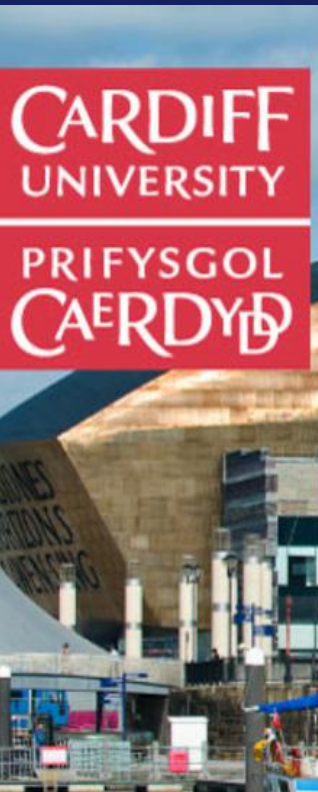




# BSHM

## Newsletter



### Featuring:

Highlights from  
Cardiff 2023

BSHM on the  
Frontline: The  
Student Elective

News from affiliated  
societies

Update on *THoMS*

Remembering  
Wilhelm Röntgen



A Tribute to  
John Blair  
(1928-2023)  
former BSHM  
President  
(1993-1995)



Welcoming the new BSHM Officers

# Letter from the President



I am honoured to have been elected president of the BSHM, following in the footsteps of predecessors who have contributed so much to the growth and development of the society over nearly 60 years, and will endeavour to uphold our wholehearted commitment to the history of medicine.

It is with great pleasure that I reflect on the excellent BSHM Congress in September held in the historic and welcoming city of Cardiff. I would like to thank the many people who helped make the meeting a success, beginning with past-president Mike Davidson and the organising committee, Professor Steve Rutherford of the School of Biosciences, and the events staff at Cardiff University. We are indebted to members of the society who reviewed abstract submissions, acted as session chairs, and judged the student prizes. The enthusiastic participation of keynote lecturers, oral and poster presenters, and audiences made it a memorable event.

My thanks are also due to conference delegates who diligently completed the feedback and evaluation forms which the officers have carefully scrutinised. Your views are critical to the planning of future events. We are gratified by the very positive response to the Congress overall, take on board those criticisms we received, and remain focused on ensuring that all participants benefit fully.

Our next event will be based on the Poynter Lecture in the autumn of 2024. We are also in the early stages of planning the next BSHM Congress for 2025 and will communicate further details when available via our website, newsletter, social media and email.

We are grateful to Kenneth Collins for acting as the BSHM's national delegate to the International Society for the History of Medicine for an extended period that included the uncertain times of the pandemic. Special thanks are due to Anjna Harrar for all her work as secretary over the last four years and, not least, for elevating the BSHM Newsletter to new heights in her role as editor.

Looking forward, Peter Carpenter will continue his excellent work as honorary treasurer, our new honorary secretary Lee Coppack has already contributed to the work of the society as blog editor and social media editor, and we warmly welcome Hilary Morris, a long-standing supporter of the BSHM, as vice-president and president elect. I greatly look forward to working with my fellow officers and editors over the next couple of years.

The BSHM is fortunate to have a large membership with varied expertise and deep experience. Your support is vital to the health of the society, and those who already contribute to our activities know how much your participation is appreciated. There are many ways that members can get involved with the BSHM by writing blogs, book reviews and newsletter articles or helping with our journal, website and events. Please get in touch if you have skills that you would like to share.

Season's Greetings.



**Edward Wawrzynczak**  
President BSHM (2023-2025)



## BSHM Congress 2023

The 30th BSHM Congress was held on 13-16 September 2023 at the Sir Martin Evans Building, Cardiff University, home to the School of Biosciences. Attended by more than 100 delegates, the conference included over 70 oral and poster presentations in parallel sessions spread over 2½ days.

The keynote lectures at the Congress were:

“Medical Care and Military Surgery during the British Civil Wars: The Civil War Petitions Project” by Professor Andrew Hopper & Dr Ismini Pells, University of Oxford.

“A Picture of Health: Medical Images and Objects in History” by Dr Anna Maerker, King’s College London.

“Medical Research on the Edges of Empire: British Colonial Medicine in the 19th Century” by Dr Elise Smith, University of Warwick.

The lectures and the Congress programme and conference abstract book can be accessed via the [BSHM website](#).

Presentations and posters were welcomed on the following themes:

1) Medicine in War  
and Conflict

2) Visual Arts and literature  
as historical resources

3) Medicine in the Age of  
European Colonialism





















# The John Blair Trust student prize awards at Congress

The John Blair Trust is a charity constituted for 'The promotion of the study of the history of medicine by undergraduate students of medicine and allied sciences' and was established in 1995 jointly by the British Society for the History of Medicine (BSHM) and the Scottish Society of the History of Medicine. The Perth surgeon John Blair (1928 – 2023) was past president of both societies and was a major driving force in creating the Trust.

The Trust's principal activity is to provide small grants (up to £150) to British medical and paramedical students to cover travel, research and other expenses in the pursuit of history of medicine projects. Another pleasant duty, however, is to award prizes to the best oral and best poster presentation by a student at the bi-annual BSHM Congress. This year I was assisted in this endeavour by fellow judges Christopher Gardner-Thorpe and Hilary Morris, who deserve huge thanks.

