

OBITUARY - Dr C.G.Church MB, BS, FFARCS, DA.

Dr C.G.Church, a member of this Society, and a Consultant Anaesthetist in Bradford, Yorkshire, died on April 5th 1989, after a long and courageous battle against malignant disease. He was 45.

Christopher Gareth Church was born in February 1944 in Colwyn Bay and educated at St Alban's School. He studied medicine at St Bartholomew' Hospital, and graduated in 1967. After house jobs at Redhill, he took a short service commission in the Royal Navy, commencing training at Plymouth. He was posted to the West Indies, Malta and Gibraltar. Chris left the Navy in 1973 to pursue a career in anaesthetics, firstly as Registrar in Southampton, then as Senior Registrar in Leeds and finally, in 1977, as Consultant in Bradford.

He will always be warmly remembered in Bradford for his humour, honesty, sense of duty, and integrity. He took a great interest in his work, his colleagues, and, above all, in disseminating the art of anaesthetics and resuscitation through his teaching. His enthusiasm was infectious, and engendered an 'esprit de corps' which was perhaps a typical quality of a Senior Service officer. He spent many hours training, not only medical students and junior anaesthetic staff, but also paramedical staff for the Navy. He held posts of Honorary Lecturer of both Leeds and Manchester Universities, and was a keen examiner of undergraduates. He remained a member of the Naval Reserve and the Society of Naval Anaesthetists, and was very disappointed when his request for active service during the Falklands crisis was refused.

His skill as an organiser was put to the test when he became a director of the Yorkshire Clinic, which at the time had yet to be built and paid for. Within two years it was to become one of the country's leading fully independent hospitals, and set such a high standard that, predictably, it was bought out within seven years of opening. Chris was quite open about his private practice, as he was about most professional matters. Indeed, he took great pride in inviting trainees to visit 'his' hospital, to see how his ideas had borne fruit, as a model in microcosm of what the NHS should be like. Thus, his dedication to duty benefited private and public sectors alike.

At home, Chris enjoyed a full family life with Vicky, a Bart's nurse whom he met as a student. He was justly proud of his children, Nicholas, Katherine and Peter. His interests were varied: an active member of, and MO to, the Keighley and Worth Valley steam railway, he also enjoyed fell walking and was a talented musician. Chris and Vicky were at the forefront in hosting and organising hospital and departmental social events.

Chris fell ill as he was about to take the Departmental Chair, and despite the prospect of prolonged and painful therapy, he decided to continue work, initially in an administrative capacity, but then he made the supreme effort of rehabilitation to full clinical duties. The remission was sadly to last just a year. Fittingly, he will be remembered in part through an eponymous annual examination prize for Leeds anaesthetics students.

P.J.B.S.