

THE BRIDGE



Issue Number Two Summer 1996

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Prof Kolvin retires

During his three years as Chair Professor Issy (Israel) Kolvin has witnessed and presided over major changes in the Association and is due to retire at the Annual General Meeting.

Born in Johannesburg in 1929 Professor Kolvin was the youngest of five children. His father died when he was only six but the loving nature of his family which extended to others less fortunate proved a lasting influence.

A bright student he went to university at 16 and graduated as a medical doctor having also completed a BA in psychology and philosophy.

The severe psychiatric problems he witnessed on the wards of a Soweto hospital intrigued him and his fascination with Freudian psychology made it natural he should consider a career in psychiatry.

With academic and research opportunities few and far between in his native South Africa Professor Kolvin headed to the UK and gained a place on the Edinburgh training scheme where he was heavily influenced by Margaret Methven. Later in Oxford he was tutored by senior child psychiatrist Kit Ounsted. From there he moved to head up the Nuffield Psychology and Psychiatry Unit in Newcastle being appointed to a personal chair in 1977.

The culmination of his career was his appointment in 1990 as the John Bowlby Foundation Professor of Child and Family Mental Health at the Royal Free based at the Tavistock. He retired in 1994.

Other prestigious and often demanding roles have included Chair of the Second Opinion Panel of the Cleveland Enquiry, Chairman of the Section of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry of the Royal College of Psychiatrists and former Vice President and currently Treasurer of the College.

