

BSHP GAZETTE

NEWS FROM THE BRITISH SOCIETY FOR THE HISTORY OF PHARMACY



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A note from the President

*Professor Mark Nesbitt, Senior Research Leader,
Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew*

I'd like to thank members for electing me President of the Society. Past President **Chris Duffin**, Secretary **Roy Allcorn** and Treasurer **Selina Hurley** have ably steered us through the pandemic with an enhanced programme of events, and increased financial support for research. In the coming year we'll be looking to expand in-person events – these feel all the more precious post-pandemic – and to manage the Society's resources so we can extend BSHP activities yet further. We will also be talking to other societies about how we can best collaborate. To introduce myself, I am a researcher at Kew Gardens with responsibility for the 25,000 crude drugs in the Economic Botany Collection. It documents global medicinal plants from 1800-1900, at the intersection of official and folk pharmacy. I'm a fan of the breadth of research covered by the BSHP, everything from herbal medicine to public pharmacy, and hope we can extend this yet further. As ever, your committee is always glad to hear members' suggestions – please feel free to contact me at m.nesbitt@kew.org



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2024 Annual spring conference, Leeds

by Briony Hudson

We welcomed 19 delegates to Leeds for our annual conference, including 16 BSHP members. Delegates had travelled from Portugal, Serbia, Germany and South Africa to join the event, with half the speakers and 10 of the delegates first-time attendees. The conference theme was Public Pharmacy, although the talks were wide-ranging.

Following a new format, the formal programme took place on one day, Saturday 23 March, with optional dinners arranged in city-centre restaurants on Friday and Saturday evening, and hotel suggestions made for delegates to book themselves. The Saturday programme was based in the conference suite of the Thackray Museum of Medicine.

The following short papers were given on the Saturday morning:

- **Daisy Cunyame, *Charitable Pharmacy: The Medicines of a Late-18th C Scottish Dispensary***
- **Chris Duffin, *Obstetric and Gynaecological Stones***
- **Maria do Sameiro Barroso, *Metal Piston Syringes: from the Graeco-Roman authors to Albucaasis (936-1013 AD) and later authors***
- **Jelena Manojilovic, *The Elderly Town Pharmacy in Obrenovac and its Owners Alexandra Stone - A social and spatial history of pharmacy in Johannesburg, 1894–1939***
- **Kevin Goodman, *The Druggist in the Time of Cholera***

The Saturday afternoon was free for delegates to explore the Museum, with an optional talk by museum volunteer (and BSHP member) Parmanand Mistry in the apothecary jars gallery. The conference made a small loss, but overall feedback was positive. In reviewing the new format, the financial risk and committee workload were significantly reduced. However, we are aware that the move away from being entirely based in a hotel was less convenient to some members.



THE THACKRAY MUSEUM; FRONT PAGE: PHARMACY BOTTLES AT THE MUSEUM. IMAGE B. HUDSON.

"I enjoyed the conference and found the one-day format dynamic and fun."

"This is just to say thank you again for organising Saturday's conference and for letting me be a part of it! Despite having come such a long way, I felt incredibly welcome and found the whole experience so worthwhile and enriching."

"I had a wonderful time: excellent speakers, fantastic company, and the venue was first rate."

Conference report continued ...

It was agreed at the AGM to hold next year's event in **Worcester in April 2025**. We intend to maintain the one-day core event to keep the workload down and encourage a wide range of attendees. If possible, we will propose a "conference hotel" so that delegates can choose to stay in the same place as others. We will investigate an optional visit or event for either the Friday afternoon or Sunday morning to extend the programme for those who are interested.

Many thanks to the conference team at the Thackray Museum of Medicine, all of our speakers and BSHP committee members for ensuring a thoroughly enjoyable event.

We hope to see you next year!

Meet the new Treasurer

Welcome to our new Treasurer **Dr Gemma Houghton**. Gemma



completed a PhD in the History of Medicine in 2021 at the Centre for the History of Science, Technology and Medicine (CHSTM), University of Manchester. Her thesis, supervised by Professor Pratik Chakrabarti, was entitled *Making Plants Modern: Medicinal plants in twentieth-century British pharmacy*. Readers may recognise her as a recent contributor to the *Pharmaceutical Historian*, writing on *Medicinal plants in British drug market reports, 1910-1965*.

Jemma is currently completing an accountancy qualification, so is warmly welcomed to the committee where she can combine her historical and mathematical specialties.



