In Memoriam: Dr. William A. Sibley

University Relations - Communications
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Dr. William A. Sibley, one of the founding faculty members of the UA College of Medicine [1] and the first head of the UA Department of Neurology [2], died on April 24 at age 90.

During his career, which spanned more than five decades, Sibley taught thousands of resident-physicians and medical students. He continued to teach through 2012, more than 45 years after joining the UA medical school leadership in June 1967.

Sibley devoted his career to the study of diseases of the nervous system and to the testing and development of treatments for multiple sclerosis, epilepsy, migraines and Parkinson's disease.

In 2006, he received the John Dystel Prize for Multiple Sclerosis Research, awarded jointly by the American Academy of Neurology and the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, for clarifying the influence of infections in the occurrence of MS relapses, and for the ramifications of these pivotal findings on MS treatment. In the same year, he also earned the UA College of Medicine's Physician Scientist Award for Excellence in Clinical Research and Seminal Contributions to the Etiology and Treatment of Multiple Sclerosis.

From 1970 to 1974 and from 1976 to 1978, he served as chairman of the advisory committee on etiology, diagnosis and therapy for the National Multiple Sclerosis Society.

He authored or contributed to more than 100 books and academic journals.

In 1984, Sibley was listed as one of the nation's "1,500 Best Medical Specialists" by Town and Country magazine. He also was featured in "The Best Doctors in the U.S." and "The Best Doctors in America."

Born in Miami, Oklahoma, Sibley earned his Bachelor of Science degree in 1945 and his medical degree in 1948 from Yale University. Before coming to Tucson, Sibley was an assistant in neurology at Columbia University in New York City, an assistant professor of neurology at Western Reserve University in Cleveland and a visiting professor in the Department of Neurology at the Albert Einstein Medical School in New York City. He was a captain in the U.S. Air Force and served with the Far East Air Materiel Command in Japan from 1952 to 1953.

He is survived by his wife, Joanne; his sister, Margaret; his daughter, Jane Clark; and his sons, John, Peter and Andrew, as well as six grandchildren.
In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Humane Society of Southern Arizona, 3450 N. Kelvin Blvd., Tucson, AZ 85716; the Sibley Resident Education Fund at the University of Arizona Foundation, P.O. Box 210109, Tucson, AZ 85721; or the charity of your choice [3].

To read the obituary or to leave condolences in the online guest book, visit this link [4].

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[1] http://medicine.arizona.edu/