he was chosen to be one of the first recipients of a college medal for outstanding service.

Despite his many commitments, Harry Garlick continued to maintain a busy practice as a consultant physician. His opinion was widely sought and he enjoyed the pure delights of diagnosis. He had an extraordinary memory and delighted in using some of his interesting cases as illustrative teaching exercises.

His most notable achievement in his last 10-15 years, when his final illness kept him from more robust pursuits, was his woodwork shop. He produced some elegant pieces of furniture for his daughter and friends and continued to do so until a few weeks before he died. He and his wife Sue would retire for a three or four day weekend to their comfortable seaside home on the cliffs at Anglesea. It was all that she could do to persuade him to come for meals, so engrossed was he in the intricacies of the chair or table he was making. Throughout all the months of his painful illness, he never complained.

He married twice; he had three daughters by his first wife Winifred née Champion, who was also a doctor. His second wife was Suzanne Gunn.

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Sources: B Hudson, RCP Inspiring Physicians, Vol.IX, p.192.; MJA 18/3/72, p.17.

