

Report of the Radiology History Sessions at the 25TH Meeting of the British Society for the History of Medicine by Dr Arpan K Banerjee

Canterbury in glorious sunshine was the venue for the 25th congress for the history of medicine held at the end of August 2013.

The congress devoted a day of its meeting (30 August) to radiology history topics and a wide variety of talks were presented on a diverse range of radiology topics. This day was a collaboration between the British Society for the History of Radiology, the International Society for the History of Radiology and the British Society for the History of Medicine.

Opening the day was a well illustrated talk on Roentgen's discovery entitled 'the revelation of one night – the history of the discovery of x-rays' delivered by Dr Uwe Busch Deputy Director of the Roentgen Museum, Remscheid, Germany.

This was followed by Prof Adrian Thomas's talk on William Coolidge and the centenary of his tube. The use of tungsten filaments instead of carbon laid the foundation of the more modern xray tube.

The next talk by Prof Amorosa from New York was based on the places that played a part in Roentgen's life such as Remscheid, Wurzburg, Zurich and Lake Como based on her project to try to create a virtual tour of his life.

Michael Collins from Sheffield talked about the evolution of the early x-ray department in Sheffield reminding us about the physicist William Hicks' contribution.

This was followed by Dr Arpan K Banerjee's talk on the Birmingham radiology pioneer John Hall-Edwards who paid the ultimate price for his work by having his hands amputated due to radiation damage. Prof Francis Duck talked on Edith Stoney (not to be confused by her sister Florence)

Dr Stephen Golding from Oxford delivered a lecture on Edward Shenton from Guy's Hospital as well as a subsequent talk on the pedoscope.

A profile of John McIntyre the Glasgow radiology pioneer was given by Roy Miller which was followed by a talk on early radiology in Dundee by Cameron and Lowe.

Elizabeth Beckman talked about the genius Hounsfield and CT. Paul Lockwood talked about the origins of the reporting radiographer (we seem to have gone full circle from the early days).

Iain McIntyre talked about The Hogarth Pringles (not to be confused with the painter) – father and son – the latter worked with John McIntyre the Glasgow radiologist on fracture diagnosis and championed women in medicine.

Frans Zonneveld from Belgium delivered an interesting presentation on CT and palaeoanthropology.

I have only mentioned the papers of radiological interest. A wide variety of other medical historical papers were also presented over the three days.

The meeting was organised by Liz Beckman (Secretary BSHM) and team with Adrian Thomas as Congress President and was a fitting tribute to his term as President of the British Society of the History of Medicine.

The next meeting of the BSHM is in Leeds 2015 and hopefully radiology history papers will continue to enthrall and inform future medical historical audiences.

Dr Arpan K Banerjee FRCP FRCR FBIR

Chairman

British Society for the History of Radiology