

Obituaries

Dr Thomas Richard Emerson

Formerly Consultant Psychiatrist,
Riverside Health Authority, London



Dr Emerson was born in 1930 into a large Catholic family in London, where his father was a dental practitioner. Thomas was schooled by the Jesuits at St. Ignatius College in Stamford Hill, London, from 1942 to 1949. At school he took part in sports, mainly squash, rackets and tennis, as well as swimming, rowing and judo, all of which he preferred to field games such as rugby and soccer. However, what he lacked in the latter two

sports he compensated for in the classroom. He was also a good chess player, and enjoyed reading, studying and listening to music. He was an outstanding scholar: he sailed through his matriculation and higher examinations with credits and distinctions to spare. On leaving school he worked as a technician for the Medical Research Council while he studied at Birkbeck College in the evenings, obtaining a BSc in chemistry in 1957.

His record was so good that virtually all avenues were open to him *vis-à-vis* the next step up the scholastic ladder. In fact, King's College London was the next step up. Here he completed his PhD degree with no difficulty so that he found that jobs in research were easily open to him. For example, between 1963 and 1965 he worked as a research chemist at Oxford, following which he was 'seized' by London University as a lecturer. Then, in 1966, he scaled all the heights of academic chemistry. He decided to perform an academic somersault and began again at the bottom, this time to scale the medical ladder. To this end, he entered St Bartholomew's Medical School as a student, emerging in 1973 with the degrees MB, BS London to hang on his academic belt.

Now a qualified doctor, he completed his house jobs including that of a casualty officer at St Bartholomew's in 1975. It was at this hospital that he formed a taste for psychiatry and ultimately he was appointed a consultant in Riverside Health Authority where he continued his very successful and indeed amazing career in psychiatry. This included work in Hackney, St Mary Abbots and the Gordon Hospitals but mainly in St Bartholomew's where he eventually retired as a consultant psychiatrist in 1995. After retirement, he acted as a volunteer medical advisor to Amnesty International for some years.

He never married and lived for 35 years in a prestigious and expensive flat in the Barbican. After retirement he found himself free to indulge his hobbies, which included a collection of long-case clocks which he presented to the Worshipful Company of Clockmakers; and a valuable porcelain collection presented to the Victoria and Albert Museum. It is important

to mention that in his will he left a substantial sum to the Royal College of Psychiatrists.

He died on 10 October 2011.

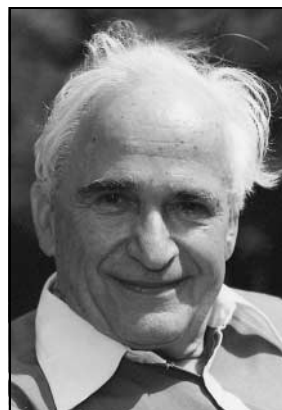
It is a matter of deep regret that I was never given the privilege of meeting Dr Emerson personally. However, I have gleaned a great deal of valuable information for this obituary from his brother. Equally valuable was the curriculum vitae (10 quarto pages) which he enclosed. Paramount for our purposes, and selected at random, is page 8, headed 'Scientific Publications' comprising 12 items, in 6 of which Dr Emerson was the lead writer.

Henry R. Rollin

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Andrew Charles Skarbek

Formerly Consultant Psychotherapist at Runwell,
Rochford and Basildon Hospitals, Essex



Andrew Charles Skarbek was inspired to specialise in psychiatry by Donald Winnicott while doing his first house job in paediatrics at the Paddington Green Children's Hospital. Skarbek started training in psychiatry at the Maudsley Hospital. He decided his future lay in psychodynamic psychotherapy and qualified as a psychoanalyst just 5 years after gaining his Diploma in Psychological Medicine. Soon after this he became involved

with the Langham Clinic in London where he was the colleague of Ronald Laing. Skarbek was later appointed clinical director of the clinic when it was renamed the London Clinic of Psychotherapy.

Born in 1925 into a distinguished aristocratic family in Lwów (in what was then Poland), Skarbek's father was the last curator of the family charitable foundation which undertook the care, schooling and professional training of some 500 orphaned children. This way of life, including Andrew's formal schooling, came to an end with the outbreak of war in 1939. He escaped from Poland with his mother and older brother in a tortuous journey through Hungary, Austria and Italy, arriving in England at the end of 1946 to join his father, who had been serving throughout in the Polish Government-in-exile. In 1948 in this new country, faced with having to learn a new language, Andrew, who had already begun his medical studies at the University of Graz, Austria, entered medical school at St Mary's Hospital, and qualified in 1954.

Researching the effects of drugs on speech behaviour at the University College London Psycholinguistics Unit, he gained a PhD in 1967. In 1977, he was appointed consultant