

CJRS – a tribute



Chris Stock recently retired from dental practice after over 40 years of quite exceptional and dedicated service to the profession. His many admiring friends and colleagues feel that it is entirely appropriate to pay tribute to Chris's many achievements.

Chris completed his secondary education at Clifton College, Bristol, and in 1958 headed north to study dentistry at St Andrews University. Student life at St Andrews, 50-years ago, had many attractions. St Andrews has a rich history and the University is the oldest in Scotland. Additionally, St Andrews, situated on the Fife Coast, is the natural home of the game of golf. The golf links provided Chris with plenty of healthy fresh air, sea, sun and sand. The fine mix of town, gown and golf provided Chris with an ideal setting to continue his personal development and commence his professional career. It was at St Andrews that Chris developed his passion for the game, and as a member of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club he returns regularly to St Andrews to renew his association with the historic town and the spirit and traditions of the game that he so loves.

During his final year at St Andrews University Chris became a second lieutenant in the Royal Army Dental

Corps, taking up his Regular Commission on graduation in 1963. It was in this year that he also married Di, his supportive life companion and keen golfing partner. The 16 years spent in the Armed Service saw service at home and abroad, including Singapore and Malaysia during the Borneo Confrontation, and Berlin. He demonstrated high clinical acumen and his desire to provide servicemen and their families with quality dental care was rewarded in 1972, when he was selected to study for an MSc in Conservative Dentistry at the Eastman Dental Institute. It was during this year that he began his long-term association with the Eastman and Fred Harty, who was then a part time lecturer with a practice limited to endodontics. In these days endodontics had not been defined as a speciality in the UK and the British Endodontic Society was in its infancy.

On completion of his MSc, Chris was posted to the RADC Headquarters in Aldershot, where he completed 5 years as Clinical Adviser in Advanced Conservative Dentistry before leaving the Army. In this position Chris established a reputation for providing and improving facilities for the general dentist. He created an effective point of referral for patients requiring advanced care whilst, at the same time improving the quality of laboratory work by monitoring the progress of all crown and bridge cases. He will be fondly remembered by many dental officers for the educational impact that he had upon them. He set up 1-week residential courses for them to keep abreast of all current developments. The courses ran four times per year and became very popular. They were a fine mix of seminars, tutorials and practical sessions with a strong emphasis on understanding principles and refining techniques. Chris was ably assisted by other members of the Armed Services and he also involved the Dental Trade, who willingly supported the scheme. The programmes were packed and the schedules were tight and involved morning, afternoon and evening activities. So keen were the participants that discussions often went on into the small hours. Some participants, seeking daily exercise, also discovered that Chris could be a fiercely competitive squash player. Chris taught with a relaxed and charming style which put his course goers at ease. This enabled him to instil confidence in areas of commonly weak

performance. Notable examples included occlusal diagnosis and the application of rubber dam. It was clear that Chris had a natural talent for postgraduate teaching and empathy for general dentists. These qualities held him in good stead for the rest of his career.

In 1978 Chris joined Fred Harty in the practice limited to endodontics in Harley Street and became a member of the Conservation Department at the Eastman. Already Secretary of the British Endodontic Society, along with Di Stock, he worked tirelessly to expand the activities and satisfy the aims of the Society. Prior to becoming President of the British Endodontic Society in 1982, Chris travelled the length and breadth of the country giving lectures and running practical courses. This often meant that he had to sacrifice weekends and valuable time away from family and work to give presentations. It was even common to find him instructing dentists in the comfort of their own practices. His popularity soared and his zeal, energy and enthusiasm for his chosen subject became infective. There are many registered specialists and academics who remember well the effect that Chris had upon their own careers.

The expanding endodontic practice moved premises to Wimpole Street, where it became known as the Lister House Endodontic Practice. The practice eventually grew to six partners and many associates with four

satellite practices. Even as managing partner Chris still found time for lecturing, supervision of postgraduate student research, and writing learned papers and textbooks. His constant push for raised standards saw the introduction of operating microscopes and digital radiography both in the practice and later at the Eastman International Centre for Excellence in Dentistry where, in the position of Senior Lecturer and Honorary Consultant he established a superb skills laboratory and a range of courses for both general practitioners and specialists.

Chris is probably the best known of our home grown endodontists. He is the perfect example of the busy man who always has time. He has a world-wide following and has travelled and lectured throughout Europe, Scandinavia, America, Africa, Middle East, India, South East Asia and Australia. He is an exceptionally competent and gifted clinician, with a formidable reputation and a total lack of conceit. Those of the Profession who have benefited from his extensive knowledge and wise counsel appreciate his impressive qualities and wish him a full and happy retirement with his wife Di, daughters Corinne and Sally, and his four grandchildren.

Dick Walker

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