

## George & Meg

On Monday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2013, I was looking at the obituaries in the Telegraph online (definitely a sign of old age, I am told); when I spotted a name that was very familiar to me – George Patterson, widower of Doctor Meg Patterson, had died peacefully at the age of 92 in Auchlathan, Scotland. Which accounted, I thought absently, for why he had not responded to an email I had sent him around Christmastime. I read the obituary with interest, and was struck most forcefully with the sense of deep gratitude yet again to the GOD in heaven who had brought my winding wobbling path into collision with this extraordinary couple.

Let me explain – as I have recounted elsewhere in my story, Mick and I had emerged from his 5 year association with the Rolling Stones by the skin of our teeth, so to speak- we were alive still, certainly, but we had paid a heavy price in the terms of our health. That's moral, spiritual, and physical. We were both completely dependent on heroin by this time, also cocaine and prescribed drugs; though we were not so aware of the problems there. Heroin is a very demanding mistress in terms of sheer physical addiction – the symptoms of withdrawal are almost indescribable, but I'll try to give you an idea. Imagine the worst flu bug you ever had; the aching limbs, the alternating chills and profuse sweating, an excruciating skin sensitivity, and a feeling of utter weakness; inability to sleep though longing for the relief it would bring. Combine that with acute depression and utter vulnerability of soul and mind – just trying to remember what it was like brings back such horrible memories –and you may have a small idea of the agony that a junkie faces every time he runs out of smack. Trying to give heroin up is an exercise that many have found is doomed to failure. Again and again you will cave in to the cravings and take it again, just to escape the withdrawal pains. You are trapped! Mick and I were trapped! There seemed no way of escape.

Then someone suggested we go and see the Pattersons. I think it may have been Pete Townshend, but I'm sorry if it wasn't you, mate – we weren't in a very fit state at the time! Anyway, somebody said that these folk had had some success in helping Eric Clapton break free from his heroin habit, so, in desperation really, we made an appointment to see them at their home in Harley Street, which was also Dr Meg's consulting rooms.

Again, my memories are sadly vague in detail, but I do remember being utterly enthralled and deeply challenged by the whole family. Their lives seemed quite extraordinary! George had recently finished making a film about the Heroin trade in the so-called Golden Triangle area in Tibet, and the tribal chiefs still at war with each other, and with the Chinese who were occupying their country. He had been a missionary in the area, I found out, and was a mine of information about the situation out there. His wife Meg had been a surgeon in Hong Kong, meanwhile, and had observed a very different approach to pain relief in the use of acupuncture. This led her to develop the revolutionary treatment that had "cured" many drug addicts in China, and which they had brought to England, and used to great effect with Eric. Put very simply; Meg's little black box, with electrodes to place on the ears, and a set of dials to twiddle to adjust the degree of pain relief, was an electrical acupuncture device!! And it seemed to work, in giving physical relief from the withdrawal symptoms that made us all so fearful of getting off heroin. We were very interested in the idea that we could be helped with our horrible problem; but I remember even then

being more impressed with the fervent Christian faith that they both exhibited in their words, and more importantly the way they conducted their lives in utter obedience to what they thought was GOD's instruction for their everyday existence; than the treatment that was being offered. They were LOVE in action!

It was decided that Meg would come and stay with Mick and I at our little cottage in Sussex, away from the temptations of London I suppose, and commence our treatment. We were both given our own little black box, and instructed how to administer the electro-acupuncture to our own comfort levels. Away we went! I found the treatment helpful to some extent in relieving the physical symptoms of withdrawal, but I recall even more vividly the demeanour of the wee Scottish lady in our house; who cooked, and talked, and suggested walks in the fresh air to us; and was so unfailingly kind and optimistic and sympathetic to us both. Her relationship with the LORD JESUS was something I envied tremendously; this JESUS was a real living person to her, who she was in close contact with on a daily basis, it seemed! Not just on a Sunday morning kind of thing.

I can't remember how many days Dr Patterson stayed with us, but she had to go back to London eventually. She was instrumental at about that time in curing Keith Richard of his heroin habit also. It was a case of "see Dr. Meg or go to jail" for him! Mick and I had many ups and downs with our addictions, and through it all the black box was very helpful; ultimately, however, the problems of WHY one is addicted to anything has to be addressed – I believe the GOD-shaped hole has got to be filled!! I thank The LORD for the challenge and inspiration of these two amazing Christians I met along my path to personal salvation – I am looking forward to seeing them again when I get to Heaven myself!! GOD bless you both, George and Dr Meg.

P.S. If you would like to know more about this extraordinary couple, their lives and legacy live on. Take a look at [www.georgepatterson.net](http://www.georgepatterson.net) , where there are many fascinating details about them and their wonderful family; and also links to George's books. He was a prolific writer, journalistic, biographical, spiritual ... and some cracking adventure stories! How he ever got the time is a wonder to me! Please check him out, you will be amazed.