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Issue 30 – Summer 2024

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Dear Colleagues

We are pleased to announce the programme for the 2024 BSHM Webinar and Poynter Lecture which will take place between 5pm and 8pm on Monday 28 October.

This online meeting will start with presentations by three expert contributors who are all accomplished writers. They will explore diverse topics that offer insights into the practice of medicine, the challenges of investigating recent events, and how we view the history of medicine. The meeting will

conclude with the 2024 Poynter Lecture given by Professor Jacalyn Duffin, as described in our April newsletter.

We warmly encourage all members in the UK and abroad to join us. At the same time, please feel free to share information about the meeting with family, colleagues and students. There is no fee to register for this event, and anyone who is interested in the history of medicine is welcome to register.

The details of the webinar programme follow on pages 4 and 5 of this newsletter, and instructions for registration will be available on the BSHM website in September.

The BSHM website continues to represent a major means of communication for the society. Today, it's a portal for contacting us and applying for membership, for announcing meetings and registering for events. It contains information about the society, our newsletters, blogs and book reviews, and our online journal *Topics in the History of Medicine*. As the activities of the BSHM have developed, so too have opportunities to expand the use of the website.

The digital world never stands still as anyone who has experienced the consequences of frustrating software updates can testify. While we were unaffected by the major CrowdStrike IT outage, there will still be occasions when the BSHM website, like your webmaster, will seem a bit slow and cranky! Overall, however, the society continues to manage the website successfully using a low-cost model that relies on the time and skill of volunteers.

Looking to the future, the officers are reviewing ways we can develop the website. To do this, we really need to understand how you – both BSHM members and those of you with a general interest in the society – use our site, what you think about it, and if you have suggestions for improvement. To this end, we have invited everyone who is on our newsletter mailing list to take part in a short online survey.

We will be grateful if you could take just a few minutes to complete the short survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/7TZYTW5>. Thank you.

With all good wishes for the rest of the summer.

president@bshm.org.uk

BSHM AGM

The Annual General Meeting of the BSHM will take place on Zoom on Thursday 19 September 2024 at 18.00. Members will be able to register to attend the meeting via the BSHM website: <https://bshm.org.uk/>

2025 BSHM Congress

The 31st BSHM Congress will take place at the University of Leeds from Wednesday 10 to Saturday 13 September 2025.

Information about the preliminary programme, conference registration and abstract submission will be published on the BSHM website:

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

2024 BSHM Webinar and Poynter Lecture

The 2024 BSHM Webinar will begin at 5pm on Monday 28 October 2024 with contributions from three invited speakers.

Inside the Medical World of Stalin's Gulag



Dan Healey is an expert on the social and cultural history of modern Russia and the Soviet Union and professor emeritus of modern Russian history at the University of Oxford. He is the author of *Homosexual Desire in Revolutionary Russia*, *Bolshevik Sexual Forensics*, and *Russian Homophobia from Stalin to Sochi*. Dan's most recent book is *The Gulag Doctors: Life, Death, and Medicine in Stalin's Labour Camps* which has been nominated for the Pushkin House Book Prize 2024.

Nostalgia and the National Health Service

Dr Agnes Arnold-Forster is a writer and historian of medicine and the emotions and a Chancellor's Fellow at the University of Edinburgh. She received her PhD from King's College London and has written about the history of cancer, surgery, reproductive health, vaccines, pandemics, the NHS and nostalgia. Agnes has published three books: *The Cancer Problem: Malignancy in Nineteenth-Century Britain*, *Cold, Hard Steel: The Myth of the Modern Surgeon* and *Nostalgia: A History of a Dangerous Emotion*.



Investigating the Infected Blood Scandal



Cara McGoogan is the award-winning author of *The Poison Line: Life and Death in the Infected Blood Scandal* and *Bed of Lies*, a documentary podcast series in which she investigates major British scandals. She is the Telegraph's first narrative audio journalist and her work has appeared in the Guardian, Washington Post, Prospect, New Statesman and on BBC Radio 4. Cara's debut book *The Poison Line* was shortlisted for the J. Anthony Lukas Prize.

The 2024 Poynter Lecture will follow at 7pm.

Infiltrating the Curriculum: A Historian's Tales from the Medical Trench

Professor Emerita Jacalyn Duffin MD PhD, haematologist and historian, held the Hannah Chair of the History of Medicine at Queen's University, Ontario from 1988 to 2017, and is former President of the American Association for the History of Medicine and the Canadian Society for the History of Medicine.

