



Obituary

Balwant Kaur Maini (1930–2021)Usha Nayar¹¹ Formerly, Department of Physiology, All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi, India

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It was 1954 when I joined the Lady Harding Medical College. Dr. Balwant Kaur Anand was my first young, charming, and energetic demonstrator with a rich ringing voice. Everyone in the department was very strict, but she was very friendly and compassionate. At times when we were mischievous, we had the privilege of being punished by sending our group out of the class, but we remained friends. Discipline was important for her. In 1956, I happened to be the Entertainment President of the college. Dr. P.S. Maini had brought a troupe from Amritsar Medical College at the youth festival. Dr. Anand asked me to organize their play in the college. I was delighted with such an opportunity. The play was beautifully enacted. We suspected a little romance between Dr. Maini and Dr. Anand. There were gossips in the hostel. They got married in 1959 in a simple ceremony and I was one of the very few students who attended the wedding. Soon after I joined the Department of Physiology at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences. She did her MD (Physiology) in 1963 from the University of Punjab. We became fellow physiologists and good friends for life.

Her physiology career started in Rohtak where she joined as an Assistant Professor in 1963 and then served as Professor and Head from 1974 to 1986. She was awarded the World Health Organization (WHO) Fellowship to work in Oxford as a Post-Doctoral student (1974–1975). As a Professor, she had no hesitation in learning new techniques, even from juniors. She was determined to make the Rohtak Physiology Laboratory as state-of-the-art, and she achieved it. She guided several MD and PhD students and published

several research papers in national and international Journals. After retiring from Rohtak, she was appointed as the Executive Director of the National Board of Examinations (NBE) from 1986 to 1991. As the Executive Director of NBE, she conducted many workshops and also streamlined and modernized the process of examinations and accreditations. Ever since, the Academy is doing very well following her guidance. Later, she served as the Secretary of the National Academy of Medical Sciences (India) from 1991 to 1993. She conducted many CME programs in various specialties. She has served as member of the Ethics Committee of Sir Ganga Ram Hospital for many years.

Her devotion to family was unmatched. She took tender and loving care of “Bhua Maini” throughout her life. She was the most devoted and caring wife. She looked after both her siblings and Dr. Maini’s family with the same love and affection. She brought up her three children in an exemplary manner who are doing brilliantly in their respective fields. Her grandchildren meant the whole world to her. Her life was fully accomplished and fulfilled.

She was one of the finest human beings with excellent qualities of head and heart. She was a phenomenon and an institution herself. Her life should be emulated and celebrated. She was my friend, philosopher, and guide. I miss her immensely and I know many others who feel the same void.

May her soul rest in peace.



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