

MR. TONY BULL...SURGEON, TEACHER, VISIONARY, FRIEND

By Wayne F. Larrabee, Jr., MD

Our friend and colleague Tony Bull, MD, met an untimely death last month; we are all still absorbing this great personal and professional loss. Tony worked, taught, and entertained us from his iconic office at 107 Harley Street seemingly forever. For those who didn't know him personally, it is impossible to summarize his charisma, humor, and wisdom—but there was no one like him. He was a giant in our specialty and along with Claus D. Walter, MD, the “glue” that bonded the North American and European facial plastic surgery communities.

Tony was a consultant surgeon at the Royal Throat Nose and Ear Hospital, The King Edward VII's Hospital for Officers, the Charing Cross Hospital, and a senior lecturer at the Institute of Laryngology and Otology Royal Free Hospital. His surgical skills were legendary as seen in the long queues of international patients traveling to have him perform their rhinoplasties at the London Clinic. Rhinoplasty was his single largest passion; but unknown to many, he was also an equally talented stapedectomy surgeon and seemed to switch effortlessly between the two skill sets. It is of note that Bill Wright, MD, one of the great rhinoplasty surgeons in the United States, also continued to do otology. These two pioneers chose operations that required great precision and craft.

Most of us first met Tony as a teacher. His lectures on rhinoplasty and “bat ears” were immensely entertaining; but beneath the wit and irreverence, there was a deep understanding of the art and craft of our specialty. His gravelly voice was unique and immediately recognizable to all. His sayings such as “spot on” and “first rate” still echo in my mind. I remember when he



and Jill joined us at a meeting in Morelia, Mexico, and he told me he had developed a unilateral vocal cord paralysis. That never left him but only added to the character of his voice and presentations.

Tony was one of the founders of the European Academy of Facial Plastic Surgery. This grew from the Joseph Society that he Dr. Walter, had organized. He served as secretary from 1977-1988 and president from 1989-1994. He helped me organize the International Federation of Facial Plastic Surgery Societies and served as president in 1998.

I have a special fondness for his role, along with M. Eugene Tardy, Jr., MD, in founding the *Facial Plastic Surgery Monographs*. I served on his editorial board for

many years and this journal was essentially the first credible international publication in facial plastic surgery. J. Regan Thomas, MD, and I launched the *Clinics in Facial Plastic Surgery* later, based to a large degree on this foundation. Our peer reviewed *Archives of Facial Plastic Surgery* (now *JAMA Facial Plastic Surgery*) also was possible because of his pioneering work and the demonstrated audience.

The most important legacy of Tony Bull is his kind and generous support to all of us for whom he was a mentor. When I was studying eye plastic surgery at the Moorfield's Eye Hospital during the 80s with Mr. Richard Collin, I would go on Fridays to watch Tony operate. He didn't just allow me to observe, but became a good friend. We would go to his favorite pub afterwards to continue the conversation. When I decided to start a practice in London, Tony welcomed me warmly. He offered to allow me to see my consultations in his personal rooms at 107 Harley Street and then wouldn't consider any payment in return. He was a great man, a great friend, and I will miss him very much. ■

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A promotional graphic for a course. It features a central red diamond shape with white text. The text includes the course title, dates (May 4-7, 2017), location (Chicago, IL, USA), venue (SHERATON CHICAGO HOTEL AND TOWERS), and the organizing body (FACIAL PLASTIC SURGERY). The background consists of stylized profiles of human faces in various colors (blue, yellow, white) against a dark background.