



Roger Williams

INTRODUCTION

This supplement to *Gut* has been produced to mark the 25th Anniversary of the founding of the Liver Unit at King's College Hospital, London. Before Roger Williams came to King's there was no specialised interest in hepatology there. He rapidly built up the clinical and academic infrastructure and within months the Unit was making its mark. It grew steadily in size and stature over the years and today the Liver Unit (now the Institute of Liver Studies) is known throughout the world, both for its clinical excellence and wide-ranging contribution to basic and applied research. It is to mark the achievements of Dr Roger Williams and his Unit in the past 25 years that this supplement has been produced.

In planning this supplement to *Gut*, our aim was to provide a series of reviews written by past and present members of The Liver Unit. Although the reviews will, of necessity, reflect the individual prejudices of the authors concerned, it is hoped that each article will provide an up to date and authoritative review of the areas selected and not merely reflect the contributions of the Liver Unit to the field. Clearly, in a volume of this size it is not possible to cover all aspects of liver disease comprehensively and to those past and present members of the Liver Unit who feel left out, we offer our apologies.

It is fitting to record here the recent tragic death of Brian MacDougall. Brian worked for many years on the Liver Unit as Research Fellow and then senior registrar before taking up the post of consultant physician in Brighton. Brian's enthusiasm, experience and concern for patients and colleagues will be remembered by all those who worked with him. He was

keen to contribute to this supplement and it is with great pleasure that we include his review.

Many people have gone out of their way to help with the planning and production of this supplement. In particular, we would like to thank Dr R Allan, editor of *Gut*, for his support and enthusiasm, we are grateful also to the staff of the *British Medical Journal*, Dr Stephen Lock (who was then editor), Mr D Parrot of the *BMJ*. Again, we are delighted that Shirley McGealey was prepared to provide the technical editorial skills which we are lacking. Our thanks too, to Ian McFarlane for stimulating some of the late entries from The Liver Unit. We are most grateful to Dame Sheila Sherlock, in whose department Roger initially trained in hepatology, for writing the foreword. We would also like to express our great thanks to all the contributors, and to the Trustees of the Liver Research Unit Trust for a most generous contribution to the cost of this tribute.

We hope then that this supplement will mark the 25th Anniversary of the Liver Unit in a way that will be of interest not only to the past and present members of the Liver Unit but also to the wider community of hepatologists and gastroenterologists.

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