Professor Duffin's research focuses on disease, technology, religion, and health policy. She is the author of 11 books and more than 100 peer-reviewed articles. Her acclaimed *History of Medicine: A Scandalously Short Introduction* is now in its third edition and her latest book *COVID-19: A History* was published in 2022. She has joined a team of UK-based palaeopathologists to contribute to the fourth edition of *The Archaeology of Disease*.



Instructions for webinar registration will be published on the BSHM website: <https://bshm.org.uk/>

Pain Progress and Promise – New Exhibition

‘Pain, Progress and Promise: The Emotional Journey of Medical Treatment’, the new exhibition at the Anaesthesia Heritage Centre, delves into the historical and contemporary landscape of medical care, exploring the emotional experiences of patients and practitioners alike.



From the evolution of pain management techniques to the shifting dynamics of patient-doctor relationships, this exhibition navigates the complexities of healthcare. Through artifacts ranging from ancient remedies to modern anaesthetic equipment, visitors are invited to contemplate the intersection of science, empathy and human resilience in the realm of medical treatment.

The exhibition is open until April 2025. Free admission, and no booking required.

Opening hours: Monday to Friday (except bank holidays), 10.00-16.00

Association of Anaesthetists, 21 Portland Place, London W1B 1PY.

<https://anaesthetists.org/Home/Heritage-centre>

What is a Historian in Residence?

In 2018, my predecessor, the old-age psychiatrist Claire Hilton, successfully lobbied for the creation of a new position at the Royal College of Psychiatrists, the Historian in Residence (HiR), writes Gordon Bates. I took over from Claire at the start of this year and I am still getting to grips with the job. Broadly speaking, the aim is to keep the college executive aware of the past because problems and potential solutions frequently reoccur over time.



Gordon Bates

For example, Claire has beautifully demonstrated that the problem of ‘out of area’ treatment of psychiatric patients is not new, but dates back at least 100 years. The disadvantages to rehabilitation and family functioning of sending mental health patients many miles from their home were recognised and described even then.

In conversation about the HiR day-to-day role, the most frequent question I get is whether I now have to live at the college. I don’t. The responsibilities are quite varied, ranging from responding to internal and external queries about the history of mental health and its treatment to providing tips on accessing archives. I do not work in isolation but rely upon my colleagues on the committee of our college’s history of psychiatry special interest group to help me with the gaps in my knowledge.

I am a relatively recent convert to historical research, but I have been making up for lost time. I completed a PhD in 2021, based on my research of British dynamic psychiatry and its complex relationship with hypnotism. I discovered a hidden story of arcane Victorian magical societies, spiritualism and an elite gentleman’s club which investigated haunted houses. These tawdry associations were quickly forgotten or suppressed by both the disciplines of psychiatry and psychology, eager to find a more scientific back story.

Anybody who finds these odd connections fascinating can learn more in my book *The Uncanny Rise of Medical Hypnotism 1888-1914: Between Imagination and Suggestion*, published by Palgrave Macmillan. See: <https://bshm.org.uk/book-reviews/recent/>.

I am unaware of similar posts at other colleges but would be delighted to be in touch with fellow HiRs. Historian@rcpsych.ac.uk

New Diploma in the History of Medicine Course to Begin

The next course for the Diploma in the History of Medicine from the Faculty of the History and Philosophy of Medicine and Pharmacy at the Worshipful Society of Apothecaries will begin in October. Applications are now open.

The DHMSA course will cover the history from medicine from 1500 BC to the present day and range geographically from ancient Egypt, China and the Islamic world to the Apothecaries Hall itself in London. The aim, according to course director Anna Simmons, is to explore the intersections of religion, medicine and society.

There will be 14 sessions held on Saturdays from October 2024 to June 2025, seven online and seven in-person at Apothecaries Hall. In addition, there will be collections-based sessions and visits to archives and museums in London. The course also draws on the rich history of the Society of Apothecaries and its splendid livery Hall.



Anna Simmons

Among more than 40 topics are paleopathology, ancient medicine, hospitals in history, women in medicine, plagues and infectious diseases, psychiatry and patient voices, the evolution of clinical practice and pharmacy.

There are no specific entrance criteria to enrol on the course, and practical sessions will equip participants with the skills to write their assignments, assess sources, use archives and appreciate critical lenses that underpin historical research. Participants do not need a medical or historical background, just the time and interest.