It's a cliché to stress how good is the quality of work presented and how difficult the task of judging but as in past Congresses, the overall standard of the student presentations at Congress 2023 was excellent and hearing, seeing and judging them was a joy.

We awarded the prize for best oral presentation to Nimisha Shaji, a medical student from Sheffield, for her presentation 'Indian medical education in the era of British colonialism and beyond.' Nimisha gave a fascinating and confident description of the conflict between traditional Indian medical practice and the western tradition imposed by colonialists, charting the process by which the western model became dominant but also uncovering areas of accommodation between the two traditions. Her conclusion suggested that the existing Indian medical education system might still be hidebound by its 19th century approach.



Nimisha Shaji, JBT Winner 2023



Umar Yousaf, JBT winner 2023

Best poster presentation was awarded to another Sheffield medic, Umar Yousaf, for his poster 'How wartime served as the classroom for radiology.' In an attractive, clear and well-illustrated poster Umar described how radiology was employed in front-line war medicine very soon after its discovery, despite the fragility, cumbersome nature and unreliability of early devices, and the advances in technique and equipment which followed as a result.

Although eligibility for travel and research grants remains restricted to medical and allied undergraduates from UK medical schools, we decided this year to widen the criteria for prize awards in order to accommodate the broader and multi-national nature of Congress attendees. Besides undergraduates, postgraduates are eligible provided they are presenting work which was substantially done as an undergraduate, within the past two years. Students from any country, and from any discipline, are eligible which enabled us to incorporate some fascinating presentations from humanities students across the globe.

The Trust is actively seeking and encouraging grant applications from students. For more information about the Trust, and application forms for student grants, [visit the webpage](#).

**Martin Edwards**

The John Blair Trust  
**JBT**



# John S. G. Blair OBE, TD, KStJ, FRCSEd (1928-2023)

John Blair (1928-2023), a former president of the BSHM, died peacefully on 12 June 2023. A former dux of Dundee High School, he went on to qualify in medicine from the University of St Andrews and maintained an association with both alma maters throughout his long life. His period of National Service as a medical officer in the RAMC was to have a lasting influence. He maintained military links through many years of service in the Territorial Army, commanding the St Andrews (later Tayforth) Officer Training Corps and then 225 Field Ambulance in Dundee. In 1971 he was awarded the OBE for his services to the TA.

After training posts in London, Cambridge and Dundee he was appointed consultant surgeon in Perth in 1965. On retirement in 1991 John developed his second career as a historian, becoming one of the most celebrated medically qualified military historians of his generation.



He produced a series of historical books. His *History of Medicine in the University of St Andrews* (1987) was complemented by *A History of Medicine in Dundee University* (2007). *Ten Tayside Doctors* (1990) was a personal account of colleagues with whom he had worked, while *The Conscript Doctors* (2001) was a compilation of memoirs by doctors about their National Service experience. His greatest work was *In arduis fidelis : centenary history of the Royal Army Medical Corps* (1998), which he was commissioned to write.

A keen golfer, he was a member of two historic clubs, the R&A and the Royal Perth Golfing Society, serving as captain of the latter and writing its history. He keenly followed the fortunes of St Johnstone, the local football club, and enjoyed outings to the local Perth races.

In addition to his presidency of the BSHM he was President of Scottish Society of the History of Medicine and World Vice President of the International Society for the History of Medicine. He was a Knight of St John and Hospitaller of the Scottish Priory of the Order of St John. In 1991 he was awarded the honorary degree of DLitt from St Andrews University.

His lasting legacy to the BSHM is the John Blair Trust, which supports undergraduate research in history of medicine. It was founded with the surplus generated by the successful meeting of the ISHM in Glasgow in 1994, which he was instrumental in organising.

**Iain MacIntyre**

**Scottish Society of the History of Medicine**

"These Newsletters get better and better"...."always good to hear how our BSHM is doing"...

"Thank you for the Newsletter, and happy the last Congress went well. Bristol is a most excellent city and such a good choice."

"I remember Sheffield and it is an excellent place to hold meetings."

"have an excellent meeting in Cardiff."

*John Blair (correspondences)*

John Blair at the Worshipful Society of Apothecaries, London, in 2018 (photography by Anjna Harrar)



# Introducing the Officers

We have a new management committee elected by members at the BSHM Congress in Cardiff in September.

Edward Wawrzynczak has taken over as President from Mike Davidson after serving for two years as Vice-President and before that as Treasurer. He also serves as BSHM journal editor for the society's journal *Topics in the History of Medicine*.

After a PhD in biochemistry at Cambridge University, and subsequent post-doctoral research in London, Edward headed the drug targeting laboratory at the Institute of Cancer Research and Royal Cancer Hospital. Subsequently, he worked closely for more than a decade with the biotechnology industry in various roles, including as director of several private and public companies involved in drug development.

Edward has a long-standing interest in the history of biomedicine and how scientific developments have influenced therapeutic practice over time. His most recent published work on the history of medicine is [The Lister Institute Serum Department: Origins and Early Years, 1894-1902](#), which appeared in *Pharmaceutical Historian* in December 2023.



