



Obituary

Terence McSweeney KCHS MCh FRCS FACS

Terence McSweeney KCHS MCh FRCS FACS an Irish-Born Orthopaedic surgeon of great ability and with a scholarly mind was born on 30th October 1920 and died on 14th January 1996.

The first of the honours appearing after his name KCHS – Knight of the Holy Sepulchre, must have been the one he relished most and was awarded in recognition of his human qualities and his dedication to Medicine. After medical training at University College, Cork he qualified with honours in 1943, and was attracted to Orthopaedics and after early House appointments he joined the Royal AirForce Voluntary Reserve – serving for two years in India during the later war years.

Soon after his return to civilian life he married his wife Joan – a ‘marriage of true minds’.

Junior Hospital appointments followed in London, Liverpool, Oswestry and Birmingham. In 1956 he was appointed as Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon at Crewe Memorial Hospital and to a post with teaching duties at the Robert Jones & Agnes Hunt Orthopaedic Hospital.

From the 1960's on at Oswestry spinal injury patients were nursed by a team of highly trained nurses based upon the principles of Sir Ludwig Guttman at Stoke Mandeville Hospital. Terence teamed up with Professor Robert Roaf, and this was the beginning of the Spinal Injury Unit at Oswestry, which grew to receive patients with traumatic paraplegia and tetraplegia from most of the Midlands of England.

During the next few years Mac attended and contributed to many further meetings of the IMSOP and made many friends in the course of his travels to Europe and the USA. He took up the halo traction method for the management of neck injuries.

Within the hospital at Oswestry there were resemblances to an old-world village main street by reason of its unusually long main corridor. Mac, with his observant eye and good memory for faces was a notable corridor conversationalist and had excellent rapport with the other hospital staff – be they nurses, sisters, porters or surgeons, junior or senior. Needless to say they all knew ‘Mr Mac’ and his gentle Irish voice and his kindly yet most observant eye. In the corridor, he would often take a medical colleague by the arm to emphasise conversational points. Ward sisters too could be judiciously persuaded by a gentle ‘arm around the waist’.



Mac was a supremely devoted family man with three sons, two daughters and a splendid bunch of grandchildren. Luke, the eldest, is an orthopaedic surgeon.

To Joan, his most devoted wife, and to his family we offer our deepest sympathy

HW Frances Jones