



John Bowen

March 8, 1941 - May 13, 2013

Dr. John Canada Bowen III, a vascular and gastrointestinal surgeon for over 42 years who was Chairman Emeritus of the Department of Surgery at the Ochsner Clinic Foundation, died Monday, May 13, 2013 at home in New Orleans. He had battled cancer for several years. He was 72 years old. Born in Memphis, TN and known as "Johnny" by family and friends, he grew up in Forrest City, AR and was the oldest of three children born to Laura Louise McDaniel Bowen and John Canada Bowen, Jr. of Forrest City. John earned a B.A. in History from Yale University in 1963. It was during his senior year that he was invited by his peers to become a member of the Yale Whiffenpoofs, one of the preeminent a cappella groups in the country and one of the oldest traditions at Yale. His Whiffenpoof nickname was John "Slide Trom" Bowen. This group was invited to perform around Europe, where on one occasion they sang for Princess Grace of Monaco. He treasured the lifelong friendships he developed with his fellow Whiffs, and his love of music sustained him throughout his life.

After college, John received his medical degree from Columbia College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York City in 1967 and completed his residencies at the University Hospitals in Cleveland, Ohio and Case Western Reserve University.

In 1969-70 during the Vietnam War, John served on a surgical research team and as a clinical surgeon in Vietnam in the medical corps of the United States Army and in 1970 received the Bronze Star Medal for meritorious service.

Following his service overseas, he rose to the rank of Major and served in the Division of Surgery at Walter Reed Army Institute of Research.

After his army service, John held a fellowship at the University of Texas Medical School at Houston, and in 1976 he joined the surgical staff at the Ochsner Clinic Foundation. While at Ochsner, he served in a number of management positions, including the Chairman of the Department of Surgery from 1993-2002. In 2012 Ochsner's medical residents honored him with the Hurst B. Hatch Teacher of the Year Award. Also in 2012, Ochsner presented him with the Spirit of Leadership Lifetime Achievement Award, and today he will be presented posthumously the Medal of Honor by the Society for Surgery of the Alimentary Tract.

John is survived by his wife of 20 years, Mimi Robinson Bowen; his son, Eldridge Scott Bowen (Lynne) of Little Rock, AR; his daughter, Laura Bowen Wills (Bradford) of Bethesda, MD; two grandchildren, Catharine McDaniel Wills and John Bradford Wills of Bethesda, MD; his four step-children, Thomas Church Farnsworth, III and Martha Farnsworth Turley of Memphis, TN, Cecile Villere Colhoun and Pierre Blaise Villere of New Orleans; his brother, Louis McDaniel Bowen of Hong Kong, his sister, Montine Bowen McNulty of Pine Bluff, AR and nine step-grandchildren.

The family will receive friends at the home of John's cousins, Buzz and Jan Haven, located south of Forrest City at 12:00 NOON, Wednesday, May 22, 2013.

Relatives and friends are invited to attend graveside services on Wednesday, May 22 in Forrest Park Cemetery at 2:00 PM. Dr. Larry Mitchell, Pastor of Graham Memorial Presbyterian Church will conduct the services, which will include Military Honors. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made in John's name to the Gayle and Tom Benson Cancer Center at the Ochsner Clinic Foundation or the Yale Whiffenpoof Alumni Fund, P.O. Box 209024, New Haven, Connecticut 06520-9024.

Tribute Wall



“ *I'm so sorry to hear about Johnny's death. I always admired him and really looked up to him when I was growing up. Please tell Montine and Louis Mac I will be thinking about them.* ”

David Deaderick - November 13, 2013 at 12:00 PM



“ *My deepest sympathy to your family! Such an accomplished man who taken too soon.* ”
Judy Ferguson Smith

May 17, 2013 at 12:00 AM