

Dr. Donald Buchanan

Donald Ian Buchanan was born on November 6, 1914 in India where his father was serving in the British army. Dr. Buchanan was educated at the University of Glasgow in Scotland, graduating with his M.B., Ch.B. and D.P.H. degrees. After serving with the Royal Air Force Medical Corps in Normandy and Belgium during the Second World War, Dr. Buchanan returned to Glasgow for post-graduate work in public health.

Dr. Buchanan came to Canada in 1949 as one of the first Medical Directors for the Canadian Red Cross Blood Transfusion Service and was instrumental in the establishment of a strong blood system in the country. In 1958, he also joined the University of Alberta Hospital as Transfusion Director. Dr. Buchanan prepared and taught a program for blood bank technologists and graduates of his program were used to staff Red Cross Transfusion Services across Canada. Dr. Buchanan served as Medical Director of the Edmonton Blood Transfusion Service until his retirement in 1979. During his 30 years of service to the field of transfusion medicine, his many research projects were recognized worldwide, most notably for pioneering work on the D-- and Fy³ phenotypes and the Diego and Lutheran blood types. Much of his work was with the First Nations People of Alberta where his name lives on as a great man. He published 28 scientific papers and was awarded the Alberta Government Achievement medal.

Dr. Buchanan's humble manner of teaching and his support to technologists, in so many ways, earned him a special spot in the hearts of those who had the privilege to work with him. Dr. Buchanan was not only a mentor, but was always compassionate and supportive. His work in the field of transfusion and his belief in the people around him will never be forgotten. Dr. Buchanan passed away in 1988.

In 2005, Dr. Buchanan was chosen as one of the Alberta "100 Physicians of the Century" by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta.

