Allergy pioneer Dr Bill Frankland awarded with MBE in Queen’s Birthday honours lists

Tuesday 27 October, 2015

Asthma UK is delighted to announce that Dr Bill Frankland, the vice-president of the charity since 1992, has been recognised in the Queen's Birthday honours lists with an MBE for his contributions to allergy research. Dr Frankland has been invited to visit Buckingham Palace to meet Her Majesty The Queen or a member of the Royal Family, on Tuesday 27 October 2015.

The 103-year-old is the UK's leading allergy specialist who introduced the pollen count, which continues to be seen on weather forecasts every day throughout the summer months. And despite his age, he still continues to publish papers, contribute to journals and work with Asthma UK to stop asthma attacks and cure asthma.

Nobel Prize winner, Alexander Fleming, was so highly impressed by Dr Frankland's work he commissioned him to contribute a new chapter on penicillin sensitivity for the 2nd edition of his penicillin 'bible'* for the medical profession.

Kay Boycott, Chief Executive at Asthma UK, said: “Everybody at Asthma UK is thrilled that our Vice President, Dr Bill Frankland has been recognised in the Queen's Birthday honours lists. His pioneering and groundbreaking work in allergy research and introducing the pollen count has helped many people living with asthma enormously. He is an inspiration to many former patients and others who have benefited from his work, and I am delighted that he has been honoured in this way."

In 1946 at St Mary's Hospital in Paddington, London, Dr Frankland began work as a dermatologist, spending two days a week in the allergy clinic. Fascinated by this little known area of medicine, he decided to devote his career to allergy research.

He retired from St Mary's Hospital at the age of 65, but continued to work at Guy's Hospital for a further 20 years.

It is only relatively recently that he made the decision to talk about his time as a Far East Prisoner of War and since then has been sought-after by TV and radio. Earlier this year he took part in a BBC R4 episode of *The Reunion* with Sue MacGregor and, following a guest appearance with Kirsty Young on *Desert Island Discs,* he joined her on TV during the recent commemorations to mark the 70th anniversary of VJ Day.

Ends

Notes to editors

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*Penicillin: its practical application, 2nd edition, A Fleming, pub. London 1950, Butterworth & Co.

Picture – Dr Bill Frankland celebrates his MBE with a glass of champagne.

Extra information on Dr Bill Frankland

He qualified in 1938 after studying medicine at The Queen's College, University of Oxford and St Mary's Hospital Medical School and joined the Army Medical Corps as a civil medical practitioner (CMP) on a salary of £1 a day when war broke out in 1939.

At an Army Hospital on Salisbury plain where, during his first job, he single-handedly managed a meningitis outbreak losing only a single patient out of 100 cases. Other epidemics followed, including one of mumps when 234 Australian troops stationed in the UK who had the rare complication of encephalitis. This Dr Frankland wrote as one of his first pieces of published work.

In 1942, Dr Frankland was given two days training in tropical medicine before being posted to Singapore, arriving seven days before the attack on Pearl Harbour. After the Fall of Singapore he spent the rest of the war as a medical officer treating his fellow prisoners of war in the Japanese forced labour camps and

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sharing the same horrific privations.

Dr Bill Frankland was one of the members of the Medical Advisory Committee of the Asthma Research Council which reformed at the end of 1950. In 1963 he was appointed as the Honorary Secretary.

In 1977, the Asthma Research Council set up a development committee to investigate setting up an organisation for people with asthma. Dr Frankland was on the development committee. In 1986, he was made a Trustee of the Asthma Research Council. In 1980, Dr Frankland was one of the members of the newly formed Executive Committee of the 'Asthma Society & Friends'.

About Asthma UK

- Asthma UK's mission is to stop asthma attacks and cure asthma. We do this by funding world leading research, campaigning for improved care and supporting people to reduce their risk of a potentially life threatening asthma attack.
- Asthma UK is solely funded by public donations
- The Asthma UK Helpline is open weekdays from 9am to 5pm on 0300 222 5800.
- For more information about asthma please visit www.asthma.org.uk

Background information on asthma

In the UK, 5.4 million people are currently receiving treatment for asthma: 1.1 million children (1 in 11) and 4.3 million adults (1 in 12).

The UK has one of the highest prevalence rates for asthma in Europe, according to the ERS Whitebook.

The UK has some of the highest asthma death rates in Western Europe according to the Death rates (all ages) for OECD nations and the World Health Organisation

Three people die every day because of asthma; based on mortality data from Office for National Statistics (ONS) for England & Wales, General Register Office for Scotland, and Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency (Northern Ireland). 1255 people died from asthma in 2013 – divided by 365, this works out as 3.4 people per day.

Tragically, the National Review of Asthma Deaths found that two thirds of asthma deaths are preventable with good, basic care.

8 out of 10 people with asthma do not receive care that meets the most basic clinical standards.

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