



Hal Watson Pittman, MD

Dr. Hal Pittman, neurosurgeon and last surviving founder of the Barrow Neurological Institute, died at his Phoenix home on his 82nd birthday, December 9, 2004.

Born in Orrum, North Carolina, he graduated first in his class at Wake Forest University Medical School at 22 years of age. After an internship and surgical training in Philadelphia and Wilmington, North Carolina, he was fully trained in neurosurgery at the Illinois Neurosurgical Institute in Chicago. He received a Fulbright Fellowship in Neurosurgery in 1953, working at the Hôpital de la Pitié in Paris, France. After he returned to the United States, he was a staff neurosurgeon at Tufts University School of Medicine in Boston from 1953 to 1956.

He came to Phoenix in 1957 as the city's fifth neurosurgeon (seventh in Arizona), attracted by the evolving plans of his partner, John R. Green, MD, to establish the Barrow Neurological Institute. He took part in the care of Mrs. Charles Barrow, in whose memory funds were given to start the now internationally known center, which opened in 1962. In 1958 Dr. Pittman was certified by the American Board of Neurological Surgery. He was a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons. From 1985 to the present, he held appointments to the clinical faculties of surgery and neurosurgery at the University of Arizona. After 42 years at Barrow, Dr. Pittman continued his career in 1985–

1998 as a pediatric neurosurgeon at the Phoenix Children's Hospital. Then he was a staff neurosurgeon at the Maricopa County Medical Center, retiring December 31, 2003, after an astounding 59 years as a practicing physician. Upon his retirement, Operating Room Number Five at Maricopa County Medical Center was dedicated in his name. In 2004 he was given a Lifetime Achievement Award by Barrow Neurological Institute of St. Joseph's Hospital.

During World War II, he attended medical school through the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP) and served as a Captain in the Medical Corps from 1946 to 1948, receiving the World War II Victory Medal and American Theater Medal. A member of Alpha Omega Alpha, the honorary medical fraternity, he is listed in *Who's Who in America*, *Who's Who in Medicine and Healthcare*, and *Who's Who in the West*. His numerous honors include Physician of the Year in 1982–83 and Teacher of the Year in 1987 at the Barrow Neurological Institute, the Dr. Joe C. Ehrlich Medal for Compassionate Patient Care awarded by the Maricopa County Medical Society, the Good Joe Award of St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center, a 1991 Lifetime Achievement Award given by the Children's Health Center, the 1995 Mercy Physician Award, and an Award for Outstanding Dedication on Behalf of Children by the Children's Rehabilitative Services, among others.

His community interests and service included founding Board memberships on the Arizona and Valley Opera Associations, predecessors of Arizona Opera, the Phoenix Chamber Music Society, and The Bach and Madrigal Society of Phoenix, which is now the Phoenix Bach Choir, the state's only professional chorus, on whose board he served in 2004. He was a founding member of Physicians for the Symphony and was President of the organization in 1994–1997. In 2003 and 2004 he was nominated for the Governor's Arts Award. He served as President of the Arizona Foundation for the Handicapped in 2000–2001 and was associated with that organization since its early days as The Perry Institute.

Dr. Pittman and his wife, Timona D. Pittman, MD, celebrated their 52nd wedding anniversary in March 2004. He is survived by his four children: Eric Pittman, MD, of Phoenix, born in Paris during his father's Fulbright year there; Janet Pittman, MD, of Belle Harbor, New York, born in Boston while her father was at Tufts University School of Medicine; Melissa Pittman Fischer of Seattle; and Arthur Pittman of Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Both Melissa and Arthur were born at St. Joseph's Hospital in Phoenix. Also surviving Dr. Pittman are five grandchildren: Michael and Patricia Pittman of Phoenix; Max and Casey Fischer of Seattle; and Sarah Pittman of Winston-Salem, North Carolina. He is also survived by family members in North Carolina: sister-in-law Nell Morris Pittman, niece Judith Pittman Welder, grandniece Maggie Welder, and grandnephew Callan Welder, all of Asheville. Also surviving Dr. Pittman is his nephew by adoption, Terry Hunt, of Fairmont. He was preceded in death by his parents Raymond Lee Pittman Sr. and Bertha Newton Pittman and by his brothers Raymond Lee Pittman Jr. and James Graham Pittman, MD.

Friends wishing to honor Dr. Pittman's memory may make contributions to the Phoenix Bach Choir, the Phoenix Symphony, Trinity Cathedral Center for the Arts, the Virginia Piper Cancer Center, Hospice of the Valley, or the Dr. James Graham Pittman Memorial Scholarship Fund of Robeson County Community College of Lumberton, North Carolina.

Timona Pittman, MD