



1962 AND ALL THAT

John Chippendale, retired general practitioner



1962. That was the year that was. The year the Beatles hit the charts for the first time, West Side Story played in the cinemas, John Glenn shot into orbit and Crick, Watson and Wilkins gained the Nobel Prize in Physiology/Medicine. And John Chippendale arrived in Lancaster. In this first of three articles Dr Chippendale presents an anecdotal look back at the Lancaster and district medical scene of 1962.

I am beginning this article on the 1st of April 2006, the 44th anniversary of the day I came to Lancaster to take up the position of assistant with view to partnership at The Surgery, 8 Dalton Square. My first duty on Monday the 2nd of April was to take sick parade at Lancaster Castle Prison and I well remember looking across the city from the John of Gaunt gateway when waiting for the wicket gate to be opened for me. In 1963, after a year as an assistant, I became a partner. My time in the practice was busy, sometimes hectic but always enjoyable and I never regretted making a major career move on All Fool's Day. Curiously, although I did not know it at the time, Dr Geoffrey Jackson took over Dr Daly's single-handed practice at Meadowside on the same day.

The article started off being from memory but then I began to ask colleagues for their memories of 1962. The retired general practitioners (GPs) meet for lunch every six months and we do talk of the past! So my memories were strongly reinforced. My basic idea was to tell of 'who was who' and 'who did what' in general practice and the hospitals in 1962. Those contributing are acknowledged gratefully and listed in the references. Some of my purely Dalton Square memories have appeared in the MBMJ as '100 years of a General Practice'.⁽¹⁾

GENERAL PRACTICE AT THIS TIME

The 1962 GPs consulted using an 'open' surgery system. This meant, in our practice, that the surgery doors were open for an hour in the morning and an hour in the evening. If the patient got through the door he or she was seen. Sometimes surgeries run in this way were gentle affairs but if 20 patients arrived, quite legitimately, at 6:55pm, beating the 7:00pm closure of the door, a long evening was in prospect. My latest time home after an evening surgery was 9:40pm. The morning and evening surgery system left much time in the day for home visiting which was very popular with the patients. The practice started an appointment system in 1965.

In my retirement, I am often asked about the greatest differences between practice in the 1960s and now. First, there were only a few women general practitioners then. Second, we had no computers on our desks – I never had a computer on my desk. Third, I think the biggest difference was the time we spent in the patients' houses. We were there for the home confinements, for the children's infectious diseases, especially measles, and we were first contact for

any other serious illness arising in the home. Finally, with the help of the district nurses we looked after many patients dying at home. How the relatively recent invention of the syringe driver would have helped us. It was many years before the hospice opened but our consultant colleagues would always allow beds to be used for terminal care where there was no home support.

We had to sterilise our needles and glass syringes by boiling. It was 1966 before sterilised syringes were issued to the GP practices, as advised by the then Health Minister, Kenneth Robinson, who was the son of a GP. Our stethoscopes were never slung behind our necks when not in use. I wonder when this, now so common, practice started?

GENERAL PRACTICES IN LANCASTER

My Dalton Square Practice

Dr Howat
Dr Stewart
Dr Hood
Dr Anderson
Dr Howat

The practice did not take the name 'The Dalton Square Practice' until I retired from the partnership at the end of 1992. This was because Dr Stout had a single-handed practice at No 9 Dalton Square which could also lay claim to being the Dalton Square Practice.

We had some 13,000 patients and a heavy commitment to hospital clinical assistantships – eight weekly sessions in total – and these were fitted in between the well-spaced surgeries. At my practice there were no surgeries on Wednesdays. Wednesdays began with a meeting of the doctors, then home visits and freedom from an evening surgery except for the doctor on call. Our practice area was from Caton Green in the north to Cockerham in the south and from Bare in the west to Jubilee Tower in the east. Each practice was doing its own on-call, ie 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Dr Stout's Practice in Dalton Square

Dr Stout

Dr Stout had been the honorary ENT surgeon pre-NHS and continued in this role until 1955, when Mr Freeman was appointed. Many people in Lancaster told me of Dr Stout removing their tonsils at home – on the kitchen table. A keen fisherman, low handicap golfer and bachelor he occupied the other half of our Dalton Square 'semi' with a resident housekeeper. We always struggled to find space for the five of us while Dr Stout always had plenty of spare rooms.

