

Hilding H. Olson, M.D.

April 30, 1916 — August 13, 2007

Dr. Hilding Harold Olson had a long and illustrious surgical career. He had the unique distinction of having been the first resident to graduate from our General Surgery Residency Program, the first individual to be appointed to our Clinical Faculty, and the first alumnus to receive the Department's Annual *Distinguished Alumnus Award*. Dr. Olson, often referred to as "The Doctor's Doctor" and as "The Surgeon's Surgeon," continued to be a source of sage advice and counsel for junior and senior surgeons and residents alike even after he retired.

Dr. Olson married Donna Anderson on August 14, 1943 and together they had three children: Sheila Richardson, Susan LeClerq, and Daniel Olson. He served with the U.S. Army from 1941-43 and again in 1946. He was a very talented man whose avocations included playing the piano and pipe organ.

To know the history of our Department of Surgery is to know the history of Hilding Olson. He not only was **Dr. Henry Harkins'** first resident, but he also worked closely with **Drs. Alfred Strauss & K. Alvin Merendino**. A renowned surgical historian, Dr. Olson made significant contributions to the social and academic development



Hilding H. Olson, M.D.

BORN: Burlington, WA

B.S.: University of Washington
(1939)

M.D.: University of Oregon
(1943)

RESIDENCY: King County Hospital
(1944-51)

UW APPOINTMENTS:

Attending Surgeon (1951)
Surgical Clerkship Program Director
(1954-73)

Clinical Professor (1964)
Director, Residency Program at
Providence Medical Center/UW (1976-87)
Clinical Professor Emeritus (1987)

of both the Department of Surgery and of the School of Medicine and held attending privileges at Providence, Harborview, Swedish, and University hospitals.

At all times, however, he was busy in private practice strengthening the bonds that link our local community surgeons with the academic surgeons here at the UW. In fact, his most significant legacy was in his role as Director of Surgical Education at Providence Medical Center. It was because of his organization of that teaching program that we were able to begin routine rotation of surgical residents and clinical clerks at Providence. The countless residents and medical students that he trained and supervised benefited enormously from his mentorship.

Dr. Olson served as President of the Pacific Coast Surgical Association in 1982 and President of the Seattle Surgical Society in 1975. He was honored by the UW School of Medicine with the *Outstanding Teacher Award* in 1958, 1968, and again in 1985.

His legacy will live on as the wisdom he has imparted passes from generation to generation.

Surgery Synopsis is an in-house newsletter published on a quarterly basis to highlight the academic activities of the University of Washington School of Medicine Department of Surgery. This publication is distributed to the Department's faculty, residents, staff, and friends.

Chairman: Carlos A. Pellegrini, M.D. **Editor:** Ted Kohler, M.D. **Associate Editor:** Siobhan Brown **Managing Editor:** Eileen Herman

University of Washington Box 356410 Seattle, WA 98195-6410 (425) 775-2373 FAX: (425) 775-2175 emherman@u.washington.edu