

TEXT OF THE INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS DELIVERED BY:

PROFESSOR MICHAEL MAHER, Professor of Radiology, University College Cork on 3 June 2011, in University College Cork, on the occasion of the conferring of the Degree of Doctor of Medicine, *honoris causa*, on **ADRIAN K DIXON**

A Sheansailéir, a mhuintir na hOllscoile agus a dhaoine uaisle,

Is cúis mórtais agus fíoráthais dom Adrian K Dixon a chur i láthair dár ngradam, Céim Dochtúireachta sa Leighis, de chuid Ollscoil na hÉireann. Is deacair duine níos fearr ná Adrian a shamhlú agus e ina chara dílis do chuige na Mumhan agus do Choláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh.

It is an honour and an immense pleasure to present Adrian K Dixon for the award of an Honorary Doctorate in Medicine, of the National University of Ireland. It is difficult to imagine a more worthy candidate than Adrian, an academic physician of international repute, a Professor at Cambridge University, a Master of a College of Cambridge University, and a true friend of University College Cork and Munster.

Adrian K Dixon was born in Cambridge in 1948, but his family's links to Ireland and this region can be traced back, long before his birth. All of Adrian's four grandparents and both parents were Irish-born and bred. Adrian Dixon's grandfather, Prof HH Dixon, FRS, was Professor of Botany in Dublin and, with John Joly, discovered how sap made its way to the top of trees. He worked on various other scientific experiments including early colour photography. He lived in Kerry when he retired, which is where Adrian spent all of his childhood holidays. During these vacations in Kerry, Adrian crossed the Cork-Kerry border regularly to play in the Irish Junior Closed Tennis Championships at Rushbrooke, Co Cork and played tennis for Donnybrook while working in Dublin. At the age of 17 years, Adrian got his first taste of "Bench to Bedside" clinical research when he spent a period in the Department of Experimental Medicine at St Luke's Hospital in Rathgar before commencing his medical studies in Cambridge. Later on, both Adrian's parents were to spend much of their retirement in Kerry and Adrian continues to spend his vacations in Glenbeigh, near Dooks beach on the Ring of Kerry.

Adrian Dixon's commenced studying medicine in King's College, Cambridge in 1967, gaining a BA degree in 1969 and he graduated with MB BCh in 1972 after clinical studies at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London. He then pursued general medicine at Nottingham and obtained Membership of the Royal College of Physicians in 1974. The young Dr Dixon then decided that his future career was to be as a radiologist and he commenced training in radiology, obtaining his Fellowship of the Royal College of Radiologists in 1978. After spells in Paediatric Radiology (Great Ormond Street) and Computed Tomography (St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London) he was appointed Lecturer in Radiology in the University of Cambridge in 1979. His interests from an early stage have centred on developing Body Computed Tomography and Magnetic Resonance Imaging. He gained his MD from the University of Cambridge with a thesis on Computed Tomography of the

lumbar spine in 1988. He was elected a Fellow of Peterhouse, Cambridge in 1986 where he was Director of Medical Studies until 1994. He was appointed Professor of Radiology in Cambridge University in 1986. He was Editor of *Clinical Radiology* from 1998-2002 and Chairman of the Royal College of Radiologists' Guidelines Working Party from 1993-1998. He was elected Fellow of The Royal College of Physicians in 1991, and Fellow of The Royal College of Surgeons in 2003 and to Honorary Fellowship of the American College of Radiology in 2009. He was also elected a founding Fellow of the Academy of Medical Sciences in 1998, one of the few radiologists to be so recognized. He was Warden of the Faculty of Clinical Radiology of the Royal College of Radiologists from 2002-2006 and Magnetic Resonance Clinical Guardian to the Department of Health of Her Majesty's Government in 2004-7.

