Gillespie Neal (Neil) McGilp Orr

MB BS, FRCS

NEIL ORR was born on 19 October 1919 on a property called "St Helens" in Toowoomba, Queensland, the only child of Scottish immigrants. Neil attended school at Toowoomba Grammar and studied medicine at the University of Sydney. At university, he stayed at Wesley College, where he was in the rowing team.

Neil graduated in 1944 and served his internship at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Sydney. He then set sail for England as a ship's surgeon on the HMS *Bellerophon,* which stopped on the way at Batavia to collect the Dutch gold that had been sent there for safety at the beginning of the First World War. He arrived in England in 1947, where he worked at several hospitals, including Hillingdon Hospital, Uxbridge, where he undertook most of his surgical training. In 1960, he was awarded Fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons.

In the early 1960s, Mona Vale Hospital opened on Sydney's northern beaches and Neil was appointed its first Medical Superintendent. He helped set up the hospital and recruit staff. A house in the hospital grounds was built for the Superintendent, with a magnificent view over the ocean and golf course. Neil was a keen surf swimmer and swam regularly.

Neil remained in this role until he retired in 1986. As Superintendent, Neil regularly visited all sections of the hospital and knew all who worked there, including nurses, pharmacists, and kitchen and ground staff. Although he no longer practised as a surgeon, he maintained his interest by assisting consultant surgeons at the hospital.

In his later years, he helped his close friend Dr Josephine Wiseman in her nuclear medicine practice. She subsequently looked after him in his last few years when he was confined to a wheelchair. After a long illness, Neil died on 9 August 2010.

James B Roche