

Radiology History & Heritage Charitable Trust

An Occasional Newsletter

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Editorial Note

Yes, there is life after 1995. After spending so much time for the preparations for the Röntgen Centenary it is difficult to believe that it is now over and we are now in 1996. Many thanks again to all those who gave so much time and help. In particular Argentum worked amazingly hard and put in maximum effort. Radiology history does continue and in particular we now need to work on the radiology history database. This is called the Nemet File after Tony Nemet who was an active supporter of our work.

If you do have any news or information suitable for this newsletter then do please send it to me.

Adrian Thomas



Friends of the Radiology History and Heritage Charitable Trust

News from the Committee

The story of the database has been long and depressing, but after spending a great deal of money on an unusable system and rejecting it, we bought a new PC last year which runs Microsoft Access. This is now working, and we have engaged a software professional to adapt the program to our particular needs. Some information is on the database, but it is not yet available for reading.

The committee has been asked to advise on the retention or disposal of historical books in the collection at the British Institute of Radiology.

The concert held in the BIR on 23rd February (coinciding with the centenary of the beginning of Becquerel's experiments on radio-activity) was of a very high standard. We could have fitted more of you in, and if you weren't there, you missed a treat. Thanks to Marion Frank who organised and energised.

We have a new Scottish representative on the committee, Dr Allan W Reid.

History at Radiology '96

Professor J Rotblat, last year's winner of the Nobel Peace Prize and a member of the BIR, will open **Radiology '96**, the joint conference of the British Institute of Radiology, the College of Radiographers and the Royal College of Radiologists.

The history session at the congress will be held on Tuesday afternoon, 21st May from 16.15 to 17.30.

Professor Rotblat will be giving the keynote address:

"One hundred years of radio-activity".

The other papers are:

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|-----------------------------|--|
| I Isherwood (Manchester) | The history of myelography |
| A S K Dzik-Jurasch (London) | The London Hospital X-Ray Department: the early years. |
| J M Guy (Newtown) | Flash exposures: a technological dilemma |
| T D Hawkins (Cambridge) | The Cambridge diploma in radiology and electrology |
| A Sharma (London) | Radiological review of the elephant man |

The Radiology History and Heritage Charitable Trust had a very successful stall at last year's Centenary Congress, and we are hoping for a good position in the exhibition once again. More historical books have been promised for the silent auction, and any contributions (not only books) to the auction would be gratefully received. The organisers, Jean Guy and Jean Barrett, would be pleased to hear about your donations in advance, if possible, but spontaneous generosity of all kinds would be welcome.

The Royal Society of Medicine

The sections of the History of Medicine and of Radiology are uniting for a joint meeting on Friday 19th April to celebrate the centenary of the discovery of radio-activity. The meeting will be open to all fellows of the RSM. Non-members can be admitted as guests of Fellows: please contact Jean Guy or Adrian Thomas if you would like to attend.

The meeting has been awarded 3 CME credits by the Royal College of Radiologists.

Medical practitioners with an active interest in the history of medicine are urged to join the society, since it gives access to a unique and comprehensive library as well as London club facilities. History meetings are held on the evening of the first Wednesday of the month, Radiology meetings on Fridays. Non-medics may join some of the sections (e.g. history) under certain circumstances. If you have not previously visited the RSM then it is interesting to see an attractive and historic building.

Programme for 19th April

SESSION 1. (2.00 p.m.)

Introductory remarks

Dame Josephine Barnes (*President, Section of the History of Medicine*)

A Lifetime of Radioactivity

Dr Frank Ellis (*Retired*)

Bun pennies and buttonholes: Edgar Haydon and the early use of radium in Britain Dr Jean Guy (*Cardiff Royal Infirmary*)

The discovery of Radioactivity - Professor Silvanus Thompson, and Marie Curie, Discoverer of Radium. Dr Adrian Thomas (*Bromley Hospital*)

SESSION 2. (4.45 p.m.)

