

## PLASTIC SURGEONS

Until the coming of T. Pomfret Kilner, as Nuffield Professor of Plastic Surgery, the general surgeons performed the limited amount of plastic

surgery but most major problems were referred, like neurosurgery, to other centres.

T. Pomfret Kilner  
E. W. Peet  
T. J. S. Patterson  
J. H. F. Batstone

Professor, 1944-57  
1946-68, d.  
1957-  
1968-

## DENTAL SURGEONS (part-time)

Edmund A. Bevers	1886-1920
A. H. Herbert	1912-1920)
H. Thornton	1912-1920)
	Both went on until 1947
A. Kendrew	1912-1919
J. B. Pettey	1912-1918
H. J. Pegler	1919-1920
H. F. Barge	1921-1922
C. Graves-Morris	1921-1930
R. G. Beck	1932-1968
C. Annand-Smith	1937-1960
F. Trent	1945-1962
M. Savage	1960-
T. C. Collins	1974-

## ORAL SURGEONS

D. S. Hayton-Williams	1934-1972
M. P. Graham	1944-1972
P. R. Barton	1965-
J. Rayne	1972-

## ORTHODONTISTS (Consultants)

J. W. Softley	1951-1972
A. J. Rodesano	1972-

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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# Tynchewyke is thirty-seven

ANTONY WARREN  
*Osler House, Oxford.*

THAT illustrious silly Society, the Tynchewyke Society, staged its thirty-seventh pantomime at Christmas, 1976. The last time the history of the Society was reviewed was in 1965, when Mr. Ted Moloney, for many years and in many guises a prolific contributor to the shows, wrote an article in this organ entitled 'Tynchewyke is Twenty-Five' (1). For those of our readers without pocket calculators, that means that the first production was in December 1940, a year after the re-establishment of the Clinical Medical School in Oxford.

It was Dr. (now Professor) Charles Fletcher, sometimes Television Doctor and bane of British smokers who directed the 'Radcliffe Raspberries' in that first show, and created the style of pantomime peculiar to Oxford, in which a more-or-less coherent story from the traditional pantomime repertoire is utterly distorted, the characters being replaced by thinly disguised caricatures of the senior staff of the Oxford Hospitals. A pantomime

has been put on every Christmas since 1940; during the war, patients used to be wheeled in in large numbers, but later it was decided that the characters behind the professional facades should be for the staff's eyes only. Nowadays a total of 1500 people come to see the five performances each year.

On January 2nd 1941 an unofficial Council meeting was held at which the name 'Pink Elephants' was adopted as the title of the company, after a new hit record of the day that was playing in the room at the time. This was also used later as a theme song for the pantomimes. Neither the name nor the music survive, but pink elephants still feature on the Society tie, and a pantomime pink elephant called Rita appears on stage every year.

At that same meeting it was also decided that the Officers of the Society should bear the grandiose titles they still have today. The President became His Munificency, to indicate the generosity with which Dr. Robb-Smith, the President at the time,

supplied beer and other refreshments at the meetings; the Treasurer, His Solvency (a profit of £4/13/8 was made by the first pantomime) and the Secretary, His Serenity, for the simple reason that he was always in a flap. Since 1950 His Serenity, the only student among the Council members, has become not only a Secretary, but also by definition the Director and main Author of the pantomime in his year of office.

Senior Members since 1965 have included as Munificence Mr. Tom Patterson (1967-70) and Dr. Fred Wright (1970-76) who holds the record for the number of senior posts held — four altogether. The funds have been in the capable hands of Dr. John Hamill (Solvency 1966-72) and Mr. Joe Smith (Hesitant Solvency 1972-76 and now His Munificence). Other senior members have joined the higher echelons: this year they include His Terectomy, His Urgency, His Radiancy and His Cardiomegaly (and you can guess which departments they work in). The senior members, especially His Munificence, not only provide booze for the meeting after the last performance and help with administration, but also occasionally act as a buffer between the Society and any other staff members who feel slandered by their portrayal on stage.

