

ROYAL AUSTRALASIAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS



THE SEVENTH
COWLISHAW SYMPOSIUM

PROGRAMME

1ST NOVEMBER 2008

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks are due to the many people who have contributed to the planning and presentation of this Symposium. The speakers have spent many hours researching their topics and preparing their papers.

Speakers:

Marius Fahrer, Kenneth Russell Memorial Lecturer

Wyn Beasley

Geoff Down

Sam Mellick

Geoff Serpell

Philip Sharp

Donald Simpson

The President of the College, Mr Ian Gough

Staff of the College, in particular:

Geoff Down

Megan Sproule

Ruth Charters

Alan Thurston

Convenor

INTRODUCTION

This year sees the 7th biennial Cowlshaw Symposium, a meeting that has become one of the principle events on the history of medicine calendar. The College is fortunate to own the collection of historical medical texts that was amassed by Leslie Cowlshaw during the period from the early 1900s, probably until his death in 1943. By 1906 he had already undertaken two world tours and after his graduation he undertook yet another tour during which he acquired a large number of significant works. By 1914 he had obtained many of the printed works in the Collection through his connexions with dealers in London and Europe. The Collection includes a number of volumes published in the 15th century including an Avicenna *Canon* of 1497 from Padua and the 1483 Nuremberg *De proprietatibus rerum* of Bartholomeus Angelicus. In his will, Cowlshaw gave the Royal Australasian College of Physicians the first right of refusal on the Collection, which, for unknown reasons, was declined. Within a month of his death and after some hurried negotiations between John Laidley (the Honorary Secretary of the NSW State Committee of the College) and Ken Russell both acting for the College, and the trustees of Cowlshaw's estate, the College had secured the complete collection at a price of £2750. In total there were some 2500 items, making it notable by world standards and considered to be the best private collection in existence at that time.

In 1996, Wyn Beasley, then Reader to the Gordon Craig Library, initiated the Symposium in order to make the College's Cowlshaw Collection better known, both to Fellows of the College and to the wider bibliophilic community. With the endorsement of the President and Council, he invited a group of speakers, all renowned for their interest in historical books and the history of medicine to participate. Embedded in this Symposium was the eponymous lecture named in the memory of the man who helped to secure the collection for the College and who then set about cataloguing it: Kenneth Fitzpatrick Russell. Thus, the format for the Symposium was set and its popularity has been proved in growing numbers and support over the first decade. The speakers are invited to select one or more items from the Collection on which to base a paper.

Over the years this has provided many outstanding papers on medical history and *materia medica*. The inclusion of the Kenneth Russell Memorial Lecture in the Symposium is entirely appropriate putting it in the context of medical history, a subject dear to his heart, and a meeting centred on the Collection that he took to heart.

The programme for this 7th Symposium looks as if it will be as varied and interesting as those that have gone before. The topics this time include such varied subjects as nerve surgery and sports medicine, with the works of Ambroise Paré given yet another airing for the third or fourth Symposium running. The research and preparation for each of these papers takes considerable time and thought, and this commitment of the speakers must be acknowledged.

PROGRAMME

Saturday 1st November 2008

0930 **Registration**

1000 **Opening** by Mr Ian Gough PRACS

SESSION 1 Chairman: Mr Ian Gough

1005 **The 9th Kenneth F. Russell Memorial Lecture**
Mr Marius Fahrer (Melbourne)
THE LIFE and TIMES of AMBROISE PARÉ
(*Opera chirurgica Ambrosii Paraei* Various Editions, 1594-1678)

1045 Mr Geoff Down (Melbourne)
THE MONSTERS of AMBROISE PARÉ
(*Opera chirurgica Ambrosii Paraei* Various Editions, 1594-1678)

1120 **Coffee / Tea Break**

SESSION 2 Chairman: Professor Alan Thurston

1150 Professor Emeritus Donald Simpson (Adelaide)
From LANFRANC to SUNDERLAND:
The Surgery of Peripheral Nerve Injuries
(*Cyrurgia parva magistri Lanfranci mediolanensis*, bound with *Cyrurgia Guidonis de Cauliaco Venetiis impressus per Simonem de Luere 23. mensis Decembris 1499*)

