

Obituary

Editor: Henry R. Rollin

JOHN PETO CHILD, formerly Physician Superintendent, St Nicholas Hospital, Newcastle Upon Tyne

John Child was born in London on 29 March 1908. He was educated at Marlborough College and Lincoln College, Oxford where he rowed for the college. He completed his medical training at St Thomas' Hospital, London, qualifying BM, BCh in 1933.

It was John's intention to become a physician. With this in view he held several medical posts while studying for the MRCP. At the suggestion of the late Professor Alexander Kennedy, he took a locum post at West Park Hospital as this would allow him time for studying. John enjoyed the work so much that he decided to make psychiatry his career. He achieved the MRCP in 1936 and the DPM (London) in 1937. He then moved as "a second" to Banstead Hospital where he met Margot, his wife-to-be. In May 1940 he joined the RAMC and after various short postings in England, Northern Ireland, and Wales, he was posted to India where he stayed until demobilisation at the end of 1945. After further appointments in the LCC mental hospitals he was appointed superintendent at St Nicholas' Hospital in 1948.

St Nicholas' is set in a prime residential area of the city, but not far from the university and the major general hospitals, the Newcastle General Hospital and the principal university teaching hospital at that time, the Royal Victoria Infirmary. John was quick to take advantage of the administrative changes which came with the introduction of the NHS. He quickly established professional and social relationships with colleagues in other specialties and built up excellent surgical and medical services to St Nicholas'. In the mid 1950s major psycho-surgery was regularly performed at the hospital. John provided a ward service and weekly out-patient session at the General Hospital. He always provided an excellent service to the local general practitioners and encouraged joint consultations at patient's homes before domiciliary visits were remunerated. At his instigation courses for GPs and clerics were regularly held at St Nicholas'.

As the University Department of Psychological Medicine expanded, first under the late Professor Kennedy and later Professor Sir Martin Roth, St Nicholas became very involved in the teaching of

undergraduates, the training of post-graduates as well as research. John welcomed and played his part in all of these activities. He held the honorary post of Clinical Lecturer and took part with Ball and Kiloh in the early trials of imipramine.

As was the tradition of the time, John and his family resided in the hospital grounds for many years. They always played an active part in the social life of the hospital and rarely missed an event involving staff and patients. They remained active members of the League of Friends up to the time of John's death.

His colleagues were aware that John was not happy to retire from work, but were surprised when, soon after retirement, he announced he was to become a partner in a local general practice. He worked there for three years, then did many short-term GP locums before ultimately retiring at 76.

Margot and John had many interests including gardening, travelling, the theatre and art. For many years they were members of the Newcastle People's Theatre and the Laing Art Gallery. They made many lasting friends.

He died after a relatively short illness on 29 April, 1991 and is survived by Margot and their three sons, Hubert, David, and Peter.

COLIN PROTHEROE

DAYANAND NAIDOO, Visiting Professor of Psychiatry, University of Beijing, China

Dayanand Naidoo died on 25 August 1991 in Tibet. He was cremated in Lahasa and his ashes immersed in the upper reaches of the Holy Brahmaputra River which joins the River Gunga in Bengal, the sacred river for Hindus – a resting place befitting one so proud of his Indian ancestry and so knowledgeable of Indian philosophies.

Having graduated from Glasgow University, he set out for a career in paediatrics but soon moved into general medicine. In 1948 he became attracted to psychiatry and a year later joined the Maudsley Hospital as Registrar. Appointed Lecturer at the Institute of Psychiatry in 1952, he then became Senior Lecturer in the Neuropathology under Professor Alfred Meyer. It was during this period that he was awarded his PhD (Lond) for work in