

DONALD R. COOPER – “EULOGY

Don Cooper was born September 8, 1917 in Kalamazoo, Michigan and died on June 13, 2001 in Philadelphia, PA. In between those two dates he packed a lot of living. He was one of five siblings, three sons and two daughters of Howard J. Cooper and Iva Rothlisberger. He was educated in the public schools of Kalamazoo growing in that city during the depression years. On completion of high school he matriculated at the University of Michigan graduating with honors from the College of Literature, Science and the Arts in 1939. He entered the university medical school and graduated in 1942 again with honors. On graduation he married Margaret Cram in June of 1942. They had two children, a daughter Sherry and a son Donald R. Cooper, Jr.

He was an intern from July 1942 until May 1943.

At this time he entered military service with the 298th General Hospital, AUS. Physicians and nurses from the University Hospital at Ann Arbor Michigan staffed it. The unit shipped out and was stationed in England until a few days after D-DAY (6/6/44) when they entered France through the bombed out port of Cherbourg. After almost three years of service in the European theatre the unit

returned home and was demobilized in February 1946. It was demobilized in February of 1946.

Coop returned to the University Hospital in Ann Arbor to complete his residency training in 1950. During this period he developed his interest and expertise in fluid and electrolyte problems as they pertained to the surgical patient. Now he published the first of the 49 papers and book chapters he authored or co-authored during his career.

On completion of his residency he came to Philadelphia joining L. Kraeer Ferguson in the practice of surgery. He was appointed to the faculty and staff of the Women's Medical College and the Graduate Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania. He also held appointments at the Philadelphia General Hospital and the Philadelphia Veterans Administration Hospital. Later he was named as a consulting Surgeon to the Philadelphia Naval Hospital. He steadily progressed through the academic ranks at the Women's Medical College of Pennsylvania becoming a full professor in 1959. At this time he was made chairman of the department, a post he held until 1981. At this time he vacated the chairmanship of the department of surgery and was appointed Vice President, and Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs.

He was an expert clinician. The basis of his expertise was his pains taking attention to every aspect of patient care. His operations were carefully planned and performed. His post-operative care was exemplary. He was an excellent teacher being enthusiastic, and concerned that everyone understood the problem and his approach to solving. He was the first in this academy to call attention to the value of spleno portography in the early struggle with esophageal varies. He was the first to point out that breast cancer in woman of childbearing age was not necessarily a contra indication to pregnancy.

As an administrator he worked to develop a modern department of surgery. At the time he was made chairman of the department at Women's Medical College there was no full time surgical faculty. In the ensuing years he fashioned the department with appointments in each of the super specialties. This created the framework for further development. Concomitantly he was involved in the physical and academic expansion and improvement of the institution.

He was active in organized medicine serving both the County Medical Society and the PA State Medical Society in multiple committee assignments. He was an active fellow of the American College of Surgeons serving as a Governor and a member of the credentials committee.

This Academy of Surgery was his great interest. He became a member in 1952 and served in a number of offices. He was elected president in 1978 and served until 1980. During his presidency he led the academy in the celebration of its 100th anniversary.

As he worked so he played. He was an avid bridge player and an expert sailor. He loved a good party and was fond of ballroom dancing. Benny Goodman was one of his favorite jazz musicians. He was a good storyteller and he liked a good joke. In retirement he tried valiantly but never mastered the game of golf.

We are sorry to see him to depart, but believe that his life is a cause for celebration. Medicine in general, the Medical College of Pennsylvania and this Academy are the better for his contributions.