

# Departmental Acknowledgement

"We have deep depth"  
Yogi Berra

Hi Everyone,

This is a time of change for our Department. The move has compressed into a short time frame the life cycle event that is retirement and we are experiencing more than the normal expected share this academic year. This week's Departmental Acknowledgement goes to **Patricia Forbes**, one of these retirees who, for many of us, has served as a valued role model earning the sobriquet a "pediatrician's pediatrician".

Originally from Wigan, England (think George Orwell's remarkable "The Road to Wigan Pier", a precis of the human costs of the Depression era), Pat undertook her medical education and initial post-graduate training in the midlands in Manchester before venturing to Montreal for more training. This was at a time when women were the rare exception in the medical profession (I recall her mentioning to me that there were three women in her medical class). She developed a particular interest in renal disorders under the tutelage of Keith Drummond, a former Chair and I believe Canada's first pediatric nephrologist. After training, she eventually settled into a long and fulfilling career as a hospital-based pediatrician with an ongoing and continuous presence over the years on our wards, in the OPD and the ER. Of particular note, she was among the first of our pediatricians to undertake a focus on a particular population of medically complex and challenging patients, creating an inter-disciplinary framework of complimentary expertise to provide holistic best quality care. For Pat, this focus was directed at children with spina bifida. She has been the Medical Director of this clinic since its inception, the hub of the wheel with spokes to nephrology, neurosurgery, urology, orthopedics and neurology. Pat has diligently shepherded these children to adulthood and indeed was doing the walk of 'transition' long before the buzz-word was created.

Pat also undertook many administrative roles over the years that are a necessary part of the fabric of an academic institution. She always did so willingly and with a dedication to quiet excellence that consistently got the job done without fuss. The number of such roles are too numerous to list but to highlight but a few these include: being a member and Chair of our Institutional Review Board that monitors clinical research protocols, the coordinator for family medicine trainees during their rotations in pediatrics, and Chair of the Ward Management Committee. The list really does go on and on.

Now in her eighth decade (sorry Pat), Pat looks terrific and for me has always been the model of the proper Englishwoman. There is something about that accent that makes us male colonials weak. More importantly, in her demeanor and clinical practice, it is evident that Pat embodies the art of medicine and its practice amongst children. She is the model of professionalism that trainees seek to emulate. For many attendings, exposure to Pat as medical students at McGill was a factor in making pediatrics an attractive choice and part of our decision calculus. Pat arrived at the MCH less than 5 years after its move to Tupper Street. She probably is the longest serving physician on this site. Her departure on the cusp of the historic move to the Glen is somewhat poetic and a tangible and personal embodiment of the sense of loss that all of us long timers are normally experiencing.

Along the way of her remarkable professional career, Pat found time to be a mother of four and is currently a devoted grandmother of many. She loves to travel (many of my hallway conversations over the years with her have been on somewhere exotic she has recently been). She is also a fervid curler. A long-time member of the Royal Montreal Curling Club, Canada's oldest active sporting club (founded in 1807 when mad [neurosyphilis presumably] King George III reigned and curling took place on the ice of

the St Lawrence River), Pat takes delight in both the competitive and social elements of the game. She continued her pioneering ways at the Club serving recently as its FIRST woman President (after almost 200 years, perhaps they were ready). Reflecting on Pat's diverse accomplishments, much of what our daughters can take for granted as the way it should be in our world is due to the efforts, which was not easy at times, of women such as Pat.

Please take the time to send Pat a message as she takes the next step in her personal journey. Please join me in wishing her only the very best in health, happiness and experience as she takes leave of her professional efforts.

Have a great weekend everyone !

Michael

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