

IFSSH Pioneer profile

Graham Stack

H. Graham Stack came from Bristol where his father was an eye surgeon. He gained a scholarship from Clifton to Bristol University where he studied Physics and Chemistry before starting medical training at St Bartholomew's Hospital (Barts).

The turning point in his career came in 1955. He had returned from America the previous year where he had studied hand surgery. Intent on pursuing this interest he found the only available outlet in this country closed to him. He resolved to start an alternative group and wrote to several interested surgeons of his own seniority; thus was born the Second Hand Club. With single mindedness of purpose he was secretary and treasurer, he recorded the proceedings and circulated the members.

With his wife Lorna's devoted help he organised twice yearly meetings at home and abroad. It is impossible to overstate the enormous amount of work which Lorna put in all sorts of ways to make the club and later the society a success. She and her husband must for years have been the best customers of the Bonnington Hotel near the Royal College of Surgeons. From the outset most orthopaedic and plastic surgeons with a major interest in the hand joined the club and so started that fruitful co-operation between the two specialties which grew into the British Society for Surgery of the Hand, collecting on the way anatomists, rheumatologists and specialists in rehabilitation who could lend their expertise to this fascinating and intricate field of surgery.

This initial vision has finally taken practical form in the recognition of the principle of inter-specialty training. The Second Hand Club was remarkable for something else. Within a few years it had attracted hand surgeons worldwide and especially from the countries of Europe, who were regular attenders at its meetings. International federations of surgery may be the talk of today but in hand



surgery it was a subject of the 1960s. He was the second secretary of the International Federation of Societies for Surgery of the Hand in 1972, president in 1978 and was recognised as one of the pioneers at a ceremony in Tokyo in 1986. Supported by sympathetic publishers, the proceedings of the Second Hand Club grew into a specialist journal, 'The Hand'. Graham's role as editor, production manager and supervisor of the printing is part of the folklore the British Society and continued until the journal's very success forced an expansion of its staff culminating in affiliation with the American Society to become the British volume of the Journal of Hand Surgery.

**The IFSSH ezine acknowledges the above information from an obituary published in the Journal of Hand Surgery(Br)1993 18:270*