

Report of 'History of Radiology' session Liverpool UKIO,

6 June 2023

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It was a delight this year to have an annual radiology imaging and oncology congress in person again and this was held in the ACC, Liverpool. The well attended radiology history session organised by the BSHR was held on the morning of Tuesday 6 June and consisted of two talks with the session chaired by Elizabeth Beckmann.

The first talk was on 'The Early days of radiology in India' and was delivered by Dr Arpan K Banerjee.

In the Western radiology literature there is very little written on the history of the early days of Indian radiology. In the late 19 century The British ruled India with the capital based in Calcutta until 1911. The contributions of early radiology researchers in India was described. The talk started by setting the historical setting and the geography of India as it was at the turn of the twentieth century. The subcontinent then of course included the current India as well as Pakistan and the current Bangladesh. The role of the early pioneers in India were described including important contribution of Dr Sircar of Calcutta in Bengal who is believed to have taken the first X-ray in India in Calcutta. Dr Sircar was a champion of modern science and believed strongly in the education of women a man ahead of his time. He used X-ray equipment from a French manufacturer based in Paris. The important role of the early medical schools in Calcutta (now called Kolkata), Madras and Delhi were described. In addition the important contributions of the Indian physicist, botanist and polymath J C Bose was also presented. He conducted important studies at the Presidency college in Calcutta in the late 1890s on his return from the UK and even corresponded with Tagore the giant of Indian literature and Nobel Laureate about this.

The second talk was delivered by Dr Adrian Thomas on '1923 and all that. Reflections on the centenary of the death day of Wilhelm Conrad Röntgen'

In his talk the early days of Röntgen's life were described. Röntgen did not have a brilliant early scholastic career. He spent a part of his early childhood in Apeldoorn in Holland. He initially studied engineering and it was only after he was taken under the wings of the Physics Professor Kundt did Röntgen's career start to flourish. Röntgen married Anna Bertha Ludwig a lady six years older than him. They had no children together but adopted Anna's brother's son when Anna's brother died. Röntgen held a number of chairs before finally being appointed in Wurzburg as a professor of physics. His contributions on the 8th

of November 1895 are of course well known. He received the Nobel prize in 1901.

The relationship between Rontgen and Philip Lennard was described. Lenard was somewhat jealous of Rontgen's fame. Röntgen finally moved to Munich in 1901 the year in which he was awarded the first Nobel Prize in physics. The talk was illustrated with images from his birthplace in Remscheid and the laboratory where he conducted his famous experiments in Würzburg both sites which can be visited by the public.

The BSHR stand this year was on the theme on Rontgen with the famous poster of Rontgen in colours from the Rontgen museum as well stamps honouring the great man's achievements. Thanks are due to Adrian and Johanna for their work on the stand and also to Tina and Arpan Banerjee for helping man the stand with Adrian and Johanna over the three days. It was nice to see so many delegates stop by and have a chat about the society.