<https://www.apothecaries.org/diploma-in-the-history-of-medicine/>

The Worshipful Company of Nurses – City of London’s 111th Livery Company

Just over one year ago, the Worshipful Company of Nurses became the newest livery company in the City of London, making it the 111th livery company. It results from a commitment to excellence in nursing and midwifery and encouragement and support from within the City of London Livery community.

On 2 May, we held our annual anniversary banquet at Apothecaries’ Hall, writes Christine Eberhardie. It was a very special occasion to be in the oldest livery hall in the City. The Worshipful Society of Apothecaries is one of many livery companies that have supported us since the Guild of Nurses was founded in 2016.

The objectives of the Worshipful Company of Nurses are:

- Promotion and support for the nursing profession
- Charitable endeavours which span nursing education and professional development, plus support for nurses in times of financial hardship
- An opportunity for all nurses who share our aims to come together with a common cause and achieve old-fashioned fellowship
- Support for the traditions of the City of London and the Lord Mayor and the aldermen.
- Opportunities for members to volunteer in schools and participate in mentoring and coaching.

Like other livery companies, the nurses have embraced tradition, and given it their own slant. Our Master and Court members wear livery based on the nurse’s cloak. The design of the logo includes a fob watch showing the time as 20:16, the year the Guild was founded.

Many livery companies have the ceremony of passing the loving cup at dinners. The Company of Nurses passes a replica Scutari Lamp, a reference to the lamp that Florence Nightengale used at Scutari during the Crimean war.



Passing Scutari lamps

We respect the past and wish to promote nursing of the present and future. The company is not just for Londoners; we have members from all over the United Kingdom and other parts of the world. With more than 400 members now, we sustain support for our profession whilst enjoying social activities and events.

British Society for the History of Pharmacy – Public Pharmacy

The British Society for the History of Pharmacy (BSHP) welcomed 19 delegates to the Thackray Museum of Medicine in Leeds for our annual conference on 23 March 2024, including 16 society members. The Thackray Museum has large and well curated displays and was an excellent venue, comments Mark Nesbitt.

Delegates had travelled from Portugal, Serbia, Germany and South Africa to join the event. Half of the speakers and 10 of the delegates were first-time attendees. The conference theme was public pharmacy.

We began with the following short papers on Saturday morning:

- Daisy Cunynghame, 'Charitable Pharmacy: The Medicines of a Late-Eighteenth Century Scottish Dispensary'
- Chris Duffin, 'Obstetric and Gynaecological Stones'
- Maria do Sameiro Barroso, 'Metal Piston Syringes: from the Graeco-Roman authors to Albucasis (936-1013 AD) and later authors'
- Jelena Manojlovic, 'The Elderly Town Pharmacy in Obrenovac and its Owners'

- Alexandra Stone, 'A social and spatial history of pharmacy in Johannesburg, 1894–1939'
- Kevin Goodman, 'The Druggist in the Time of Cholera'

On Saturday afternoon, the delegates were free to explore the museum, with an optional talk by museum volunteer (and BSHP member) Parmanand Mistry on the apothecary jars gallery.

We held our AGM on the same day, saying farewell to previous officers Past President Chris Duffin, Secretary Roy Allcorn and Treasurer Selina Hurley, and welcoming as President Mark Nesbitt, Vice-President Catherine Walker, Secretary Matthew Johnston and Treasurer Jemma Houghton.

Our next public event will be on Monday 25 November 2024: 'A Narrative of Reiteration and Repetition: Medicinal Plants, Nationhood, and the Postwar Philippines'. Details and booking at: <https://www.bsph.org/events/>.

Next year's annual conference will take place in Worcester in April 2025.

History of Medicine Society of Wales – From All Parts of the Principality

More than 50 people came to the spring meeting of the History of Medicine Society of Wales (HMSOW) at Llandrindod Wells on 27 June. 'The programme was stimulating, with varied topics, and a few surprises', writes Graham Kyle. Attendance is now approaching pre-pandemic levels.

Anne Freeman, who has made a great contribution to setting up top class treatment for stroke throughout Wales, presented her paper 'From Apoplexy to Stroke and Beyond'. She traced the history of what we call stroke, previously known as apoplexy. Even before the condition got that name, it was recognised by the Babylonians and Sumerians. They differentiated between upper and lower neurone facial palsy and recognised some familial incidence. The Egyptians were aware that it resulted from brain malfunction. The Greeks introduced the term *apoplexia*. Italian anatomist and pathologist Morgagni (1682-1771) distinguished between sanguinous and serous

apoplexies. Anne concluded with the story of how stroke services in Wales have been brought up to date recently.



