

## **Introduction to Lifetime Achievement Award to Mary Cotter and Norman Cameron by Vincenza Spallone**

### **Slide 1.**

#### ***Lifetime Achievement Award to Mary Cotter and Norman Cameron***

#### ***The value of a career***

#### ***The precious pearl of a friendship***

I'm very honoured to introduce Professor Mary Cotter and Professor Norman Cameron as winners of the Lifetime Achievement Award.

### **Slide 2. Introduction**

This prize was established by the Executive Committee in 2007 after a proposal by Peter Kempler, with the aim to recognize scientists who have significantly contributed to the knowledge of diabetic neuropathy.

The first winners were the founders of Neurodiab John Ward, Peter Watkins, Guido Menzinger, Arnold Gries, followed by eminent scientists and mentors in the field of diabetic neuropathy, Peter Dyck, David Tomlinson, Aaron Vinik and Anders Sima.

Thus, I'm very happy about the decision of the Executive Committee to award this prestigious and meaningful prize to Professor Mary Cotter and Norman Cameron, and I'll spend a few minutes with you to go over the reasons for this, mainly from the prospective of Neurodiab's history.

### **Slide 3. Personal biography**

I think that many of us who have the privilege to get to know Mary and Norman, can hardly remember them without one another, despite their very clear identities and differences. So, it is difficult to talk about one of them without mentioning the other.

### **Slide 4. Academic positions**

Mary Cotter and Norman Cameron spent most of their academic careers at Aberdeen University, one of the oldest universities in the world. It was founded just a couple of centuries after the University of this city, Coimbra... So, we're dealing with very prestigious university environments.

### **Slide 5. Academic positions**

Mary Cotter graduated in Biological Sciences from the University of Birmingham in 1970 then completed a postgraduate certificate of education, a PhD in Physiology and a Wellcome Postdoctoral Fellowship at the University of Birmingham. She was appointed as a lecturer in Physiology at the Nursing degree at the University of Hull, and then at the University of Aberdeen (1979). She was promoted to senior lecturer (1992) and to a Chair of Systems Physiology in 2001. Currently she is Emeritus Professor of Physiology at Aberdeen.

### **Slide 6. Academic positions**

Norman Cameron graduated in Biological sciences from the University of East Anglia in 1970 and obtained a doctorate (D.Phil.) in experimental physiology at Sussex University (1975). He studied physiology and visual sciences at postdoctoral level at Sussex and Birmingham Universities, and was appointed as a temporary lecturer at Leeds University in 1977. Then, he was appointed as a lecturer in Physiology at Aberdeen (1978), and was promoted to senior lecturer (1992) and reader (1999), and finally he was awarded a

Personal Chair in Vascular Neurobiology at the University of Aberdeen. Currently he is Emeritus Professor of Physiology at Aberdeen.

### **Slide 7. Dissemination of knowledge**

Mary Cotter

A particular propensity and dedication to teaching came perhaps to Mary from her personal education and personality.

She acted as the Coordinator of Phase I of medical school and was appointed as the Executive Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and Medical Sciences. She was also Director of Teaching and Learning for the College of Life Sciences and Medicine at the University of Aberdeen.

In 2010 she won the Simpson Medal for outstanding contribution to the teaching of medical students at the University of Aberdeen.

### **Slide 8. Dissemination of knowledge**

In the same year she was awarded the first Otto Hutter Teaching Prize that was introduced by the Physiological Society to recognise outstanding teachers of undergraduate physiology.

We can read on the webpage of Society and BBC news that she was nominated for her innovative approach to teaching - introducing problem-based learning, student-led teaching and interactive lectures - and the passion she brought to lecturing. It is reported that standing ovations were not unheard of in Mary's lectures.

