

Retired Members Group

'How the White Man brought the disease to the Country'

Prof Peter Pharaoh

Held on Tuesday 24th October 2017

The disease was a thyroid goitre, the country was Papua New Guinea and the consequence for women was mental handicap in their offspring.

Peter was a junior doctor training in London to be a physician. Wanderlust took him and Margaret to a primitive hospital in the PNG islands where he embarked on an epidemiological study that was to redirect his career and indeed the family's life.

There had been a surge in the incidence of infant mental handicap since the late 1950s. Peter and his colleagues recruited 8000 women of child bearing age into a trial of Iodine injections or placebo and painstakingly followed them up across the country's mountainous terrain.

The reduction in affected babies in those treated was dramatic and returned to historic levels. White man had brought Salt to the country which contained substantially less iodine than that the natives obtained from a single spring in an inaccessible island location.

Illustrated with spectacular mountain panoramas, basic hospital facilities, and stories of injury and hardship, family Pharaoh's destiny, like that of the locals was to change evermore.

"The Lieutenancy"

Dame Lorna Muirhead

Christmas Lecture held on Tuesday 12th December 2017

From her midwifery training in Birmingham when she cycled to work, to sister tutor in Liverpool's Oxford Street, Lorna joined the general midwifery Council, travelled first class to London on the train, using Quaker Oats vouchers, and after a year as a DL assumed the lord lieutenancy of Merseyside.

For over a decade she was chauffeured in a Range Rover Vogue with a Union Jack on the Bonnet! She now drives a Skoda, having demitted office in September.

Dame Lorna's address, was both entertaining and amusing as she described some of her most memorable encounters with the Royal Family, including the infamous "Duck" trip in the Albert Dock!

Her observations on the Liverpool Maternity scene involving patients, nursing and medical colleagues, sometimes elaborated with exceptional mimicry, were up to the standard of Ken Dodd.

We lunched in the Council room with Christmas Fayre and drinks in joyous spirits.

"Rodney Street"

Marie Passey

Held on Tuesday 13th March 2018

Marie is now a City Blue Badge guide and formerly an A level French teacher. Her topic attracted a bumper audience of nearly 40 guests some of whom had practised from rooms in the street and others had actually lived there.

The street was named after Admiral Rodney and before the Anglican Cathedral was planned was in continuity with renamed Admiral Street to the East.

"Rodney Street" (Cont'd)

The street was popular with doctors on account of its elevated position above the city and its proximity to the hospitals. Marie took us on an illustrated journey from Brownlow Hill to Upper Duke Street, pointing out Georgian architectural features, famous residents and changes of professional usage.

From cellar to roof tops there are points of interest. Her excellent talk gave us insight into Liverpool's Harley Street and generated much nostalgic discussion.

SUMMER SURPRISE OUTING

Tuesday 12th June 2018

14 of us paid our tolls to cross the Mersey Gateway Bridge (Talk 2016) and visited Norton Priory Museum and Gardens in Halton. We were indebted to our guide and lecturer, Lynn Smith who brilliantly introduced us to the human remains of this Augustinian Priory concentrating on the frequency of Paget's Disease and trauma.

After a sandwich lunch in the glorious sunshine, prepared by job seeking Halton youngsters, Mrs Smith then guided us around the site delivering another superb commentary of this truly fascinating museum and garden literally on our doorstep but just over the water! We were able to make a donation to the museum's research fund for which I was subsequently thanked. All agreed to revisit soon.

Chris Evans