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Correspondence to:

robbie.carrington@doctors.org.uk

This article has been re-published with the medical photographs.

Editor

A “Catonite” with nine lives

Terry Ainsworth, Football Historian & Hospital Volunteer

As I am a new patient representative, I think I should introduce myself with a little background information. I was born in Caton and the Royal Lancaster Infirmary (RLI) has always been MY hospital and link to the NHS. A cat supposedly has nine lives and this “Catonite” certainly has three of his, thanks to the RLI. When I was about six years old, I was with my parents on the platform at Morecambe Promenade railway station (now the Platform venue) when I fainted, fell on to the track, broke an arm and fractured my skull. Treatment at the RLI followed and after a worrying time, they saved my life. Fast-forward to my early thirties when I snapped an Achilles tendon playing squash and had an operation. Whilst, I was nearing full fitness again, I started to struggle to get my breath. My doctor rushed me into the RLI where they diagnosed a pulmonary embolism, two blood clots having gone to my lungs. The RLI once more saved my life. Many years later, 2017-18 to be precise, I fainted twice over a period of 15 months and ended up in Accident and Emergency (A & E). For some time, I had been experiencing severe stomach pain but after many tests during my first A & E visit, they found no cause. The second visit in September 2018 solved the problem. I remember the doctor coming into my cubicle in A & E with a big smile on his face saying:

“We think we have solved the problem and a surgeon is on her way to see you.” The surgeon came to see me and said that I had a Spigelian Hernia. She said she would put me on her list for an operation as soon as she had carried out more tests because she was worried that when I fainted, I was unconscious for 7 or 8 minutes. Many tests were carried out, all positive, and the surgeon asked her senior colleague to assist in the operation, which took place on November 16th, 2018. Those two surgeons were my guardian angels, as well as all the staff who assisted them. This experience has stayed with me and I resolved to put something back into the NHS by becoming a volunteer in the Charity Office (more on that in future editions).

For twenty years, I have written articles for the Lancaster Guardian primarily about local football and its history. In those years, I have also written 13 books on the same subject although my last two books have been about the first 100 years of football in England from 1872-1972. In football parlance, I suppose I am making my debut in the journal and I hope that I can produce the occasional article for Shadaba to publish.

Correspondence to:

terryainsworth42@gmail.com