

Dr. David Scott, pioneer behind Headwaters hospital, dies aged 88

Written By MIKE BAKER

Staff at Headwaters Health Care Centre are mourning the loss of the man who, quite literally, helped to put the local hospital on the map.

Dr. David Scott, who practised general surgery in Orangeville from 1962 to 1997, and was one of the leading figures behind the push for a new community hospital in the late 1990s, passed away on Saturday (April 25) at the age of 88. He had been residing at Dufferin Oaks in Shelburne.

While cause of death has not been revealed to the public, the Citizen has learned Dr. Scott had suffered a stroke and that his passing was not likely related to COVID-19.

A life-long resident of Orangeville, Dr. Scott provided outstanding leadership in health care in our community across five decades. Kicking off his career in the community in the early 1960s, Dr. Scott was the first specialized doctor to practise in Orangeville. He would later serve as the local hospital's Chief of Staff from 1983 to 1989.

He retired in 1997, after spending time on the Dufferin Area Hospital's Steering Committee on Alternative Care Delivery Systems, where he played a leading role in developing a blueprint for health care delivery in the new millennium in Dufferin County.

A one-time colleague, the current Chief of Staff at Headwaters, Dr. Peter Cino, remembers "an exemplary professional who led by example" when speaking with the Citizen this week.

"My wife and I noticed 28 years ago, when we came to look for a place to begin (our) practice, that there was not a more welcoming place (than Dufferin County)," Dr. Cino said. "It took me a few years of working with Dr. Scott, observing his interactions, hearing stories of the Scott family providing medical care in Orangeville dating back 100 years (Dr. Scott's father, Charles, was also a doctor in Orangeville), to learning about his leadership roles in healthcare in the hospital and the community, that I attributed our 'luck' of finding this warm community to the hard work and gentle character of Dr. Scott."

He added, "He was a true professional, in every sense of the word, who led by quiet, calm example."

While current President and CEO of the hospital, Kim Delahunt, didn't work alongside Dr. Scott, she still holds a deep respect for the man who has made such a difference to the way healthcare services are provided in Dufferin County today.

"I learned about Dr. Scott and his legendary contributions to this community and the region early on in my role here at Headwaters," Ms. Delahunt said. "His work and pioneering spirit is embedded in so many aspects of health care at the hospital and in the community at large. He was a true health care hero."

Such was the impact Dr. Scott had at Headwaters, the facility named an award after him in 2000. The annual Dr. David Scott Award recognizes individuals or groups who have gone above and beyond to improve the health and wellness of the Dufferin-Caledon community, and promote links between the hospital and the community. The 2019 award was jointly awarded to Dr. Gordon Willans and Tom Reid, chief of the Dufferin County Paramedic Service.

It was noted that while in his 80s Dr. Scott still played an important role in recruiting young physicians to practise in Dufferin.

"Dr. Scott was probably one of the wisest people I ever had the privilege of knowing. He was so dedicated to this community and to excellent patient care," said Mary Wheelwright, Director of Health System & Integration at Headwaters. "What often surprised me about him, although it really shouldn't have, was how progressive he was, and how open he was to new ideas. Dr. Scott seemed to

relish challenging himself to think about things in new ways.?

A private family service will take place in the coming days, with a celebration of life to be held at a later date. Dr. Scott's family is asking that any donations in his memory be made to Community Living Dufferin or the Headwaters Health Care Foundation.

A tree will be played in memory of Dr. Scott in the Dods & McNair Memorial Forest at Island Lake Conservation Area, where an annual dedication service is to be held on Sept. 13 at 2:30 p.m.