



American Gynecological & Obstetrical Society



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[AGOS \(/\)](#)

[MEETINGS \(/MEETINGS\)](#)

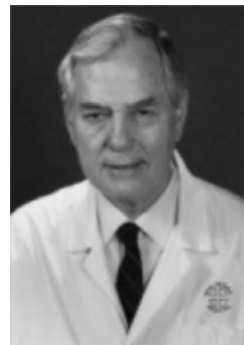
[RESOURCES \(/RESOURCES.HTML\)](#)

[MEMBERSHIP \(/MEMBERSHIP.HTML\)](#)

[MEMBERS ONLY \(/MEMBER-PAGES-LANDING.HTML\)](#)



A. BRIAN LITTLE, MD



July 22, 2011

Dr. A Brian Little died on April 14, 2012 after a long illness. He was born in Montreal, March 11, 1925, into a prominent family. His grandfather was a successful businessman and benefactor of the community. His father, an obstetrician-gynecologist, was instrumental in founding the Women's Pavilion at the Royal Victoria Hospital in Montreal. Unfortunately, he died prematurely at the age of 57, leaving his wife with three boys to raise. She became a writer for the Montreal Gazette and instilled a strong competence for the written word in Dr. Little. All of the boys served in the armed forces during WWII, but tragedy continued in the family as his two brothers were killed in the war. After completing his service as a flying officer (navigator) in the Royal Canadian Air Force, Dr. Little returned to Montreal and graduated from McGill Medical School. Subsequently he did a residency in obstetrics and gynecology at Harvard Medical School.

Dr. Little had an extraordinarily successful academic career. He was an internationally recognized investigator in reproductive endocrinology studying the metabolism of steroid hormones and the neuroendocrinology of reproduction. He was a funded investigator by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) for 28 years and was a leader in directing the research efforts of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD). He became chair of its reproductive biology study section and also served as chair of the steering committee of reproductive medical centers. He served as a council member of the national advisory committee of NICHD, and was the chair of the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute's (NHLBI) policy monitoring panel for the clinical trial of antenatal steroid therapy. These were a remarkable series of accomplishments for a single external investigator.

His outstanding qualities were recognized early in his career by his being chosen first to head obstetrics and gynecology at Boston City Hospital on the Harvard Service where he did the first intrauterine transfusion for RH sensitive fetuses. He was then recruited to become chair at the Cleveland Metropolitan General Hospital and eventually he moved to become the chair and

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Arthur H. Bill professor of obstetrics and gynecology at Case Western Reserve Medical School. He was a “teacher of teachers” and a number of the faculty he recruited became chairs of other academic departments.

Subsequently, Dr. Little returned to Montreal to become professor and chair of obstetrics and gynecology at the medical school at McGill University where he continued his strong emphasis on research, teaching and excellent patient care. After retiring from McGill where he became professor emeritus, he continued his strong interest in teaching and mentoring students by accepting a post retirement professorial appointment at UMDNJ-New Jersey Medical School where he taught until he became terminally ill.

His academic accomplishments and leadership as an excellent clinician were recognized by his becoming a director of the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology, and President of the prestigious American Gynecologic Society. He also served as President of the Perinatal Research Society and the Society for Gynecologic Investigation. He held membership in numerous academic medical societies. During his career he published over 100 original articles, books, and monographs.

Dr. Little was recognized by his peers and students as an intellectual leader with an ever-inquiring mind and for his mastery of the English language and the written word. He was a powerful and positive influence on his students, trainees, and faculty. He taught by example and would frequently prod his students with the question, “but what does that really mean..?” His excellent sense of humor was frequently injected into his piercing conversations and as one friend noted, “you had to pay attention and not daydream when talking with Dr. Little.” He was highly respected by all who came in contact with him for his honesty, dedication to excellence, and for being a true gentleman.

Dr. Little married twice. First to Nancy Campbell in 1949 with whom he had six children. The oldest, Michael, died tragically in a mountain accident in Austria at age 19. After his first marriage ended in divorce, Dr. Little married Dr. Bitten Stripp in 1984. She survives him along with his five daughters, Deborah Little (Tyler Miller, MD), Susan (Peter Hoagland), Catherine (Dr. Dan Reagan), Jane Little, MD (Tom Hostetter, MD), Lucinda Little (David Wells) and eight grandchildren: Catherine, Sam and William Miller-Little, Alexandra, Leah and Ian Hoagland, Andrew and Jane Reagan.

Submitted by Dr. Arthur L. Herbst

Return to [In Memoriam \(/member-pages-in-memorial.html\)](/member-pages-in-memorial.html)

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