The King Street Practice⁽²⁾

Dr Daniel
Dr Dawson
Dr Moffitt
Dr McGuiness

Dr McGuiness was the assistant and did not stay on to become a partner. They had a large practice and also had appointments as works medical officers to the then busy factories of Williamson's, Nelson's and Lansil. Dr/Mr Daniel had been a surgeon at the Infirmary before the start of the NHS with a special interest in urology and Dr Dawson had been a physician. They would have had the chance of taking consultant contracts at the start of the NHS but had opted for general practice. The practice had just suffered the early death of Dr/Mr Kay who had also been a pre-NHS surgeon at the Infirmary. Dr Kay died when attending his god-daughter's wedding at Lancaster Priory Church. Junior partner Dr Bob Moffitt had been with the practice three or four years. We are now golfing partners in our retirement!

The other King Street practice

Dr Murphy
Dr Goodall

These doctors were in partnership in King Street opposite the Queen Square practice. Dr Murphy was the doctor of a branch of my family who lived in Lancaster and he was a clinical assistant in anaesthetics. Dr Murphy worked at the Moor Hospital giving anaesthesia for ECT.^(3,4)

The Queen Square Practice^(5,6)

Dr Cullen
Dr Cassar

They also had a busy practice and in common with the other practices had a number of other appointments. Dr Cullen was active in medical boarding work, where he sat with Dr Hood from my practice. Dr Cassar was the clinical assistant attached to the General Practitioner Maternity Unit at Queen Victoria Hospital, Morecambe, and had three clinical assistantship sessions at the Moor Hospital. The practice had a satellite surgery at Caton.

Owen Road Surgery

Dr Reddrop
Dr Whitton
Dr Mechie

The surgery building here was in the garden at the rear of senior partner Dr Reddrop's home. The surgery remains in the same place in 2006 but is much extended and the practice has taken over nearby houses. I met junior partner Dr Mechie in my very early days when I took cremation papers to him. I did not know any local doctors and thought it proper that I should give the doctor who would sign the second part the chance to actually see me. We became and remain friends and have shared skiing experiences and now do local walks preceded by pub meals! Two things about the Owen Road practice.

- 1) Dr Reddrop was, I think, the only Lancaster GP to serve throughout 1939-45 war. He was a medical officer in the Navy.
- 2) The practice doctors were the area police surgeons.

In 1962 there were no breathalysers and no requirement to give a blood sample for alcohol content. The Owen Road police surgeons had to prepare clinical reports including reporting on how suspect drink drivers walked the proverbial straight line.

Dacrelands at Skerton Triangle

Dr Rickards
Dr Morris

Dr Rickards was briefly in practice from this house on the north side of Skerton Triangle; Dr Morris was with him before going to Manchester to become an anaesthetist. They also held a surgery at Lane Head House in Bolton-le-Sands.⁽⁷⁾ Later on, Dr Rickards became part of the Queen Square practice.

Meeting House Lane

Dr Wilkie

Dr Wilkie was single handed but had some help from his medically qualified wife. The practice surgery was on Meeting House Lane with access for the doctor across the back garden of his home in Dallas Road.⁽⁸⁾ Dr Wilkie was the successor to Dr William George, who famously gave the George Cup to be competed for annually by the local golfing doctors. Sometime later Mrs/Dr Wilkie, sadly by this time a widow, gave the John Wilkie Quaich for a 9-hole competition on George Cup day. I sat with Dr Wilkie on DHSS medical boards which were then held at the 'hutments' on Fairfield Road. He was the medical officer at the Royal Grammar School where there were over 100 boarders. It was a sad day when he died only a year or so into his retirement. Dr Carne joined Dr Wilkie in 1964 and took over the practice in 1967. Later on, he joined up with Dr Jackson to form the Meadowside Practice.

Meadowside Surgery

Dr Jackson

Dr Jackson began his single-handed practice as I joined at Dalton Square as an assistant. I never met Dr Daly, his predecessor, who was another GP with clinical assistant sessions in anaesthesia.

