

An inspiring visit to Roentgen's birthplace

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On November 5, the British Institute of Radiology and the British Society of the History of Radiology organised a joint visit to the Deutsches Roentgen Museum in the city of Remscheid Lennep (40km from Dusseldorf) in Germany. Radiologists will all know that on November 8, 1895, Roentgen, aged 50 years, discovered x-rays at the University of Wurzburg and subsequently changed the way we all practise medicine. The Deutsches Roentgen Museum opened in 1932 and is the only museum of its kind in the world celebrating Roentgen and his life and discoveries. The museum has recently undergone an extension.

This meeting was organised jointly with the Deutsches Roentgen Museum itself and Dr Uwe Busch, the deputy director, along with other important delegates from the friends of the museum including chairman of the friends of the museum Professor Moedder, vice-chairman Professor Streffer and past president of the German Roentgen society 2007-2009 Professor Laniado who welcomed all the delegates to this exciting venue. After the introductory lectures the delegates were able to wander around the museum and enjoy the exhibits. Exhibits and memorabilia on display included Roentgen's Nobel Prize medal from 1901 – he was the first winner of the Nobel Prize in Physics. Examples of his x-ray apparatus and manuscripts and photographs were on display here.

In addition, there were several interactive exhibits that would appeal to families with children who would also benefit from visiting this inspiring place and learn how modern imaging developed throughout the 20th century. Not far from the museum building is Roentgen's actual birthplace and this house is now being looked after by the German Roentgen society. This house, where Roentgen spent his early life, is home to a large collection of radiology books (including a particularly large Japanese collection) and archive material.

In the evening, the delegates were invited to attend the opening of the Ars Humanis art exhibition in the museum. This is organised by a consultant radiologist, Professor Fellner from Linz, Austria, who has used radiological investigations as a source of inspiration for his art work. Dr Fellner has previously exhibited at the Leopold Museum in Vienna. The exhibits were truly spectacular examples of the applications of modern radiological investigation techniques and computer post-processing to the world of art.

The next day, following a reception in the town hall of Remscheid with dignitaries from Remscheid, delegates were able to visit the local Bergischland, including a visit to the city of Solingen where apparently the world's best surgical blades and medical instruments are made, among other things.

The visit to the museum was a real inspiration. It was fascinating to visit the museum as well as Roentgen's birthplace. I cannot over emphasise how interesting and inspiring the visit was. I would strongly recommend a visit to all those who are interested in radiology and its allied sciences.

Special thanks must be extended to Liz Appleyard of the BIR and Dr Uwe Busch, Deputy Director of the Roentgen Museum, and the friends of the museum for the hospitable welcome showed. Hopefully, further visits will be organised in the future.

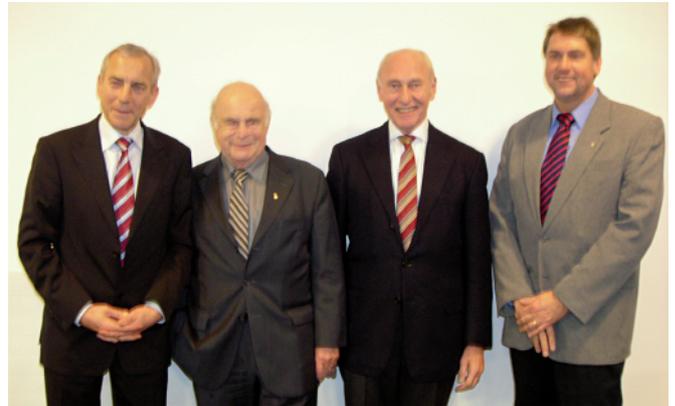


FIGURE 1
From left are Professor Laniado, Professor Streffer,
Professor Moedder and Dr Busch.



FIGURE 2
The Roentgen Museum.