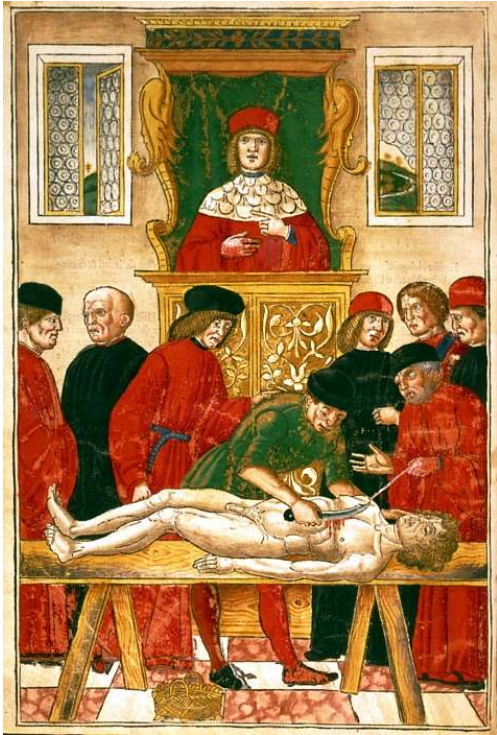
Anne Freeman

David Jones followed with his talk 'Gallant Little Wales' about the Welsh volunteers who went to South Africa to provide medical assistance to British forces in the Boer War. Although a repeat topic to HMSOW for David, this wasn't a repeat talk. Following his initial presentation, David had been encouraged to write a book and researched the subject more deeply. The result, *Gallant Little Wales*, is well worth reading especially if like me, the Boer War is a bit of a blank spot. The book is available at <https://coles-books.co.uk/gallant-little-wales-by-david-jones>

Clive Inman talked about 'Relationships between western and traditional medical practice in sub-Saharan Africa in the colonial period'. Clive, who worked as a surgeon in central Africa, explained the background concepts of health and disease in the region in previous centuries: that disease resulted from poor relationships between people. There was widespread fear of sorcery and witchcraft, and the role of spirits of ancestors was mentioned.

He then described the various methods that the incoming Western missionaries adopted to encourage the local population to accept more rational medical care (to the visitor's mind). These had mixed success, as there was a general fear of hospitals.

Clive illustrated his talk with pictures of the Victoria Falls and surrounding areas, painted by Tom Baines who accompanied David Livingstone on his expedition, Baines later returned to paint the area in greater detail. Copies of David Livingstone's *Journals* and H.M. Stanley's book *Through the Dark Continent* were also on display.



Johannes Ketham, Fasciculus Medicinae
 (Venice: Giovanni and Gregorio de Gregori,
 1493) Yale University, Harvey Cushing/John
 Hay Whitney Medical Library

As an academic lecturing in medieval literature, Peter Mitchell spoke on ‘The Early Modern Literary Anatomy: Medicine, Law, and Examination of the Soul’. The topic required concentration from the audience mainly of retired doctors with an interest in medical history. The concepts he expounded were a new approach.

He examined the use of anatomy as a metaphor for religious concepts in medieval writings, with natural theology implying that an understanding of God’s work in producing the human body would give insight into the make-up and construction of the soul. His illustrated slides listing the various books and authors were accompanied by beautiful illustrations, mainly etchings from old texts.

Alex Anstey’s talk ‘Betsi, Florence and Godfrey’ had a particular relevance for those of us resident in North Wales. The Betsi Cadwaladr Health Board provides healthcare over a large area of that part of the Principality ... yet few know much about the eponymous lady. Many think of her as ‘the Welsh Florence Nightingale’, knowing only she served as a nurse in the Crimean War. There is a lot more to her life than that, and her relationship with Florence was not particularly friendly.