1225 Honorary Professor Sam Mellick (Brisbane)
THE SIGNAL ACHIEVEMENTS of JAMES LIND (1747), JAMES COOK (1770) and OWEN STANLEY
(James Lind, *An Essay on Diseases incidental to Europeans in hot Climates, with the Method of preventing their fatal Consequences*, London, Murray, 1788)

1300 **Lunch**

SESSION 3 Chairman: Mr Wyn Beasley

1400 Mr Geoffrey Serpell (Melbourne)
SYMPATHETIC OPHTHALMIA and GLAUCOMA
BEFORE OPHTHALMOSCOPY
(William Mackenzie, *A practical Treatise on Diseases
of the Eye*, London, Longman, 1840)

1435 Mr Philip Sharp (Sydney)
FRIDTJOF NANSEN: THE MAN WHO
PENETRATED UNKNOWN REGIONS
(René Descartes, *Tractatus de homine et de formatione
fœtus*, Amstelodami apud Danielum Elsevirium, 1677)

1510 **Coffee / Tea Break**

SESSION 4 Chairman: Mr Philip Sharp

1545 Mr Wyn Beasley (Wellington)
JOHN BROWN'S BOOK
James Syme, *A Treatise on the Excision of diseased Joints*,
Edinburgh, Sutherland & Knox, 1831, and *The Principles of Surgery*,
Edinburgh, Carfræ & Son, 1837)

1620 Professor Alan Thurston (Wellington)
THE ART of PRESERVING HEALTH: STUDIES on THE
MEDICAL SUPERVISION of PHYSICAL EXERCISE
(Hieronymus Mercurialis, *De arte gymnastica libri sex*, Venetiis apud
Juntas, 1587)

1655 **Closing remarks**

1715 - 1830 **Cocktail Reception**

ABSTRACTS AND BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

The 9th Kenneth F. Russell Memorial Lecture

THE LIFE and TIMES of AMBROISE PARÉ

(*Opera chirurgica Ambrosii Paraei*.
Various editions, 1594 - 1678)

J.F. Malgaigne's edition of Ambroise Paré's *Œuvres complètes* (1840-41) is preceded by a comprehensive history of surgery, introducing a detailed biography of Ambroise Paré. This biography has served as the basis for developing a few aspects of the period between Paré's arrival in Paris in 1552/53 and his death in 1590. Continuous wars during this period gave the observant and reflective doctor the opportunity to become the chief surgeon to Henri III de Valois, King of France and Poland. Episodes of history in which Paré participated directly or indirectly are described and analysed.

A hypothetical concerning a failed case of Ambroise Paré, that of King Henri II de Valois, is discussed. The criminal rôle of his widow Catherine de Médicis is exposed: she invented high-heeled shoes.

Marius Fahrer was born and educated in Bucharest, Romania and came to Australia in 1963. He loves books old and new, and is convinced that anatomy is necessary for medical practitioners.

THE MONSTERS OF AMBROISE PARÉ

(*Opera chirurgica Ambrosii Paraei*.
Various editions, 1594 - 1678)

The Cowlshaw Collection possesses a number of copies of the works of Ambroise Paré published between 1594 and 1678, in Latin, Dutch and English.

A revised edition in French was published by the famous French surgeon J.F. Malgaigne in 1840-41. While quoting all the variations of the texts published during Paré's lifetime, he omits most of the illustrations of the old editions, arguing that "...the anatomical sketches...where almost every line is mistaken...and these figures or rather disfiguring of animals then rare in Europe, but today quite common, like the elephant, the camel, the lion..." are not worth reproducing.

Among the many monsters illustrated, we have selected several of the more interesting ones, some which existed, and some which were believed to exist, by most of the scientific community of the western world during the 16th and 17th centuries.

Geoff Down is a native of Melbourne. Having graduated from the University of Melbourne in Arts (Fine Arts & Classics), he travelled to London and worked for some time in the Department of Prints & Drawings at The British Museum. On returning to Melbourne he took up a position as Curator of Prints at the University of Melbourne. In 1996 he was also appointed Acting Curator of the Grainger Museum. He joined the College in 2001.

**FROM LANFRANC TO SUNDERLAND:
THE SURGERY OF PERIPHERAL NERVE INJURIES**
(*Cirurgia parva magistri Lanfranci mediolanensis*, in
Cirurgia Guidonis de Cauliaco, Venice, Luere, 1499)

In the late thirteenth century, Lanfranc of Milan wrote a surgical textbook which briefly advocated the repair of severed peripheral nerves by suture. The Cowlshaw Collection offers two versions of Lanfranc's work. One is in Chaucerian English, printed in modern times from two early fifteenth century manuscripts. The second is in Latin, and was printed in 1499 as part of a collection of mediaeval surgical texts.

