



AFMS NEWS

Winter 2014

AFMS
www.anglofrenchmedical.org

Issue number 74
Charity Number 327706



The 2014 AFMS conference will take place from the 17th to the 20th September in Durham.

The roots of the city of Durham can be traced back to as early as AD 955. It is well known for its 11th Century Norman Cathedral and castle, both designated a World Heritage Site by UNESCO. In medieval times, the city found spiritual prominence and it is the resting place of St Cuthbert and St Bede the Venerable.

The City saw the creation of the world's first passenger railway in 1825 as well as playing a major role in the development of the coal industry.

A visit to the must see attractions in the city is being planned as part of the social programme.

Further afield, the Durham Dales are home to breathtaking scenery and fascinating attractions. We will visit The Bowes Museum, a magnificent French-style chateau housing an impressive collection of European and fine arts. Also planned is a visit to Beamish, a living museum and winner of Visit England's Large Visitor Attraction of the Year 2012 where one can step back in time and experience life from several hundred years ago,

For those staying after the conference, an excursion to Hadrian's Wall is being organised. The Wall is undoubtedly one of Rome's most outstanding architectural monuments ever built. Finally we will be visiting the beautiful town of Corbridge.

This village was founded on its present site in Saxon times and Roman stones were used to construct many of the village buildings, Today the streets, which remain much as they did in medieval times, house a range of innovative and interesting shops and pubs. If you would like to give a presentation at the conference, especially one which demonstrates an aspect of Anglo French practice, please email the administrative secretary.

More information and a booking form will be available in Spring.

AFMS NEWS

Welcome to the latest edition of the AFMS news. If there is anything you would wish to have included in future editions, please send an email to the administrative secretary at tonyridge72 (at) yahoo.co.uk Please also can you inform Tony of any changes in either home or email address.

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French Medical
Weekend, Warwick.
4th to the 6th April.

• September 2014

Scientific Conference
Durham UK - 17th to
the 20th September.

Visiting Lecturer Programme

Thank you to all AFMS members who have expressed interest in the teaching initiative, and facilitating membership exchange.

Since the Biarritz conference, we have received interest from several universities (Paris V, Paris 11, Paris 12, Caen) who are currently independently introducing medical English teaching into their programmes and are working with them to co-ordinate their requirements within the limited budgets available.

We envisage this will result in a more co-ordinated programme for the 2014-2015 academic year, and hopefully increased French student /doctor attendance at future conferences. In addition, the teaching partnerships which have already been established at University Angers (Colin Mumford) and Paris V (John Altrip and Rex Melville) are continuing.

On February 4th and 5th John Altrip, Disha Midha and Caroline Van Tran delivered a 2 day intensive medical English workshop (lectures, role plays) to a diverse mixture of healthcare professionals (dermatology, cardiology, GP, physiotherapy, pharmacy, academic researchers, rheumatology, haematology, psychiatry, orthopaedics, statisticians) at Paris-Est Cretail. In addition, we also publicised the AFMS and AFMB, and the forthcoming Durham conference. Some of these healthcare professionals are now interested in making contact with English peers, with a view to jointly presenting at conference (eg training pathways and practicing as an English/French cardiologist/pharmacist/dermatologist etc).

Please contact me if you are interested in finding a French 'twin' for the Durham Conference. Separately a French cardiology consultant is also interested to work in the NHS (preferably London or Birmingham) for one year or more, so please contact me if you can facilitate.

John Altrip (jaltrip(at) hotmail.com)

Manchester Meeting May 2014

The 18th Manchester Meeting is to take place on Friday the 16th May 2014 at Manchester University. Cost to delegates will be only £10 a head with students free of charge. (Students will be asked to pay £10 with their booking forms but will be refunded the fee on arrival at the meeting).

Details - Venue - Manchester University Medical School.

Registration 6pm to 6.30pm. Meeting starts at 6.30pm.

Presentations. Buffet 8.00pm to 9.00pm with a selection of French wines.

9.00pm Meeting finishes.

Please complete the enclosed form if you wish to attend.



Medical French Weekend 4th to the 6th April 2014.

The 22nd French Medical Weekend Course 4-6th April 2014, will take place at Warwick University Campus. This established and highly regarded course provides essential medical French and the confidence to use it. It is invaluable for doctors and medical students intending to study or work clinically in French speaking countries or with organisations such as Médecins sans Frontières.

Teaching is in small groups, according to the level of spoken French-speaking; All levels from basic (GCSE/O-Level) to fluent are accommodated. Tutors are experienced teachers, including French-speaking doctors, professional linguists and UK-trained doctors who have worked in France and you can read more about the tutors in the insert in this newsletter.