**Edward Wawrzynczak**



**Dr Hilary Morris**

A principal objective of the society is to promote the study and teaching of the history of medicine and public engagement. We hope to encourage more students of medicine, healthcare and allied sciences, and early-years scholars in general, to participate in future BSHM events.

Our new Vice-President is Hilary Morris. Hilary is an academic medical historian based in both UK history departments and medical schools, most recently at the Brighton & Sussex Medical School where she was the Apothecaries Lecturer. She is a published author on a range of medical history subjects and current editor of the *Journal of Medical Biography*.

Her current areas of research include the development of preventive medicine in the 18th and 19th centuries in the British Army and Royal Navy; the cholera epidemic in 19th-century Mauritius; friendly societies and their relationship with the medical profession; and the rise of history of medicine as a discreet subject.

As a wish list in her role on the BSHM management committee, Hilary says: "I want to encourage wider participation in BSHM from history departments in universities and all other educators with an interest in understanding and developing the history of medicine in innovative, creative and inclusive ways."



Treasurer Peter Carpenter is a retired psychiatrist specialising in intellectual disability. He is active in the Royal College of Psychiatrists, being chair of their neurodevelopmental psychiatry special interest group and financial officer for the History of Psychiatry special interest group. His current research interests and publications are in the history of intellectual disability and of psychiatry particularly around Bristol.

Peter is keen to increase contacts between the BSHM and its members and increase collaboration especially through online media.



**Peter Carpenter**



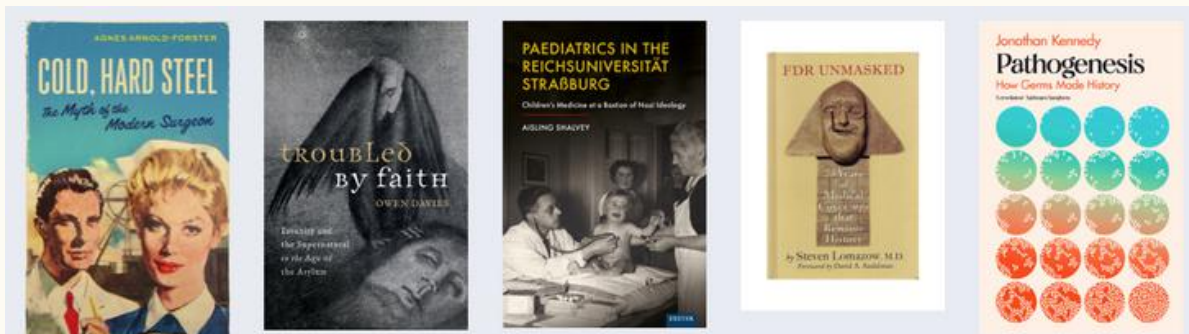
**Lee Coppack**

Lee Coppack has joined the management committee as Secretary of the BSHM. She is a journalist by background, having specialised in insurance and risk related subjects especially natural catastrophes. Lee did an MA in the history of medicine at Birkbeck, and she is facilitator of the history fellows of the Society of Apothecaries' Faculty of the History and Philosophy of Medicine.

She wants to put her communication skills to work for the BSHM to widen the constituency who take part in the activities of the BSHM and its affiliate members. Her medical history interests include non-conformists in 18th-century British medicine, concepts of risk in medicine and the evolution of medical journals from print to predatory.

## BSHM Book Reviews

The BSHM and Book Review Editor are grateful to all the book reviewers for their efforts. (Bryan Rhodes)





## More BSHM Notices

### Communicate more



Blogs are an opportunity to communicate your work, ideas and interests with an audience that is wider than professional journals. You can also use published blogs to reach more people through social media and put links in your list of publications.

These are some of the good reasons why BSHM encourages members to publish blogs on our website. We're not entirely selfless. Good blogs also help BSHM promote itself and generate interest in the history of medicine.

BSHM blog editor, Lee Coppack, is a professional journalist, and she likes working with contributors even if they're not experienced blog writers. She can also develop blogs from longer material, such as conference presentations, as you'll see from the blog about the Welsh apothecary Robert Drane on the BSHM site. The author always gets final approval.



Contact [Lee](#) to suggest a topic or discuss ideas.  
See the [blog pages](#) for recent examples.

Lee Coppack  
[blogeditor@bshm.org.uk](mailto:blogeditor@bshm.org.uk)

## BSHM on the frontline: The Student Elective

### Stephanie Hampson

5th Year Medical Student at the University of Aberdeen

For my medical elective, I'm investigating the postoperative outcomes of 200 hypertrophic cardiomyopathy (HCM) patients treated with septal myectomy by one cardiothoracic surgeon, Mr Alex Shipolini, at St Bartholomew's Hospital.

HCM is the most common heritable cardiac disease (affecting between 1 in 200 and 1 in 500 of the general population) and is the leading cause of sudden cardiac death (SCD) in the young. HCM is inherited in an autosomal dominant fashion with variable penetrance and is caused by mutations in sarcomeric proteins.

HCM is characterised by left ventricular hypertrophy in the absence of alternative causes such as hypertension or aortic valve stenosis. The degree and localisation of hypertrophy is highly variable, which results in a heterogeneous clinical presentation; from asymptomatic to SCD.