Lanfranc's writings were widely disseminated, but his advocacy of nerve suture did not enter into general surgical practice until the late nineteenth century. In 1889, the English surgeon Anthony Bowlby published a book on injuries and diseases of nerves, which reported a substantial number of nerve injuries, with successful repair by suture in many. The causes of success and failure were explored during the two world wars, by a number of European and American surgeons and neuroscientists; in the Second World War, a leading part was taken by the Australian anatomist, Sydney Sunderland. His work as a clinician and laboratory neuroscientist was recognised in 1981 when a society dedicated to the study of the peripheral nerves was called the Sunderland Society.

Donald Simpson graduated in medicine in 1949. He specialized in neurosurgery, and underwent postgraduate training in the Department of Neurological Surgery, in the Radcliffe Infirmary, Oxford, under J. B. Pennybacker, and later in the Royal Adelaide Hospital under T. A. R. Dinning. He was Director of Neurosurgery in the Adelaide Children's Hospital, 1970-1985; he is now Emeritus Neurosurgeon in that hospital (now the Women's & Children's Hospital) and in the Royal Adelaide Hospital and Clinical Professor in the University of Adelaide.

Like most Australian neurosurgeons of his time, he occasionally operated on patients with injuries and tumours of the peripheral nerves, though often with poor or mediocre results. Concern at these results stimulated him to study the history of peripheral nerve surgery.

Since childhood, he has been addicted to the past; he has written on the history of neurosurgery in Australasia and on other historical topics. He is the curator of the museum of the Neurosurgical Society of Australasia a foundation of the Section of the History of Surgery and Anaesthesia [now Section of Surgical History] of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, and a member of Australian Society of the History of Medicine, also of the Maritime History Society of Australia and the Australian Mining History Association.

**THE SIGNAL ACHIEVEMENTS OF JAMES LIND (1747), JAMES COOK
(1770) AND OWEN STANLEY**

(James Lind, *An Essay on Diseases incidental to Europeans in hot climates, with the Method of preventing their fatal Consequences*, London, Murray, 1788)

These three men, surgeon, master mariner and naval captain respectively, indeed merit the collective designation of a triplet, being "persons united or combined in their careers". Lind's "Clinical Trial" on HMS Salisbury in 1747 demonstrated the effectiveness of lemon juice in both preventing and treating scurvy. Cook's awareness of this and other remedies enabled him to use effective measures to prevent

the disease in his epic "Endeavour Voyage" in 1770, when he circumnavigated the globe without losing a single seaman from the scourge of scurvy; and his otherwise complete map of the whole East Coast of New Holland lacked only a short stretch in Northern waters. Owen Stanley corrected this deficiency in 1847, 100 years after Lind's "experiment"; and he was the first to chart the islands of the Torres Strait and the Southern New Guinea Coast.

Lind received no honours in England but was admitted to Fellowship of the French Royal Society of Medicine, and his real memorial is the inspiration he provided to Cook and others, in particular Gilbert (later Sir Gilbert) Blane, who in 1795 persuaded the British Admiralty to issue a daily dose of lime juice to all Naval seamen, effectively eliminating scurvy at sea.

Cook was unanimously elected a Fellow of the Royal Society and was awarded its highest honour, the Copley Medal. Stanley's voyage produced accurate charts of the inner passage of the Barrier Reef and the Torres Strait enabling for the first time safe passage from the Pacific Ocean and the Coral Sea into the Indian Ocean. Also on his voyage he was able to assist the (unfortunately ill-fated) Kennedy Overland Expedition in North Queensland, and he rescued Barbara Thompson of Sydney, sole survivor of a shipwreck 6 years earlier.

Sam Mellick was born in North Queensland and qualified MB BS with First Class Honours at the University of Queensland in 1948. He gained his English Fellowship in 1953, returning to the new Princess Alexandra Hospital in Brisbane, whose department of Vascular Surgery he founded in 1961 and headed until 1985. He became FRACS in 1960, and has since been Chairman of the Board of Examiners, Censor-in-Chief and Senior Vice-President. His FACS dates from 1967, and he served two terms as a Governor of the American College. He became Hon FRCSI in 1989 and was the first Australian to be President of the International Society of Cardiovascular Surgery. He was made CBE in 1987 and he was appointed Honorary Professor in the School of Biomedical Sciences in the University of Queensland in 2006.

