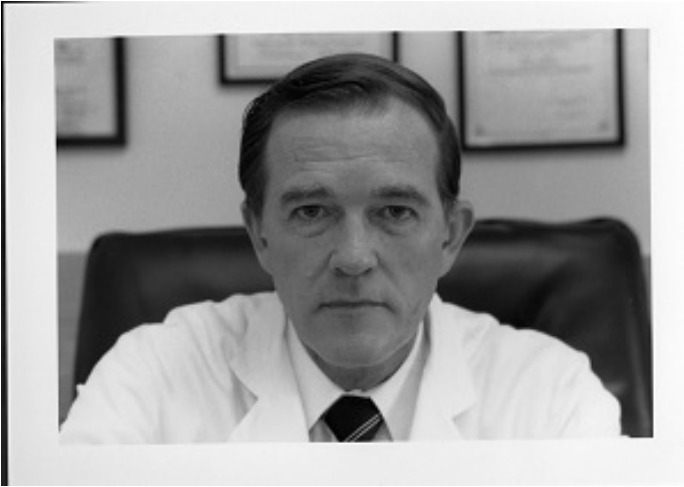




John J. Collins, Jr.



1934-2010

In 1984, John J. Collins, Jr., together with a surgical and medical team from the BWH performed the first heart transplant in New England. This was a relatively controversial decision, since there were only 8 established cardiac transplant units in the country, but with the introduction of immunosuppressant drug Cyclosporin he was confident that this operation would be a reasonable one for patients with terminal heart failure. The program in the last 25 years has done over 600 heart transplants.

In addition to his extensive contributions to the treatment of coronary artery disease, coronary artery bypass surgery, valve surgery and cardiac transplantation, Dr. Collins had a leadership role in international exchange of medical research and surgical advances. In 1978 he began annual visits with a surgical team from the Brigham and Women's Hospital, to China, where he operated on political and civic leaders while instructing Chinese physicians in his methods and advising of the designs of operating suites at many hospitals throughout China. In 1985 he was named honorary professor at the Peoples Liberation Army military Hospital in Beijing China. He is Past President of the Association for the Advancement of Medical Instrumentation and served as Chairman of the Medical Device Committee for the American College of Cardiology. He is also a member of the US Information Agency, Medical Science Advisory Committee. For 10 years he served as Editor of the Yearbook of Cardiology providing commentary and articles published on cardiac surgery.

Dr. Collins professional career began with a medical degree from St. Louis University in 1957. He served his country as a lieutenant in the US Naval Corp in New London CT where he helped to improve the safety and habitability of submarines. Dr. Collins was accepted into the residency program at the Peter Bent Brigham Hospital in 1966 under Dr. Francis Moore. Dr. Collins also worked under Nobel Prize winner, Dr. Joseph Murray who performed the world's first successful kidney transplant, and Dr. Richard Wilson.

He remained at the Brigham and Women's hospital for 3 decades, and served as Chief of the Division of Cardiac Surgery from 1970-1987 and Vice Chair of the Department of Surgery from 1987 to his retirement in 1999. At Harvard Medical School, he was appointed Assistant in Surgery in 1968 and rose steadily through the academic ranks, serving as Professor of Surgery from 1977 until his retirement as Professor of Surgery, Emeritus in 1999.

*In tribute to their dedicated efforts to science and medicine, deceased members of the Harvard Faculty of Medicine (those at the rank of full or emeritus professor) receive a review of their life and contributions with a complete reflection, a **Memorial Minute**.*

Dr. Collins' contributions and achievements were recognized with many awards. In 2000 the Brigham and Women's Hospital established the John J. Collins, Jr. Cardiothoracic Surgeons Scholar given to the resident with the highest score in the ABTS in-service examination. In 2002, he received the St. Louis University School of Medicine Alumni Merit Award and in 2004 his home town of Thomasville, GA awarded him with the Thomasville Thomas County Pinnacle Award honoring his extraordinary leadership and service to his community. In 2005 Dr. Collins received the legendary Lion Recognition for St. Leo University in St. Leo, FL for highest achievement in his field. As a young man he had attended St. Leo Benedictine Preparatory School.

John Collins, Jr., was married to Mary Hogan Collins, MD, whom he met in medical school at St. Louis University. John and Mary lived recently in Marion, MA and Thomasville, GA. Throughout his career, Dr. Collins made a point of nurturing his family personally and intellectually and he enjoyed numerous excursions with them which included driving to southern GA, sailing off the MA coast, fishing in the west traveling to Europe and Asia and teaching them all to play golf.

John J. Collins, Jr., died on Saturday, March 6th, 2010 in Marion, MA. He was 76 years old. He is survived by his wife Mary; his four children, Anne Collins Goodyear, Maureen Collins Beekley, John Joseph Collins, III, MD and Robert Ryan Collins; and two grandchildren.

Dr. Collins participated in the training of over 200 residents and fellows at the Peter Bent Brigham and then Brigham and Women's Hospital and he always commented that this was one of his greatest legacies.

At the conclusion of his career he was archives director of the Brigham and Women's Hospital Department of Surgery and as he mentioned, "the study of history is designed to improve our access to the future, not to enshrine the past".

Respectfully submitted,

Lawrence Cohn, *chairperson*
John Mannick
David Sugarbaker