There are two types of HCM: (1) the less common non-obstructive type; and (2) the more common obstructive type (HOCM), which accounts for 75% of cases. In HOCM there is obstruction of the left ventricular outflow tract due to systolic anterior motion of the anterior mitral valve leaflet and interventricular septum thickening. The latter confers a worse prognosis.





St Bartholemew's Hospital

Currently, there is no curative treatment for HCM. Pharmacological agents that reduce myocardial energy demand such as beta-blockers and non-dihydropyridine calcium channel blockers are typically used first-line in symptomatic HOCM patients. If symptoms persist then septal myectomy is the gold-standard intervention for obstruction reduction.

The above description is the preferred nomenclature. However, during my literature review, I encountered several different names: to date >80 different names, terms and acronyms have been used to describe this condition. This vast array of terminology used by clinicians to characterise this condition showcases its heterogeneous nature and prompted me to investigate the history of HCM.

HCM was first described by Alfred Vulpian (1826-1887) in 1868 as “idiopathic hypertrophic subaortic stenosis” after its anatomical anomaly. This was followed by similar descriptions the following year by Henry Liouville (1837-1887) and Henri Hallopeau (1842-1919) in the *Medical Gazette of Paris*.

However, it took almost another century before HOCM cases were reported by Russell C. Brock (1903-1980). A year later in 1958, Donald Teare (1911-1979), a pathologist at St. George's Hospital in London, reported “asymmetrical septal hypertrophy or muscular hamartoma of the heart” seen on the autopsy of eight patients who presented with sudden death “where cardiac incapacity is ... rare”.

This was followed by a case series published in 1959 by Andrew Glenn Morrow, (1922-1982) and Eugene Braunwald about three patients with a condition mimicking aortic stenosis, which they termed “functional aortic stenosis”.

In 1961 Edwin C. Brockenbrough et al. described how to differentiate HCM from aortic stenosis during cardiac catheterisation by premature ventricular contractions (PVC). Post-PVC the pulse pressure increases in aortic stenosis, whereas it decreases in HCM giving a distinct “spike and dome” waveform pattern. This became known as the Brockenbrough-Braunwald-Morrow sign.

In 1964 Morrow and Braunwald published a case series of 64 patients with HCM, which laid the basis for our understanding of HCM today. The same year Morrow performed the first surgical myectomy (Morrow procedure).

Our definition and understanding of HCM has evolved over time. A great deal still remains to be discovered about HCM and it will be interesting to see how our perception of this condition changes in the future.



**Stephanie Hampson**

5th Year Medical Student at the  
University of Aberdeen  
BSHM Newsletter Editor



# Bards, Books and Bicentenaries ... a missive from up North

As I reflect upon the last 12 months, it has certainly been a year of highs and lows. As my house is situated quite close to the main railway line to the west of Scotland at the Lancashire / Cumbria boundary, at least I don't have to worry now about HS2 disturbing my existence any time soon ! From a history perspective there have been plenty of highlights. I took over from Bill Dibb as BSHM Book Review Editor in April and, with a certain amount of help from my fellow Bradfordian, Edward, this new role has been relatively straightforward. Fortunately the world of publishing is in a healthy state and publishers continue to publish 'history of medicine' themed books. Of course, there are now many different ways to enjoy a new book, including audio books ( my wife's favourite method ) and various digital online methods. I was interested to read about the British Library's efforts to archive some of the new digital publications in their archives as well as some of the older publications. The work of Geoffrey Chaucer, including 'The Canterbury Tales', the first major publication by William Caxton, has recently been added and is free to view.



Gareth Williams unveiling the heritage plaque in Lancaster  
(photo courtesy Dr. Robin Jackson )



The original minute book of the Lancaster Medical Book Club,  
one of the first items purchased by the Book Club in  
November 1823

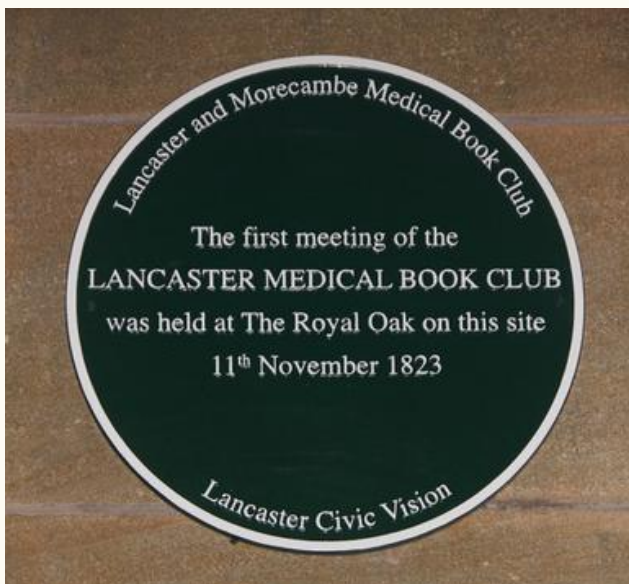
On the subject of digital publications, in July I got to record my first medical history podcast as part of Lancaster City Museum's '100 years, 100 Objects' project celebrating their centenary with one hundred podcasts about items in their collection. My podcast was published in October: No. 83 and features a very rare double-ended set of Roman surgical forceps discovered in an archaeological dig near Lancaster Castle in the 1920s. Found in isolation, if they had been the common single-ended forceps then it would not have been possible to state that they were intended for surgical purposes. Only three examples of this variety of double-ended design have been found worldwide so I am convinced that they represent the earliest evidence of surgical activity in Lancaster, and a great example of Roman surgical instrument design from over 1600 years ago. The podcast can be accessed on Spotify, Podbean and the Lancaster City Museum website.