SYMPATHETIC OPHTHALMIA AND GLAUCOMA BEFORE OPHTHALMOSCOPY

(William Mackenzie, *A practical Treatise on Diseases of the Eye*, London, Longmans, 1840)

One of the practitioners of probably the oldest surgical specialty, Ophthalmic, was the eminent Scottish ophthalmologist, Sir William Mackenzie. Educated in Edinburgh, he moved to Glasgow and described and named sympathetic ophthalmia before the time of the ophthalmoscope, well defining his powers of observation and deduction. Founding the Glasgow Eye Infirmary, his 'Practical Treatise on Diseases of the Eye' appeared in English in four editions (1850 - 1884) and in French and German. In this work also appears the first full and clear account of glaucoma. Both he and the illustrator of his book, Wharton Jones, moved to Glasgow because of rather indefinite connections with Robert Knox the anatomist, who was allegedly helped by the body snatchers Burke and Hare. Mackenzie, and his book were highly regarded before the revolutionary ophthalmoscope. He was knighted and appointed Surgeon Oculist to the Queen in Scotland.

Geoffrey Serpell is a graduate of the University of Melbourne (1946). Since then he has had a long association with Prince Henry's Hospital and Monash Medical Centre including Life Governorship and Consultant Ophthalmologist to both. He spent three

years in London, at the London Hospital and Moorfield Eye Hospital. In London, he also worked as a Research Fellow in Pathology at the Institute of Ophthalmology where he instigated the research on kittens having excess oxygen as a cause of retinopathy prematurely in babies. In 1951 he founded the first Glaucoma Research Clinic in Australia at the Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital and founded the museum of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College Ophthalmologists in 1956. He a fellow of four Royal Colleges, Australasian and Edinburgh College of Surgeons, and foundation fellow of the two Royal Ophthalmology

Colleges (ANZO and England). He has always been actively interested in medical history.

FRIDTJOF NANSEN: THE MAN WHO PENETRATED UNKNOWN REGIONS

(René Descartes, *Tractatus de homine et de formatione fœtus*,
Amsterdam, Elsevier, 1677)

In the Cowlshaw Collection there is a 1677 edition of *De Homine* by René Descartes, the first text on physiology in the Western World. His concept of brain function was the skin was moved by external stimuli that pulled on nerve filaments to open valves in the ventricles allowing animal spirits to be released from the ventricles into the nerves triggering muscle movement. All this was regulated by the pineal gland.

The development of the achromatic lens in 1826 improved microscopy allowing scientists to see nucleated cells (and thus, structure) more clearly.

In July 1891, the German anatomist Wilhelm von Waldeyer formulated the neuron doctrine. This has been the basis on brain function and how the nervous system is organised. It states that the cell theory applies to the nervous system.

Four years earlier, Fridtjof Nansen in his doctoral thesis, was the first to publish experimental evidence in favour of the neuron doctrine providing the bridge between the network concept of Camillo Golgi, and the view of the nerve cell as an individual entity proposed by Santiago Ramón y Cajal.

Nansen was a remarkable individual, a renaissance person like Descartes, integrating information from other sources and cultures into his own work. He was a founder of modern polar exploration, zoologist, oceanographer and author. He played a key role when Norway gained independence from Sweden. He was a diplomat, Rector of St Andrew's University and a leader in the repatriation of POWs and refugees after World War I for which he was awarded the 1922 Nobel Peace Prize. When Nansen was born in 1861, the outline of the World was virtually completed. He helped to fill in the details.

Philip Sharp is a general surgeon in Sydney. He graduated in medicine from the University of Sydney in 1972, and obtained his Fellowship in 1980. He has recently been awarded a Fellowship of the Australian College of Biomedical Scientists.

He is secretary of the RACS Section of Surgical History, and has enjoyed presenting several surgical history papers at Annual Scientific Congresses. His paper on surgical footballers was especially well received.

He is on the committee of the NSW Society of the History of Medicine. But his real interests, he insists, are rugby, rowing, jazz and red wine!

