



Dr. E.J.W. Bowie (1925-2008)

Dr. E.J. Walter Bowie, Professor Emeritus of Medicine and Laboratory Medicine at the College of Medicine, Mayo Clinic, died Sunday, March 16, 2008 in Rochester, Minnesota at age 83 years.

Edward John Walter Bowie was born March 10, 1925 in Church Stretton, Shropshire, England where his physician father was in charge of a public health facility. After spending much of his childhood in Doncaster, Yorkshire, his studies in Classics at Oxford University were interrupted by World War II during which he served as a sublieutenant in the Royal Navy, including assignment to a motor torpedo boat that participated in the D-Day invasion. Following the war, Bowie returned to Wadham College, Oxford to begin medical school. In 1949, just before beginning training in clinical medicine at University College Hospital, London, he married Gertrude Susi ("Trudi") Ulrich in Stammheim, Switzerland. After obtaining B.M and B.Ch. degrees and postgraduate medical training at several London hospitals, in 1954 the Bowies emigrated to Treherne, Manitoba, Canada, where Dr. Bowie began a general medical practice. In 1958 he moved to Rochester, Minnesota, USA with his wife and four children to begin a fellowship in internal medicine at Mayo Clinic, and after qualifying for the M.S. degree in Medicine from the Mayo Graduate School and the University of Minnesota, he joined the consulting staff in 1961 in the Division of Hematology and Internal Medicine.

Under the mentorship of Drs. Charles A. Owen, Jr. and John H. Thompson, Jr., Dr. Bowie developed an interest and special expertise in hemostasis and blood coagulation. He received the Judson Daland Travel Award from Mayo Foundation in 1963 which enabled him to visit several national and international hemostasis diagnostic and research laboratories. In 1971 he founded the Mayo Hematology Research Section that was initially focused on hemostasis and dysproteinemias, and he undertook leadership of the Mayo Special Coagulation Laboratory (founded by Dr. Owen in 1950) and affiliated Coagulation Clinic, all of which he directed through 1989. Bowie also laid the groundwork for the Mayo Comprehensive Hemophilia Center that was directed by Dr. Gerald S. Gilchrist from 1972 through 1999 and which was designated in 1974 as an International Hemophilia Training Center by the World Federation of Hemophilia. The hemostasis laboratory and clinical, research and education units remained closely integrated and contiguous, fostering synergism and advancements in knowledge and patient care. After his retirement in 1990 Dr. Bowie then directed the General Coagulation Laboratory and he continued to make contributions to the Special Coagulation Laboratory's practice, research and education until 1996. Subsequently, with Dr. William L. Nichols he co-edited Dr. Charles A Owen's monograph, "A History of Blood Coagulation" that was published in 2001, and with Dr. Gerald Gilchrist he wrote "Bleeding and Thrombosis at Mayo Clinic: A Brief History" that was published internally in 2005.

During more than 40 years of clinical practice, research and education focused on hemostasis and thrombosis, Bowie and colleagues provided important contributions that furthered knowledge and understanding in many areas of this broad discipline. His publications include more than 300 articles and book chapters, and five books. In 1963, Bowie and colleagues were the first to emphasize the occurrence of thrombosis in patients with systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE) and circulating anticoagulants. Dr. Bowie had special interests in qualitative platelet disorders and in von Willebrand disease (VWD), and especially notable contributions from Bowie and colleagues included: 1) establishment of a porcine VWD animal model with studies of the bleeding time, platelet retention and hemostatic plug formation, including use of monoclonal antibody blockade of von Willebrand factor (VWF) and its platelet receptors; 2) collaborative work in the isolation and first observations of the multimeric structure of VWF; 3) pioneering work revealing the importance of VWF in mediation of the atherosclerotic process; 4) use of organ and bone marrow transplantation to demonstrate sources and roles of various body pools of VWF in hemostasis; 5) collaborative work in the isolation of porcine coagulation factor VIII, cloning of the human factor VIII gene, and its application to defining mutational status of potential carriers of hemophilia and to introduction of recombinant factor VIII for hemophilia therapy.

Throughout his career Dr. Bowie served on intramural and extramural committees and professional editorial boards, delivered numerous invited lectures and educational presentations, garnered continuing extramural research funding for the Mayo hemostasis program project group (1972-1991), and received many recognitions and awards. In 1987 Dr. Bowie was named a Mayo Foundation Distinguished Investigator, and in 1996 he received the Mayo Foundation Distinguished Alumnus Award. He was awarded the D.M. degree from Oxford University in 1987, and in 1991 he received the Distinguished Career Award from the International Society on Thrombosis and Haemostasis (ISTH). For that society he served as vice president of the VIIIth ISTH congress in Toronto (1981), chaired the Scientific and Standardization Committee (SSC) 1988-1990 preceded by serving as its secretary (1986-1988), and chaired the SSC Animal Models subcommittee (1981-1984) and served on other subcommittees including Platelets (from 1974), Factor VIII and VWD (from 1976) and Lupus Anticoagulant (from 1981). Bowie also was active in the World Federation of Haemophilia (WFH) including chairing its VWD Committee (1983-1989), and in the USA National Hemophilia Foundation (NHF) and its Minnesota chapter. In 1990 a retirement festschrift, the Bowie Symposium on von Willebrand Disease, was held at Mayo Clinic Rochester. In post-retirement he collaborated with Dr. Fedor Bachmann to found the international Thrombosis and Vascular Training Centers program. In addition to his own distinguished career, Dr. Bowie encouraged and fostered the careers of many others.

Dr. Bowie was well known for his quick wit, entertaining stories and love of limericks. His colleagues and friends worldwide appreciated his collegiality, perceptive humanism and leadership. He suffered a life-altering skiing accident at age 69, which he bore with uncommon grace. He is survived by his wife, Trudi; four children, Katherine, Christopher, John and James; seven grandchildren; and a brother, Edgar, of Copenhagen,

Denmark. A memorial service was held March 21, 2008 at Charter House in Rochester, Minnesota where the Bowies had recently resided. Memorials may be made to the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation at Mayo Clinic or to the National Hemophilia Foundation, New York, NY USA.

On behalf of Dr. Bowie's many colleagues, students and friends it is our privilege to contribute this obituary for him. He will be sorely missed by all.

William L. Nichols, MD1

Jerry A. Katzmann, PhD1

Kenneth G. Mann, PhD2

Dennis A. Gastineau, MD1

David N. Fass, PhD1

Lawrence A. Solberg, Jr., MD, PhD5

Gerald S. Gilchrist, MD1

Whyte G. Owen, PhD1

Francis J. Kazmier, MD3

John A. Heit, MD1

Gerhard J. Johnson, MD4

Rajiv K. Pruthi, MD1

1Mayo Clinic Rochester; 2University of Vermont; 3Mayo Clinic Arizona; 4Veterans Affairs Medical Center Minneapolis; 5Mayo Clinic Jacksonville

Correspondence: Dr. William L. Nichols, Special Coagulation Laboratory, Hilton 200, Mayo Clinic, Rochester, MN 55905 USA email: nichols.william@mayo.edu
telephone: 1-507-284-5978