
Obituaries

Jan Teodor Leyberg and formerly consultant psychiatrist to the Bolton and District Health Authority

Jan Teodor Leyberg, the first consultant psychiatrist appointed to the Bolton and District Health Authority, died peacefully in his sleep on 11 September 1994, aged 81. Born in Lodz, Poland, he graduated in 1936 from the University of Warsaw where he specialised in nervous and mental diseases. Thereafter he undertook postgraduate studies at the Salpêtrière in Paris and at the Polish School of Medicine at Edinburgh University where he graduated MD in 1945.

He was in Paris at the outbreak of war where he had joined the Polish Army Medical Corps and with them he was evacuated to Britain in July 1940. He served in the then psychiatric military hospitals at Bellsdyke and Carstairs and in 1942 was appointed as Senior Lecturer in Psychiatry at the Polish School of Medicine in Edinburgh.

In 1946 he became acting superintendent of the Argyle and Bute Mental Hospital at Lochgilphead. He moved to Parkside Hospital in 1948, and three years later after obtaining his DPM from Manchester University, he was appointed Visiting Consultant at Prestwich Hospital, Manchester. He had the additional and very onerous responsibility of developing psychiatric services for Bolton and Bury, a task that was to occupy the next five years. From 1956 he was able to concentrate on Bolton where at first he had sole consultant responsibility for a catchment area with more than 250,000 residents.

Undaunted by the magnitude of the task in hand he pioneered a forward looking community orientated service, well in advance of its time, with its emphasis on early diagnosis, energetic treatment at home and excellent day hospital provision. He worked closely with colleagues in general medicine, general practice and the social services department to establish a well integrated service with very high standards.

Jan was a founder member and later chairman of the Manchester Regional Psychiatric Association, and a past president of the Psychiatric Section of the Manchester

Medical Society. He was elected a Foundation Fellow of the Royal College of Psychiatrists in 1971. As well as publishing papers on a wide variety of topics in the psychiatric press, he took every opportunity to promote an understanding of mental illness among the wider public. He was a passionate advocate of the National Health Service and spared neither time nor trouble in his commitment to it.

To his colleagues in all disciplines he was a wise mentor whom they greatly respected and liked. He taught as much by his excellent example as by precept, insisting that patients were treated with kindness and courtesy as well as skill and care. Under his leadership the Department of Psychiatry at Bolton was a stimulating and happy place in which to work and those who did so benefited from the experience throughout their working lives. No newly appointed inexperienced consultant psychiatrist could have found more support, tactful guidance and friendship than he offered and those of us lucky enough to work with him remember him with affection and gratitude.

His patients had great confidence in his professional judgement. He was always approachable and understanding and they became very attached to him.

Outside the professional sphere Jan's interests ranged widely. He loved music and was a keen supporter of the Hallé Orchestra. An accomplished linguist, he was an omnivorous reader, and in his younger days he excelled in a wide variety of sports. Throughout his life he was an enthusiastic walker with a particular fondness for the Scottish Highlands. His love of his adopted country and his lifelong concern for the less privileged members of its society led to a searching interest in current affairs and to firmly held political convictions, expressed with moderation but deeply felt.

Colleagues will remember Jan as a pioneer in the provision of first-class hospital and community care in a district setting, an achievement made all the more striking when one realises how few resources were made available to him at first. They, and his many friends will also remember his integrity,

loyalty, kindness and sense of humour as well as the generous hospitality he and his wife liked to offer in their home.

On the whole, his health remained good and he was able to enjoy his well deserved retirement and to celebrate his golden wedding with his devoted wife, Peggy. His children, Stephania, Irene, Charles and their families were a source of great pleasure.

By them and by his friends, colleagues and patients he will be greatly missed.

M. E. MACKAY

Charles David Neal, formerly Consultant in Health Care of the Elderly (Psychiatry) Crewe Health Authority



David Neal was born in Nantwich on 30 June 1936, died at home in nearby Wrenbury Heath on 10 April 1994 and is buried in the soil of his beloved Cheshire. His mother died when he was young and he grew up

as an only child devoted to his father who was a skilled and respected cabinet-maker and antique dealer. There was little money but David enjoyed the richness of his father's enthusiasm and knowledge and rapidly demonstrated a wealth of talent of his own. From the local grammar school he entered the medical school of Birmingham University in 1953 where he qualified MRCS, LRCP, MB ChB (1959). Interest in psychiatry led him to work with Gilbert Hall, Michael Jefferson and the Professorial neurosurgical firm. A brief venture into general practice in Balsall Heath gave way to further studies in psychiatry from posts at Highcroft Hospital and help and influence from Professor Sir William Trethowan and Norman Imlah. In 1969 he was appointed consultant psychiatrist in general psychiatry at Shelton Hospital, Shrewsbury, where he served until 1978. Working with characteristic energy, vision and devotion, he was a much sought opinion by local GPs, often proving able to 'fathom' and resolve problems which had baffled others for months or years. He took leadership responsibility in planning and developing

services and joined others in research which led to important publications. His first marriage foundered and he moved for two years to St Lawrence's Hospital in Bodmin. Even there, in a brief and troubled sojourn, he contributed a great deal beyond the routine expectations of work.

In 1980 he returned to his roots to take on what should have been an impossible task. Within a few years he had transformed psychiatric services for the elderly in mid-Cheshire from hopelessness and despair to an example of good practice commended by the Health Advisory Service. Senior registrars from the Mersey Region and beyond were pleased to gain training and encouragement there. Other agencies involved with providing medical and welfare services for old people grew and blossomed. An epidemiologic study of dementia and depression among the elderly of Nantwich was accomplished.

David became a founder member and Chair of BASE South Cheshire and a member of the national executive of BASE, founder member and committee member of Age Concern Cheshire, Chair of the Visiting Panel to the Salvation Army Eventide Home, Member of Crewe C H C. During this time he was an active member and on the Executive Committee of the Old Age Section of the College, he examined in the Membership, was elected FRCPsych and MRCP (Edinburgh).

In 1988 he married Mary Harrison, a union which sustained him through these final years.

Changes in the health service, interpreted locally with vicious right-wing enthusiasm, all but destroyed the services he and Mary had created: old people suffering from multiple long-term illnesses were largely being denied their rights to free NHS care. His colleague Chris McWilliam moved to an academic post at Keele and was not replaced, David took retirement at the earliest opportunity and Mary resigned. There is little doubt that David's heart, though not his spirit, was broken.

He kept the vestige of the service going as his own (supposedly part-time) locum, served as a Mental Health Act Commissioner, studied for and obtained an MA in Medical Ethics at Keele, gave almost every other hour to the church as licensed Lay Reader, Organist and bell-ringer (until too short of breath).

Yet he still found time for his wife, their home, his workshop, garden, antiques, cats, children, grandchildren and many god-children and friends.