

Vale Bob Elvey

The manipulative physical therapy world grieves for past IFOMPT President Robert Elvey who passed away on 17 April 2013 after a long period of illnesses.

Bob, as we all knew him, will be remembered warm heartedly by thousands of colleagues, former patients, relatives and friends for many qualities and achievements.

Bob was a pioneer therapist.

While being an expert for joint and spinal assessment and management, he initiated a whole new area of manipulative physical therapy: the world of neural tissue provocation testing and managing nerve trunk pain with outstanding subtlety and variability. He introduced pain science in manual therapy, referring to peripheral and central sensitization, and adopted Sidney Sunderland's conception of "Muscles Protect Nerves".

Bob as a teacher and mentor.

He could mirror anybody at any level. He always appealed to common sense and his most often asked question was an answer to a student's question "You tell me". And never without a big smile.

Bob as a presenter and researcher.

Slides instead of PPT. Paper instead of www and PDF. At the edge of digital and scientific revolutions, Bob was keen to initiate research in the academic setting of Australian physiotherapy. He developed to an excellent ambassador of Curtin University of Technology Perth Western-Australia. His dissection video with pins in nerves and surrounding tissues may have some methodological flaws, however is seminal work and inspired so many students and colleagues. Close your eyes and see the pins moving. No matter whether there were just a few course members, or up to one thousand at a conference, Bob was Bob, always the same. Remarkable.

Bob as President of IFOMT.

Bob served IFOMT, without the P, as president from 1984 to 1992. Difficult times it was. Competitive educational groups were seeking for IFOMT membership and the parent body recognition clause urged him to develop the conception of the umbrella groups. His attitude was that there always is a solution. He always had the common cause in mind. It was with great reluctance and only under four eyes that he would express his disappointment. Bob was awarded the Honorable Life Membership of IFOMPT in 2000 in his home town Perth (photo with Stan Paris also receiving award), and just last year in Quebec he was awarded IFOMPT's inaugural Geoff Maitland Award for outstanding clinicians. He could not make the trip, but his closest colleague Toby Hall, presented his grateful and inspiring letter. Bob donated the money connected to the



Award to an African student to enable his attendance, and also topped it up with some funding of his own. Generosity was his second name.

Bob loved sports.

He did swim, because of his bad knee there was no other option to do sports. He loved Aussie rules or basketball, occasionally accompanied by a good beer, or two. Of course.

Bob as a patient.

After his career, leaving Perth and the physiotherapy world behind, he certainly had a different idea about retirement. Suffering organic and nervous system dysfunction, Bob felt very unwell for a large number of years. He was a very strong fighter and was fighting for life for a long time.

Bob as a friend and family man.

Any reader of these lines can come up with numerous fond memories. Telling jokes, referring to Peter Sellers "A mouse that roared". He would always inquire how your wife and kids were doing. Yes, there are many great ways how to remember him. We now feel with his wife Pamela and children Dan and Susan, and send them our sincerest condolences.

Dear Bob, thank you so much for everything you gave us to a huge extent.
May your soul rest in peace. God bless you and your family.

John Langendoen and IFOMPT Friends



Clinic photos courtesy of John Langendoen