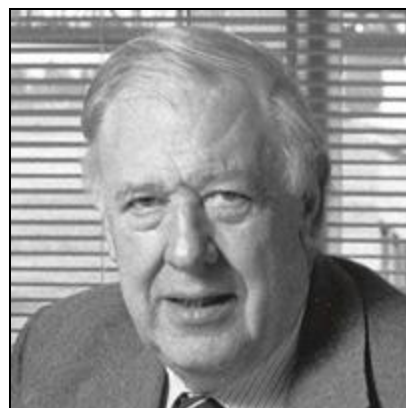


Alexander G. Bearn, MD (1923-2009)

Dr. Alexander G. Bearn, 86, physician, research scientist and pioneer in the study of human genetics, died of heart failure at home on May 15, 2009. He was president of The American Society of Human Genetics in 1971.

Dr. Bearn headed the American Philosophical Society from 1997 until 2002. He was a member of the National Academy of Sciences and a former trustee of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute. In 1996, he was a fellow at Christ College, Cambridge University.



Born in Surrey, England, he earned a medical degree from the University of London and served in the Royal Air Force. He came to the United States to join the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research in New York in 1951, and became a U.S. citizen in 1969.

At the Rockefeller Institute (now Rockefeller University) Dr. Bearn established a laboratory for the study of human genetics. In 1966, he was appointed chairman of the department of medicine at Cornell Medical College and established a human genetics lab there. From 1979 until retiring in 1988, he was vice president for medical and scientific affairs for the international division of Merck & Co., Rahway, New Jersey.

He authored three biographies of prominent scientists: *Sir Archibald Garrod and the Individuality of Man* (1993), *Sir Clifford Allbutt: Scholar and Physician* (2007), and *Sir Francis Richard Fraser: A Canny Scot Shapes British Medicine* (2008).

In addition to his wife of fifty-seven years, Margaret Slocum Bearn, Dr. Bearn is survived by a daughter, Helen Pennoyer; a son, Gordon; a brother; and five grandchildren.

Excerpted from an article by
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The Philadelphia Inquirer