



2017 Newington Medal - International

BRIAN SOMMERLAD (ON 1958)

Brian Sommerlad was a student at Newington College from 1954 – 1958. In 1956 he was awarded the Stretton Waterhouse Memorial Prize, was a member of the 1st Debating in 1957-58, won the Moulton Prize in 1957, was awarded the Wigram Allen Scholarship in 1957, and in 1958 was Cadet Lt./CUO, a Sub-Prefect and was a member of *The Newingtonian* Committee.

Upon leaving Newington College, Brian attained his Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery in 1966 from the University of Sydney. Brian was the Resident Medical Officer at Sydney Hospital (1966-1968) and Royal Alexandra Hospital for Children, Sydney (1967-1968) holding both junior and senior positions in both hospitals. The United Kingdom beckoned in 1969, where Brian commenced his career at the Great Ormond St Hospital for Sick Children, London as a Senior House Officer (Plastic & Orthopaedic) and it continues today as a Consultant Plastic Surgeon.

In 1970 Brian was made a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons, England. He is also a Fellow of the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health and in 1998 became a Fellow of the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (Hon). In 2000 he became, a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh (Hon).

In 1971, Brian was a Surgeon in the Australian Surgical Team, Bien Hoa Hospital, South Vietnam. For service Brian was awarded the Vietnam Logistic and Support Medal and the Australian Active Service Medal.

For the last four decades Brian has held positions as a Plastic Surgeon throughout hospitals in England, specialising in surgery for children and adults with cleft of lip and palate and associated conditions. He has been particularly involved in the development of the operating microscope for cleft palate repair and in re-repairing the cleft palate as an alternative to pharyngoplasty in some patients.

Brian's skill and knowledge has commanded numerous surgical and teaching posts, he is a Full Member of eleven international Medical Associations. He is the past President of both the British Association of Plastic Surgeons and the Craniofacial Society of Great Britain and Ireland. His highly specialised skill has directed Brian to teach fellow surgeons in Indonesia, India, Sri Lanka, Uganda, Bangladesh and China. It is via these experiences that led to his philanthropic work.

Brian regularly visits countries where cleft lip and palate services are less well-developed, to work with local surgeons and to assist in their development of multi-disciplinary teams. He is a Trustee of Interface Uganda, and also works with cleft teams in Sri Lanka, Iran, Egypt, Bangladesh and Venezuela. He is an honorary member of the Indian Society of Cleft Lip, Palate and Craniofacial Anomalies and regularly attends meetings in India. He is a member of the Medical Advisory Board of Smile Train, a US based charity dedicated to empowering and supporting local surgeons and teams to carry out cleft lip and palate surgery.

This lifelong and extraordinary contribution to medicine and the impact it has on so many people provides an inspirational example of achievement for past and present students of the College. It is an honour to name Brian Sommerlad as the Newington Medallist (International) for 2017.

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