

# Annual Dinner

Held on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2017

Guest Speaker: Professor James Owen Drife on "Becoming Retired"



Professor Drife had enjoyed a busy NHS post as a Professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology and had been fully and gainfully occupied in his post. However, retirement is an inevitable consequence if you live long enough. Now, in retirement, he had time on his hands, to look backwards, to look at the present and to look forwards.

Looking backwards, he was quizzical about buzz words of his era, such as "Mission Statements". An apocryphal example was "Creating tomorrow's problems today." Was that personal to him and other pensioners, about to present their geriatric health problems to the NHS?

Looking at the present, he now had time, perhaps *too* much time, with which to answer emails and telephone calls. However, there were now far fewer calls which needed an urgent response. He sometimes pretended that he was busy.

He had been told that he looked much less stressed and even looked younger! He was enjoying a new more casual dress code and wore trainers often. More time on his hands meant more time on his wife's hands and her enquiries into when he would be leaving the kitchen.

Looking to the future, retirement meant coming out of the bubble in which his enjoyable career had enclosed him. He was enjoying travelling locally to explore the history of where he lived. He was reading and enjoying poetry, and he finished with the first reading of his own composition, written in the style of Scotland's (in)famous poet, William McGonagall.

Sir Ken Dodd proposed a vote of thanks to Professor Drife and presented him with the Knotty Ash Tickling Stick Award. He too acknowledged the consequences of increasing age. "What is the purpose of a Knighthood?" he asked us. Well, it does help in getting an appointment to see your general practitioner! In an uncharacteristically brief 10 minute talk, packed with anecdotes, Sir Ken concluded with a convoluted tale about the Yorkshireman from Cleckheaton, his very rare blood group and his chance meeting with a grateful prince. You just had to be there.

John Sprigge