

Blue Plaque for Chassar Moir at 11 Chadlington Road 6th July 2019

Closing memories from Jane Moir, daughter

Thank you, David.

Welcome.

This house and garden: where we grew up. Much loved by all of us – like a third parent, keeping us safe. We romped around the house and garden, kept chickens, had pets, and often trampled on our father's precious seedlings!

One or two anecdotes connecting the house to our father's work:

The bay window on the ground floor was his study; his desk stood in the window. Not particularly tidy – on one side would be bunches of curling photographs, held by Bull clips, which he had just developed. The other side often had pencil drawings of his operations, or some new surgical instrument he wanted made (John Bell & Croyden – Wigmore Street, still there – I passed it the other day).

Above the study was our Guest Room. Many distinguished colleagues stayed there, including Munro-Kerr, the author of the great Tome 'Operative Obstetrics', which our father later took over and edited. Several colleagues, escaping from Europe in the 1940s, also stayed for short periods, some more than once.

At 10 minutes to 4.00 pm on a Sunday afternoon, he would rouse himself, or rush in from the garden, to use his own words – 'to dash off' his weekly letter to his mother. He would then run across the road licking the envelope, to meet the Postie coming round the corner from Linton Road to empty the post box on the dot of 4 o'clock!

Another memory is of the click of the front door, as he went back to the hospital. The phone would ring – this is Oxford 5141, Professor speaking. A short while later any time day or night, winter or summer, he would go back if called for. In the early days of the War, our car went up on blocks in the garage, as with most other people's. He then cycled to and from the hospital. From this perspective now, I marvel at his fortitude: he was not a robust man – he had had T.B. as a child. Those of us here today, of a certain vintage, will recall that there was no street lighting during the war. You couldn't just ring for a taxi either. Some winters were bitterly cold.

Of course, it was our mother who 'kept the show on the road'. I remember her once telling me that after they moved into this house – Spring 1938 – she had been kept awake at night by the singing of the Nightingales.

I will now hand you back to the Chairman.

Thank you.

Jane Moir