It was at the first official Council meeting on St. Valentine's Day 1941 that the momentous decision to adopt the name Tynchewyke for the Society was taken, at the suggestion of Dr. Robb-Smith. Nicholas Tynchewyke first hit the headlines in 1291 as Physician to King Edward I, but he was also the first known medical teacher in the University of Oxford. In common with other academics he was also a priest; in 1296 he was in the retinue of the Bishop of Winchester, and he was presented to the living of Reculver, Kent as the King's candidate in 1306, indeed Edward I thought highly of him as "the best doctor for the King's health". He included turpentine, aromatic flowers, carminatives, electuaries and various ointments in his personal formulary. He lived in Catte Street, the 'Physicians' Quarter' of Oxford, at an inn adjoining the Physic School where he lectured, which was on the site of the present All Souls' cloisters. He granted two Halls to the University, and as a Fellow of Balliol was one of two external masters appointed to supervise the administration of that College. In this capacity he increased his suitability as patron of the Society that took his name by forbidding the study of anything but the Arts. (2).

Tynchewyke's memory has been toasted every year since 1940 at the party that follows the final performance. His name, however, is spelled differently every year. Since 1964 the forms Ptnjwyq, Tyndjouique, Tindzwick, Tynjjwik, Tynjwyk, Ptynywyk, etc. have been used. Thus the widespread misconception that the Society is named after the village of Tingewick in Buckinghamshire (whose name means Tida's dairy-farm (3)) can be scotched right away, although some members have made pilgrimages there, even bringing back a few relics. A few attempts have been made to organise a pub-crawl to Tingewick; perhaps they failed because there are only two pubs there, only one of which is worth visiting.

There have been many changes in the activities of the Tynchewyke Society since 1965 but none as controversial as the admission of WOMEN as members. There is nothing in the original Constitution forbidding their election, and half-hearted attempts to introduce turns by nurses have been made in the past. With the increasing numbers of female medical students the controversy grumbled on for several years with everyone apparently assuming that the ladies would never break down this bastion of male chauvinism, until matters were brought to a head by the fiasco of October 1962, when an Extraordinary meeting was called to discuss the incumbent Serenity's proposal to use women in that year's pantomime. When the proposal was overwhelmingly defeated His Serenity resigned. To avoid repetition of this sort of chaos a resolution was carried later that year that Serenities would only be elected after they had made an undertaking not to include actresses in their schemes of things. This did not prevent the grumbling on of the controversy, however, indeed it increased it, as the question from now on had to be debated every year. Nowadays most non-discriminating men would be amazed to read the vitriol hurled out of the Minutes Book. A bid for the inclusion of women in 1965 was described as a "disgraceful suggestion". In the following year it was recorded that "members were prepared to use women and even to perform if required . . . but not in front of 500 people in the Nurses' Home". Astonishing though it may seem, it was not until 1969 that the plunge was taken (by a vote of only seven to five, with many abstentions) and there have been actresses in the company, and admitted to full membership, ever since.

It is not clear what objections those who opposed this move for so many years actually had. The question seems to have revolved around the questionable taste of the scripts and the quality of the female talent in Osler House. The proximity to the bone of Dr. Fletcher's scripts was remarked on in the early nineteen forties, and the tradition seems to have continued. Whether or not this is a virtue is debatable, and its value as a reason for keeping women out surely minimal. In recent years the shows have become cleaner anyway, as it has come to be realised that the jokes can actually be funny without being rude as well, although para-umbilical humour is not entirely neglected. As for the female talent in Osler House, it has to be admitted that the quantity is very limited. Ladies seem to be hesitant about allowing themselves to do silly things on stage (how many female television comediennees are there?) but the quality, not to mention the width, has generally been excellent. It is usual for the skirt length of the female lead to get shorter every year, giving added interest, especially to those in the front rows. It is also possible to follow the pantomime tradition even more closely by having a Principal Boy. In short, there has been nothing but benefit from the change, and in these egalitarian days there is no doubt that it will be a permanent one. There is one question left to be resolved, however, namely what 'pink elephant' garment can be issued to lady members in lieu of the Society tie. Various items of underwear have been suggested, but if any readers

have useful ideas they are invited to forward them (under plain cover) to His Serenity.

Putting on pantomimes has never been intended to be the only activity the Society undertakes. The profits from the silver collection taken after each performance (if any) are used to benefit the patients in some way. Until recently, this used to take the form of a Fireworks Party for any children in the Radcliffe Infirmary on November 5th. This has gone out of favour for three main reasons: in the first place the occasional patient has been admitted with firework injuries; only a very few of the patients who attend the hospital during the whole year benefit; and the display was enjoyed by many more staff and their families than patients, thus defeating the object of the exercise. The proceeds from the 1975 and 1976 pantomimes, £100 in all, was therefore used to buy the Oxford Hospitals Broadcasting Association a new tape-recorder for outside broadcasts to patients on most wards in the Radcliffe, Churchill, NOC, and John Radcliffe. Rita the elephant made the presentation and assured herself yet again of immortality by being broadcast live on BBC Radio Oxford.

