

Worth his weight in ...

M.R. Chasen MBChB MPhil(Pall Med)*

PHILIP ("PHIL") GOLD CC OQ MD PhD

A native Montrealer, Dr. Phil Gold was born in 1936 to Polish immigrant parents. As a youth, he spent his vacations as a camp counsellor by day and a brewery watchman by night. During the weekends, he sold encyclopaedias—and probably read them as well!

After his early schooling in Montreal, Gold went on to McGill University, obtaining a Bachelor of Science in Physiology, followed by a master's degree and a doctorate. He then travelled abroad to train at the Public Health Research Institute of New York as a Centennial Fellow of the Medical Research Council of Canada, eventually returning to the Montreal General Hospital and McGill University.

Gold has been a pioneer in cancer research for more than 50 years. Clinical work, teaching, and clinical investigation are his fortes. His early research—with his colleague Dr. Samuel Freedman—led to the discovery of carcinoembryonic antigen (CEA), which revolutionized cancer research. In modern oncology, the test for serum CEA is now the most frequently used test for the diagnosis and management of patients with cancer.

In 1978, Gold became the first director of the McGill Cancer Centre, which subsequently evolved into the first university-based department of oncology in North America. In 1980, he served as physician-in-chief and then, between 1985 and 1990, as chair of the Department of Medicine at McGill University. In 1995, he stepped away from the position of physician-in-chief to become executive director of the Clinical Research Centre of the Research Institute of the McGill University health complex.

Gold has received numerous international awards and honours and has been elected to a wide variety of positions in scientific organizations. He has been named a Companion of the Order of Canada, an Officer of the Ordre Nationale du Québec, and a member of the Academy of Great Montrealers. He is also the recipient of the Gold Medal Award of Merit of the Graduate Society of McGill University and of such prestigious awards as a Canada Gairdner International Award (Gairdner Foundation), an Izaak Walton Killam Prize in Health Sciences (Canada Council), and the R.M. Taylor Medal (National Cancer Institute of Canada). He has been elected to membership in the Royal Society of Canada and the Association of American Physicians and to a Mastership in the American College of Physicians. He was inducted into the Canadian Medical Hall of Fame in 2010 and has been described by many of his peers as a worldly statesman with a long and respected career at the national and international levels.

Gold's generous spirit manifests in the time he gives so freely, always making the person with whom he is speaking feel that she or he is the most important person at that particular moment. Many a student will tell you of times when they had a single question to ask of Gold but ended up engaged in an extended conversation about other important issues as well. Gold has a passion for teaching students and residents; he was one of the initial Osler Fellows at McGill. (The Osler Fellows are practicing physicians and faculty members who are recruited to teach a four-year Medicine course called Physician Apprenticeship.)

Phil Gold has been deputy editor of *Current Oncology* since 2006. From the beginning, he has helped to attract quality submissions and authors, leading to increased recognition of the journal within Canada and internationally.

With 2015 marking the 50th anniversary of the discovery of CEA, *Current Oncology* hereby extends its warmest congratulations to Gold, who was recently honoured at the 25th Annual International Carcinoma Embryonic Antigen Symposium held in Washington, DC, and at the 42nd Congress of the International Society of Oncology and Biomarkers held in Poland. The full announcement



Dr. Phil Gold, co-discoverer of carcinoembryonic antigen, is being honoured in this 50th anniversary year of that discovery.

posted by McGill University can be found at <http://publications.mcgill.ca/medenews/2015/09/25/mcgill-legend-dr-phil-golds-seminal-discovery-celebrated/>.

We salute you, Phil! And may you be blessed with many years in which to continue making a substantial contribution to humanity.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES

I have read and understood *Current Oncology's* policy on disclosing conflicts of interest, and I declare that I have none.

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