

**Barrie Milroy**  
**1936 - 2002**



Barrie was a friend and colleague for nearly forty years. We first met when he came to Melbourne to train in plastic surgery under my partner and teacher, Sir Benjamin Rank. Barrie impressed with his commitment, competence and enthusiasm. He was intrigued by the new field of reconstruction after head and neck cancer surgery and later pursued this interest in Buffalo, New York. He returned to Sydney to take up an appointment with Tony Pelly at the Prince of Wales Hospital, where he later became Head of the Plastic Surgery Unit.

He later told me his Professor asked him on his commencement of practice, whether "he intended to be a merchant surgeon, or an academic". He chose the latter.

He had an open mind and was always ready to embrace new ideas and technologies. He was fascinated with the new speciality of micro reconstructive surgery in which he became sufficiently expert to make a number of contributions. He was the first Australian plastic surgeon to see the benefits of laser surgery and specialised in this field. He conducted a number of training courses and established a comprehensive laser clinic in Sydney where many doctors received instruction in this new discipline. He was sympathetic towards the plight of the maimed and the deformed and worked in war torn Israel. He also undertook four programmes to the Pacific Islands for Interplast Australia, a voluntary aid organisation for plastic surgery.

Barrie was a great supporter of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons and made many contributions to the scientific meetings and the organisation of plastic surgery. He served on many committees, became Chairman of the Division of Plastic Surgery of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons and served on Council of the College from 1991 – 1994. He became the Australian representative on the International Confederation for Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery and served on the Executive of this World body. He was highly regarded by his international colleagues, who appointed him parliamentarian to this august organisation.

He had a strong sense of the obligations of the medical profession and was dismayed by the encroaching commercialisation on plastic surgery practice. He espoused the principle that our prime responsibility was to our patients and the community. In later years, he embraced medico legal practice with the same dedication, as he did to all other areas of plastic surgery. He was one of the few surgeons who was prepared to see patients, both for defence organisations and plaintiff's solicitors.

Barrie was man of principle and integrity and would never compromise, even if his views were unpopular. He was an entertaining companion, with a delightful sense of humour and his company was eagerly sought by his colleagues at surgical meetings over many years.

He made great contributions to plastic surgery, both in Australia and Internationally. He sometimes upset colleagues, but discharged his professional duty as God gave him the light to see that duty. His courage, integrity and humour will be sadly missed.

***Credit: Donald MR. Marshall***