



COMMEMORATING THE HEASLIP BEQUEST TO MEDICAL EDUCATION

Wednesday 21 November 2018



The Heaslip Bequest to Medical Education

“*The Heaslip Bequest has made a significant contribution to the development of medical education at Flinders University.*

The University’s medical program is recognised internationally for its innovative curriculum that delivers outstanding clinical and academic training, integrating clinical medicine with a strong underpinning in biomedical science.

The bequest has greatly assisted the University in its mission to pursue excellence in contemporary teaching, reflecting Gordon and Barbara’s own visionary and future-focused thinking.”

Professor Jonathan Craig

Vice President and Executive Dean
College of Medicine and Public Health
Flinders University



Gordon and Barbara Heaslip

Gordon Heaslip's forebears migrated to South Australia from Ireland in 1851, taking up land north of Adelaide around Orrooro, Gladstone and Carrieton. Gordon was educated in the area and attended high school in Gladstone. After school he moved to Adelaide for further studies and graduated in medicine in 1929. He also completed studies at Wesley College with a view to becoming a medical missionary.

After tropical health postgraduate studies in Sydney in 1930, Gordon and his wife Barbara (nee Shorney) ventured to Fergusson Island, off the south east coast of Papua New Guinea. Here, Gordon took charge of the recently established Missionary Hospital under the patronage of the Methodist Missionary Society of Australia.

Gordon and Barbara started their family in 1933. They had four children, Jeffrey, Jocelyn, Jennifer and Rosalie.

In 1938 Gordon commenced his career in medical research as one of the first NHMRC Research Assistants at the IMVS where he focused on the causes of Queensland Fevers, identifying causative micro-organisms.

By 1940 World War II was directly impacting Australia. Gordon joined the Australian Army Medical Corps Reserve of Officers and in 1941 he enlisted in the Militia in Wayville and then on to Camp Woodside. He continued to practice his speciality expertise in tropical health and

pathology within many military hospitals in Australia, and also travelling extensively between Malaya, Borneo, Indonesia.

Returning to Australia after the war Gordon focused on his rural holdings, purchasing property in Gilles Downs and in the south east.

Gordon later encountered health problems with a condition called polycythemia vera that progressed to become leukaemia. He passed away in 1961.

Throughout their lives, Gordon and Barbara were affected by tumultuous events, both internationally and nationally. In these difficult times they rose to the occasion, proving to be major forces for good in their own distinct ways.

With their pioneering work at the Salamo medical mission they were at the forefront of the development of Papua New Guinea. Gordon's medical research underpinned new understandings of tropical diseases and played a crucial role in supporting the troops during the War.

Barbara, who passed away in 1982, can be credited with unstinting devotion to improving the lives of people with mental illness and developing the community support available to them.

Gordon and Barbara Heaslip's legacy to the community is testament to their intrinsic goodness.

**Emeritus Professor Peter McDonald
and Dr Robert Fitzsimons**

“*Since neither birth
nor fortune have
favoured me, my
actions shall speak to
the world.*”

- MATTHEW FLINDERS, 1804

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