Founded in 1992, the course continues to prove a popular springboard for those wishing to work in French. In 2012, Zara Bieler, a British GP with experience both training and working in France and UK, became course organiser. The course fees include en suite accommodation, all meals, tea and coffee, and a comprehensive course handbook covering general vocabulary, the systems of the body, primary care, medical emergencies, prescribing, etc. Standard fee: £195 for students and £395 for doctors and other professionals. The 2014 course has places for 40 doctors and 30 students. Recent courses were heavily over-subscribed; early application is advised. For registration or further information, contact: Christine Greenwood, School of Clinical Sciences, Clinical Sciences Centre, University Hospital Aintree, Longmoor Lane, Liverpool L9 7AL. Tel: 0151 529 5885 email: c.greenwood@liverpool.ac.uk

French scientists take 'first steps' towards personalised gene therapy treatment for breast cancer.

Cancer scientists in France have made “one of the first steps” toward the creation of personalised medicines targeted to combat an individual patient’s breast cancer. By scanning all of the DNA – the entire genome – of more than 400 women with late stage breast cancer for the first time, researchers have provided “proof of principle” that the technique can be used to understand the genetic cause of cancer in an individual, and help design tailor-made drugs to target it. However, the number of patients whose genetic alterations could be “matched” with new treatments was small – only 13 per cent, and experts cautioned that the number of drug trials underway would have to increase if the dream of “precision medicines” for cancer were to become a reality. The SAFIR01 trial, led by Professor Fabrice André of the Institute Gustave Roussy in Paris, involved patients from 18 cancer centres in France. Biopsy samples including at least 50 per cent cancer tumour cells were analysed from 407 patients. It was possible to analyse the entire genome of two thirds of the patients, all were found to have a targetable genetic alteration.

Dr Charles Swanton, from Cancer Research UK’s London Research Institute, said that the study had brought “important insights into the logistical, scientific, and clinical challenges of implementing national cancer genomic assessment”.



Back Page Notes

Chamonix

Winter Meeting.

The final few days of January 2014 saw a number of members of the AFMS travel to Chamonix for our annual winter conference.

The ten-or-so members, were greeted like old friends at our now-established base of the Hotel Aiguille du Midi.

The formal part of the meeting comprised three diverse academic talks, followed by an appetite-whetting presentation by John Wilkinson on the timetable and layout of our 2014 autumn meeting which will be held in Durham. Opening the educational talks, Andrew Hassan discussed the sensitive issue of how to manage failing, incompetent, or improperly-behaving doctors, often euphemistically referred to as “doctors-in-difficulty”. He pointed out that provided colleagues and others remain vigilant to problems, frequently issues can be identified early, with corrective steps taken before a crisis develops. As is often the way, the key to good management of these challenging situations rests in top-quality communication.

Next Colin Mumford gave a talk on the perils and pitfalls of medico legal work, drawing on his own experience of giving evidence in several legal cases in which neurological issues had been paramount. He offered tips for doctors who were considering starting off in medico legal work. For the third talk, Andrew Farrall, consultant neuroradiologist in Edinburgh, gave an illuminating presentation on the interpretation of chest X-rays, making this often mysterious art seem easy, and at the same time bringing out a great sense of nostalgia amongst the group, who were all transported back to basic radiological training in their early clinical years at medical school.

As always, the “après-travail” was first class. Members enjoyed the sporting opportunities afforded by the region, with a large group skiing together in glorious spring conditions on consecutive days at Les Houches and Le Tour, with a smaller group venturing out into the mists of Brevent-Flegère, whilst others enjoyed snow-shoeing



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(Hon Secretary)

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(Membership Secretary)

Dr Mark Cottrill

(co-opted member)

Dr Colin Mumford

Dr Rex Melville

Dr Carol Barton

Dr Paul Ward

Dr David Bell

Dr Andrew Leitch

Dr Zara Bieler

Dr Nick Mc Carthy

Did you know?

What on earth are they smoking in northern France? Hydrangeas, apparently. Police in the Pas de Calais are on the trail of a “hydrangea gang”, which is presumably a direct descendant of the Lavender Hill Mob. Residents of several villages have filed complaints that their prized hydrangeas have been systematically stripped of buds or growing tips. Hydrangeas have become very popular in Germany and Switzerland as legal substitute for cannabis. The trend appears to be spreading to France. Hydrangeas contain a substance which has a similar effect to THC, the ingredient in cannabis.