CONFERENCE TOUR OF THE COLLECTIONS WITH PARMANAND MISTRY. IMAGE B. HUDSON.

Funding & grants

Peter Homan Small Grant Scheme, £500

Open for applications. Granted twice a year
British Society for the History of Pharmacy
<https://www.bsph.org/awards/PeterHoman.asp>

Research Fellowship Grant, €2,500

International Society for the History of Pharmacy
Deadline 31 August 2024
<https://histpharm.org/ishp-research-fellowship/>

British Society for the History of Science (BSHS) Research Grant, £50-£500

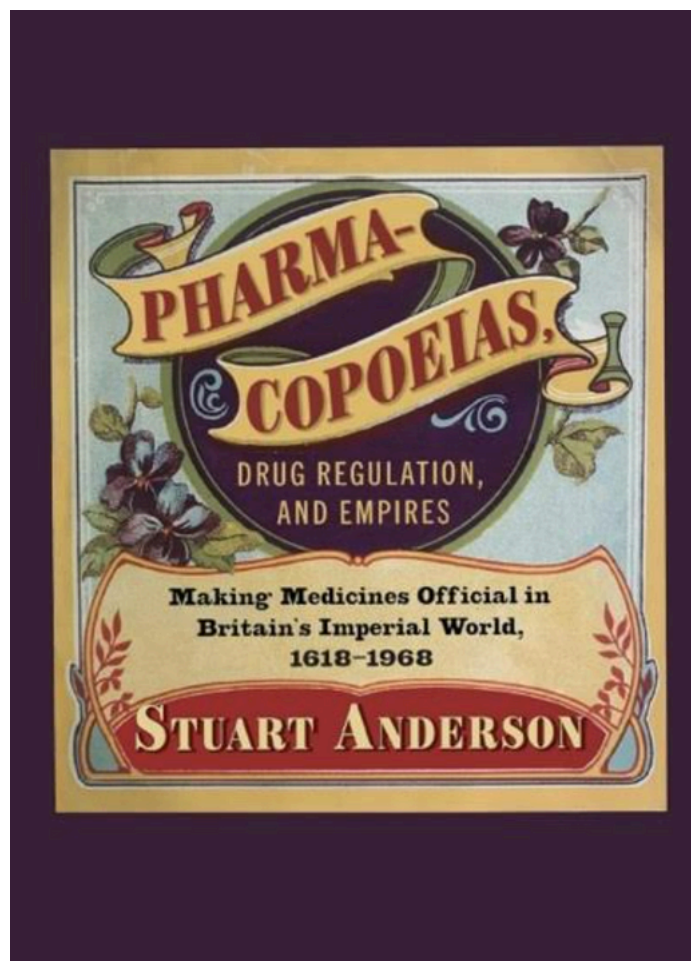
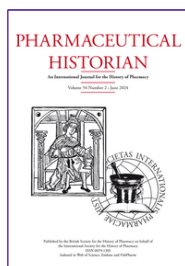
Deadline 30 September
<https://www.bsbs.org.uk/grants/research-grants>

Can you help?

An 1862 *Chemist & Druggist* journal invited readers to buy a colour print of a giant crystallised statue known as a 'chemical trophy' formed in the shape of a serpent. The trophy was shown at the International Exhibition by Howards & Sons. The C&D image archives don't appear to have followed the journal archives to the Wellcome. Has anyone seen a copy tucked away in an archive? If you have any tips, please email Kim kwalker.research@gmail.com

Pharmaceutical Historian

With this mailing you are receiving the June 2024 issue of the *Pharmaceutical Historian*, (Volume 54, Number 2), our flagship international journal. This number includes an article by **Bruno Bonnemain** on the evolution of history of pharmacy societies and journals around the world between 1913 and 2023. It also includes the second of **Edward J. Wawrzynczak's** three articles on the Lister Institute Serum Department, this time describing its role during peacetime 1903-1913. And in a comprehensive study on the efficacy of early modern medicines c.1600 to 1800, **John K. Crellin** asks; how important were mortars? The issue is rounded off with a short communication by **Luke Read** and **Max Cooper** describing the life and work of William Gunton (1791-1880), an English druggist in America.



