

## Obituary

### Robert G. Addison, MD (1921-2012)

#### APS President (1989-1990)

**G**ifted physician, surgeon, researcher, teacher and sculptor, Robert George Addison died peacefully in Bradenton, Florida on March 15, 2012. He was 90 years old.

Dr. Addison served as a Clinical Professor in the Department of Orthopedic Surgery at Northwestern University Medical School since 1953, and later joined the Department of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation. Dr. Addison maintained an active private practice as an orthopedic surgeon until joining the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago (RIC) as a full-time faculty member in 1974. At the RIC, Dr. Addison served as medical director, chief of staff, and chief of surgery, as well as sitting on numerous administrative committees. As an affiliate member of the Institute's board of directors, he helped organize the RIC consulting medical staff in 1958. He was honored by being named as the first chairholder of the Coleman Foundation Chair in Rehabilitation Medicine.

In 1980, he founded the first interdisciplinary pain clinic in the Midwest, the Center for Pain Studies at the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago. He was a contemporary and close friend of Dr. John Bonica, yet developed his own brand of interdisciplinary care based on his experience as an orthopedist, working in conjunction with early leaders in the field of rehabilitation such as his colleague and friend Dr. Henry Betts at RIC. He is the author of books, book chapters, and scientific and editorial writings, and was an active national and international lecturer and symposia/program director for physician and allied health groups, student and lay organizations, as well as insurance and corporate executives.

He was a Charter Member of the American Pain Society (APS; 1978) and served on many committees and as its Treasurer; Chair of the Financial Committee; Chair of the Nominating Committee, and as its President (1989–1990). In 1996, he was the recipient of the APS Distinguished Service Award acknowledging his many seminal contributions that helped to lay a strong foundation for the success that the APS now enjoys. Dr. Addison was also a founding member of the American Academy of Pain Medicine and its president from 1986 to 1987 and a founder and first president of the Midwest Pain Society. He was an advisory board mem-



ber of the International Pain Foundation, a participant in the activities of the International Association for the Study of Pain, and has been a member of the National Advisory Committee on Chronic Pain Management of the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities and consultant on the Agency for Health Care Policy and Research, Pain Management Guideline Panel.

He and his wife Beverly loved travel, particularly to Italy and France. He was an Honorary Member of the Italian Pain Society and as a founder and President of the France-USA Pain Association; he was instrumental in organizing its meetings in the U.S. and France, and in developing its clinical monographs on pain in HIV/AIDS and pain after landmine injury. The latter appeared as a special supplement in *Pain Medicine*. In addition to serving on various executive and editorial boards, Dr. Addison served as a clinical and industrial researcher, presenting papers and technical exhibits in and outside of the United States. For example, he was a key consultant on the development of the Sealy Posturepedic® mattress.

Never speaking harshly of anyone, his interactions were always gentle, respectful, and fair and marked with patience and interpersonal charm. It was these

traits that made him so very effective at bringing people together and consensus building and earned him great respect.

He balanced his many professional activities with (as he described it) a "zest for work and strong family pride." He was an avid racquetball and tennis player and was an accomplished award-winning sculptor. Dr. Addison was a consummate teacher, visionary in the field of pain management, scientist, humanitarian and artist; but most importantly, a mentor and loving father and grandfather. He felt that he was the "luckiest man in the world" to have had his career, but most of all for having his wife, Beverly Minkin Addison, as his partner during their remarkable journey. He is survived by Beverly, his four daughters, Elizabeth Addison, Nancy Addison, Benita

Addison Schachter, Susan Addison, and his 8 grandchildren. He left a large and extended loving family, friends and colleagues.

A memorial is being planned for Dr. Addison in Chicago for the near future.

*R. Norman Harden, MD  
Director, RIC Center for Pain Studies  
Northwestern School of Medicine  
Robert G. Addison Chair in Pain Studies*

*John L. Reeves II, PhD, MS  
Professor, UCLA School of Dentistry  
Section of Orofacial Pain*