



THE HONG KONG CONNECTION

The appointment of Sandy Manson as Chair of the Development Trust Trustees continues a family association with the University that dates back to the mid 19th century. Sir Patrick Manson was an Aberdeen graduate who went on to become known as "the father of tropical medicine" during an illustrious career, much of which was spent in Hong Kong and China.

Born in Oldmeldrum outside Aberdeen in 1844, where Sandy Manson and his family stay to this day, Patrick was said to have carried out his first dissection on a neighbour's cat, within which he found a tapeworm, at the age of 14. It was clear even at that age that he had an avid interest in biological science which eventually went on to reap tremendous global benefits, including the discovery that malaria is spread via mosquitoes.

His initial interest in mechanics led to an apprenticeship as a blacksmith at the age of 15 but health problems forced him to give up engineering and he switched to medicine – a fortunate twist of fate for the millions of people whose lives he has helped to save over the past 150 years.

In 1860 he started studying medicine at the University of Aberdeen, graduating in 1865. The following year he took his elder brother's advice and accepted a medical officer post in the Customs Service of Formosa (now Taiwan) where he started his life-long career in the research of tropical diseases and how to prevent and treat them. While there he also treated Chinese patients in a local missionary hospital where he was exposed to a wide variety of tropical illnesses. He took time to befriend the locals and learned the languages which helped to break down the mistrust of western medics and medicine prevalent at that time.

In 1871 he moved to Amoy (Xiamen) where alongside his role as medical officer for the local Imperial Maritime Customs, he again treated the local Chinese patients at the Baptist Missionary Society's Hospital. Taking into account local superstition and cultural differences, he modified his operating theatre so that people could watch his operations.

After a brief stay in London he returned to Amoy with his new wife in 1876 and it was during this period of his career, and through his indepth research, that he started to discover the link between mosquitoes and malaria. His research and theory in this area was verified by Ronald Ross who was mentored by Manson and who went on to win a Nobel Prize.

In 1883 Manson moved to Hong Kong where he set up a successful private medical practice and his career flourished. Not only did he found the Hong Kong College of Medicine, which was incorporated into the University of Hong Kong in 1912, he also founded the Hong Kong Medical Society, the Alice Memorial Hospital and the Hong Kong Dairy Farm which supplied affordable hygienic milk to pregnant women, children and patients.

Manson returned to London in 1889 where he championed the need for specialist education into tropical diseases, their treatments and prevention. He founded the London School of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene in 1899. He was knighted in 1903 and died in 1922, leaving behind a legacy that continues to save millions of lives.

The work Manson did in the area of tropical medicine was ground-breaking and provided a solid foundation for much of the ongoing modern research undertaken. Even to this day he is regarded as one of the most highly respected figures in his field and will be known forever as "the father of tropical medicine". ■



CONTINUING STRONG LINKS WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

THE LORD WILSON SCHOLARSHIP



If you are interested in finding out more about supporting the University of Aberdeen please contact Vicki Corbett, Development Manager: + 44 (0)1224 274111 or email v.corbett@abdn.ac.uk

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The University of Aberdeen Development Trust is a charity registered in Scotland no. SC002938.

The Hong Kong College of Medicine which was founded by Sir Patrick Manson became part of the University of Hong Kong (HKU) when it opened in March 1912.

The University of Aberdeen has maintained strong links with HKU throughout its history and in October 2012 gifted the University a specially commissioned tartan which was presented at a ceremony to mark HKU's centenary. The gift, which embodies Scottish tradition, celebrates the strong historic links between the two Universities and the collaborations that will continue into the next century. Chancellor Lord Wilson of Tillyorn and Vice-Chancellor Professor Sir Ian Diamond of the University of Aberdeen as well as HKU Vice-Chancellor Professor Lap-Chee Tsui officiated at the ceremony.

During the event the establishment of a new fund was announced, named in honour of Lord Wilson who stepped down as Chancellor of the University of Aberdeen at the end of 2012. Lord Wilson was installed as Chancellor in 1997 following a career which saw him appointed as 27th Governor of Hong Kong from 1987 until 1992. The Lord

Wilson Scholarship has been established to recognise both his remarkable career and his fundamental role in the leadership of the University of Aberdeen.

The University of Aberdeen operates an International Exchange Programme with some of the world's most distinguished institutions, including The University of Hong Kong. Today, both institutions continue to share a special relationship through academic collaborations and exchanges.

The Lord Wilson Scholarship is available to University of Aberdeen students who have been selected as part of the International Exchange Programme to study at the University of Hong Kong. The scholarship is awarded on the basis of academic merit and covers the cost of travel, accommodation and subsistence for the exchange year up to £10,000.

If it were not for Sir Patrick Manson's vision, this special collaboration is unlikely to have been developed. His legacy therefore resonates even further today as students begin to benefit from this significant new exchange opportunity. ■