As usual, the BSHM conference ( in Cardiff ) was great fun and very enlightening. At the ORC meeting I was able to introduce a couple of small changes to the guidelines for book reviewers. I chaired one of the 'miscellaneous' sessions and also presented my paper ( with co-author Gill Fitzgerald ) on 'Lancaster Medical Book Club and the Dissection of Lancashire Murderers', describing what was, almost certainly, a unique episode in British history where a provincial medical book club became involved with the judicial dissection of criminals.



The Lancaster Medical Book Club ( LMBC ), recently renamed the Lancaster and Morecambe Medical Book Club, celebrated its bicentenary earlier this month and is the oldest surviving provincial 'Medical Book Club' and the second oldest provincial medical literature society after the Bristol Medical Reading Society, formed in 1807. I helped to organise the events celebrating the bicentenary on November 11th. These included the unveiling of a blue heritage plaque in Market Square, Lancaster by our special guest, Prof. Gareth Williams . The plaque marks the location of the very first meeting of the LMBC, in the Royal Oak Inn ( now the site of the Lancaster branch of TK Maxx ) in 1823. I suspect that the Royal Oak was chosen because it had a reputation for offering high quality food, an early gastro-pub.

The unveiling was followed by a lecture and display in the Storey gallery, preceded by a celebratory toast. Edward Jenner died in 1823 so it was appropriate that Gareth Williams gave the lecture, featuring the life and career of Edward Jenner, father of vaccination, and our display featured items relating to the early LMBC members, smallpox vaccination and testing, and some old books from the LMBC archive. I was delighted to discover that one of my favourite books, Gareth's *'Angel of Death: the Story of Smallpox'* will receive a second edition next year.



Courtesy of Dr. Robin Jackson, LMMBC Archivist'

The new Shakespeare North Playhouse, opened in 2022, is currently exhibiting a rare and very valuable copy of the 'first folio' of Shakespeare's work which was published seven years after the great bard's death in November 1623. Recent research has supported the theory that Shakespeare's plays can be best understood if they are performed with regional accents. A play called 'A Yorkshire Tragedy', first published in 1608 and attributed to a 'Wylliam Shakespere', didn't quite make it into the first folio but is perhaps due further consideration. My favourite living poet, the so-called 'Bard of Barnsley', Ian McMillan, is currently garnering rave reviews for his new Yorkshire version of 'The Barber of Seville', which debuted in Bradford this week. I'm hoping that Ian will follow this up with a Yorkshire version of Shakespeare's Julius Caesar next; Ey up Brute !



**Bryan Rhodes**  
Retired orthopaedic surgeon  
BSHM Book Reviews Editor

# Topics in the History of Medicine (THoM)

The society will soon be publishing the third edition of its peer reviewed, open access, online only journal Topics in the History of Medicine (THoM) on the BSHM website. Volume 3 of THoM will comprise a series of papers entirely focused on the History of Military Medicine. Please watch out for the announcement on the [website home page](#):

In our last newsletter, we indicated that the journal would invite manuscript submissions for Volume 4 based on presentations made by delegates at the BSHM Congress in Cardiff which numbered over seventy and covered a wide variety of topics in the history of medicine. Professor Sean Hughes has kindly agreed to act as the Guest Editor for this volume of the journal. Since the meeting, the editors have already received several manuscript submissions. We therefore ask prospective authors to contact us by 31 January 2024 if they intend to submit a manuscript before the deadline of 31 March 2024 as we will be unable to consider further submissions without prior notice.

Authors should acquaint themselves with the journal's editorial and publication policies and will need to follow the Guidance for Authors and directions for Manuscript Preparation which can all be found on the [website](#).

Please contact the [Editorial Team](#) with any questions or suggestions.



Edward Wawrzynczak

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## Topics in the History of Medicine – Journal Home

<https://bshm.org.uk/thom>

ISSN 2753-9695



The British Society for the History of Medicine was established in 1965 by four original societies - the Section for the History of Medicine at the Royal Society of Medicine, London, the Osler Club of London, the then Faculty of the History of Medicine and Pharmacy of the Society of Apothecaries of London and the Scottish Society of the History of Medicine.





# History of Medicine Society (Royal Society of Medicine)



The History of Medicine Society at the Royal Society of Medicine were delighted to welcome Stuart Jamieson, professor of cardiothoracic surgery at the University of California, San Diego, USA. We heard his wonderful story from his childhood pets that included a zebra, ostrich and a giraffe, to his eventual life in the United States as a pioneering heart and lung surgeon.

A great social event, there were interesting conversations over coffee and dinner.



## History of Medicine Society at Buckfast

Staying at the Northgate hotel in the peaceful surrounds of Buckfast Abbey 23 delegates attended a three day programme. Arriving early one had the chance to roam the tranquil grounds, home to the Benedictine Monks.

