



## IN MEMORIAM

Margaret H. Jones  
Professor of Pediatrics, School of Medicine, Emerita  
Los Angeles  
1904– 2001

Dr. Margaret Jones, an emerita professor of pediatrics and pioneer in treatment of cerebral palsy, has died at the age of 97 on December 8, 2001. She died in her sleep of congestive heart failure while at home in the Pacific Palisades.

Born June 3, 1904, in Portland, Maine, Dr. Jones was an outdoor enthusiast who relished boating, skiing and hiking. She obtained a bachelor's degree in chemistry from Radcliffe College and then studied for her master's degree while teaching at Vassar College. After working as a research chemist, Dr. Jones entered medical school and graduated from Cornell University in 1933, one of the few women in her class.

After an internship, she traveled west to her first job, at the Wyoming Department of Public Health. Among her duties was caring for what were then called "crippled" children. Her interest in cerebral palsy was born.

In 1943, Dr. Jones traveled further west to California and joined a busy pediatric office in Los Angeles in 1943. About six years later, she opened her own practice in Glendale. It was there that she founded a nursery school for children with cerebral palsy, the first of its kind. She advanced a new paradigm based on the idea of treating babies with daily physical therapy. Years later, she succeeded in persuading the Los Angeles Unified School District to open adaptive classes so that children with Cerebral Palsy could attend school regularly. Dr. Jones taught at the USC School of Medicine from 1943 to 1954 before joining the staff and faculty at the UCLA School of Medicine and gradually shifted over to full time to direct the Child Rehabilitation Program.

She was particularly concerned with quality- of- life issues affecting children and adults with cerebral palsy, a complex disorder that results from damage to the developing brain at birth. Although most treatment of cerebral palsy focuses on muscle function, Dr. Jones advocated that more attention be paid to the speaking, breathing and swallowing problems that often affect patients. In one famous "experiment," Dr. Jones mixed barium, a contrast agent used to highlight tissue in X- rays, into chocolate brownies to permit a detailed swallowing function in order to avoid feeding tubes. After her retirement in 1972, Dr. Jones continued to see patients during occasional rounds at the Center for Cerebral Palsy at UCLA- Orthopedic Hospital until about a year ago.

Dr. Jones was the recipient of numerous awards and honors: A 1997 conference on cerebral palsy at UCLA was held in her honor. Dr. Jones also served as the sixth president of the American Academy of Cerebral Palsy. "She helped to guide that organization to the 1,500- plus members it has today." In her later years, she enjoyed life fully and was admired for her longevity and active retirement. She actively remained involved in the clinic at UCLA. "Patients loved her, and many stayed with her for more than a half century," said Dr. William Oppenheim, director of the Center for Cerebral Palsy. Just a few weeks prior to her death, she put the finishing touches on a book describing the treatment of cerebral palsy over the last century.

On a personal note by Dr. Neumann, my first introduction to Dr. Jones was when I joined the Department of Pediatrics in 1969, and she insisted we come with our children to her front garden in Pacific Palisades to view

the Fourth of July parade, which marched past her home each year; this became an annual event! Another memory is how Dr. Jones, an avid outdoorswoman and athlete, and dedicated Sierra Club member, accompanied a Sierra Club group in a Utah Ski trip as the outing physician. She, returning in a cast having broken her leg while skiing downhill at age 75! Upon returning home in a cast, she continued her clinical duties.

Dr. Jones at age 85, during her first “date” with her husband to be, Dr. Kaamer, a retired British Army surgeon, also an outdoors person, went on a hike in the Santa Monica Mountains. Instead of a three hour walk, it turned out to be an eight hour excursion, as they managed to get lost in the mountains taking a wrong trail. This encounter led to a proposal of marriage! Subsequently, they enjoyed four years of a happy marriage until her husband passed away in 1993.

Our one deep regret has been not having spent more time with this remarkable, delightful woman and inspirational humanitarian who lived her life fully to the last days.

Charlotte G. Neumann  
E. Richard Stiehm  
William Oppenheim