

In Memoriam:

# Grady L. Hallman, MD

(1930–2017)

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**O**n 13 January 2017, the Texas Heart Institute community said goodbye to a pioneering THI surgeon, mentor, and friend. Dr. Grady L. Hallman made a substantial contribution to THI's mission to educate surgeons and physicians, to advance research, and to provide exceptional patient care for those suffering from cardiovascular disease.

Grady Hallman was born on 25 October 1930 in Tyler, Texas. He graduated with honors from the University of Texas at Austin, where he was inducted into Phi Beta Kappa and where he indulged his passion for music by playing the trombone in the Longhorn Band and the euphonium in the UT Symphonic Band. In recognition of his considerable musical accomplishments, he received the Outstanding Band Member Award and later in life was elected to

the Longhorn Band Hall of Honor. After graduation, he attended Baylor College of Medicine, received his medical degree with honors in 1954, and was elected to the Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society. He served in the Army Medical Corps during his surgical residency, and in 1962 he completed his surgical training at Baylor under Dr. Michael E. DeBakey. Dr. Hallman then joined Baylor's Department of Surgery, when cardiovascular surgery was in its infancy.

It was also in 1962 that Dr. Hallman asked Dr. Denton A. Cooley, the founder of the newly established Texas Heart Institute, if he could join his practice and assist in his pioneering surgical work at Texas Children's Hospital. Impressed with Dr. Hallman's work, Dr. Cooley accepted him as his first associate at THI. Together, the 2 surgeons collaborated in innovative surgeries for children with congenital heart disease. Their work led to many of the early advances in the field and resulted in numerous publications, including the first comprehensive surgical textbook on the subject in 1966 and its revised editions published in 1975 and 1987. Dr. Hallman's and Dr. Cooley's other early contributions to the literature included the following articles:

- "Cardiovascular surgery in the first year of life. Experience with 450 consecutive operations" (*American Journal of Surgery*, 1964)
- "Open heart surgery using disposable plastic oxygenators, 5 per cent dextrose in water for priming, and maintenance of normothermia: experience with 1,162 operations" (*Annales de Chirurgie Thoracique et Cardio-Vasculaire*, 1965)
- "Congenital cardiovascular anomalies in adults. Results of surgical treatment in 167 patients over age 35" (*American Journal of Cardiology*, 1966)
- "Surgical correction of coarctation of the aorta in the first year of life" (*The Annals of Thoracic Surgery*, 1967).

In all, Dr. Hallman was an author on 309 peer-reviewed papers during his career.



*Grady L. Hallman, MD*

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The pioneering surgery performed by THI surgeons led to the explosive growth of cardiovascular surgery in the 1970s and 1980s. It was not unusual for the surgical staff to perform 30 to 35 procedures per day in 10 operating rooms, and surgeons from around the world came to Houston to observe. During the past 45 years, 136 surgical residents have completed training for board certification in cardiovascular surgery, and 929 surgeons from 47 countries have participated in the THI Cardiac Surgery Fellowship program. Dr. Hallman mentored many of these individuals, who held him in high esteem and appreciated his technical prowess, willingness to teach, and emphasis on excellence and precision. Dr. Philip Allmendinger, who in 1972 was the first chief resident in the THI's new cardiothoracic program, recently wrote a letter in which he reflected on Dr. Hallman's contributions to surgical education and patient care. "To operate with [Dr. Hallman] was a lesson in anatomy and technique," Allmendinger said. He also remembered Dr. Hallman for saying, "Each stitch and each anastomosis in cardiovascular surgery must be perfect, as I would want it if I were the patient. Furthermore, neither I nor my colleagues believe in taking shortcuts. Each of us strives for technical excellence. As a result, the mortality rate at the Texas Heart Institute is extremely low."

Dr. Hallman was a member of many professional societies and gave generously of his time, serving as president of the Houston chapter of the American Heart Association, chairman of the membership committee of the Society for Thoracic Surgeons, and advisor to the State of Texas' Crippled Children's Services Program. In addition, long before quality metrics became a science and public reporting of surgical outcomes was required for cardiac surgeons, Dr. Hallman chaired St. Luke's Episcopal Hospital's Committee on Quality and Outcomes, serving in that capacity for 35 years.

Dr. Hallman's love for music was evident throughout his professional career. While at THI, Hallman founded and directed The Heartbeats, an all-doctor band that performed at many medical meetings and social events to raise awareness of heart disease; Dr. Hallman played the trombone, and Dr. Cooley played the bass fiddle. Proceeds from The Heartbeats' recordings were donat-

ed to Mended Hearts, a volunteer organization of former patients with heart disease who visit and encourage patients undergoing heart surgery and their families. In his letter, Dr. Allmendinger recalled that, when a new set of operating rooms was built, "...[Dr. Hallman] was able to customize his OR to his liking. A quadrasonic sound system was installed, and we listened to many artists...including his favorite, The Heartbeats." Dr. Hallman also toured Europe and played solos with the Dallas Wind Symphony, the Texas Wind Symphony, and the Doctors Orchestra of Houston. He was also a board member of the Houston Symphony and The Shepherd School of Music at Rice University.

Dr. Hallman was preceded in death by his wife of 62 years, Martha Suit Hallman. They leave a loving family that includes their son Daniel, their son David and his wife Kimmy, their son Charles and his wife Martha, 7 grandchildren, and a great-grandchild. Much to his father's delight, Charles shared his father's love for surgery and is a cardiovascular surgeon at THI.

The Hallmans enjoyed spending weekends at their country place near Round Top, Texas, a location that, unsurprisingly, is known for its music festival. For many years, Dr. Hallman enjoyed hosting the THI family at his ranch for the Fourth of July, and he proudly performed medleys of John Philip Sousa's marches from the bandstand he built next to the swimming pool.

Grady Hallman lived a full life for 86 years and touched many people. His passion for teaching surgery was always evident; even in the last weeks of his life, he came to THI at 6 AM once a week to give lectures to new medical students on his favorite subject, cardiac surgery. His many gifts, love, and service to his family, patients, students, colleagues, and the Texas Heart Institute will not be forgotten, and his encouraging words and harmonious spirit will be sorely missed. Well done, good and faithful servant.

*James J. Livesay, MD,  
Department of Cardiovascular Surgery,  
Texas Heart Institute,  
Houston*