

Paul Gallagher

(1941 - 2025)

Obituary by Keith Tucker



Paul Gallagher joined the orthopaedic department at the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital in 1980 as one of five general orthopaedic surgeons but with a special interest in surgery of the upper limb. He rapidly became an outstanding opinion and technically excellent surgeon with a practice that reached well outside Norfolk.

Paul was a Yorkshire man through and through. He grew up in Castleford and attended a Jesuit school, St Michaels in Leeds. His father was a building contractor. His family had a close association with the Catholic Church.

In 1961, he attended Leeds University to read Mechanical Engineering but quickly switched to medicine although his love of things mechanical never left him.

Sport was always a big part of Paul's life. He was an outstanding player at both rugby and cricket, captaining Leeds Medics at both sports and at one time playing for various Yorkshire County Cricket sides, as seam bowler and hard-hitting bat.

His training included a substantial amount of general surgery at registrar level (as was expected of budding orthopaedic surgeons in those days) before commencing his orthopaedic training which included spells at the RNOH and Bristol. He undertook a fellowship with Raoul Tubiana in Paris where he helped translate Tubiana's textbook into English.

Paul married Sheilah, a physiotherapist in 1971 and they have two sons, Robbie and Alasdair, the latter practicing as a GP in Leeds.

At the N&N, he rapidly developed an upper limb service, establishing joint clinics with the plastic surgeons and the rheumatologists. He was much admired by both his colleagues and trainees. He is remembered fondly by his patients, with his white coat and his bow tie.

Paul strongly supported his trainees, helping them publish when they wished. He was one of the early advocates for the use of the de la Caffiniere first carpo-metacarpal joint replacement.

He was one of the original group appointed to examine the then 'new' FRCS Orth and indeed was one of the specialist hand and wrist examiners for many years and regarded widely as a very 'fair' examiner.

Shortly after his retirement from the N&N Paul moved back to his beloved Yorkshire where he played a lot of golf besides, as well as caddying for Sheilah who played competitively. He was a knowledgeable ornithologist.

Very sadly, some years ago Paul developed Lewy body dementia and then Parkinson's disease. He died following pneumonia after injuring a shoulder in a fall. ■



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