



Lloyd Douglas MacLean

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One of Canada's most accomplished surgeons, Dr. Lloyd Douglas MacLean, died quietly in his sleep on January 14 at the age of 90. A pioneer in the field of kidney, lung, and heart transplants and bariatric surgery, MacLean was also noted for his research into peritonitis, host resistance, and shock. MacLean was credited with Canada's first lung transplant in 1966 along with Dr. D.D. Munroe. In addition, he had a long career as a teacher and administrator and was known for his commitment to patient-centered medical care. "He was a very humble man," said one of his sons, Ian MacLean. "We used to find out about all these accomplishments by the media or on TV. He didn't blow his own horn."

MacLean, who was born and raised in Calgary and graduated from the University of Alberta medical school in 1949. He completed his surgical training at the University of Minnesota and served as surgeon-in-chief at the Royal Victoria Hospital in Montreal from 1962 to 1988, during which time he proved adept at juggling multiple posts. "The man never wasted a minute of any day," Ian said. MacLean was also chairman of the McGill University Department of Surgery for three terms (1968–1973, 1977–1982, and 1987–1988). From 1987 to 1993, he taught at McGill's Department of Surgery as the university's first Edward W. Archibald Professor. Dr. Gerald M. Fried, current surgeon-in-chief of McGill's University Health Centre, described Dr. MacLean as "a giant in Canadian surgery" and a wonderful ambassador for McGill.

As a scientific scholar, MacLean published more than 350 papers in peer-reviewed journals and was an active member of numerous surgical societies. He was president of The American Surgical Association in 1992 and the American College of Surgeons in 1993. "It's very rare for Canadian medical leaders to be highly recognized in the United States, which is very U.S.-centric," Fried said. "But Dr. MacLean rose to the leadership positions of the most prestigious organizations in the USA as well as in Canada. That brought a lot of glory to McGill and Montreal and to Canadian medicine." Fried

described MacLean as "a very clear and analytical thinker" with a flair for summarizing. In meetings, he could, within a few words, bring clarity to discussions that were going around in circles. "That was a gift he had. He wasn't a verbose person. But he was a very insightful one." In 2003, McGill University launched an L.D. MacLean day marked each year by a lecture from a distinguished international leader in the field of surgery.

In spite of a hectic career, MacLean found time for his family, which included his wife, Dr. Eleanor Colle and their five children (Hugh, Charles, Ian, James, and Martha). "We laughed a great deal together as a family," recalled Ian, the middle child, a communications consultant. Family outings often included wilderness hikes or canoe trips. Since their father was a photography buff, "We're possibly the most documented family ever," Ian said. He remembered a dinner party at the family home with his father surrounded by such medical greats as South African cardiac surgeon Dr. Christiaan Barnard, credited with the world's first successful heart transplant in 1967.

Two of Maclean's sons, Charles and James, became doctors, although not surgeons, and Martha specialized in oncology as a nurse, so the family medical tradition is being carried on. Hugh is an economist. James MacLean said his father was the son of a Calgary haberdasher of relatively slender means. The family, descendants of Scottish immigrants, had moved to Alberta from Prince Edward Island. A whiz at school, MacLean won scholarships that helped him continue his education. "He had an enormous amount of energy," James said. "Anything he did, he did it with 100-per-cent gusto. He was a lifelong learner and really believed in academic surgery, the concept of new discovery, of pushing the field and trying to find new and better ways of taking care of people."

In 1985, Dr. Lloyd Douglas MacLean was appointed an officer in the Order of Canada.