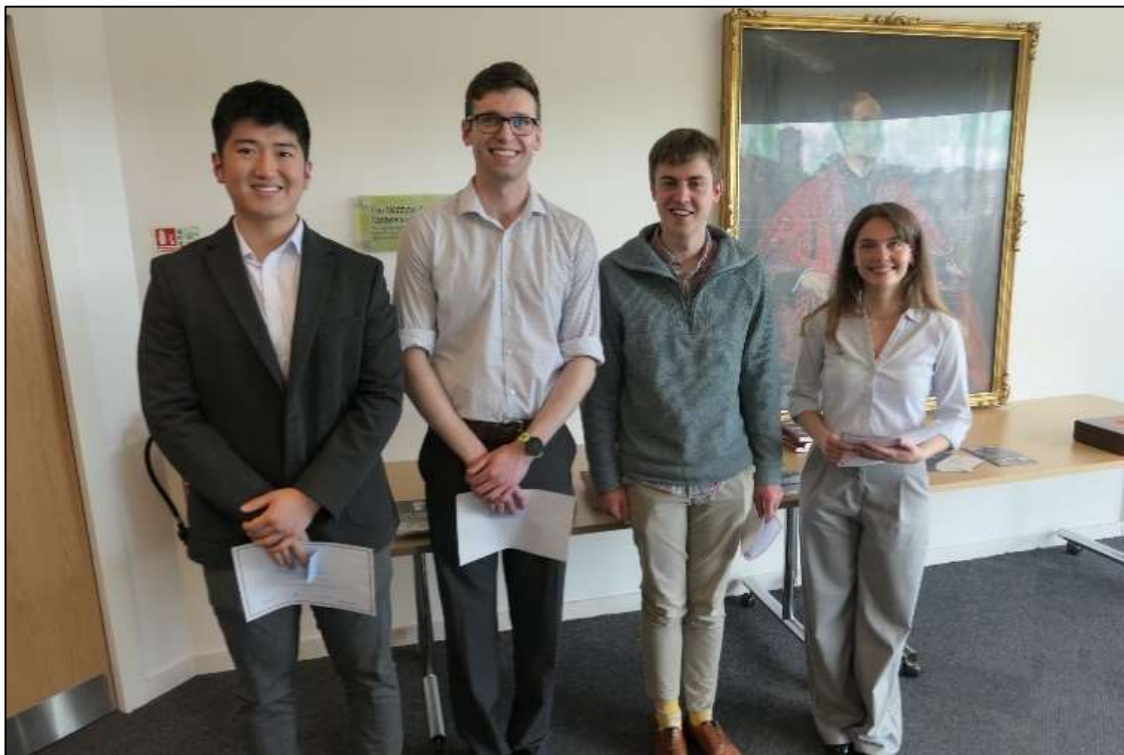
Elizabeth (Betsi) Cadwaladr
 (1789-1869)

‘Godfrey’ refers to Godfrey Morgan, Lord Aberdare, a survivor of the Charge of the Light Brigade, who donated much of his inheritance to establish many hospitals in South Wales. These, and many other topics, are covered in Alex’s book *Under the Skin*.

Scottish Society of the History of Medicine – Aberdeen Summer Meeting

The Scottish Society of the History of Medicine was in Aberdeen for its summer meeting on 8 June, joining up once more with the city's long-established Medico-Chirurgical Society. We were in the brand new Suttie Centre, an impressive teaching facility within the Royal Infirmary complex at Foresterhill. The speakers were all either from, or connected with, Aberdeen medicine, John Clark, Secretary, SSHM reports.

The morning session opened with an extraordinary tale of survival and determination presented by Emeritus Professor of Surgery Zygmunt Krukowski. He had recently unearthed and researched accounts of his father's travels and escapes from wartime Poland in the 1940s, featuring lengthy and complicated train and boat journeys across much of Europe, all while anticipating capture and death at any moment. His journey finally ended in the UK where, after a lengthy period of hospitalisation, he ultimately settled.



Medical students Luke Kang, Josh Baillie, Sebastian Barclay and Alexandria Habibi

A series of short presentations from fourth- and fifth-year medical students came next – four confident and highly impressive deliveries from Luke Kang, Josh Baillie, Sebastian Barclay and Alexandria Habibi (pictured above), speaking respectively on ‘Attitudes to amputations in the Napoleonic Wars’; ‘Lionel Whitby, pioneer of military blood transfusion services’; ‘The Thomas splint in fracture management in warfare’; and ‘Sir William Macewen and the mysterious dome of thought’ (i.e. neurosurgery). Ably mentored by Aberdeen clinicians (and SSHM members) Tom Scotland and Pragnesh Bhatt, their enthusiasm and genuine interest in medical history could not be faulted.

After lunch, another Emeritus Professor of Surgery, James Hutchison, impressed us with his tally of ‘Aberdeen Firsts’, listing more than 100 (and counting) famous and not so famous medical pioneers from the city. Most specialties featured in at least one form or another, but he invited additional nominations from the audience at any time.