As well as charitable activity the Society often promises itself to stage a Summer Production, but this rarely if ever materialises. 1977 is an exception as two Mediaeval Mummers plays were performed at the Osler House Ball, and later in some of the Radcliffe wards.

One change in the activities of the Society which may be regretted by past members, if not by the Hospital Administration, is the dearth of humour off-stage. For example, in 1949 a Night-Sister was blown up, in 1952 a motor-car was discovered in Piccadilly Circus, and in 1955 the front gate of the Radcliffe was bricked up. Since then the only recorded outrage has been the driving of the dinner trolley into the Quad fountain in 1968, killing the fish. The Christmas pudding does not even get stuck on the ceiling of the Osler House Lecture

Theatre (now used for a much more worthy purpose, as the Bar) nor do the flower beds outside get their annual added nitrogen any more during the party on the last night of the pantomime. One thing that will never change is that as the Society was born of alcoholic refreshment during the dark days of the War, that is how its members intend it shall continue.

#### REFERENCES

1. MOLONEY, G. E. (1965) 'Tynchewyke is Twenty-five' O.U.M.S.G.
2. TALBOT, C. H. & HAMMOND, E. A. (1965) 'The Medical Practitioners of Mediaeval England' Wellcome History of Medicine Library, London.
3. EKWALL, E. (1960) 'The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-Names' 4th edition, O.U.P.

#### LIST OF PANTOMIMES SINCE 1964

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|------|---|
| 1965 | 'Allison Wonderland' or 'The Great Brain Robbery'<br>Serenity: Irving Jaye          |
| 1966 | 'The Sound of Bougies' or 'The Man from A.N.K.L.E.'<br>Serenity: John Reid          |
| 1967 | 'Slamelot' or 'Yukon Goitre Hell' Serenity: Peter Smail                             |
| 1968 | 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' or 'Gynae-a-Gogo'<br>Serenity: Brian Eldred             |
| 1969 | 'Pwolapse' or 'Woom at the Bottom' Serenity: Simon Smail                            |
| 1970 | 'At your Cervix, Madam' or 'Dilated to meet you'<br>Serenity: Gerry Jarvis          |
| 1971 | 'Two Way Stretch' or 'All's well if your end's well'<br>Serenity: Richard Maxwell   |
| 1972 | 'The Gobjfather' or 'Great Expectations' Serenity: David Burge                      |
| 1973 | 'A Fistula full of Dollars' or 'A Night in a Cas E blanket' Serenity: Adrian French |
| 1974 | 'Alice through the Speculum' or 'Up Yaws' Serenity: Richard McCubbin                |
| 1975 | 'Cinderella Typhi' or 'Blonde with the Wind' Serenity: Richard Underwood            |
| 1976 | 'Aladdin and the Magic Lump' or 'The Bleeping Beauty' Serenity: Antony Warren       |

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## Euthanasia

ELIZABETH JENNINGS

The law's been passed and I am lying low  
Hoping to hide from those who think they are  
Kindly, compassionate. My step is slow.  
I hurry. Will the executioner  
Be watching how I go?

Others about me clearly feel the same.  
The deafest one pretends that she can hear,  
The blindest hides her white stick while the lame  
Attempt to stride. Life has become so dear.  
Last time the doctor came

All who could speak said they felt very well.  
Did we imagine he was watching with  
A new, deep scrutiny? We could not tell.  
Each minute now we think the stranger, Death  
Will take us from each cell

For that is what our little rooms now seem  
To be. We are prepared to bear much pain.  
Terror attacks us wakeful. Every dream  
Is now a nightmare. Doctor's due again.  
We hold onto a gleam

Of sight, a word to hear. We act, we act  
And doing so we wear our weak selves out.  
We said "We want to die" once, when we lacked  
The chance of it. We wait in fear and doubt.  
O life, you are so packed

With possibility. Old age seems good.  
The ache, the anguish — we could bear them, we  
Declare. The ones who pray plead with their God  
To turn the murdering ministers away,  
But they come, softly shod.