News from members

In March, **Stuart Anderson** gave a presentation to the Historical Group of the Royal Society of Chemistry, London, entitled *Pharmacy in Britain: Division of Medicine or Branch of Chemistry? Why Pharmacists can call themselves chemists but chemists cannot call themselves pharmacists*. He had earlier published a contribution under the heading *Pharmacists are the new doctors, pharmacy technicians are the new pharmacists* in the *Pharmaceutical Journal* (24 October, 311, 7978, 1-3).

His new book (pictured, above), *Pharmacopoeias, Drug Regulation, and Empire: Making Medicines Official in Britain's Imperial World, 1618-1968* (Montreal, Canada: McGill-Queen's University Press) will be published on 15 June 2024, and will be reviewed soon in the *Pharmaceutical Historian*.

Membership renewal

Could all members please check that they have paid their 2024 membership renewal? An invoice was sent with the January mailing. If you are unsure if you have renewed or not, please email honsec@bshp.org.



New members

A warm welcome to:

Jemma Houghton (Manchester)

Amanda Peruchi (Sao Paulo, Brazil)

P. Marshall Li (Cambridge)

2024 BSHP EVENTS

8 JULY 18.30-19.30 BST, [ONLINE], FREE

Dr Shahina A. Ghazanfar

Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

History of medicinal plants in the Qur'an & other religious texts

This talk will focus on plants mentioned in the Qur'ān and other religious texts such as the Bible and Hadīth that have medicinal value and have been used since ancient times to cure medical and other health conditions. It will also cover the cultural beliefs that people have about these plants in their curative powers.



25 NOVEMBER 18.30-19.30 BST, [ONLINE], FREE

Kathleen Cruz Gutierrez

University California, Santa Cruz

A Narrative of Reiteration and Repetition: Medicinal Plants, Nationhood, and the Postwar Philippines

What features of medicinal plants produce ideas of nationhood? How can medical botany writing advance the symbolic and commercial promise of a postcolonial nation? In this talk, join Kathleen Cruz Gutierrez as she examines a seminal work in the history of medical botany in the Philippines, Eduardo Quisumbing's *Medicinal Plants of the Philippines* (1951). Published from the rubble of Manila after the brutality of the Pacific War, *Medicinal Plants of the Philippines* relies on a particular brand of "encyclopedism" to recuperate the capital, its scientific institutions, and the nation more broadly following World War II. Gutierrez suggests that medicinal plants help to anchor—through reiterative and repetitive discourse—a particular vision of the nation, no matter the political persuasion.

PAST EVENT

Professor Pablo Gomez

University of Wisconsin-Madison

Brebajes, Yervas & Pharmacopoeias: Healing Materiality & The Imagination Of The Early Modern Caribbean

Now available to watch in the link below.



Watch all our previous online talks on our youtube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/c/BSHPBritishSocietyfortheHistoryofPharmacy>

BOOK YOUR PLACE: EVENTS@BSHP.ORG

NEWS FROM FURTHER AFIELD ...

Other 2024 events

Wednesdays May-July (online)

Women's Ideas in the History of Medicine

Center for the History of Women Philosophers and Scientists

<https://historyofwomenphilosophers.org/new-voices-talk-series/>

Thurs 27 June

History of Medicine Summer Meeting

Metropole Hotel, Llandrindod Wells
History of Medicine Society of Wales

<https://homsw.org.uk/events/>

Wed 10 - Sat 13 July

BSHS Conference

Aberystwyth, Wales

British Society for the History of Science

<https://conference.bsbs.org.uk/>

Wed 4th - Sat 7th September

46th International Congress for the History of Pharmacy

Belgrade, Serbia

<https://ishp24.com/en/home-english/>

Wed 16 October

Conference: Converging Influences in the History of Western Herbal Medicine & Practice

Herbal History Research Network, London

<https://www.herbalhistory.org/home/seminars/>



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ISHP news



Read what has been happening in pharmacy history around the world, including a report from us at the BSHP. Find all this and more in the 25th annual newsletter from the **International Society for the History of Pharmacy**.

<https://histpharm.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/ISHP-Newsletter25.pdf>

BSHM news



Read the latest news and events from the **British Society for the History of Medicine**.

<https://bshm.org.uk/newsletters/>

Days out



Have you heard of the **London Museums of Health & Medicine** website? It is the go-to-guide for London-based collections, libraries and expertise relating to the history of medicine (and pharmacy). Find out more and plan your trip here:

<https://medicalmuseums.org/>



THE APOTHECARY. T. MCLEAN, LONDON, 1830. WELLCOME COLLECTION

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