



The Alumni Award of Distinction
of the Christian Medical College Alumni Association
for the year **2011**

is given to

Dr. Atar Deo Singh

Dr Atar Deo Singh popularly known to his colleagues as AD has been a teacher, friend and mentor for many Oncologists who now practice Radiotherapy successfully in many parts of India and abroad. He was born in a small village in the Begusarai District of Bihar. After successfully completing his MBBS degree in 1953 from the Patna Medical College, he went to the UK where he studied Radiotherapy and was awarded the DMRT in 1958 and FRCR in 1960. Refusing several lucrative job offers in England and Canada, he returned to India and joined C.M.C.Vellore in August 1961.

Dr Ida B Scudder, niece of our founder, was managing the Radiotherapy Department alone. She had felt her back bent with the continuous load of the department; and often said that Dr Singh was God's answer to her prayer. Dr Singh would respond by saying she was the only lady he had to continuously run after! Soon after joining, he accepted a Central Government job in Chandigarh which he was offered. However, Dr Scudder's selfless service, her motherly affection, and the spirit of C.M.C had touched his soul. He felt he had been emotionally stirred and fitted for service in C.M.C. He soon returned to Vellore, accepting a salary one third of what he received in Chandigarh.

The first task was to get technical staff. Dr Singh started a training program for Radiotherapy Radiographers and Physicists. He also helped to initiate the first MD RT course in India with the Madras University. He stayed in Vellore for five years. During this time, a few Technologists had qualified. Another Telecobalt Unit was added as well as a new Isotope Laboratory named after his mentor, Dr Ida B Scudder. In those days, Radiotherapy and Diagnostic Radiology were one department. For Radiotherapy to emerge from under the shadow of Radio diagnosis, Dr. Singh convinced the MCI to recognise Radiotherapy as a separate specialty.

Compelling family obligations forced Dr Singh to move back to North India. However, he could leave only after Dr Solomon Padam Singh, joined the department.

The story does not however end there. Drawn by his love and concern for the institution, Dr. Singh returned to Vellore in 1976 to take charge of Radiotherapy and Radio-diagnosis when the Institution was going through a period of crisis. He stayed on till he retired in 1989.

There have been many firsts in his career. He was the first from his village to be a matriculate, and a doctor, also the first to travel abroad. He was the first Indian to obtain the FRCR exclusively in Radiotherapy.

As early as 1966, Dr. Singh published a paper in the American Journal of Roentgenology highlighting the association of tobacco and oral cancer. In 1968, he co-authored a paper on sequential chemotherapy and radiotherapy in carcinoma of the buccal mucosa. His technical report on the poor man's wedge was published in the UICC Compendium of Radiotherapy Techniques. Subsequently he has published and presented many papers also authored a book Quintessence of Radiotherapy

He was one of the main movers to start the Association of Radiation Oncologists of India and the Indian College of Radiology with all its academic activities. He has been a founder member and served as President of Association of Radiation Oncologists of India.

At a National and State level, Dr. Singh's work has been recognised. He has received several awards; The Dr. B.C.Roy National award, Shri J.C. Bose Oration, Dr. Solomon Padam Singh Oration, Dr. Ida B Scudder Oration and the Dr. K.L. Gupta oration.

In the department and in the Institution, he is remembered for his simple lifestyle, friendly manner, sincerity, philosophical discussions and his sense of humour. He shared generously from his experience and knowledge.

He was deeply involved in trying to uphold the spirit of empathy and service in the institution. Toward this goal, he collected the Ida Scudder prize winning essays and published a book titled "Walk a Mile in My Shoes". To cheer up the patients, he created a beautiful garden near R ward. Seasonal flowers bloomed there; the fragrance of Jasmine pervaded the area. Though the garden has given way to a new need for a waiting area and Dr. Singh's post is now held by his student, we all remember him as a person who added graciousness, old time values and beauty to our Institution.

In recognition of his dedicated service and contribution to the life and work of the institution the Alumni Association of the Christian Medical College, Vellore is proud to honour Dr. Atar Deo Singh with the Alumni Award for the year 2011.

13th August, 2011
Vellore

President
CMC Alumni Association