

# Pulmonary Pathology Society Lifetime Achievement Award, 2009

David Dail, MD, Virginia Mason Medical Center,  
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During my first years as a resident in pathology, I remember looking in awe at a large blue book entitled *Pulmonary Pathology* newly placed on shelves at our medical school bookstore.<sup>1</sup> Although a number of texts on other subspecialty fields of pathology such as gynecologic pathology had been featured for years, a text devoted to pulmonary pathology was new and different. Picking the book up, it seemed to weigh more than other pathology texts. Browsing through its copious descriptions and illustrations only reinforced this perception.

My encounter with “the blue book” fostered and nurtured a nascent interest in the subspecialty of pulmonary pathology. What a pleasure it then was, in 1998, to have an opportunity to work with the lead editor of this text—David Dail, MD. It was an even greater privilege to present the 2009 Pulmonary Pathology Society Lifetime Achievement award to Dr Dail at our biennial meeting and to write this corresponding tribute.

We will all remember Dr Dail for the blue book—his compendium of pulmonary pathology, which served, and continues to serve, as the authoritative reference in the field.<sup>1</sup> In 1994, Dr Dail along with his coeditor Sam Hammar, MD, published a second edition, which expanded on their initial work, reporting many of the exciting discoveries of the time.<sup>2</sup> In an age before digital photography, the second edition of *Pulmonary Pathology* contained “1517 images in 1989 parts.” *Dail and Hammar’s Pulmonary Pathology* is now in its third edition, published in 2008 and now edited by Joseph Tomashefski Jr, MD, and others.<sup>3</sup>

In addition to his textbook, Dr Dail will be remembered for his many other significant contributions to pathology. He is the author of 22 book chapters, 3 smaller monographs, and 33 peer-reviewed articles. Working with Averill Liebow, MD, he described the first cases of intravascular, bronchiolar, and alveolar tumor of the lung, later recognized as a distinctive respiratory variant of



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epithelioid hemangioendothelioma.<sup>4</sup> He has given presentations or served as moderator at 6 international meetings and 74 national workshops and seminars. He served as the chief prelector and organizer for the American Society for Clinical Pathology fall anatomic pathology slide seminar on lung tumors in 1991 and for an additional 20 regional meetings. He also served as member and chair of 8 committees for the American Society for Clinical Pathology as well as a judge of resident papers and pathology photography and a member of the awards committees for both the American Society for Clinical Pathology and the College of American Pathologists. In 1990, he was the recipient of the American Society for Clinical Pathology’s Distinguished Service Award. In 2001 Dr Dail and Dr Hammar were codirectors of the second biennial Pulmonary Pathology Society meeting in Seattle, Washington.

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Dr Dail's numerous achievements reflect his passion for learning both before and after becoming a pathologist. He was born in Missouri but spent most of his childhood in California near San Francisco. He went to Berkeley for undergraduate studies prior to receiving his MD degree in 1968 from the Medical College of Wisconsin, Milwaukee. After a rotating internship at the Medical College of Virginia, Richmond, and serving for 2 years as a medical officer in the United States Army, he was intent on pursuing a career in radiology. Through a fortunate circumstance, however, he was able to do a year of autopsies at University of California San Diego where he met Dr Averill Liebow. Dr Dail's work with Dr Liebow profoundly influenced his subsequent goals and career. He changed his residency to pathology and finished 2 years later.

Dr Dail began his professional career at the University of California San Diego as an assistant professor and director of the autopsy service. Working closely with Dr Liebow, he developed a love for pulmonary pathology. A 3-month sabbatical with Dr Herbert Spencer in London reinforced this passion. From 1978 to 1979 he was a fellow and junior staff pathologist at M. D. Anderson, Houston, Texas, and in 1979 he came to Seattle as a pathologist at Virginia Mason Medical Center and a clinical professor of pathology at the University of Washington.

On a personal note, I had the privilege of working with Dr Dail for 8 years at Virginia Mason Medical Center prior to his retirement in 2006. Dr Dail was always an inspiration for me and was always happy to offer his

opinion and lend his insight on difficult cases of pulmonary interstitial lung disease and neoplasia. He has helped, and continues to help, me and others in providing material, images, and insight for our own publications.

During the 2009 Pulmonary Pathology Society biennial meeting, as in so many prior meetings, Dr Dail graciously accepted our invitation to give the Pulmonary Pathology Society yet one more presentation. This presentation, "The History of Pulmonary Pathology," featured remarks on the origins of pulmonary pathology, significant advances in the field, and, of course, remarks on Dr Liebow and his role as the father of pulmonary pathology. This talk was a highlight of our meeting and allowed us once again to appreciate David's wit and charm in a topic of great interest.

David is now retired with his wife and continues to live in the Seattle area. On rare visits to our department, he is still happy to offer his opinion and insight in difficult lung biopsy cases. He has 2 daughters—one is working in computer animation and the other in oceanography.

#### References

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