



The Meath Foundation

Healthcare Research and Education at the Hospital in Tallaght

Newsletter Edition 7:
Spring 2007

Spring has Sprung!

Welcome to the spring edition of The Meath Foundation Newsletter.

Our feature article is part one of the much requested and very successful lecture given by Mr Michael Butler on T.J.D. Lane. This is such good story we have decided to serialise it as it would be impossible to print the full article in this edition so part two will be available in our summer edition. Our thanks go to Mr Butler for such an interesting story.

Annual General Meeting

The Meath Foundation's Annual General Meeting for Governors will be held in the Education Centre of The Adelaide & Meath Hospital, Tallaght on Friday 30th March 2007 at 12:15pm. We have a packed programme of events including lunch at 1:00pm followed by The Meath Foundation's first Research Symposium to include the formal awarding of Research Grants for 2006 totalling over €230,000.00, and a presentation of progress reports of Research projects funded in 2005. We hope that all our Governors will be available to attend.

Research Grants 2007

At The Foundation's Annual General Meeting the announcement of applications for Research grants for 2007 will be made. The Meath Foundation invites applications from members of staff of The Adelaide & Meath Hospital, Dublin, Incorporating the National Children's Hospital to apply. This year two grants each up to €60,000, two grants each up to €35,000 and an exclusive grant up to €45,000 for research into "Kidney Disease" will be available for suitable projects. Application forms will be available on The Meath Foundation's web-site at www.meathfoundation.com along with The Foundation's Research Grant Regulations and The Meath Foundation's Research Strategy from 30th March 2007.

Women's Mini Marathon 2007

This year the Women's Mini Marathon celebrates its 25th Anniversary and promises to be a fantastic day. The Meath Foundation invites women to help raise funds for Research into "Kidney Disease". Contact Catherine at 4142432 for details.

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HELP US
To raise funds to support and encourage
RESEARCH
into the incidence, prevention and treatment
of
KIDNEY DISEASE
WALK OR RUN
the
Flora 25th Anniversary
Women's Mini Marathon
on
Monday 4th June 2007
For free t-shirt and sponsorship card
Contact Catherine at 4142432

Being sponsored by a charity does not entitle you to participate in the event. All participants must enter on an official entry form, which will appear in the Evening Herald nearer the event, or online at www.meathfoundation.ie

SNIPPETS

Donations

Thank You Thank You
Thank You Thank You

The Meath Foundation would like to say a big thank you to all our Annual Governors who have returned their annual subscriptions for 2007. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Every donation, regardless of size, makes a difference and supports research and education programmes at the hospital in Tallaght. The Meath Foundation would like to thank Ms Maureen Fallon and Mr John McDonald for their donations.

Thank You Thank You
Thank You Thank You

As a charity The Meath Foundation urgently need the support of volunteers. Please contact Catherine at 4142432 or e-mail meathfoundation@amnch.ie if you would like more information.

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The Meath Foundation:

The Meath Hospital Archives

The Foundation is delighted to announce that Ms Sarah Dobbs has been contracted to complete work on all the Meath's Archives and Memorabilia. To date a number of pictures from The Meath Hospital archives have been remounted and are now on display along Hospital Street beside The Foundation's Memorial Garden. Further work along Hospital Street is expected throughout the year and will include more of The Meath's memorabilia. Ms Dobbs has also made a number of proposals regarding the panels along the window of the memorial garden and the Board is currently considering these.



Extracts from Lane Lecture 2005

By Mr Michael Butler



Urology in The Meath and T.J.D. Lane is a good story. It is accessible because he published extensively in the literature and regularly included references to the people and events that motivated him to do what he did.

Tom Lane was born on the 4th November 1893 at Ferozepur in India. His father T.T. Lane was a Colonel in the Indian Medical Services. There were three children in his family he had two younger sisters.

Tom spent a short period on his early childhood in India on his return to Ireland he was educated at Our Lady's Bower, Athlone and Clongowes Wood College. He received his medical education at Trinity School of Physic and qualified M.B. in 1916. He had a distinguished undergraduate career graduating 1st in his class and won the Fitzpatrick Scholarship.

He fully intended to follow in his father's footsteps by practicing in India. To this purpose he sat the Diploma of Tropical Diseases and Hygiene and passed this exam with distinction.

As I understand it he had a short period as a General Practitioner in County Kerry from whence the parent family originated.

Lane was appointed to the Meath in 1922. What road led to the Meath from general practice in Kerry I am unable to say but on his appointment he was assigned the task of setting-up a Pathology Department and when this was accomplished, he then proceeded to set-up a Radiology Department which was established on a firm footing before he left it.

He was then appointed surgeon to the



Meath at the end of 1923 in succession to Sir William Taylor, which meant that he occupied concurrently three important consultant posts. In this era of structured

surgical training Lane's career path was very unusual as he appears to have undertaken no formal surgical training and never sat a surgical examination in Trinity or the College of Surgeons. Instead he was awarded an honorary Masters of Surgery by Trinity early in his career and an honorary Fellowship by the Royal College of Surgeons. He was the first Irish Surgeon to be so honoured by Surgeons for 170 years making him only the Third Honorary Irish Fellow after Robin Adair and Sylvester O'Halloran.



Quite early in his surgical career Lane espoused a passionate interest in Urology.

The major issue in urinary surgery at that period was the morbidity and mortality associated with prostatic surgery and he clearly grasped the importance of the issue of sub-specialisation as the way forward for safe surgery and spoke about this at the Biological Club in 1935 over seventy years ago, and again in 1957 to the Annual Conference at the Meath.

