

# THE WAY WE ARE

## CLASS OF '61

Retiring from a long career in medicine can leave some feeling restless for a new “all-consuming monomania,” as **Joseph Sapira** (MD '61, Fel '65, Res '66) puts it. For Sapira, the answer was homebrewing. “Never made a bad batch of beer,” he says. When he became diabetic, he started making his own wine instead. The process requires meticulous reading and study, which Sapira says he’s no stranger to thanks to his medical background. His papers on internal medicine, its subspecialties, psychiatry, and psychosomatic medicine have been published in all the major journals. He served as president of the American Psychosomatic Society in 1991. He has worked as a visiting professor at more than 60 medical schools in the United States, as well as some in Canada and Japan. He spent much of the 1990s teaching at large hospitals in cities throughout Japan, as well as smaller hospitals in Okinawa and other islands. Sapira’s *Art and Science of Bedside Diagnosis* (1990) has been called a “masterpiece.”



Richard



Askin



Amalong



Mihm

Faculty member Edward Saitz drove Richard and **Stephen Askin** (MD '61) to class each day. While discussing upcoming exams in the car, Richard recalls, “Steve could cough up the information just by hearing it.” After graduation, Askin practiced general surgery in San Francisco and served as chief

of surgery at that city’s St. Luke’s Hospital.

Askin was quite involved in the 1961 Scope & Scalpel production, *A Stitch in Time*, and fondly remembers singing in it. He struggles for a moment to remember some of the lyrics. Then, a flash of recall: *With his hand inside his coat, Napoleon looks like a rube*, he sings. *Clearly he was emptying his ileostomy tube*. Askin retired at age 69. He sings in the Marin Men’s Chorus, farms fruits and vegetables on three acres, and golfs in his free time.

**Ronald Amalong** (MD '61) recalls a favorite prank from his Pitt days: Paging “Dr. Roscope.... Dr. Mike Roscope” over the school’s PA.

Amalong specialized in ophthalmology and began working abroad when he answered a medical-newspaper ad for a job in Ecuador. He went on to cofound and direct Vision Health International in 1984. The organization of volunteer medical experts still takes two trips a year, providing cataract-removal procedures and eyeglasses to patients in Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and Poland, among other countries.

Recently, **Martin Mihm** (MD '61) has also made contributions to global health. He established a free clinic for children with vascular anomalies in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. By the clinic’s first anniversary this past January, more than 2,500 children had been treated. He also helped found clinics in Greece and Spain.

In 1966, while teaching at Harvard Medical School, Mihm cofounded the world’s first multidisciplinary melanoma clinic. He later became chief of dermatopathology at Harvard in 1976. This year, he assumed directorship of the melanoma program at Brigham and Women’s Hospital and also helps direct the program at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute.

At 76, Mihm continues to study at Harvard the prognosis of malignant melanoma.

And what of retirement? “If God gives me the ability,” he says, “I will work until I die. I find medicine still very stimulating.” —*Keith Gillogly*

## WILLIAM B. MILLER

NOV. 9, 1922 –APRIL 2, 2010



Miller

After receiving his bachelor’s degree from Pitt, William Miller (MD '48) applied to the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine and was accepted, but with a one-year deferment. (Pitt only accepted one African American a year in those days.) He was then drafted. As the family story goes, while he was aboard a ship en route to Germany, Miller’s captain reviewed his file, saw his admission status, and arranged an honorable discharge. “You’re not going to war,” he said. “You’re going to medical school.”

Miller, who was the School of Medicine’s oldest living African American alumnus, died in April. He was 87.

Miller loved the city and his alma mater. (His three sons are Pitt medical and dental school alumni.) During his third year in medical school, William Miller was awarded the James D. Heard prize, which is awarded to the student with the highest performance in internal medicine. Following his internship in St. Louis, Mo., he returned to Pittsburgh, completed his residency at the VA, and served the Hill District as a general practitioner for 55 years.

From 1968 until he was well into his 80s, Miller was a physician and later medical director for Tadiso, a drug rehabilitation center on the North Side. He was known for his gentle, caring nature. Among his many honors was the 2006 Nyswander/Dole Award, presented by the American Association for the Treatment of Opioid Dependence.

—KG

## IN MEMORIAM

### '40s

**WILLIAM MACLACHLAN**  
MD '48  
APRIL 30, 2010

**WILLIAM PARSONS**  
MD '48  
JUNE 16, 2010

### '50s

**ARTHUR KELLEY**  
MD '50  
JUNE 1, 2010

**LOUIS “SKIP” CHERRY**  
MD '53  
MAY 7, 2010

**CHARLES WELLS**  
MD '59  
APRIL 15, 2010

### '60s

**BILL SHAW**  
MD '62  
JUNE 2, 2010

**MORTON GOLDSTEIN**  
MD '63  
MAY 16, 2010

### '70s

**DONALD KILPELA**  
MD '74, RES '77  
JUNE 23, 2010