President of the History Society Christopher Gardner-Thorpe commenced proceedings in the conference centre with an introduction to his home county of Devon. His talk was interspersed with related poems and photographs encompassed issues from fog on Dartmoor, manganese and tin mines and Exeter Hospital. Dinner gave us a chance to meet fellow delegates, many not having met up before at the RSM.



**Christopher Gardner-Thorpe**

Dr Anjna Harrar, in her "Tale of two Physicians", shared her extensive research linking her family from Bulandshahr near Sikandrabad in Uttar Pradesh, India, with that of Dr Christopher Gardner-Thorpe. His great, great, great grandfather being Henry Stiles Ford, a trainee with the East India Company Army had been involved in the 3rd Anglo-Maratha War. He fell from his horse and died in the similarly named town of Secunderabad.



**Anjna Harrar**

## “Possi & Bossi – are gynaecologists particularly at risk of assassination?”

Professor Sean Hughes's intriguingly titled talk written with Mike Collins “Are gynaecologists particularly at risk of assassination?” discussed the French gynaecologist and intellectual Samuel Pozzi (famously painted by John Sargent Singer in a crimson velvet dressing gown displaying his elegant long fingers and sensual pose). A great socialite, who had many affairs including with the famous actress Sarah Bernhardt on whom he performed an operation to remove an ovarian cyst. On 13 June 1918 Pozzi was murdered by a complaining patient, in his consulting rooms in Paris.

1 February 1919 the Italian gynaecologist Professor Luigi Maria Bossi was murdered in his consulting rooms in Milan by the jealous husband of a patient who then went on to shoot his wife and himself. Bossi had operated on Constance Wilde the wife of Oscar Wilde. Unfortunately, Constance died five days after the operation. Sean explored the risks of being a professor of gynaecology with an international reputation treating world-famous women and asked the question whether the two first professors of gynaecology in France and Italy ending up murdered within a year of each other was more than a coincidence.



**Professor Sean Hughes**

## More memories of the trip

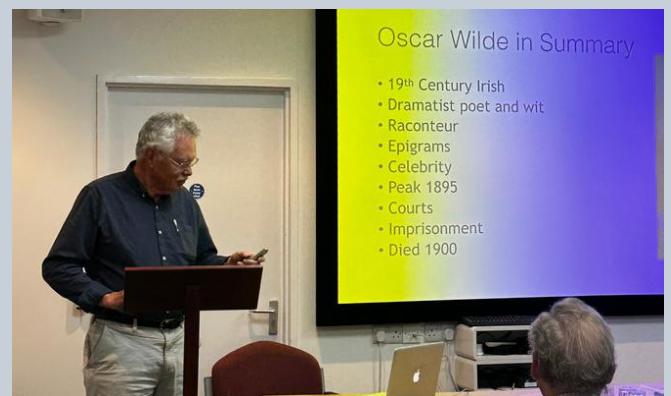


“The legend of the Lady of the Lake” a historical connection between the practice of medicine in ancient Egypt and medieval Wales

**Professor Rosalie David**



“Detective cameras” by **Dr Richard Lansdown**



“Oscar Wilde” by **Mike Collins**





# History of Medicine Society (Royal Society of Medicine)



The History of Medicine Society welcomed Dr Hilary Morris as its new President in October 2023. The first lectures in this year's programme took as their theme the development of anatomical studies. The evening's proceedings were opened by Professor Vivien Nutton who discussed his most recent study which has involved revisiting the texts of Andreas Vesalius, with the aim of illustrating that this highly influential body of work exerted a significantly earlier influence across Europe than is traditionally presented in subsequent history of medicine publications.

The second session was led by Ms Cat Irving, the Human Remains Conservator at Surgeons' Hall, where she is responsible for the anatomical and pathological museum collections in addition to being Consultant Human Remains Conservator for the preparations of William Hunter at the Hunterian Museum of the University of Glasgow.

Cat discussed how anatomical preparations have changed across the years and ways in which this has historically informed medical understanding, referencing the unique and fascinating items under her care.



Images left to right: Dr Hilary Morris, Cat Irving, Professor Vivien Nutton

## The Sarah Hughes Trust Lecture

The 2023 Sarah Hughes Trust Prize presentation came at the end of the third annual Sarah Hughes Lecture, which this year was delivered by Professor Nicholas Roe, Wardlaw Professor of English Literature, University of St Andrews. It was based on John Keats' influence on both beauty and truth as applied to medicine and the humanities, particularly through the concept of Vitality. The lecture brought together beautifully the depth of Sarah's reading and writings and related both John Keats and Sarah's ideal of Vitality in prose and poetry to the medical concepts of Vitality practised in the early 19th century by surgeons such as John Abernethy. Professor Roe concluded with quotations from the Keats poem the Eve of St Agnes which expressed the idea of Vitality in poetry. This was a truly memorable lecture which was thoroughly enjoyed by all the delegates.



**28 November 1972  
– 5 April 2021**

Helen Puttick, a specialist reporter for *The Times in Scotland*, has won the 2023 Sarah Hughes Trust Prize for journalism that exposes misleading health information. Her successful submission was published in the Scottish edition of *The Times*, across three articles. The first, in September 2022, ran under the headline 'Government information on NHS waiting times is grossly misleading' and challenged the Scottish government's claims on the NHS Inform website that people waited a median of 26 weeks for orthopaedic care.