It is worth para-phrasing his views on sub-specialisation in detail, as they are a great clarion call for surgical sub-specialisation, and even seventy years on from their first exposition they have a great sense of modernity and

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sadly have not as yet been fully achieved or implemented in the specialties particularly in the realm of infrastructure.

"I have been preaching the doctrine for years. Less than twenty years ago the mortality for the operation of prostatectomy at the Meath Hospital was 20% - a truly terrible figure. Lane observed that "specialisation demands for its progress and development plenty of material i.e. patients A specialised unit gives those who work in it a unique opportunity. While perfection cannot be attained, the very numbers permit a closer approach to it to be reached"

The daily performance of the same tasks tends, if performed in the proper spirit, to lead to its improved and better performance.

The limitation of effort obviously enables more to be learned about a focussed field, both as regards the nature of the diseases within it and the best ways to deal with them.

There is no room for parochialism and provincialism in a matter as vital as this. This question is a national one. The only patients not seriously affected today are the well to do who thanks to air travel are within a couple of hours of specialised centres. The poor and the less well off are entirely dependent on local services and talent, and it is to them above all that the proper development of specialised services is of first rate and vital importance"

So how did he set about resolving the problem?

Lane was greatly impressed by the published results of prostate surgery emanating from the USA He had however, not suspended his critical faculties, and viewed the results with a degree of healthy scepticism. He disbelieved a great deal of what he was reading So in May 1938 he set out for the Mayo Clinic and on his return to Ireland he wrote the following *"I was astonished at what I saw I was fully satisfied that the writings I had doubted were not only perfectly fair, honest and truthful but had in fact, failed to convey an adequate picture of the high number of very severe cases dealt with. I was overwhelmed and grateful for the*

information and instruction given to me there and I was determined to try and put the lessons I had learned into practice at home".



The Mayo Clinic

It was hammered home to him there, that the 2 essentials to achieve results approaching those at the Mayo were a dedicated specialist team, and a customised urological unit. Immediately on his return in 1939 he assembled a small team of whole time nurses for both day and night services that did nothing other than urological nursing.

He developed and produced detailed written instructions of their duties and scrutinised diligently the execution of these instructions. Sister Betty Cunningham was T.J.D.'s right hand Sister and the first nurse specialist, a novel concept in those days to be appointed in these Islands. All of us who knew her will remember her with great affection. Unfortunately while still in office she died after a freak road traffic accident on 20th November 1975. Her exceptional contribution to the unit was chronicled as you would expect of him in a perfect tribute by Victor Lane in the national Press later that year. Once Betty Cunningham and her 2 "specials" were indoctrinated Tom Lane turned his attentions to the other members of the team. He worked tirelessly to convert Physicians, Anaesthetists, Theatre staff and hand picked junior staff to adhere to his new protocols and become specialised in urological procedures. In addition he gathered what he deemed to be adequate urological equipment.

The results were quick in coming and impressive. Working with this new team audited results for 1939 for prostatectomies carried out mainly by punch resection revealed 3 fatalities in 120 operations. This represented a stratospheric

improvement as the mortality was down to 2.5%. It is interesting to point out that no patient in that year was refused an operation on the grounds of operative risk. 1939 was a landmark year in Ireland for prostatic surgery and the bar had been raised to a new level. The results included all patients who died from whatever cause within 4 weeks of their surgery thereby setting himself very exacting standards.

The figures in short were sensational.

The workload at the unit developed very quickly as practioners and surgical colleagues countrywide very quickly and perceptively appreciated his achievements, and within a year his nurse specialists were increased to six.



He was now fully committed for the next step which was an even bigger challenge; to design and construct a specialised unit.

Read part two of TJD Lane's story in the summer edition of The Meath Foundation's Newsletter.

If you have any articles you would like us to consider publishing please contact Catherine at 4142432.

The Meath Foundation:

The Mission of the Meath Foundation is to carry on the best traditions of the Meath Hospital by providing a focus for voluntary input into the Adelaide & Meath Hospital, Dublin Incorporating the National Children's Hospital.

We do this by supporting the development of the Hospital in Tallaght particularly through the promotion of Healthcare Research and Education within the Hospital and the wider community.

Our core values of Voluntarism/Self Help, Inclusiveness, Innovation/Originality, Effectiveness and Objectivity inform and guide our work to develop a credible and sustained programme of broadly defined research activity at the hospital.



The Hospital at Tallaght

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The Meath Foundation:

If you would like to submit articles, news or information about events to the Meath Foundation for inclusion in our newsletter, please contact us at the address below.

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How You Can Help ?

BECOME A MEMBER

At the Meath Foundation we value individual members for their participatory role and their diversity of opinion. On payment of a yearly subscription of €32.00 Members will receive our quarterly news letter. As a member you can help to shape the agenda and objectives of the Meath Foundation. To join please fill out the form below and return it to the Meath Foundation.

ORGANISE AN EVENT

You may be able to donate your time and organisational ability to running an event for the Meath Foundation. See our website for Details www.meathfoundation.com or contact us at the number below for further information

GIVE NOW

You can donate online at our website www.meathfoundation.com or by filling in the form below and returning it with your cheque to the Meath Foundation

GIVE REGULARLY

"Planned Giving" is the most efficient and effective way to support The Meath Foundation. Setting aside a specific sum of money each month is easily organised through your bank by standing order. Fill out the form below and we'll send you a Standing Order form or see our website for further details. (www.meathfoundation.com)

POST/FAX

Fill out the form below and post it to the address opposite, or fax it to 01 4145949

Name.....

Address.....

Phone.....

E-mail.....

I would like to become a member of The Meath Foundation and enclose a cheque for €32.00

I would like to make a donation of €_____ to The Meath Foundation.

(Cheques only please to the Address below)

I would like to set up a standing order, please send me a Standing Order Form

