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# A Tribute to Roy Muir

## Jayne Hubble

In June 2002, Dr Roy Muir died in Christchurch after a short illness. I was fortunate to know him for the last nine months of his life, benefiting from his training as psychiatrist and psychoanalyst. Within these areas, Roy had a special interest in, and vast experience and knowledge of, child and adolescent psychiatry, with a particular focus on the mother-infant pair. Those of us here in Christchurch who sought his expertise felt privileged to have a man of his professional standing in our psychiatric/psychotherapeutic community. When he was diagnosed with a terminal illness, on top of his existing Parkinson's Disease, the blow could not have felt more cruel.

Roy was born in Otago and completed his psychiatry training here in New Zealand. Hungry for more, or perhaps a different experience, he moved with his family to Canada where he undertook training to be a psychoanalyst. He returned to Dunedin in the 1980s and established New Zealand's first comprehensive child psychotherapy training course. Several of the child psychotherapists whose work we know and value today were his students. He also held the position of Clinical Director of Ashburn Hall in Dunedin.

There was another pilgrimage back to Canada, where he took up the appointment of Associate Professor at the University of Toronto, as well as being head of the Adolescent Service, and Infant and Family Programme at the Hincks Child and Family Clinic. Finally in 2001, Roy and his wife Liz returned to Christchurch for Roy to take up semi-retirement and for them both to be closer to adult family and grandchildren. A diagnosis of Parkinson's Disease had been made prior to his return and Roy spoke frankly about the ongoing challenge of managing the symptoms.

He was a quiet, unassuming man, with a sharp sense of humour, who was thoughtful and insightful in his observations and comments. There was, for me, a sense of receiving from him a potent distillation acquired from years of training and experience and his ability to make use of these. He was compassionate but did not shy off from speaking the truth, and he was wise about human experience, from the earliest weeks of life through to adulthood.

Roy's last words to me, said wryly as I walked out of his rooms into a cold Christchurch autumn day were, 'Keep warm'. Roy had already warmed me

with his words and thoughtfulness and his presence here in Christchurch. I miss him still as I am sure many other colleagues and students do. His premature death robbed us of his considerable knowledge and experience, and of a warm, humble man. Undoubtedly, we have lost one of our taonga.