Speaking of her passion for teaching, Mary said *"I feel it is a real privilege to be able to teach students Physiology because it is the best subject. I love teaching science and medical students Physiology, particularly the tricky bits like acid-base and respiratory mechanics."*

### **Slide 9. Editorial activities and dissemination of knowledge**

Norman Cameron

Norman paid particular attention to the dissemination of knowledge and research data and among others he authored the well-known book on diabetic neuropathy with Arnold Gries, Philippe Low and Dan Ziegler. He served as Associate Editor of *Diabetologia*, for many years and currently is Editor-in-Chief of *Current Diabetes Reviews* and a board member of the *Journal of Diabetes Research*.

### **Slide 10. Research activities**

Mary and Norman have published more than 150 original papers, reviews and book chapters. Here just few examples. I apologize for possible miss.

### **Slide 11. Main achievements in research**

Research interests have been in diabetic polyneuropathy, autonomic neuropathy, the vascular effects of diabetes, vascular endothelium function, skeletal muscle function and brain and peripheral neural tissue blood flow.

Their main achievements regard pathogenesis of diabetic neuropathy and vascular endothelium dysfunction, in particular the pathogenetic role of neurovascular factors with a precocious intuition about the relationship between vascular changes and metabolic factors, which was subsequently confirmed and expanded, also by providing insight into the role of pro-inflammatory mechanisms (nuclear factor kappa B - NFκB/p38 mitogen-activated kinases - MAPK).

Other aspects concern the role of impaired neuronal blood flow in erectile dysfunction, and the multiple studies in animal models to try different potential treatments targeted to main

pathogenetic mechanisms of diabetic neuropathy, such as nerve blood flow deficit, polyol pathways, oxidative/nitrosative stress, advanced glycation/lipoxidation, PARP activity, and inflammation, with conclusive support to the role of neurovascular dysfunction, and the offering of suggestions on potential targets of therapeutic intervention in human diabetic neuropathy.

### **Slide 12. Activity in Scientific Societies and Organizations**

They have covered different roles in scientific societies.

Mary served as a member of the Council of the Physiological Society.

Norman was an ad hoc scientific adviser for Diabetes UK and spent 8 years on Medical and Scientific Review Panel of the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation International. He was also a member of the Diabetic Neuropathy Committee of the International Diabetes Federation.

### **Slide 13. Neurodiab**

However, the prominent society activity I'd like to mention pertains to Neurodiab.

They attended all the meetings from Cork in 1991 to Sophron in 2014 and also organized the meeting in Aberdeen in 2001.

### **Slide 14. Saint Malo**

They were in Istanbul and Saint Malo.

### **Slide 15. Ystad**

They did not miss Ystad ..

### **Slide 16. Utrecht**

.. Utrecht

### **Slide 17. Orvieto**

.. and Orvieto

### **Slide 18. Toronto**

They were active members of the Toronto Consensus Panel ...

### **Slide 19. Sophron**

.. and finally they attended the meeting in 2014 in Sophron in Hungary.

They have always been protagonists of the scene, a model of authenticity and linearity in their scientific approach and an established reference for younger participants and colleagues with whom professional and academic cooperation was established throughout Europe.

### **Slide 20. Executive Committee**

They also spent 4 years each as members of the Executive Committee of NEURODIAB,

### **Slide 21. Executive Committee**

here are some places of the venues for Exe Com meetings.

### **Slide 22. Executive Committee**

Mary was Vice President.

**Slide 23-24. A history of friendship**

Neurodiab has also been for Mary and Norman a history of friendship and spending time together. I appreciated their closeness when earthquakes hit Italy in recent times

**Slide 25. A history of friendship**

Listen to her words for the Commemorative book of 25 years of Neurodiab.

*“I have happy memories of many of the meetings, they tend to merge into one happy remembered society that is Neurodiab.”*

*“A very successful and joyful organization that has always felt more like a family than anything else”.*

**Slide 26. Conclusion**

In conclusion, I truly believe that this prize is fully deserved and I'd like to extend our gratitude for their warm friendship.