

## James Wroe

It is with sadness that we report the passing of the founding owner-publisher of *Practical Diabetes*, James Wroe aged 74 years, after a long debilitating illness. Poignantly, the news was received during the recent Diabetes UK annual professional conference, where on so many previous occasions James's inimitable presence had become so familiar and engaging.

His contribution to diabetes through his publishing work was immense, extending far beyond the written word, embracing an exceptional relationship with those facing the challenge of diabetes, both professionals and people with diabetes alike. In September 1984, at significant personal investment, James launched the first issue of *Practical Diabetes* through his then own publishing company (Asgard). A dynamic partnership with the inaugural Editor, Arun Bakshi, a man of equal entrepreneurial spirit, had identified an increasing importance of the multi-disciplinary team in the delivery of diabetes care. Consequently, an educational journal based on then current good clinical practice, meeting a diversity of professional interest, was considered both innovative and welcome. *Practical Diabetes* was the first diabetes journal of its kind and, in particular, included a primary care readership at a time when diabetes care was almost exclusively under hospital diabetes clinic domain.

James Wroe, educated at Merton College Oxford, was a consummate classicist by nature, an accomplished poet, lover of music and a talented, classical guitar player. Yet, he was entirely at ease in the medical world, enriching us through his publishing skills, initially with *Hospital Doctor* and then *Practical Diabetes*. He gave tireless support to so many involved in diabetes care, and his pivotal role with PROUD (Professionals United by Diabetes) deserves special mention – 'an international network of health care professionals meeting the challenge of diabetes'. James was a stalwart champion of the Association of British Clinical Diabetologists (ABCD) during its early years, serving as the Charitable Trust's first Chairman, and for which he was recognised with honorary life membership, one of an elite few.



In 2003, the International Diabetes Federation (IDF) Congress held in Paris bestowed on James the honour of delivering a prestigious lecture, particularly special as a non-medical speaker. His talk, entitled 'Can the Medical and Lay Press Influence Policy Makers?', was replete with literary quotations, such as: 'a doctor's image of the journalist': *genus irritabile vatum* (Horace) 'the difficult tribe of writers', contrasted to 'a journalist's image of the doctor': 'people of the same trade seldom meet together... but the conversation ends in a conspiracy against the public!' (Adam Smith, 'The Wealth of Nations').

We have so many memories of James, always courteous, singularly modest and remarkably generous – in fact the quintessential English gentleman. Our condolences are with his wife Sian and family, including brother Charles, who for many years was part of an inseparable publishing partnership. *Practical Diabetes* is hugely indebted to James Wroe and we will very much miss him.

**Professor Ken Shaw, MA, MD, FRCP, Emeritus**  
Professor of Medicine, University of Portsmouth, UK