

Icon of the Issue

Dr. Harold Kleinert and the Plough

I met Dr. Harold Kleinert in 1984 in Louisville, Kentucky, at his clinic which was a veritable beehive of activity almost entirely devoted to the surgery of the hand. I remember that it was located near about the Mohammad Ali Avenue, who recently passed away because that is where he was born as Casius Clay. Years before I first met Dr. Kleinert, I had served as a resident at the Grace Hospital in Detroit (1972) where they used to speak about a surgical resident called Harold Kleinert, mainly for his energy and dedication. I realised how true those words were when I stepped into the Kleinert clinic.

I am sure that there are others who will write about him including the redoubtable Raja Sabapathy, whose Ganga Hospital in many ways embodies the Kleinert spirit. Therefore, I only narrate an anecdote here. While in Louisville he invited me to this home located on vast tracts of land, a part of which was filled with a collection of dozens of vintage, agricultural tractors. That was his passion. I mentioned to him then that he did not have the most basic agricultural implement, the 'plough'. He suggested that I get one for him from India. Two weeks after my return, a combination of misfortune and fortune made it possible to acquire a plough. The scions of the Kirloskar family, the original manufacturers of ploughs in India, in the late 19th century, met with a traffic accident on the way to the Mumbai airport and one woman of the entourage had a longish lacerated wound on the forehead which I stitched up in the middle of the night. When she came to remove her stitches, I broached the topic of the



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plough and the family was kind and gracious enough to send a piece by sea-mail to the Kleinert address.

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