

Obituary

**CHRISTOPHER HAFFNER, formerly Medical Director,
Wessex Unit for Children and Parents, Portsmouth.**

Dr Christopher Haffner, a Foundation Fellow of the College, died at the age of 72 on 16 February 1986, after a short illness. He was born in Stuttgart, but left West Germany in 1935 to study Art at the University of Berne, under Paul Klee. Later he joined the Universities of St Andrews and Edinburgh where he studied medicine in the war years, graduating in 1944. This was followed by a period of training in psychiatry at the Maudsley, after which he worked at Napsbury Hospital, St Albans, and later at Guy's, taking his MD in 1951.

The following year he was appointed Consultant Child Psychiatrist at St James' Hospital, Portsmouth, and subsequently became Medical Director of the Wessex Unit for Children and Parents. It was with the close collaboration of Dr John Revans at the Wessex Regional Health Authority that Dr Haffner was able to develop and

implement the planning of a Regional Child Psychiatric Unit, incorporating, by 1967, three in-patient units, out-patient facilities and a special school.

In the mid-1950s, Dr Haffner worked on a study of enuretic children, but during the 1960s and 1970s, he presented a number of dissertations at the RMPA and university venues on more wide-ranging subjects in family psychiatry and, in particular, on adoption, into which he had researched in great detail. He also worked meticulously on the development of clinical data and on a Family Life Health Inventory, at the same time initiating a Diploma Course for nurses in the Psychiatric Care of Children (later to be known as Course 600 and Course 603). In 1960 he was appointed to the Mental Health Review Tribunal for the Wessex Area and remained an active member until the time of his illness.

Intensely creative and imaginative, his considerable abilities as a painter, and as a writer, were unfortunately seldom allowed public expression because of his natural reticence. Those of us who knew Christopher in his later years, as a professional colleague and as a man remember him as a person of great courtesy and charm and of a great breadth of culture. He had, after all, lived or worked in Germany, Switzerland, Scotland, Canada and England. Thus, quite apart from his directly professional concerns and abilities, he was familiar with the literature and the musical and visual arts of many parts of Europe and the New World. His attitude to life in general may indeed have been coloured by his love of the mountains of Switzerland to which he frequently returned. Perhaps it was this influence which often called forth in those who met him, what one might only describe as a sense of personal enlargement.

Always a private person, Christopher was very much a family man. He is survived by his loyal and supportive wife, Luce, by his son, Paul, a Roman Catholic priest, and his daughter, Christine, who graduated in medicine in 1981 at Bristol University.

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