

Pacemaker Pioneer Now Lives With Device

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Dr. Vincent L. Gott was part of an innovative group of doctors who trained with Dr. C. Walton Lillehei, considered to be the father of open-heart surgery.

When Lillehei performed the first open-heart surgery in 1954, Gott was observing as an intern. He later drew an illustration of the operation showing the defects in the patient's heart, which caught Lillehei's eye. Gott went on to become one of the pioneers in the development of the pacemaker -- a device that he himself benefits from today.

Gott stopped operating at 67, but kept working until age 81, seeing patients, teaching medical students and doing research. These days, Gott, 86, is retired and writing a children's book about the history of cardiac surgery.

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