Sir Alexander Ogston (1844-1929),
University of Aberdeen collections

Next up was the only non-medical speaker of the day – David Rennie, a local teacher and historian – with an account of the life of Sir Alexander Ogston, on whom he had recently published. Ogston was very much one of the previous speaker’s Aberdeen Firsts, introducing Listerian principles to his work in abdominal and orthopaedic surgery and going on to identify and name the *Staphylococcus* bacteria. His work in this field was treated with scepticism by southern colleagues, the then editor of the *BMJ* joining in to ask: ‘Can any good thing come out of Aberdeen?’ The record of history powerfully provides the answer he was not looking for.

Completing the afternoon was Colonel Mike Stewart, formerly of the Royal Army Medical Corp and advisor in trauma and orthopaedics. He focused on the often-neglected field of peripheral nerve damage in military conflicts, illustrating it with examples from his experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan and emphasising the lengthy but often rewarding rehabilitation required.



Attendees and speakers on the terrace (between rain showers).

It was another highly successful meeting which generated a number of new recruits to the Society, not least from among the cohort of medical students attending.

Society of Apothecaries Lecture – A Spoonful of Sugar



Natasha McEnroe, General Secretary of the Society of Antiquaries of London, gave the evening lecture to the Society of Apothecaries on 4 June: 'A Spoonful of Sugar: Polio, Public Health and Protection'. Formerly keeper of medicine at the Science Museum Group, Natasha considered how polio, one of the most feared childhood diseases, is represented in museum collections and how such historic medical material can be useful today.

Future History of Medicine Events

Bristol Medico-Historical Society

Saturday 21 September, 09.45-16.20

A Day for History at the Wigwam

In gardens of The Red Lodge Museum, Park Row, Bristol BS15LJ

Contact bristolmedhist@gmail.com to book a place by 7 September

<http://www.bristolmedchi.co.uk/the-bristol-medico-historical-society>

Friends of Millbank

Friday 27 September, 18.30

100 Million Years of Malaria History – Dr Tim Mason

<https://www.friendsofmillbank.org/programme/#gsc.tab=0>

West Sussex History of Medicine Society

Saturday 12 October, 10.00-12.00

Start of 2024 Programme

Penguins and Polyps: Medicine in the Falkland Islands – Dr Adam Stone

Granville Sharp Pattison, Anatomist and Adventurer – Mr Graham Kyle

Meetings held at St Paul's Church, Churchside, Chichester PO19 6FT

<https://wshoms.co.uk/>

Herbal History Research Network

Wednesday 16 October, 09.30-16.30

Converging Influences in the History of Western Herbal Medicine & Practice

Medical Society of London, Lettsom House, 11 Chandos Street, W1G 9EB

<https://www.herbalhistory.org/home/seminars/>

History of Medicine Society of the Royal Society of Medicine

Wednesday 23 October, 17.30-19.35

Scotland's Contribution to Medicine and Surgery – Mr Iain Macintyre

Presidential address by Dr Andreas Demetriades

Royal Society of Medicine, 1 Wimpole St, Marylebone, London, W1G 0AE

<https://www.rsm.ac.uk/events/history-of-medicine/2024-25/hst01/>

History of Medicine Society of Wales

Friday 25 October, 10.30

Winter Meeting

Manor Park Hotel, Cardiff, CF14 9UA.

<https://homsw.org.uk/events/>

Friends of Millbank

Friday 25 October, 18.30

Blair Memorial Lecture

George Blair and the Taiwan POW's – Kate Venables

<https://www.friendsofmillbank.org/programme/#gsc.tab=0>

The Osler Club of London

Thursday 31 October, 18.30 for 19.00

Mr Henry Marsh, retired neurosurgeon – title to be confirmed

Royal College of Physicians, 11 St Andrews Place, Regent's Park, London NW1 4LE

<https://www.osler.org.uk/events/blog-post-four-hyyfe>

DATE CORRECTION

The Sarah Hughes Trust Lecture 2024 at the Royal Society of Medicine will take place on Tuesday 3 December, 18.00.

The speaker is former President of the Supreme Court UK, Lady (Brenda) Hale.

Royal Society of Medicine, 1 Wimpole St, Marylebone, London, W1G 0AE

<https://www.rsm.ac.uk/events/history-of-medicine/2024-25/hst02/>

Please check the official websites to confirm the date, time and location of the events listed. The BSHM is not involved in organising these meetings and any enquiries should be directed to the relevant societies.

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British Society for the
History of Medicine

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