Rosebank Surgery in Scotforth

Dr. Geddes
Dr Clarkson

The surgery was in a row of terrace houses. Although working from the same premises the doctors were not in partnership.^(9,10) Dr. Geddes came to be a DHSS boarding doctor and I got to know him well as one does when sitting together on a Board. I never met Dr Clarkson, who lived in a detached house a little way south of Rosebank Surgery. Dr Geddes lived at '3 Mile Cottage' on the Caton Road, where he tended a lovely pyracantha shrub on the wall of a barn near his house. All passers-by admired Dr Geddes's pyracantha.

THE HOSPITALS

It was just 14 years since the start of the NHS. The hospital doctors appointed at the start of the service were comfortably in post as were those who had opted, in 1948, to be in the



hospital service and give up their general practice work. Compared with 2006, the main difference was that there were so many hospitals in use. Taking a surgeon's work as an example, there were operating sessions at the Royal Lancaster Infirmary, the Morecambe Queen Victoria Hospital, the Garnett Clinic of the Moor Hospital and at Westmorland County Hospital Kendal. The other hospitals were the main Moor Hospital for long-stay psychiatric patients – with Ridge Lea Hospital for acute admissions – the Royal Albert Hospital for those with learning disability, and Beaumont Hospital, originally the Fever Hospital, but now with chest, ENT, dermatology and paediatric patients. There were 2,023 resident patients at the Moor Hospital in 1962.⁽¹¹⁾ There was a private ward at the Infirmary and patients could ask for an amenity bed at a cost much less than full private care.

Three General Surgeons

Mr Magauran
Mr McFadzean
Mr Hall-Drake

There were just three general surgeons at work at the four sites listed in the previous paragraph. Mr Magauran and Mr McFadzean had been attending surgeons before the NHS but Mr Hall-Drake was appointed at the start of the NHS. They were truly general surgeons. I remember Mr Magauran doing quite a bit of urological work even though Mr Graham, the Preston surgeon, who lived in Garstang, did some urology in Kendal as a visiting surgeon. Mr Glennie, a chest surgeon from Blackpool, was also a visiting surgeon as was Mr Tutton, the Preston neurosurgeon. Mr Glennie performed bronchoscopies in Lancaster but did any major chest surgery in Blackpool.

The Anaesthetists

Dr Thompson
Dr Borland
Dr Kilpatrick
Dr Scott

I started off expecting to be very anecdotal here because I did not think I would know the whole anaesthetic team of 1962. However, Dr A Kilpatrick⁽⁴⁾ kindly came to my rescue and lent me Dr Cartwright's 1984 book⁽³⁾ on the history of anaesthesia in Lancaster. Dr Das was registrar and the GPs, Drs Daly, Murphy and Morris, were clinical assistants. I did know Dr Scott and Dr Kilpatrick and I worked with Dr

Borland and Dr Kathleen Thompson, who anaesthetised at the Garnett Clinic. Dr Borland was a friend of Mr Magauran and usually did his anaesthetic work. Dr Thompson worked with Mr Kitchin when he operated at the Garnett Clinic and her husband, George Thompson, was a GP in Morecambe. *(Dr Morris ultimately achieved high office as Vice President of the Royal College of Anaesthetists – Editor)*

Two Orthopaedic Surgeons

Mr Kitchin
Mr Purser

Mr Purser was the main medical person involved in setting up the postgraduate medical education centre on Ashton Road. Prior to the opening of the centre, the Lancaster Book Club held clinical meetings where cases were presented. The orthopaedic surgeons' base was in Ward 7, also known as Bromley Ward, which was a small complex on land to the south of the 'old' Infirmary and the beginning of what has become the huge expansion to the south of recent times. This orthopaedic domain was ruled by Sister Ballisty, who was a ward sister of the old school. Messrs Kitchin and Purser also operated at the Garnett Clinic where my partner, Dr Howat junior, was their clinical assistant. When covering for Dr Howat I assisted Mr Kitchin at quite major operations, which was not quite what I had expected when joining the firm. There were no hip replacements in 1962 but Mr Kitchin did a very effective arthrodesis operation for severe arthritis of the hip. Casualty work at the Lancaster Infirmary, Morecambe and Kendal was overseen by the orthopaedic team. Dr Howat's wife, working as Dr Davies, did casualty work and later became the A&E consultant at Lancaster as this speciality developed.

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