Professor Dixon enjoys a worldwide reputation as an academic radiologist. He has published extensively in Computed Tomography, Magnetic Resonance Imaging and various aspects of effectiveness and outcomes research within Radiology. Recently, he has used imaging to characterize body fat distribution in a variety of disease processes such as diabetes, obesity and the metabolic syndrome. He has written and co-edited various books on CT, Anatomy and Diagnostic Radiology. He has travelled extensively to lecture and teach, and has also been awarded Honorary Fellowship/Membership of Radiological Societies in Australia/New Zealand, France, Hungary, Ireland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the USA. Through Professor Dixon's clinical appointment at Addenbrooke's Hospital in Cambridge, he has helped train numerous Irish radiologists, one of whom Dr Thomas Greaney, a consultant radiologist at Tralee General Hospital, is in attendance at the ceremony today. All of these graduates speak of an inspirational teacher and role model who teaches from first principles and of a radiologist whose opinion is widely sought by clinical and radiological peers. His work ethic and dedication to his clinical duties are legendary, a fact that is always highlighted when speaking to those who have been lucky enough to count Adrian as a colleague. He has been fortunate to have been supported throughout his career by his wife Anne, who has been Adrian's partner in many projects.

Currently, Professor Dixon works as Professor of Radiology in Cambridge University and as a Consultant Radiologist at Addenbrooks Hospital in Cambridge. He is also Editor-in-Chief of *European Radiology* and the journal has seen major improvements under his leadership including a significantly improved impact factor.

In 2008, The Fellows of the Peterhouse, the oldest college of Cambridge University, announced the election of Adrian K Dixon as the 51st known Master of the Peterhouse, making him the second medical Master in the College's history of over 700 years, and the first medical Master since 1500. There are interesting parallels here with UCC, which appointed Dr. Michael Murphy as its second medical president in 2007, the first being Bertram Windle in 1904. As Master, Professor Dixon succeeded Lord Wilson of Tillyorn, a former Governor of Hong Kong. In a statement from the Peterhouse, Professor David Watkin, its Senior Fellow, said, "After very thorough and wide-ranging consideration, the Fellows of Peterhouse were unanimous in electing Adrian Dixon to be our next Master. We

are delighted to elect one of our own, someone who has given immense devotion and service to the College and its members for over twenty years, while at the same time being recognised internationally for eminence in his field. We all look forward to his guidance and continuing friendship in building on the outstanding Mastership of Lord Wilson.”

In spite of his many work commitments, Professor Dixon, retains very strong connections with the Munster region and his beloved Glenbeigh, County Kerry, with Dooks Golf Club nearby. He still spends many vacations at his mother’s house in Glenbeigh. While on vacation, he plays golf and enjoys the natural beauty of the Ring of Kerry with his wife Anne and their children. It is difficult for Adrian, however, to completely forget his commitment to education and he has addressed Junior and Leaving Certificate students at the Intermediate School in Killorglin on a number of occasions. He has also given invited lectures at the Southern Radiological Society in Cork in 2007 on his way to Glenbeigh and has also spoken at the ceremony to mark the installation of the first CT scanner at Tralee General Hospital in Kerry. He was adviser to UCC during the establishment of, and appointment to, the Professorship of Radiology and today, maintains a keen interest in the development of the department, frequently acting as an advisor.

Adrian has many sporting interests, which include golf and tennis. As well as his lifetime membership of Dooks Golf Club, he is President of the Cambridge University Golf Club.

Adrian Dixon is being honoured today by this university in recognition of his contribution to medicine and radiology internationally and in Ireland but equally for being a great friend in many ways to this region and to this university. There is no more worthy recipient of this honorary degree.

PRAEHONORABILIS CANCELLARIE, TOTAQUE UNIVERSITAS:

Presento vobis hunc meum filium, quem scio tam moribus quam doctrina habilem ad idoneum esse qui admittatur, honoris causa, ad gradum Doctoratus in Medicina, idque tibi fide mea testor ac spondeo, totique Academiae.