



BSHP Gazette

The Newsletter of the British Society for the History of Pharmacy

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Editorial

Future generations studying the history of pharmacy will no doubt be able to take a distant reflective view of the current medical emergency and the front line pressures that were experienced and superbly handled by pharmacists and pharmacies. Not forgetting those pharmaceutical scientists researching the need for a vaccine etc. When one is in the eye of the storm, so to speak, it's hard to take an objective view. The historians are likely to study the dramatic effect on everyday life but also the emergence of the new phenomena such as "social distancing".

Your Society has not been immune to the effects of the coronavirus outbreak and our annual conference and AGM due in Manchester at the end of March had to be cancelled. We will take a hit financially from this but we have been able to negotiate transferring the hotel reservation to the same venue for 2021 with just a 10% administration cost.

With this month's mailing you are receiving the latest issue of our journal the *Pharmaceutical Historian*, Volume 50 No.1 (March). So with this and the Gazette here this gives you some additional reading material for your confinement.

Memorial Bursary and Research Grant 2020

The winners of our awards this year were:

- 1) **Burnby Memorial Bursary** - Dr Sebastian Kroupa, Department of History and Philosophy of Science University of Cambridge, Darwin College. His topic was "'Medical Knowledge in Transit Between Manila and London: Philippine Materia Medica - Lost and Found In Translation". This paper will now be given at our 2021 conference.
- 2) **Annual Pharmacy Research Grant** - Soh Xi Ken (Ken) from Sunderland where he is a 2nd year undergraduate. His research topic is "A holistic view on the evolution of pharmacy education from the 19th to 21st Century : a case study on University of Sunderland's School of Pharmacy".

Membership Subscription Renewals

As said above the Society's finances have suffered with the cancellation of the annual conference so it is more important than ever that anyone who has not yet renewed their membership for this year does so without delay. We have about 13 renewals outstanding.

Equally some of you will have had an invoice and letter recently where there has been a shortfall in recent subscription payments. Again we would appreciate your urgent attention to these payments and an updating of old Standing Orders to the new subscription rate of £30. We have 16 members in this category. All urgent attention to these matters will help us to sustain our cash flow and keep our administrative costs to a minimum. Thank you very much.

Worshipful Society of Apothecaries

We were due to have our joint lecture with the Faculty for the History and Philosophy of Medicine and Pharmacy on Monday 1st June 2020 at Apothecaries' Hall but this has been cancelled. We hope to reschedule this for 2021. The talk was going to be by Dr Freya Harrison (University of Warwick) and entitled 'Unlocking the Medieval Medicine Cabinet'. We will announce any new date in forthcoming Gazettes.

Events 2020

- 1) We hope to be able to hold our Summer visit this year which is provisionally set as 2pm on Wednesday 1st July to the Museum of the Order of St John (11th Century Museum, St John's Ambulance, Clerkenwell, London). Please see page 3 for full information about this visit which of course is subject to confirmation
 - 2) Our October evening meeting is scheduled to be held on Monday 19th October 2020 at UCL at 5.30pm (details and confirmation to follow later this year)
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Evening meeting 10th February 2020, UCL London

Emma Spary, from Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, came to give us an illustrated talk entitled "Suppliers of Plant Drugs in Late 17th Century Paris – In (and Out) of the Pharmacy". She has been studying the trade in medicinal drugs in Paris from around 1660-1730. This was all part of a project on plant-based medicines (simples) for the Leverhulme Trust.

At that time there was no clear demarcation between what grocers and apothecaries handled or could supply. They were in the same Merchant Guild as can be seen with the insignia below (centre photograph) which couples an image of an apothecary scale with one of the tall ships that brought exotic drugs to grocers in France. The grocers were able to access quite distant areas for supplies whilst the apothecaries had the botanical knowledge of how to use and apply the many items of materia medica. There were many arguments and differences of opinion within the city walls of Paris and Emma highlighted these. One batch of shop probate inventories had survived a fire in 1871 and these plus stock lists and brochures proved invaluable in identifying what was used, where and by which merchant. Stocks of both types of merchant were illustrated and described.

