

The history of the Plastic Surgery Unit at Wexham Park Hospital

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The ninth of a series of histories of Plastic Surgery Centres adapted, when necessary (by A. F. Wallace and C. W. Chapman), from records forming part of the Archives of the British Association of Plastic Surgeons.

In 1949 Rainsford Mowlem was asked by Mr George Arden, consultant orthopaedic surgeon in Windsor, if he would arrange for someone to come there to start a plastic surgery service. Previously the only plastic surgeon who had held clinics in the area was Oliver Mansfield, at that time at the Hill End Unit. They stopped when he became a consultant at Birmingham.

The responsibility for developing a plastic surgery service in the Windsor area was given to Stewart Harrison, who started clinics first at the Canadian Hospital and then at the King Edward VII Hospital and Upton Hospital. Ultimately beds as well as operating sessions were allocated in all three hospitals. Peripheral clinics were held also at Maidenhead and Ashford hospitals. Mr J. Rowntree, who had been Stewart Harrison's registrar at the Canadian Hospital since 1952, became clinical assistant, then an associate specialist, and has made a valuable contribution to the plastic surgery service in this area.

The new Hospital

A new hospital was planned at Wexham Park and, after considerable discussion, a 32-bedded plastic surgery unit incorporating both males and females was agreed in addition to 6-8 beds in the paediatric unit. Miss Mooriston-Davies, who was a senior sister in the plastic surgery unit at Mount Vernon Hospital, took charge of the ward and the running of the Unit with tremendous efficiency.

There was a Medical Research Council Unit for rheumatology at the Canadian Hospital, under Professor Bywaters and Dr Barbara Ansell, and joint clinics and ward rounds were held there and at Wexham Park Hospital for the treatment of rheumatoid hands. Very soon after its opening in 1966 Wexham Park became recognised as a centre for hand surgery training. The Postgraduate Federation recognised the appointment there of a

senior registrar in hand surgery and this was the only senior registrar in this specialty in the United Kingdom.

Mirec Stranc was appointed as second consultant to the Windsor area in 1967, with sessions mostly at Wexham Park, but he relinquished these a year later to take over more sessions at Mount Vernon. He was replaced by Magdy Saad who was appointed in 1968. Five years later Saad relinquished his sessions at the West Middlesex and Mount Vernon hospitals and took over sessions at St Mary's Hospital, Paddington. Jointly with Mr John Barron, he published a book on operative plastic surgery, and Stewart Harrison, who had published extensively on hand surgery, became joint author with Kenneth Backhouse of *An Atlas of the Surgery of the Rheumatoid Hand*.

Recent developments

Microsurgical services were started at Wexham Park as soon as the techniques had been developed and all the junior staff, which consist of three senior



Fig. 1

Figure 1—Stewart Harrison.



Fig. 2

Figure 2—The plastic surgery staff at Wexham Park Hospital in February 1987. (Standing from left to right) Peter Riley (SHO), Dahlia Nield (Registrar), Ruth Rayment (Senior Registrar), Noel Murphy (SHO), A. Bannagee (SHO). (Sitting from left to right) Chris Khoo, J. Rowntree (Associate Specialist), Magdy Saad, M. Bromley (Sister-in-Charge), David Evans.

house officers and a part-time senior registrar, are trained in microsurgical technique as soon as they are appointed. A course on hand surgery was held annually at the postgraduate centre and was well attended, but was discontinued in 1976.

Stewart Harrison retired in 1976 and was replaced by David Evans who was senior registrar in Oxford: Evans has continued hand surgery at Wexham Park as this is his main interest. In 1983 Christopher Khoo, who was already a consultant

at Stoke Mandeville Hospital and who had completed part of his training at Wexham Park Hospital, was appointed consultant plastic surgeon there. He too has an interest in hand surgery.

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