Introduction Dr R Dick (*President-Elect, Section of Radiology*)

Presidential Address: Radiation Therapy at the Westminster Hospital Dr Robert Phillips (*President, Section of Radiology, Royal Society of Medicine*)

The meeting costs £10 (£5 for trainees) and registration is with:

Jan Malique
The Royal Society of Medicine
1 Wimpole Street, London W1M 8AE
0171 290 2986

On the same day, Friday 19th April, there is a conference on Medicine and Film at the **Wellcome Institute** organised by representatives from several organisations concerned with the archival preservation and historical use of medical films, including the National Film and Television archive, the BMA library and the Wellcome Trust. It will be held at the Wellcome Building in London (09.15-18.00) For more information contact Michael Clark, Historical Medical Films Conference Organiser, The Wellcome Building, 183, Euston Rd, London NW1 2BE. Tel: 0171-611 8888.



The Royal London Hospital, Whitechapel, London

The radiology department at the Royal London Hospital is setting up an exhibition to commemorate the centenary of the department in 1996. It will begin in January, and there will also be an exhibition in the hospital's archive department beginning in May. Both will be accessible to members of the public. Details from Jonathan Evans, Archivist, 0171 377 7000, extension 3364.

The Royal London Hospital Archives and Museum are well worth a visit. They contain the story of the Hospital from 1740 and there is a considerable quantity of material related to imaging. Guided tours can be arranged by the Archivist.

The Archives and Museum
St Augustines with St Philip's Church
Newark Street London E1 2AA

Opening 10.00 to 16.30 Monday to Friday. Closed Public Holidays. Admission Free but donations are requested.



Other History of Medicine Activities

Researchers interested in the social aspects of radiological history, for example, the rise of professionalism and the place of radiology in the life of the hospital, may wish to consider joining the **Society for the Social History of Medicine**. They have recently published a list of members with their research activities and interests. At present there is only one member with an interest in radiology history! This number should be increased. Anyone interested should contact: Anne Borsay, Secretary, SSHM, Department of History, St David's University College, Lampeter, Dyfed, SA48 7ED.

Most local history of medicine societies, and several national ones, are affiliated to the **British Society for the History of Medicine** which holds a biennial congress alternating with a lecture. This year's Poynter lecture will be on Friday June 28th at the Wellcome Institute, and will be given by Professor Michael Biddiss of the Department of History at Reading University. Last year's congress was in St Andrew's, next year's is in Bristol, 3-6 September 1997. Papers are refereed and there is space for all varieties of topic, including radiology. The Secretary, who will be able to give details of a history of medicine society near you, is Sue Weir DHMSA, 64 Roupell St, London SE1 8SS. Or contact Jean Guy.

The **International Society for the History of Medicine** also holds a biennial conference which this year runs from 2nd to 8th September on the island of Kos in Greece, the home of Hippocrates. The conference contact is ITCO, 33 Nikis Street, GR 105 57 Athens, Greece. The British representative of the society is Dr John M T Ford, 57 Hadlow Road, Tonbridge, Kent TN9 1QB.

As well as hosting many meetings of other bodies, **The Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine** has excellent library facilities, a contemporary medical archive, and wide ranging collections of medical illustrations and manuscripts. Its academic unit acts as a department of University College, London and arranges symposia, research seminars and public lectures. One of their symposia is on Friday and Saturday 26th and 27th April entitled **Skill in Science, Medicine and Technology**. Dr Simon Schaffer of Cambridge is lecturing on Friday morning on 'Skill, craft and the body electric'. Of particular interest to us is their **History of Twentieth Century Medicine Group**, which puts on several lectures a year and has a newsletter. On 2nd July the group is holding a Witness Seminar "Making the body more transparent" which is about the development of scanning. Contact Mrs Wendy Kutner at the Wellcome Institute, 183 Euston Rd London NW1 2BE, 0171-611 8616. You may keep in touch with the Institute's activities by joining their **Friends** group, which enables you to subscribe to the Institute's journals at reduced price and organises lectures, entertainments and medical history visits for its members. Contact the Friends Administrative Secretary, Tracey Wickham, at the Institute.