Images left to right: Professor Nicholas Roe, Helen Puttick, Dr Hilary Morris

# THE OSLER CLUB OF LONDON

Founded 1928



Daniel Sokol, barrister and medical ethicist, has become President of the Osler Club of London. His first three events were a huge success with three very brilliant speakers. The first involved a former Norah Schuster Prize winner (2018), Mr Alexander Baldwin, Research Fellow in Burns and Plastic Surgery at Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust who delivered a very topical lecture entitled 'The history of industrial action in the NHS'. The second lecture was on 'The Hippocratic Oath', delivered by Professor Edith Hall, Department of Classics and Ancient History at Durham University. The third was an eye opening account relating to medical negligence, presented by James Badenoch KC.

Daniel's Presidency has come with an exponential rise in membership applications.



Left: Daniel Sokol with Professor Edith Hall. Right: Alexander Baldwin



James Badenoch KC

## American Osler Society in London 2023

The Annual Meeting of the American Osler Society was held in London, May 21-24, 2023.

"My major goals as the President of the American Osler Society are to increase the engagement of medical students and residents in the medical humanities and secondly to increase the engagement with other organizations interested in the medical humanities.."

Rolando Del Maestro  
President of the AOS (inaugurated May 2023)



Above: Rolando Del Maestro with participating American medical students

Below: More AOS students at the Royal College of Physicians



Dr Shawna Nesbitt delivered the AOS John P. McGovern Award Lecture 2023. Dr Nesbitt presented her work "The Role of Physicians in Creating Health Equity". Dr Nesbitt is a national advocate for inclusiveness. After receiving the John P. Govern Gold Medal, Dr Nesbitt responded by saying how honoured she felt.





# Remembering Wilhelm Röntgen on the centenary of his death

23 February 2023 marked the centenary of the death of Wilhelm Conrad Röntgen, the recipient of the first Nobel Prize in physics in 1901. Today he is best remembered as the discoverer of X-rays, a discovery which revolutionised the practice of medicine in the 20th century and beyond. His position in the pantheon of medical history pioneers rests assured.

Röntgen was born in Lennep, Germany, on 27 March 1845. Röntgen was not a brilliant student in his early days. He started studying engineering in Zurich and switched to physics only after he met his mentor Professor Kundt, whom he eventually followed to Strasbourg.

In 1869, he obtained a PhD from Zurich University for his thesis 'A study on Gases.' He was appointed a professor of physics in Wurzburg in 1888. On 8 November 1895 the 50 year old professor made his famous discovery of X-rays on a Friday afternoon which was to change his life forever. He was a meticulous experimenter and initially did not believe his findings so he repeated his experiments.

News of Röntgen's discovery spread far and wide and was worthy of newspaper articles, and he received congratulations from many of the finest physicists of his generation including Lord Kelvin from Glasgow, the recently outgoing President of the Royal Society of London.

Although today Röntgen is best remembered for discovering X-rays, we must not forget that the brilliant scientist made major discoveries in the fields of crystallography, material science and structural analysis, and paved the way for subsequent scientists to continue researches in a wide range of the natural sciences.

Röntgen moved from Wurzburg to Munich in 1901 and remained a professor of physics there until his retirement. He married Anna Bertha whose hand X-Ray he took immortalised her in the annals of history. They had no children of their own. Today, 8 November is celebrated worldwide as the International day of radiology.

In Wurzburg, Röntgen's laboratory has been preserved for visitors to see in the Röntgen Memorial Museum. The house where he was born in Lennep can also be visited and is walking distance from the Röntgen Museum the only museum in the world dedicated to this remarkable scientist.



Dr Arpan K Banerjee MBBS(LOND) FRCP FRCR FBIR  
Chair International Society for the History of Radiology (ISHRAD)  
Past Chair and current Trustee British Society for the History of Radiology (BSHR)

**Declaration of Interest**  
Dr Banerjee helped with the translation of the book on Röntgen by Busch from German to English.

**References**  
Busch 2021 Wilhelm Conrad Röntgen A Shining Light for Science  
Banerjee A K Thomas A M K 2003 The History of Radiology

# The Hunterian Society

The Hunterian Society is proud to announce the recent achievements of their past President (2012–2013) Professor Prokar Dasgupta.

## Padma Shri Award 2022

The Padma Shri Award (26 January), instituted in the year 1954, has been announced every year on the occasion of India's Republic Day except for brief interruption(s) during the years 1978 and 1979 and 1993 to 1997. All nominations received for Padma Awards are placed before the Padma Awards Committee, which is constituted by the Prime Minister of India. The recommendations of the committee are submitted to the Prime Minister and the President of India for approval.[1][2] Professor Dasgupta responded to the news:

"It is a great privilege to receive the Padma Shri award for services to medicine. I would like to extend my gratitude to my colleagues across KHP who help facilitate all the fantastic surgical science collaborations that benefit patients' lives in London and beyond." [3]

## OBE 2023

Professor Dasgupta received an OBE in 2023 in the historic post coronation honours list by King Charles III for services to Surgery and Science.

