

Professor Douglas Kevin Baird AM

The honorary degree of Master of Surgery was conferred posthumously upon Douglas Kevin Baird AM by the Chancellor Dame Leonie Kramer AC CVO at the Faculty of Medicine graduation ceremony held at 2.00pm on 2 May 1996.

Citation

Presented by the Vice-Chancellor and Principal Professor Derek Anderson

Chancellor,

I have the honour to present Mrs Philippa Baird to receive on behalf of her late husband Professor Douglas Baird, the degree of Master of Surgery (honoris causa).

Douglas Kevin Baird graduated from this University in 1966 with the degrees of Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery with First Class Honours and the degree of Bachelor of Science (Medical). He trained in cardiothoracic surgery at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital and at Greenlane Hospital in Auckland. He subsequently became a Fellow of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, a Fellow of the Australian College of Surgeons and of the American College of Cardiology.

In 1974 he was appointed to the Department of Cardiothoracic Surgery at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital and Head of that Department in 1981. He developed computer software which enabled all patients treated in that unit to be prospectively documented. This provided hospitals with one of the world's best documented databases, which will continue to be used to understand the natural history of cardiac disorders for years to come. He was a pioneer in electrophysiological surgery for cardiac arrhythmias and the biology of vascular grafts. In 1976 he played an important role in re-organising the Australian Cardiac Society Register, which contains data on all cardiac procedures performed in Australia. It is a unique record not available in any other country.

In 1991 he was appointed Clinical Professor by the University of Sydney. He was instrumental in organising undergraduate medical teaching in cardiothoracic surgery. He participated widely in administration in management, holding among other positions the Chair of the Board of Central Sydney Area Health Service in 1987. He was Chairman of the Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery of Royal Prince Alfred Hospital between 1982 and 1987. Professor Baird served this University for many years.

He worked tirelessly for the Medical Graduates Association and was its President from 1992 until 1995. In 1991 he was an Honorary Governor of the Medical Foundation and in 1994 he was Chairman of the John Loewenthal Club. He was a Fellow of Senate from 1994 until his untimely death.

Professor Baird published widely in many refereed journals and was internationally respected as a clinician. He was a Consultant Surgeon to the Republic of Singapore, an Adviser to the Federation of Malaysia and Chairman of the Sir Edward Dunlop Hospital in Delhi.

Today we honour and remember Douglas Baird's many gifts and attributes. By example, he inspired so many and enriched the lives of all those privileged to know him.

Chancellor, I have great pleasure in presenting Mrs Philippa Baird to receive on behalf of her late husband, Professor Douglas Baird AM, the degree of Master of Surgery (honoris causa).