



Whitehill F.P. Club Newsletter. Lockdown Issue 2, 21 April 2020

*Oor wee school's the best wee school, the best wee school in Glesca,
The only thing that's wrang wi it, is the baldy heedie maister,
He goes tae the pub oan a Saturday, he goes tae church on Sunday,
Tae pray tae God tae gie him strength, to murder the weans on Monday.*

Dear fellow Whitehill FPs

We thought it would be a good idea to introduce some additional Newsletters over this lockdown period in an effort to keep people in touch and spread a little cheer.

Whitehill School has produced some incredible achievers in its time and for sure it will continue to do so today. The first story in this issue is particularly relevant today, as we all face this pandemic and support our health care workers and scientists in their efforts to treat those affected and to potentially find a vaccine to prevent Covid-19.

Dr June Almeida (nee Hart)



You may have glanced at or read through a story which appeared on the BBC website, The Herald and even the Irish Times, of a girl from Dennistoun who became an internationally renowned virologist whose skills in electron microscopy enabled her to not only identify viruses, to shed light on viral infections and also to improve methods of diagnosis.

As June Hart, she was brought up in a tenement flat in Duntroon Street, Dennistoun and it was reported that she left school at 16 with “no formal education”. We decided to investigate further and lo and behold, found that this could not be further from the truth. June attended Whitehill School, leaving in 1947 having won the science prize that year (Summer 1947 magazine) and no doubt with an excellent education. She did not have the funding to go on to university.

On leaving school she became a laboratory technician at the Royal Infirmary, followed by a position at St. Bartholomews in London, in the histopathology laboratory. She married and emigrated to Canada where she studied electron microscopy and authored several scientific papers on the structure of viruses. June and her family were lured back to the UK in 1964 to work at St Thomas's Hospital in London.

June taught many virologists including a doctor from the National Institute of Health in the U.S. who went on, using June's techniques, to identify the Norovirus. She continued, whilst at St Thomas's Hospital, together with other investigators and observed a new virus with what appeared to have a halo or crown around it. This was named by them as Coronavirus. She was awarded a DSc and today most virology review articles and textbooks contain her electron micrographs of viruses.

Dr June Almeida died in 2007, at the age of 77. Now 13 years after her death she is finally getting the recognition she deserves as a pioneer whose work sped up the understanding of the virus that is currently spreading across the world.

June Hart. Another Whitehill FP who made a difference.

Dr Charles McEwen.

Charles McEwen was a consultant ophthalmic surgeon at the Glasgow Eye Infirmary and Gartnavel General Hospital, providing first class care for those with vision or eye problems for nearly 50 years. He was born and brought up in Dennistoun and attended Whitehill School, leaving in 1948. He graduated from Glasgow University in 1953, and served in posts at Stobhill and the Victoria Hospitals before National Service took him to Germany with the RAMC reaching the rank of Captain.

On his return to the NHS he was appointed to a consultant post at age 30 making him one of the youngest consultants in the country. He helped to influence and shape ophthalmology services in Glasgow. He introduced the then highly innovative operating microscope and embraced leading-edge surgery for a wide spectrum of conditions, particularly for cataracts and diseases on the cornea. One high-profile case received much publicity at the time. The family of a young girl, Marie Queen, who had been blind from birth, was told that she would never see. Dr McEwen, using a pioneering technique restored her sight, a result described at the time, as a miracle.



Dr McEwen was a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow, the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh and the Royal College of Ophthalmologists. Charles died on 1st February 2020 after a short period of physical decline.

Another Whitehill FP who made a difference to people's lives.

Jim Aitken - Quiz

During lockdown it is important to keep the brain active!! Answers next issue, no prizes!

1. In which city is the headquarters of the Red Cross?
2. On which island was Napoleon Bonaparte born in 1769?
3. Who developed the smallpox inoculation in 1796?
4. What is the term for a female goat?
5. What is the largest of the 50 states of the USA?
6. The bishop of which English diocese signs himself Sarum?
7. Carousel was the second musical to be created by which duo?
8. Spirits of salts is an ancient name for which acid?
9. Which Queen song features Lady Godiva in its name?
10. Who played the title role in the 2000 film Erin Brockovich?
11. Which country is the biggest producer of coffee in the world?
12. What musical instrument was played by Bernard Stanley "Acker Bilk"?

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