Much of her study was focused in the area of Paris known as the Oratoire in the rue Saint-Honoré (near the Louvre) where the shops were mainly open fronted (see photo bottom right). She concluded by showing how the pattern of trading even back then was changing with supplies increasingly being grown in and sourced from Europe. The whole food/medicine interface gave rise to some interesting questions at the end.



Accessing pharmacy history material at home

The evening lecture above by Emma Spary and the previous one (October 2019) by Henrietta McBurney-Ryan are now available as podcasts on the BSHP website. Visitors to the site can download the presentation slides and the recording separately.

They can both be found in Events>Previous events at www.bsHP.org/events/archive/

BSHP Member Tony Cartwright together with N Anthony Armstrong are publishing a paperback book on 30th April. This is entitled "A History of Medicines We Take" and will cost £12.99 plus postage. It can be pre-ordered from Pen and Sword Books for £10.39 plus postage. See www.pen-and-sword.co.uk. Again ideal if you are looking for reading material.

The archive of Pharmaceutical Historians (1967-2016) continues to be available online – it is accessed via the University of Braunschweig using: <http://publikationsserver.tu-braunschweig.de/get/65362>. More recent issues from the start of 2017 are available online as open access pdfs through Ingenta Connect. Use this link to access them: <http://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/bsHP>.

Finally don't forget all the digitised pharmacy history material from the Wellcome Library website.

BSHM / BSHP Joint meeting

We are in discussions with BSHM to hold a joint meeting, potentially in Worcester, to take advantage of their two medical museums: the Infirmary Museum and the George Marshall Medical Museum. A date has not yet been fixed, but any expressions of interest can be emailed to conference@bshp.org.

AGM and Annual Conference and coronavirus

Very reluctantly, but wisely in retrospect, the Society's trustees (officers) took an early decision to postpone our Annual General Meeting due for Sunday 29th March in Manchester. As things stand it was not possible to hold this and realistically we might not be able to hold it until October 19th (our next meeting date).

Summer Visit 1st July 2020

This year we had provisionally arranged a group visit to the Museum of the Order of St John, located in Clerkenwell London. We are in the hands of the Museum about whether this tour is possible (they are currently closed to the end of June).

When? Wednesday 1st July commencing at 2:00 pm

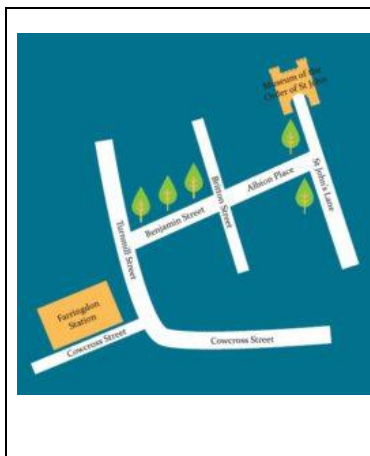
Where? Museum of the Order of St John, St John's Gate, London, EC1M 4DA (See map)

Cost? £10 per person, payable to BSHP on the day

What to do? A guided tour around the Museum of the Order of St John, Priory Church and 12th century crypt.

To book a place : We will announce details when possible but expressions of interest can be emailed to Chris Duffin : cduffin@blueyonder.co.uk

Getting there :



Train : Farringdon (Tube and Thameslink trains) is the nearest station, 5 minutes walk from the Museum (Underground map grid reference C6).

Car : Pay and display parking spaces are available in St John's Square. (Parking restrictions and charges apply Monday to Friday, 9am to 6.30pm, Saturday 9am to 1.30pm, 2 hours maximum stay). There are also several NCP car parks within walking distance. Please see the [NCP website](#) for details.

Bus : Clerkenwell Road (55, 243), St John's Street (153) and Farringdon Road (63).

Further information : You can use TfL's [Journey Planner](#) to help plan your journey to the Museum.

Background Information

The Museum at St John's Gate has been welcoming visitors for over a hundred years. The extensive collections include paintings and illuminated manuscripts, rare armour, a bronze cannon given by Henry VIII, ancient coins, decorative furniture, ceramics, silverware and textiles.