JOHN BROWN'S BOOK

(James Syme, *A Treatise on the Excision of diseased Joints*, Edinburgh, Sutherland & Knox, 1831, and *The Principles of Surgery*, Edinburgh, Carfrae & Son, 1837)

James Syme (1799-1879) was a professor of surgery in Edinburgh for the middle third of the 19th century. He was a gifted surgeon and a highly-regarded teacher, and among his protégés was John Brown, a son of the Manse, who went on to become a respected general practitioner in Edinburgh, but was moreover to enjoy a lifelong friendship with the Syme family and to be, in a sense, Syme's Boswell.

Wyn Beasley is an orthopaedic surgeon who has turned to the writing of history. He is a former vice-president of the college, has been chairman of the sections of Surgical History and Military Surgery and, as reader to the Gordon Craig Library, was the initiator of the Cowlshaw Symposia which have now become a part of the College calendar. His history of the College's first 75 years, *The Mantle of Surgery*, was published in 2002, the year in which he was a Hunterian professor of the English College. This year he is contributing to the Symposium on his way home from delivering a Gordon-Taylor lecture at the Edinburgh College, and discussing his latest book, a medical history of Winston Churchill, with Sir Martin Gilbert, who was the official Churchill biographer.

THE ART OF PRESERVING HEALTH: STUDIES ON THE MEDICAL SUPERVISION OF PHYSICAL EXERCISE

(Hieronymus Mercurialis, *De arte gymnastica libri sex*, Venice, 1587)

To the ancient Greeks physical exercise was an essential part of life and, as a consequence, so were injuries. Long after the end of the Classical Greek era, Roman conquest brought a shift toward martial training, increased professionalism in athletic competition and a weak strand of restorative gymnastics kept barely intact by the likes of Galen. While the crux of these teachings was the use of exercise, among other things, to promote and maintain health, the emphasis began to shift to concerns about the health of athletes and the medical problems brought about by exercise. The Greek system utilised three categories:

1. Orthopaedic (to prevent and to cure bodily injury and sickness),
2. Military (for the purposes of war), and
3. Athletic or pedagogical (encompassing games, dance and acrobatics).

The modern concept of sports medicine emphasizes the first rather than the two latter.

Alan Thurston was born and educated in Feilding, New Zealand. Was awarded the Manawatu Co-operative Society Scholarship and entered the University of Otago, 1966. Graduated MB, ChB in 1972 with distinction in anatomy and the David White Prize in Clinical Surgery. Undertook compulsory military training as a medical student and was commissioned as a medical officer in 1971. Trained in orthopaedic surgery with an interest in hand surgery in Wellington and was admitted as FRACS in 1980 and FNZOA in 1982.

Graduated MSc (Oxon, bioengineering) in 1982 and then returned to New Zealand to take up a post as Senior Lecturer in Orthopaedic Surgery at the Wellington School of Medicine and Health Sciences and Consultant Orthopaedic and Hand Surgeon at Wellington Hospital. He was awarded the Broadfoot Memorial Essay Prize, 1985, the ABC Travelling Fellowship (Orthopaedic Associations of: NZ, Australia, South Africa,

Great Britain, United States of America and Canada) in 1986 and the Douglas Iverach Postgraduate Fellowship in Medicine in 1991. Promoted to Associate Professor 1996

Clinical interests include hand surgery (is a Past-President of the New Zealand Society for Surgery of the Hand) and amputations and limb fitting. Research interests are centred on hand surgery and biomaterials, the biomechanical aspects of amputee stumps and prosthetics with a particular interest in the history of surgery.

Was the Commanding Officer of the 2nd NZ Field Hospital from 1986-90 and was awarded the Efficiency Decoration (honour awarded by the Governor General under authority delegated by Her Majesty The Queen in recognition of service to the Territorial Force of the New Zealand Army) in 1987. Has recently retired as the Assistant Director of Medical Services, Army General Staff, New Zealand Army in the rank of colonel and as Honorary Surgeon to His Excellency the Governor General of New Zealand.

KENNETH FITZPATRICK RUSSELL MEMORIAL LECTURERS

1991	Prof. Harold Attwood
1994	Dr R. Andrew Cuthbertson
1996	Prof. John H. Pearn
1998	Prof. A. Wyn Beasley
2000	Prof. Donald A. Simpson
2002	Prof. Alan J. Thurston
2004	Hon. Prof. Sam Mellick
2006	Mr A. Wyn Beasley
2008	Mr Marius Fahrer