

THE POYNTER LECTURE 2016

Wednesday 12th October, 6:00pm

at the

**[Wellcome Collection Conference Centre,
183 Euston Road, London.](#)**

The Officers and Society Representatives will meet at 3:30 pm.

For all members the afternoon starts with a short AGM at 5:00 pm and all members are invited to attend. This is followed at 5:15 pm by a drinks reception courtesy of the Wellcome Trust.



The lecture will be by Sam Alberti, Keeper of Science and Technology, National Museums of Scotland, Edinburgh. Sam has a long standing interest in medical museums,

and especially paths travelled by the objects within them. He will focus in particular on what medical collections can tell us about the lives and experiences of those who were treated. He will argue that museums must find these patients.

For further details and to book go to bsh.m.org.uk/poynter-lecture/
(Just click on the link)

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Our Congress Venue 2017

Surgeons' Hall, home to the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh,



includes a modern conference facility, housed within a historic city-centre campus. The College celebrated its

Quincentenary in 2005 marking a continuous 500 years of involvement in surgical education, assessment and training.

The campus lies within the UNESCO World Heritage Site, which includes the medieval Old Town and the elegant Georgian New Town. Edinburgh offers a wide variety of visitor attractions, many of which are within walking distance of the Congress venue. The main Surgeons' Hall building, venue for our Congress receptions and dinner, is built in the Greek revival style which earned Edinburgh the sobriquet 'Athens of the North'. The conference presentations will be given in the Symposium Hall, recently upgraded to modern conference standards.

On the Friday afternoon we will visit Surgeons' Hall Museum, where a £4.2 million refurbishment in 2014 allowed this major historical collection to be presented with 21st century technology. (museum.rcsed.ac.uk/)

The venue includes a four star hotel, but many hotels with a range of prices lie within easy walking distance. Profits from the venue's conference activities are used in the Colleges core work in surgical education and training.

[Book for the Poynter Lecture: Wednesday 12th October 2016](#)

METASTASIS (by Spyros Retsas)

The Liddell and Scott dictionary defines metastasis, in the medical context, as the *transference of the seat of disease*¹. The word means removal or migration, dislocation, but also departing from life, and even (according to Aristotle) change of political constitution. There are at least nine entries for *metastasis* (μετάστασις) in the Hippocratic corpus but in a context unrelated to cancer, even though the disease is amply described in these texts².

Galen (129 A.D. – c. 200 A.D.) in his commentary to *Hippocrates' Aphorisms*, reiterates that *metastases of an ailment are named when its transference occurs from one part (of the body) to another*³. Although this definition would fit the concept of metastatic cancer it focuses on a statement by Hippocrates that epilepsy developing before puberty may resolve (in adulthood). In this context metastasis means also *lysis* or *resolution* of a condition such as epilepsy³.

Galen has a remarkable insight into the nosology of cancer² but it is uncertain whether he perceives metastatic cancer, as it is clinically understood today^{3,4}.

References

1. Liddell HG and Scott R. A Greek-English Lexicon. Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1968; 1117.
2. Retsas S. *Ed. Palaeo-oncology. The antiquity of cancer.* Farrand press. London, 1986; 41-53.
3. Galen *in* KUHN 17b, (1821-1833); 790 -791.
4. Galen *in* KUHN 18b, (1821-1833); 219.

The John Blair Trust

In 1992, the decision was taken that the next meeting of the BSHM would be in Scotland.

The President of the Scottish Society was Dr John Blair, a



recently retired consultant surgeon at Perth Royal Infirmary, and now a medical historian, teaching at St Andrews and Dundee Universities. The Scottish Society

was given the responsibility for organising the meeting. It was agreed that the meeting should be held in Glasgow and Strathclyde was the chosen location. The meeting was very successful.

Following the meeting, The BSHM committee decided that a Trust should be set up to give financial assistance to students of medicine and allied sciences wishing to undertake research into medical historical subjects. Financial support was received from several charities. Dr John Blair and Dr John Cule were senior trustees and the trustees met regularly, setting up a system to assess students for help.

If you are interested in presenting a paper/poster at the BSHM Congress 2017 in Edinburgh, or entering for a prize given by the History of Medicine Society of the Royal Society of Medicine or the Hunterian Society, and would like to apply for a grant to pursue your studies, please click on the link below for the application form:

bshm.org.uk/about-us/john-blair-trust/

BSHM News

History of Medicine Blog

The BSHM website (bshm.org.uk) now has a Blog page for member's contributions. If you have a short item relating to medical history that you would like to post, please send this to: webmaster@bshm.org.uk

Videos for medical students

Visit the noticeboard page for information on history of medicine videos which might be of interest to all and not just medical students: bshm.org.uk/notice-board/

Did you know?

The four founding societies of the BSHM in 1965 were the then History of Medicine Section of the Royal Society of Medicine, the Osler Club of London, the Faculty of History and Philosophy of Medicine and Pharmacy of the Worshipful Society of Apothecaries and the Scottish Society of the History of Medicine. The logos of these four societies form the president's badge.

[All members of affiliated societies are automatically BSHM members](#)