Across St John's Square from the Gate is the Priory Church, with its twelfth century Crypt. The Church's Priory Gallery features an exhibition on life in the medieval priory and Clerkenwell through the ages. The Church Cloister Garden provides a tranquil space for members of the public to enjoy, and its range of herbs gives an idea of the medicinal gardens that would have been cultivated by the Knights Hospitaller during Medieval times.

In September 2009, the Museum of the Order of St John received a £3.6 million Heritage Lottery Fund for redevelopment. Fourteen months later, it reopened with new galleries and visitor facilities, including a dedicated learning space which allows for the provision of various workshops and events for community groups and schools. The re-design has also revealed more of our wonderful Tudor building. By 1080, a hospital had been established in Jerusalem by a group of monks under the guidance of Brother Gerard. Its purpose was to care for the many pilgrims who had become ill on their travels to the Holy Land.



The men and women who worked there were members of a new religious order, officially recognised by the Church in 1113. Known as the Hospitallers, they cared for anyone, without distinction of race or faith. After the Crusaders captured Jerusalem, the Hospitallers also took on a military role. They became known as the Knights of the Order of St John of Jerusalem.

When Palestine was recaptured by Muslim forces in 1291, the Order moved briefly to Cyprus and then, in 1309, to Rhodes. The Order remained on Rhodes until 1522, when the Turkish Sultan, Suleiman the Magnificent, conquered the island. From Rhodes, the Order moved to Malta. After a famous siege by Suleiman in 1565, which the Knights and the Maltese people survived, a new capital city, Valletta, was built. The Order's ships patrolled the Mediterranean and remained on Malta until 1798, when the island was surrendered to Napoleon. The original Roman Catholic Order still has headquarters in Rome; its full title is the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of St John of Jerusalem, of Rhodes and of Malta. It remains a sovereign entity in international law and is engaged in international charity work.

In the 1140s the Priory in Clerkenwell was set up as the English headquarters of the Order. When King Henry VIII split from the Catholic Church and established a new Anglican Church, the Order in England was dissolved and all its lands and wealth were seized by the Crown. The Order was restored briefly by Henry's Catholic daughter, Queen Mary, who granted it a Royal Charter. However, on the accession of her Protestant sister, Queen Elizabeth I, the Order in England was dissolved for good.

The buildings in Clerkenwell were put to different uses in the years that followed. During the sixteenth century, they were used as the offices of the Master of the Revels. Thirty of Shakespeare's plays were licensed here. In the eighteenth century, the Gate was briefly used as a coffee house, run by Richard Hogarth, father of the artist William Hogarth. Dr. Samuel Johnson was given his first job in London at St John's Gate, writing reports for The Gentleman's Magazine. At the end of the eighteenth century, the Gate was used as a pub, The Old Jerusalem Tavern, where artists and writers, including Charles Dickens, used to meet.

The modern Order of St John in England was granted a Royal Charter by Queen Victoria in 1888. Humanitarian in its aims and purpose, the modern Order recognised the need for public First Aid and ambulance transport services, as no such system existed in newly industrialised England. In addition, the Order established an eye hospital in Jerusalem, following the principles of the Order's first hospital, treating all those in need, regardless of faith or wealth. The Order's full title is The Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem. Its principal charitable foundations today are the St John Eye Hospital in Jerusalem, and St John Ambulance.

Royal Pharmaceutical Society Museum

We are saddened by the fact that the RPS Museum is once again being subjected to a stringent reduction in funding which has caused the two existing staff to take redundancy. They will be replaced by one Museum Officer post so our best wishes go to John and Matthew as they seek new jobs. We thank them for all their help over the years.

New Members - we wish to welcome the following into membership:

Anthony Butler (St Andrews)
Marco Pezzi (Ferrara, Italy)

Sean Jones (Hitchin)
Lucy Smith (Uttoxeter)

Contacts

Facebook: British Society for the History of Pharmacy

Twitter : @PharmHist

BSHP Secretariat : info@bshp.org