

# Obituary

## Peter Castaldi

1933-2018

### A legend and a role model

*Medicine Today* mourns the loss of Peter Castaldi but celebrates the many major roles he played, including a pivotal role in *Medicine Today*.



**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF  
PETER CASTALDI**

AO, MD(Syd), DU Paris(Hon), FRACP

**E**meritus Professor Peter Castaldi, an internationally renowned haematologist and Foundation Director of Medicine at Westmead Hospital joined *Modern Medicine* as Chair of the Board in 1995. He remained in the position through the transition of the journal to *Medicine Today* in 2000, and held it with distinction until 2007. In recognition of his contributions, he was made Editor-in-Chief in 2017.

Peter's career was marked by a range of distinguished achievements, all tempered with scholarship, wisdom, a strong sense of equity, a passion for medical research to be translated into better health care and a quiet strength.

He graduated from Sydney University in 1957. After his residency, he became Registrar of the Clinical Research Unit at Sydney Hospital. He then moved to a research fellowship at The University of Sydney and the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital's Clinical Research Unit in 1961. Three years later, he was invited to work as Research Fellow at the Hôpital Saint-Louis in Paris where his seminal research in haemostasis and thrombosis commenced.

On his return to Australia, he was appointed a Staff Specialist in Haematology and Blood Coagulation at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital in Sydney, until he moved to Melbourne to become Director of Haematology at the Austin Hospital in 1969.

There was excitement in the medical world when Westmead Hospital in Sydney opened in 1978. There was an urgent need to recruit high-quality clinical and research staff, to establish Westmead as a leading teaching hospital for Sydney University and to convince the sceptics that Westmead would soon become a force to be reckoned with. Many were involved in the development of Westmead Hospital, with Peter being one of the key players. He was appointed Foundation Director of Medicine in 1978 and Professor of Medicine at Sydney University. He helped

set the tone that Westmead required: a combination of high-quality care, research and education.

Peter was the first Professor of Medicine at Westmead Hospital, undertaking this simultaneously with his other roles until funding for a full-time Director became available. He was a prolific fundraiser for research, particularly for the Westmead Medical Research Foundation, and a strong advocate for the establishment of geriatric services. Although committed to all of these activities, he continued his work in haematology and pursued his passion for encouraging young researchers and clinicians. He had the ability to spot future talent and provided ongoing advice and nurturing to the many whose careers he influenced.

He continued his collaboration with French researchers, including two visiting professorships. The importance of Peter's academic work in France was recognised by the award of the Chevalier de L'Ordre National du Merite and an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Paris in 1989. He became an Officer of the Order of Australia in 1992 and received the Medal of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians in 1994.

Peter served on many state, federal and international committees and was Chair of the Western Sydney Area Health Service Board.

Amidst all of these activities he still found the time to make a valuable contribution to *Medicine Today*. We remember him, as do those who worked with him, as scholarly, considerate, thoughtful and very effective. *Medicine Today* is grateful to Peter for the consummate skill he brought to his role with us. We are richer for that relationship.

**Kim Oates**  
*Chair, Board of Honorary Consultants*