

Oldie edited by Richard Ingrams

Pulses race throughout the land in the run-up to the announcement of the prestigious Oldie of the Year award next month. Speculation is as feverish as that surrounding the selection of a new Pope, the choice of venue for the Olympic Games or the winner of the Booker Prize. Nothing would induce us to reveal the distinguished names on the shortlist, but as a foretaste, here is the almost certain winner of one of the minor categories: the Oldie Going Out In Style Award.

It goes to the late distinguished surgeon, Henry Shucksmith, renowned in life for a tongue as sharp as his scalpel. His obituary notice in the *Yorkshire Post* of 20th November read:

SHUCKSMITH. On November 19, at St James's Hospital, of Wetherby, Henry Samuel FRCS TD, aged 83 years, beloved husband of Mary (Binkie), devoted father of Tom and Bill, grandfather of William, Philip, Sarah and Samuel. Cadaver to Leeds University Anatomy Department. Ashes to the four winds.

We are grateful to Mr James Scott, a former colleague of Mr Shucksmith's, for bringing this item to our attention. Mr Scott writes: 'I always knew he had it in him to produce something of the sort to mark his departure from this world ever since the occasion, about 25 years ago, when he bade farewell to a retiring colleague with the words, "May I wish you a long and lingering wait for the grave."'