

Dr Margaret Geraldine Phoebe Reed 1900 – 1999

Margaret Reed was born and brought up in Tasmania, Australia. After attending Melbourne University she moved to Cambridge and entered Newnham College, University of Cambridge, in 1920 to read Natural Sciences. Following further study at Kings College Hospital in London she qualified in medicine in 1926.

From 1931 to 1965 Margaret was a general practitioner, first in a rural area of the fens, and then in central Cambridge. In 1947 she became a founder member of Soroptimist International of Cambridge. Margaret was the Club's 2nd president in 1949 and was made an Honorary Member in 1996.

Dr Reed's career as a doctor was of great benefit to women and children in the City. She defended women's interests in the face of the then predominantly male profession. Before the foundation of the National Health Service in 1948, she persuaded at least one consultant surgeon to treat women of limited means without charge. She also pressed for the admission of women to a convalescent home after gynaecological surgery.

In addition to her work as a general practitioner she acted as Medical Officer to several schools, including one for boys with special educational needs, and two Infant Welfare Centres in villages outside the City. She was a co-opted member of the Cambridge Maternity and Child Welfare Committee, a committee member of Age Concern Cambridge from 1966, and Secretary of the Nursing Auxiliary Trust (Cambridge), now the Cambridge Community Nursing Trust, from 1964. She was also a committee member of a home for elderly people which was supported by Cambridge Soroptimists for many years.

After her retirement from general practice her influence was felt nationally. She represented the Medical Women's Federation on the General Medical Services Committee of the British Medical Association, and was President of the Cambridge and Huntingdon Branch of the B M A from 1974 – 1975.

Despite these extensive professional commitments Dr Reed was an active member of S I Cambridge, regularly attending meetings and other functions and contributing to discussions. She continued to attend until well into her nineties.

