

Obituary

Inderbir Singh

(29 August 1929–3 March 2014)

A TEACHER BEYOND COMPARE



Every medical graduate in India at one time or another has studied a book written by Professor Inderbir Singh. A prolific writer, a teacher beyond compare, an excellent artist, a computer wizard and of course a wonderful human being; these are some of the epithets that can be used to describe him.

I am fortunate to be one of the lucky medical graduates who had an opportunity to learn from him at the

Post Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences, Rohtak, Haryana (then known as Rohtak Medical College). In 1988, when I joined the medical college as a 17-year-old we were all impressed by the humility of a senior teacher—Dr Inderbir Singh. He used to bend quite low to return your good morning wishes to him. He never raised his voice, but as he himself was very disciplined he instilled an attitude of perfection in us.

An excellent artist, he set up a beautiful anatomy museum in the premises of Rohtak Medical College. He prepared coloured chalk to teach us anatomy in his innovative way. Though the

blackboard would hold his art for maybe an hour or two, his masterly lectures in human embryology are still clear in our minds almost 30 years after he delivered them. He needed no expensive equipment to explain a point; we distinctly remember that he folded the cloth duster into various shapes to explain how the human embryo develops in the womb.

He was a prolific writer. After writing the human embryology textbook (published by Macmillan), he went on to write several textbooks of anatomy. A special feature of these textbooks was that he would start with the bony skeleton and layer by layer would add the muscles, the blood vessels, nerves and then the skin.

Words cannot describe our gratitude towards him. We distinctly remember him working on his computer, and writing his books (very few teachers used the computer at that time as efficiently as he did).

There is so much to write about him but I feel blessed to have learnt my basics from a doyen of Anatomy like Dr Inderbir Singh Ji. Ours was probably the last batch he taught (later he became Professor Emeritus at Rohtak Medical College) but his books continue to guide us.

PUNEET KAUR

Batch 1988

Rohtak Medical College

(presently Pandit B.P. Sharma Postgraduate

Institute of Medical Sciences)

Rohtak, Haryana

Obituaries

Many doctors in India practise medicine in difficult areas under trying circumstances and resist the attraction of better prospects in western countries and elsewhere. They die without their contributions to our country being acknowledged.

The National Medical Journal of India wishes to recognize the efforts of these doctors. We invite short accounts of the life and work of a recently deceased colleague by a friend, student or relative. The account in about 500 to 1000 words should describe his or her education and training and highlight the achievements as well as disappointments. A photograph should accompany the obituary.

—Editor