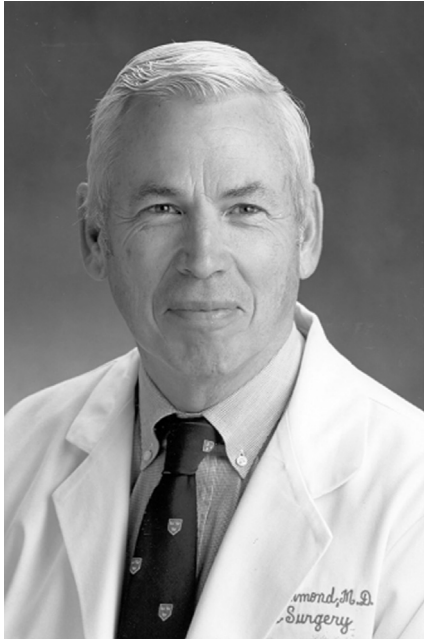


Obituary

Denis Sise Drummond, MD, FRS(C) (1934–2019)



Denis Sise Drummond, MD, FRS(C)



in his professional life, and he was loving and accepting of people for who they were, in his personal life. He was loved by his family and friends.”

Our dear friend, colleague, mentor, and professional idol Denis Drummond passed away June 18, 2019, leaving a breathtaking legacy globally. Through his clinical care and research, he bettered the lives of several generations of children; through his teaching and mentoring, he helped train and advise hundreds of surgeons. With his vibrant leadership skills, he improved pediatric care at the University of Wisconsin and Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP), was president of the Scoliosis Research Society (SRS), and was a founding leader of the Pediatric Orthopaedic Society of North America (POSNA). Perhaps Denis’s greatest impact, however, was on his friends, colleagues, and family, for whom his joy of life, positive energy, and good old-fashioned Irish wit enriched friendships and deepened his love for his family. He is survived by his college sweetheart and loving wife of 60 years Joan, his 4 sons, 10 grandchildren, and a number of dogs. As his son Jim Drummond recently wrote: (he was) “a generous, optimistic person with a questioning and independent mind

Born on New Year’s Eve 1934 in Montreal to Paul and Elizabeth Drummond, he grew up loving hockey, football, and outdoor activities. At McGill University, he met Joan Kimber, to whom he was happily married for over 60 years. Denis received his BA (1957) and MD (1962) from McGill University, and then did his orthopedic training at the University of Toronto, achieving an FRCS(C) in 1968. After completing a pediatric orthopaedics fellowship at the Hospital for Sick Children, Great Ormond Street, in 1969, Denis joined the Orthopaedic Surgery Department at McGill University and Shriners’ Hospital. After eight years of service in Montreal, he was recruited to be Director of Pediatric Orthopedics at the University of Wisconsin, which he led for seven years where he invented the “Wisconsin Spinal Compression System” to correct scoliosis. He was then recruited to be Chief of Orthopaedic Surgery at CHOP, which he led from 1985 to 1996 as Professor of Orthopaedics (tenure track). Denis started the CHOP Pediatric Orthopaedic Fellowship, which has trained more than 60

pediatric orthopaedic surgeons to date. He generously shared his expertise internationally including time with CARE in Tunisia and after the major earthquake in Armenia. He was featured on the PBS show “Nova” as part of one of the very early teams separating conjoin twins. Denis continued his clinical practice at CHOP until 2014, when he retired back to his native Canada, spending time at their summer home on the Saint Lawrence River (Metis sur Mer, 200 miles north of Quebec City), with Joan, family, and friends.

Denis was known as a skilled surgeon, with a particular interest in spine deformity and pediatric cervical spine anomalies and injuries. His pediatric spine thought-leadership was widely recognized and included both implant design (he was co-holder of six patents), surgical technique improvement, and outcomes research. He published more than 180 original research studies, 42 chapters, and was a popular invited lecturer, serving in that role more than 50 times. He was legendary for his mentoring of young orthopedic scholars, vetting ideas and very frankly critiquing project ideas, results, and manuscripts; many owe early career success to Denis’s commitment to teaching and mentorship. He won the Okagaki Resident Teaching Award at Wisconsin and was a six-time winner of teaching awards (Nicholson Award or Dean’s Award) at Penn/CHOP.

He became an active member of the SRS and served on the SRS Board of Directors for 10 years, including 8 consecutive years serving as Secretary and then President 2001–2002. He was the corecipient of the Hibbs Award for best paper (2006) and, ultimately, “his proudest professional achievement,” the SRS Lifetime Achievement Award (2011).

Denis also played a key leadership role in forming the POSNA. He was President of the Pediatric Orthopaedic Study Group in 1982. In 1983, he was Chair of the Merger Committee of Pediatric Orthopaedic Study Group and the Pediatric Orthopaedic Society that navigated the merger process leading to the birth of POSNA.

Denis’s passion for teaching and mentoring young surgeons is honored each year with CHOP’s annual Denis Drummond Rising Star Visiting Professorship. Initiated in 2016, the program offers an innovative young pediatric orthopaedic surgeon the opportunity to visit CHOP’s clinics and ORs and participate in lively interactive education and research sessions.

Denis Drummond left an amazing legacy—for his family, patients, trainees, institutions, and organizations. Ultimately, all of us whose lives were warmed and improved by Denis’s advice, humor, and joy will carry with us his inspiration to make lives better, as he did.

John Dormans and John M. Flynn (Jack)