## John Wickham lifetime achievement award in robotic surgery 2023.

Named for John Wickham (1927-2017), pioneer of robotic surgery, this is an annual award honouring surgeons who have made a significant contribution to robotic surgery. The prize consists of a medal featuring an engraving of John Wickham's likeness. Professor Dasgupta commented:

*"John Wickham was my hero. I am sure this sentiment echoes with many other robotic surgeons."* [4]

Professor Stephen Challacombe, Dr Anjna Harrar



## Professor Prokar Dasgupta

OBE, MSc, MD, DLS, FRCS (Urol), FEBU, FLS, FKC

King's Health Partners Foundation Professor of Surgery  
Chair in Robotic Surgery and Urological Innovation  
Chairman King's-Vattikuti Institute of Robotic Surgery  
Faculty of Life Sciences and Medicine, King's College London (KCL)  
Hon. Consultant Urologist, Guy's and St. Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust, London  
10th Editor in Chief, British Journal of Urology International (BJUI)  
Past President Hunterian Society, BSHM Affiliate member

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4. "Prof Prokar Dasgupta OBE, Academic Surgery Professor of Surgery, was awarded the John Wickham Lifetime Achievement Award at a special event in Florence". [www.kingshealthpartners.org](http://www.kingshealthpartners.org). Retrieved 2023-12-03.

## The Hunterian Society Prize

The [Hunterian Society Prize](#) is awarded annually for the best essay of up to 2000 words that connects contemporary medical, dental, or veterinary practice and knowledge to 18th and 19th century medicine/comparative anatomy/evolutionary biology in Britain, with particular relevance to the work and legacy of John Hunter.

The successful applicant will receive £750 and free Fellowship of the Hunterian Society for five years. All shortlisted applicants will be awarded free Fellowship of the Hunterian Society for one year.

Fully registered, non-Consultant grade doctors, dentists, veterinary surgeons, and medical and veterinary students are eligible.

Shortlisted applicants are expected to make a power point presentation of 15 minutes, followed by a 5 minute period of questions, to a meeting of the Society.

A shortlist of successful entrants will be announced in early February 2024 and shortlisted authors will be invited to present at the Society meeting on 15 April 2024: the winner and runners up will be selected at the meeting.

Deadline 31 December 2023





### Young Apothecaries' Christmas Dinner

On 7th December 2023, the youngest members of the Apothecaries' Hall gathered with their guests for the first annual Christmas dinner. After being announced by the Beadle to the Master, we headed upstairs to the Court Room for drinks and an opportunity to meet other young medics, Apothecaries and indeed members of other liveries. We were then led very ceremoniously into the Grand Hall and enjoyed a splendid dinner. After the closing toasts and ceremonies, the Master gave a brief speech to introduce all of the newcomers to the traditions of the Apothecaries and then Dr Fraser Peck closed the dinner with a thank you speech. To round off the evening we went downstairs to the bar for drinks and more socialising. All in all the evening, it was the perfect way to celebrate the season and begin a new tradition for the Young Apothecaries.



*Lodovico and Hareya*

### Thank you to Maria Ferran

After almost ten years at the Worshipful Society of the Apothecaries, Maria Ferran will be moving on to new adventures. Aside from her work as both Faculty Manager and Webmaster for the Faculty of the History and Philosophy of Medicine and Pharmacy, Maria is the Chair of the London Museums of Health and Medicine but also enjoys acting. We wish her all the best in her exciting new future and she will be dearly missed at the Hall.

*Hareya Gebreyohanes, Apprentice at the Worshpiful Society of the Apothecaries*



*Maria Ferran*

### Upcoming events at the Hall:

10 April 2024: "The role of London Medical Students in the relief of Bergen-Belsen in 1945", by Professor Stephen Challacombe

15 April 2024: "Taking London's Pulse (or what I've learned from medical officers of health reports)", by Ross MacFarlane

On behalf of the medical student editors of the BSHM Newsletter, we wish you a Merry Christmas! It has been a busy and fun year for all of us. Lodovico graduated from his intercalated BSc in Medical Physics and Bioengineering and, after a summer of travelling around Europe, has plunged into his first clinical year at UCL—he has been enjoying his rotations at the Whittington Hospital but still finds time for tennis. Up in Aberdeen, Stephanie has passed her final exams and is preparing for life as a junior doctor. Amidst practicing rural medicine in the Orkney Islands, Stephanie explored beaches, sampled local whiskey and immersed herself in the wildlife and rich history of Orkney. Somewhat further afield, Hareya has started a gap year in Atlanta, Georgia, where she is undertaking shadowing in the Psychiatry department at Emory University Hospital before returning to UCL to continue her medical degree next September—in her free time she has been enjoying the nature of the southern United States by going camping in the mountains.



## BSHM Officers



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## Medical Student Editors at the BSHM



Hareya Gebreyohanes

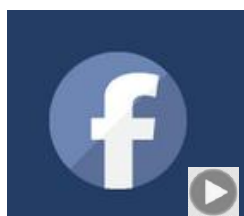


Stephanie Hampson  
Merry Christmas and a  
Happy New year



Lodovico di Giura del  
Balzo di Presenzano

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*To contribute, please contact the Secretary*