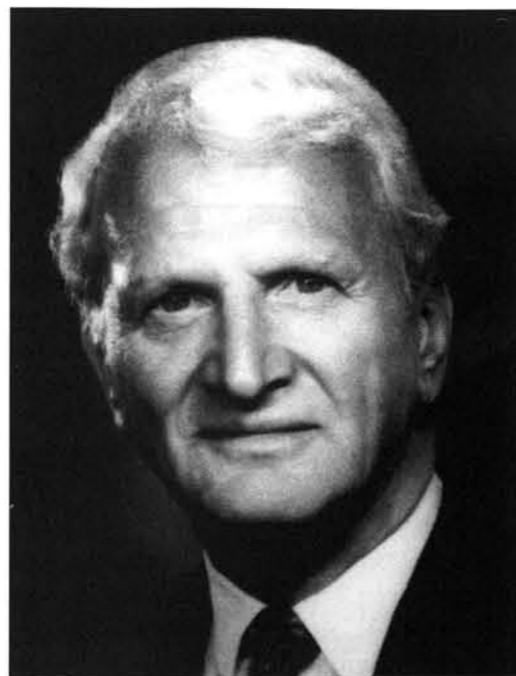


# A Doctor's Destiny

## A profile of Dr. Eugene Myers

Despite coming from a family of doctors, Eugene Myers was well on his way to a completely different career thanks to earning a degree in economics. Then fate intervened twice with epiphany moments to convince him to change his mind and enter the medical profession. The first instance was a visit with a doctor who had devel-



oped an operation to restore hearing. The second instance was meeting the woman who would become his wife. She was a student nurse at the time, and their frequent dinners with residents convinced him that if they could be doctors, then he could as well.

"The idea of helping the deaf and not letting science classes intimidate me anymore caused me to reinvent myself," Myers admitted, "and the rest, as they say, is history."

And what a history—better still, a legacy—that Dr. Myers has created.

Dr. Myers, a graduate of Temple University School of Medicine in Philadelphia, is Professor and Chairman of the Department of Otolaryngology at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine. He also is a Professor with the Department of Oral Maxillofacial Surgery at the University of Pittsburgh School of Dental Medicine.

"We have the three-legged stool of

patient care, academia and research here," he explained. "We treat patients who have cancer of the head and neck, we arrange the education of medical students from Pitt and overseas, and we conduct intense research activity. We are the second best funded in the National Institutes of Health funding, focusing on balance, pediatric ear/nose/throat

problems and head and neck surgery."

"Dr. Myers continued, "What I'm the most proud of in my career is the opportunity to cure people with cancer of the head and neck. It's a difficult disease and an unusual population of patients in that they're heavy drinkers and smokers—a colorful group of people who tend to be non-compliant. I still see people that I operated on 30 years ago and learn from them. We changed the face of head and neck surgery by the techniques and studies we developed here. People used to think that it's a regional cancer, but it really spreads around through the lymph nodes. Now we manage it like breast cancer, taking the primary site and the lymph nodes, a procedure that we pioneered. We changed the view of ear disease in children, and I'm very proud of that. Inserting tubes in children's ears is the most frequently done operation in this county, and we're trying to prevent and treat their ear problems in ways that

don't require surgery.

"Secondly, I'm proud that we built the department from zero. When I came here, there was no department, and now it's one of the top departments in the world with 40 fulltime faculty and 100 or more staff.

"Thirdly, I'm proud of my wife and family. My wife, Barbara, is an interior designer. My son is a head and neck surgeon in Houston, my daughter is in human resources in San Francisco. I have five grandsons, one who already has told me that he wants to be a doctor as well."

Colleagues refer to Dr. Myers as Mr. International in tribute for his years of dedicated service in both national and international activities in the medical field. His involvement with the American Academy of Otolaryngology includes former president, and current board member and coordinator for international affairs, for which he has recruited 23 corresponding memberships with fellow international societies, and international editor of Otolaryngology—Head & Neck Surgery journal. He was made a fellow of The Royal College of Surgeons of

Edinburgh and is a member of The Military and Hospitaller Order of St. Lazarus of Jerusalem.

"We continually have a coterie of international visiting scholars in the department, anywhere from 15-20 at one time," he explained. "We use the PAA as a place to entertain them, and they're terribly impressed with the elaborate building and the good service and food."

A wine enthusiast with an extensive collection of antique corkscrews on display in his home, Dr. Myers also is a peripatetic traveler, having visited some 70 countries.

"Even though most of our travel occurs for professional reasons, we make sure that we stop and smell the roses," Dr. Myers said.

Perhaps the simple plaque on Dr. Myers' desk best sums up the philosophy that guides his take-charge approach to life—"If you are not the lead dog, the view never changes." He also is partial to a bumper sticker he once saw that read "I'd rather be operating."

"Operating is the best, fun thing that I do," he added. "Operating is real. The rest is illusory."

## Annual Open House

Sunday, December 29, 2002  
5 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Complimentary Deluxe Hors d'oeuvres  
Drinks by *Signature*  
Reservations available for dinner 6-8 p.m.

For reservations call 412-586-2086.

Come and enjoy the beautiful holiday decorations and a pleasant evening at your Club!