

### **Dr Ralph Beverly Lynn, 1921–2006** **President, Canadian Thoracic Society 1970–1971**

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It was half a century ago in Saskatoon, the medical school was new, the University of Saskatchewan hospital was new, built of canescent stone shaped by Scottish masons. The clinical faculty under the Dean of Medicine, Dr Wendell MacLeod, was impressive and one of the brightest people in that assembly was a young cardiothoracic surgeon, Dr Ralph Beverly Lynn.

Bev went to school in Penetanguishene (Ontario) and Midland (Ontario). In 1940, he entered medical school at Queen's University (Kingston), and graduated with highest standing in 1945. Following a rotating internship at Kingston General Hospital (Kingston), and having served a short spell in the Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps, he left for England and was appointed Senior Registrar in the department of pathology at the postgraduate school in London (United Kingdom). After that, his curriculum vitae grew prodigiously – working in Edinburgh (Scotland) and London (England), and obtaining the Fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh and England. Then he was off to the United States – to Western Reserve University in Cleveland and to Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore. During this time his research involved the study of peripheral vascular disorders and the application of the heart-lung machine and hypothermia to patients undergoing surgical correction of cardiovascular disease.

He had come to the University of Saskatchewan with a Markle Foundation Scholarship in medical science – an outstanding award. However, in 1958, a move was afoot. Back at his alma mater a cardiac catheterization and pulmonary laboratory was being designed in the new university building, Etherington Hall. Bev returned to Queen's University to become Head of Cardiothoracic Surgery. It involved a great deal of work – getting the heart-lung machine set up for open heart surgery as well as a myriad of other tasks.

Bev was an excellent clinical and operative thoracic and cardiac surgeon who cared for thousands of patients over the years. He had a dry wit and could make a humorous and telling comment when called for – sometimes with a caustic twist. One of his favourite aphorisms had to do with statistics. He would say, “statistics are used as a drunken man uses a lamp-post – not so much for the light it sheds on the problem as for the support it gives to his position.”

During the raising of their four sons, Blanche was always at his side supporting and helping him. Tragically, Bev and Blanche died in a road traffic accident in Ontario on December 1, 2006.

Bev was always proud of his association with the Canadian Thoracic Society and was actively involved for several years, serving as its President from 1970 to 1971. Bev will be dearly missed by those who had the privilege of knowing him.

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