



Donald F. Smith

November 25, 1949 - October 29, 2016

Donald Frederick Smith, age 66, passed away on October 29, 2016 following complications related to a stroke. Don was born on November 25, 1949 in Picton, Ontario, Canada, and was the son of David and Pearl Smith. He grew up in a rural environment, working on the family dairy and vegetable crop farm. He attended the University of Guelph, achieving his DVM degree (with distinction) in 1974. It was there that he met his future wife, Doris Dempster. Don subsequently completed an internship in large animal medicine followed by a residency in large animal surgery at the University of Pennsylvania.

Following his residency training, Don joined the faculty at New York State College of Veterinary Medicine at Cornell University and quickly established himself as a premier food animal surgeon with a masterful understanding of bovine anatomy and physiology. This area of expertise was strengthened by his research on metabolic disorders in cattle and fluid replacement therapy.

From 1983 until 1987, Don was Professor and Chair of the Department of Surgical Sciences at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He then returned to Cornell and served as Professor and Chair of the Department of Clinical Sciences. In 1991, he became Associate Dean of Education and in this role he was instrumental in establishing the College's pioneering problem-based-learning curriculum for veterinary medicine. Don served as Dean of the College of Veterinary Medicine from 1997 until 2007 and in this role hired outstanding faculty and oversaw departmental reorganization and the building of the state-of-the-art Animal Health and Diagnostic Center.

Don was a diplomat of the American College of Veterinary Surgeons and a member of the

National Academies of Practice. He was widely published and spoke nationally and internationally. In 2007, Don was named Veterinarian of the Year by the New York State Veterinary Medical Society and also received recognition from the President of the American Veterinary Medical Association. Don pursued many professional interests following his term as Dean. He initially studied the human-animal bond while simultaneously working on a project that quickly became an enduring passion: recording (in spoken and written word) the history of veterinary medicine and veterinary education at Cornell. The audio recordings he collected, as well as written transcripts, images, and biographical sketches of more than 30 Cornell alumni and other notable veterinarians are available as “An Enduring Veterinary Legacy” at eCommons Cornell or at his blog “*Veterinary Legacy*” (veterinarylegacy.blogspot.com). The majority of his interviews targeted Cornell veterinarians graduating in 1920-1949 and are truly fascinating accounts of different eras, when the typical veterinarian slowly changed from caring for the working horse to companion animals. He also recorded the many roles veterinarians assumed during World War II. Later in his research, he focused in particular on the contributions of women and minorities to the profession of veterinary medicine. He interviewed many women veterinarians around the world and relished the stories they told of practice and of their contributions to the profession. This new interest continued to evolve and Don developed a popular course at the College of Veterinary Medicine focused on the history of veterinary medicine, as well as a seminar series on woman’s leadership. That seminar series evolved into a book co-authored with Julie Kumble entitled “*Leaders of the Pack: Women and the Future of Veterinary Medicine (new directions in the human-animal bond)*” which contains many more of his interviews. He also authored several journal articles and a book on the history of veterinary medicine, “*Pathways to Progress, The Vision and Impact of Members of the Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges at the Fiftieth Anniversary (1966-2016)*” that was commissioned by the American Association of Veterinary Medical Colleges. More recently, Don helped found, organize and advise a newly established woman veterinary leadership group. He encouraged all young faculty and students to be lifelong learners and to take leadership roles in the profession and in their community.

Don loved being outdoors and hiked many national parks with his family. He loved classical music, played the piano, and was active in his church, the Christ Chapel of Ithaca, NY. Generous and gregarious, he was loved deeply by friends and family and will be profoundly missed. Don is survived by his wife, Doris, and their three adult children: Darryl Smith, his wife Corey, and their two sons Maddox and Bishop of Atlanta, GA; Debra Bourne, her husband Robert, and their daughter Abigail of Pittsburgh, PA; and Dennis Smith and his wife Rachel of Scottsdale, AZ. Don’s siblings, Dorothy, Catherine and Robert also survive him. His father David passed away in 2007 and his mother Pearl passed away a short time after Don.

At the time of his death, Don was Professor of Surgery and the *Austin O. Hooey Dean Emeritus*. He will be remembered as a true family man, a role model for his students and trainees, a brilliant surgeon, and a caring administrator. His uncanny diagnostic ability with dairy cattle was truly unique and he raised the standard of care for farm animals in the northeastern United States. Those of us who follow in his footsteps will be forever grateful.

Written by Susan L. Fubini (Chair), Richard P. Hackett and Nita L. Irby