

Walter James (“Bill”) Skinner

MBBS

WALTER JAMES (“BILL”) SKINNER died of melanomatosis on 12 July 2003, aged 88, after a long illness. Born on 3 April 1915, he was educated at Waverley College, Sydney, and studied medicine at the University of Sydney, graduating in 1940.

After working as a Resident Medical Officer at St Vincent’s Hospital, Sydney, Bill enlisted in 1941 in the 2nd Australian Imperial Force. He served as a Medical Officer in the Middle East with an artillery regiment and later had various postings in the Papua New Guinea campaigns. In 1942 he married Dorothy Magee, a St Vincent’s nurse.

After the war, Bill worked in country general practice in various places, including Taree, NSW, and southern Queensland. In 1955, he bought a practice in Windsor, NSW, and also the famous, historic “Doctor’s House” in Windsor’s Thompson Square.

Bill practised in the Hawkesbury area for some 36 years. He was a foundation member of the Nepean–Hawkesbury



Local Association of the British Medical Association (NSW) Branch, and a long-serving Secretary of the Honorary Medical Board of the Hawkesbury District Hospital. For most of his years as an Honorary Medical Officer there were no resident medical staff, so Bill and his colleagues were responsible for all emergency and in-patient care. For many years he performed most of the anaesthetics for his colleagues’ patients as well as having a very large obstetric practice.

Bill’s high principles and ethics, and his loyalty to the Anglican Church, to his profession, and to his colleagues and many patients made him a highly respected member of the community. He had hoped, in retirement, to have time for his great love — cricket. His idea of a perfect day was to be in the members’ stand watching a good game of cricket and having a leisurely lunch of a bottle of beer with two cold Sargent’s meat pies.

Bill is survived by his children Elizabeth, Mary and Stephen.

John JG Bain