



THE MASONIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

Paper No. 146

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Date: 28 May 2007

Bro. Dr. DONALD MELVYN SHELDON, MB, BS, FRCS. (1937-2007)

It is sad that we learn so much more about our close friends in death than we ever did in life. The many-faceted life of Bro. Dr. Don Sheldon is a prime example, as became obvious to his friends, and perhaps even to his family, between his diagnosis of carcinoma of the lung in July last year and his death.



Dedicated ... Don Sheldon.

Most medical colleagues knew of his superb proficiency in surgery of the gastrointestinal tract, his wonderful ability to teach, his clear mind, his selflessness in his work in Vietnam and his preparedness to go to Iraq to clarify the circumstances around the death of Private Jake Kovco.

His friends in the Southern Highlands town of Robertson knew, perhaps more about his farming and grazing abilities.

As friends met his family for the first time in the last months of his life, different facets of his life were revealed, showing a man who had given much in so many areas, and had so much more to give.

Donald Melvyn Sheldon's parents were school teachers and his father came from an agricultural background in the Southern Highlands.

Born in Dulwich Hill, Don went to Canterbury Boys' High School, where he was vice-captain and an outstanding sportsman. He started his medical career at Sydney University, graduating in 1960 and becoming a junior resident medical officer at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital. Sheldon did his surgical training at Royal Prince Alfred, apart from one year in England with the great surgeon Rodney Smith, Before becoming an honorary surgeon at RPA in 1969.

He topped his primary surgical fellowship exam and won the Gordon Gordon-Taylor Prize for being the best candidate from Australia and New Zealand. During his study he met and married Pam Guard.

He led a surgical unit of doctors from RPA who volunteered to form the Third Australian Surgical Aid Team to Vietnam in 1967. He also worked over the years to provide thoracic surgical services in Port Moresby.

Sheldon had an abiding, and at times fierce, determination to serve not only his patients well but to enable the medical profession to offer independent, truthful and reliable advice and service to patients. With many of his colleagues, he feared

