

# Obituary

Obituaries should be submitted by email to Jonathan Coe at [jonathan.coe@nature.com](mailto:jonathan.coe@nature.com).

All submitted obituaries should be 400 words maximum in length (apart from obituaries for past presidents of the BDA where the length should be 800 words).

Content of the obituary is down to the individual author, and the approval of the family should be given for the obituary prior to submission to the *BDJ*.



**Brian Mouatt**

1936–2018

Brian Mouatt CBE was born on 4 September 1936. He had hoped to follow his father and become an RAF pilot but was thwarted by less than perfect eyesight. Opting instead for dentistry, he graduated from the University of Edinburgh in 1960 and then joined the RAF dental branch on a five-year commission that included a three-year posting to RAF Butzweilerhof in Germany. During this time he was delighted to have been the first dentist to join the 1000 mph club by flying as crew in a Lightning fighter aircraft. In 1962 he married Ursula who supported him wonderfully throughout his life.

On leaving the RAF he joined the Bournemouth Public Health Department where he provided treatment primarily for patients with special needs. In 1968, with his wife and their two young children, he travelled to Zambia under the auspices of the Foreign and Colonial Office. During four years he oversaw the development of both the country's dental services and the dental school. A challenging task for a young man, which undoubtedly influenced his future career and fostered his love of Africa and its peoples.

He returned to Dorset and into general dental practice. He honed his skills as a natural leader and became a member, then chairman of the regional, district and local dental committees and the Bournemouth Section of the BDA. His enthusiasm for postgraduate education was exemplified by the award of the MGDS RCS (Eng) in 1979.

In 1984 he joined the Department of Health, initially as a dental reference officer. He was soon promoted to senior dental officer tasked with providing advice to ministers and others on the provision of the General Dental Services. In 1990, he was appointed the chief dental officer for England. This was well received by the profession but surprisingly it was only part-time, shared with S. E. Thames RHA. After strong representations it was restored to a full-time post.

His time as CDO was one of profound change, with GDPs recovering from a cut in fees; mandatory vocational training being introduced; a new oral health strategy for England being published and the publication in 1995 of the Mouatt Report on UK specialist dental training. This report was robustly challenged by the BDA, the Royal Colleges and others. He was a little bruised by the personal attacks and frustrated by those seeking to impede the development of specialties within general dental practice, but with characteristic determination he faced his critics head-on. An accord between the GDC, the Royal Colleges and others resolved the situation and Brian's desire for specialist training to become more flexible and more accessible to general practitioners came to fruition.

He was proud to have started the Council of European Chief Dental Officers which he chaired for some years. By the end of 1996 compulsory retirement beckoned and he left with plaudits and thanks from many. These included the health minister who praised his professionalism and further remarked that Brian had 'persuasively presented the profession to the Department and the Department to the profession.' He was appointed CBE in the 1997 New Year's Honours. A year later he was awarded the fellowship of the BDA and

in 2001 he was elected a fellow of the Faculty of General Dental Practice. The faculty had been established in 1992 and Brian had long been an advocate.

In retirement he worked tirelessly for the Commonwealth Dental Association, becoming its President in 2000. He was forever seeking ways to work with others to improve oral health, especially for deprived communities. In 2002 the FDI formed its World Dental Development Committee with Brian as its first chairman. In 2005 that committee, with him at the helm, worked with the WHO and 40 chief dental officers to deliver a 'Declaration on Child Dental Health' which was adopted by the WHO and many governments including the UK. He participated in countless other meetings and workshops especially aimed at helping less well developed nations devise strategies to improve oral health. He was also appointed a consultant adviser to the WHO's African region.

He became an appointed member of the General Chiropractic Council and for nine years he was a director of Dental Protection Ltd. He also held honorary appointments at the Eastman Dental Institute and King's College Dental School.

For many years Brian enjoyed skiing and he also painted watercolours, spending many hours depicting the gradual emergence of Canary Wharf from old warehouses. His garage housed a splendid model railway which he and Ursula enjoyed controlling, often fortified by a glass or two of red wine.

Brian died at home on 29 October 2018 and with his passing the profession has lost a committed, approachable and industrious advocate and friend. Our thoughts are with Ursula and their children, Steven and Susannah, and their three grandchildren.

John M. G. Hunt