Mentors in urogynecology

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My first introduction to Jack Robertson was hearing his beautifully modulated Southern American voice on an audio-digest tape on my car cassette player as I was out bush in Victoria travelling between hospitals on a country rotation. Although that was over 30 years ago, I can still hear Jack talking about the value of urethroscopy in the diagnosis and management of female urogynecological conditions such as urinary incontinence and urethral diverticulum.

We have all developed our special interest in urogynecology and the pelvic floor through contact with teachers who have stimulated and inspired us, through the written word in journals and books, and, increasingly as time has gone by, by means of listening to cassette tapes, watching videos and scanning the internet. Ours is a very practical and hands-on surgical speciality, however, and excellence develops slowly through an apprenticeship by watching and then assisting senior colleagues do difficult surgery and make it look easy.

We therefore thought it would be timely for the *International Urogynecology Journal* to publish the mem-

ories and recollections of the people that forged our subspecialty. Some of these extraordinary people, such as Hodgkinson, Ingelman-Sundberg, and Ulmsten, have gone but are by no means forgotten. However, some of their fellow pioneers—Drs Robertson, Stanton, Ostergard, Petri, Shull and Ortiz—have agreed to give us their recollections of the people, issues, and events that influenced their careers in medicine and urogynecology and their lives generally. We have also invited a number of distinguished gynecologists trained by these mentors for their views on their former bosses, what part they played in stimulating their careers and their contribution to urogynecology more generally. So the mentors' influence goes on through time, influencing further generations of young gynecologists. This is their legacy to urogynecology and improving the health and quality of life for women everywhere. We will publish these memoirs over the coming months, starting with Jack Robertson in this issue.

We hope that you find these historical reviews interesting.

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