If you would like to start studying the history of medicine, but do not know how to go about it, I recommend the diploma course in the history of medicine which is run by the **Worshipful Society of Apothecaries** in London, beginning in late September every year. The courses are held every other Saturday morning (compatible even with a 1 in 2 on-call rota!) in the Wellcome Institute. The examination is not compulsory. Contact Kim Edwards, Society of Apothecaries, Black Friars Lane, London EC4V 6EJ.

Know your positions

Are you aware of the K C Clark Slide Library? All radiographers will have heard of “Kitty Clark” and used her textbook. Her slide collection has been preserved and is available in the library of the BIR. Though of interest historically, it is still a useful teaching resource and may be copied. Enquiries to the librarian, the British Institute of Radiology.

Museums

There is no museum in Britain devoted to the history of radiology, but there are many which hold significant collections. Best known is the **Science Museum** in South Kensington where there is X-ray equipment in the Physics section, in the exhibition “Health Matters” and in the Wellcome Medical History museum on the top two floors. Due to open this year is the **Thackray Medical Museum** in Leeds, intended to show how medicine has shaped our lives. The main focus of the public exhibitions is on the social history of medicine and the commercial pressures that influenced change. The museum has just received a large grant, and its prospects seem bright. Although the emphasis will not be on medical science as such, there could be scope for displays, for example, on obstetric ultrasound and breast screening. Mike Cooper on 01532 444343 will be able to tell you whether your cherished historical item would fit in with his design. Would members of the Friends of RHHCT who live near Leeds please keep us informed of developments. Is there a museum near you with an interesting radiological collection? Please write and tell us about it.



Books - A recent publication:

Gerd ROSENBUSCH, Matthijs OUDKERK, Ernst AMMANN [English language edition by Peter F Winter]: *Radiology in Medical Diagnostics, evolution of x-ray applications 1895-1995*, 524 pp, innumerable illustrations. Blackwell Science, 1995 ISBN 0-86542-899-9. £59.50

This is an attractively produced book, well-illustrated and thoroughly referenced and indexed. Its twenty two authors hail from Germany, Sweden, and the Netherlands. The text is a collection of separate essays, each with its own style and theme, and with different referencing systems. The quality of translation varies from chapter to chapter, and some, particularly the first, are non-idiomatic translations of the German. This chapter does have some errors, for example, at the bottom of page 9 “diffracted” should read deflected, on page 25 “brake” should be break, and on page 17 “Stephen Gay” should read Stephen Gray. I always learn something new from a book, even when I think I have read every possible version of the story. I discovered here that some of Röntgen’s experiments were witnessed by a physiologist colleague, Adolf Fick [the Fick principle?]. The space distribution between subjects is odd, there are 84 pages on the history of angiography as compared to 31 on the digestive tract, 11 on neuroradiology before CT and 27 on the skeleton. This reflects the authorship of the book. The writers are practising or recently retired clinicians who are describing the background to their own speciality. However I welcomed the 122 pages devoted to developments in equipment. The concentration on Siemens products is consistent with their sponsorship of the volume. Naturally, German, Dutch and Swedish radiology is given prominence, American radiology comes next, and there is barely a nod towards Britain.

Jean M Guy, The Vicarage, Betws Cedewain, Newtown, Powys, SY 16 3DS,
Tel: (01686) 650345 Fax: (01686) 650119

other books:

Copies of **Radiology, An Illustrated History** by Roland Eisenberg which was published in 1991 have now been reduced to a very reasonable cost of £45.00. There is a 24 hour orderline facility (customer services) on: *tel:*0171 391 6464 *fax:* 0171 391 6599.

A book on **Technology in the Hospital, Transforming Patient Care in the Early Twentieth Century** has recently come out. It is written by Joel Howell. The book deals with such important questions as “How did gender influence the way physicians and the public thought about X-ray Images?”. If they send me a copy I will get it reviewed.
0-8018-5020-7 £31.60 The Johns Hopkins University Press

