

Bournemouth meeting report.

31 members and 14 accompanying partners attended the meeting in Bournemouth, hosted by President Tony Markus, on the 15th and 16th November 2007, based at Marriot Highcliffe Hotel in Bournemouth.

Most members arrived on Thursday afternoon in time for tea prior to the annual general meeting. That evening there was an informal dinner in the Sea Breezes Restaurant.

On Friday 16th November, after breakfast, the Scientific Meeting was held in the Sherbourne Suite in the hotel.

The meeting started with Tony introducing Professor Jonathon Cole, of the University of Southampton, who is also a clinical Neurophysiologist at Poole Hospital. Jonathon gave a talk entitled 'Inside Moebius' which is also the title of his forthcoming book. He spoke about the effects of living without facial expression and its effect on emotional experience and emotional expression on those with the syndrome.

Martin Leggett, an ENT Surgeon, gave a talk entitled 'tipping the balance.' His clinical interest is in clefts and problems of balance; he talked about the problems of disorders of balance with interesting case histories.

Adrian Harvey, an Orthopaedic Surgeon, spoke to us about the advances in knee surgery. Surgery for soft tissue problems and arthritis is becoming more aggressive now in the UK as it previously has been in the USA. Injured cruciate ligaments are now being repaired with Hamstring grafts. Meniscal surgery is becoming more conservative as previous patients who had meniscectomy had developed osteoarthritis so repairs are carried out and the meniscus allowed to heal. Knee replacement has essentially become a resurfacing procedure. Surgery has become minimally invasive using smaller instruments and smaller incisions.

Andrew Clark, a general surgeon in Poole, talked about advances in colorectal surgery. He talked about pelvic floor problems, incontinence, particularly caused by obstetric trauma, and the advantages of primary repair. Hernia repairs, frequently carried out with endoscopes, are more successful with little significant pain.

After lunch Desmond Tham, a dental surgeon, gave a talk about his years as a volunteer with Mercy Ships, a global charity, which has operated hospital ships in developing nations since 1978. Desmond introduced the work by telling us how the ship 'Anastasis' was bought from a scrap yard and refitted as a hospital facility for \$1 million and about his six years as a volunteer working on it in developing nations. He gave accounts of many cases of facial tumours and deformity. The members gave generously for a collection for the charity during his talk.

Professor Terry Hamblin gave a talk on advances in gene therapy, a technique which is being used for vaccination against disease, mostly cancer, but which appears to be most useful for severe combined immunodeficiency disease. Thomas Hickish, a Consultant Medical Oncologist, talked about advances in Oncology. He focused on the effect of lifestyle on cancer risk and recovery. High Body Mass Index is associated with an increased risk of breast cancer and risk of recurrence after treatment.

Finally Ian Downie, our colleague from Salisbury, talked about his interest in Veterinary Maxillofacial Surgery. Initially Ian was approached by a Veterinary Surgeon who was a specialist in ENT, for advice and help with a German Shepherd dog with hyper salivation. He described the case and its management and then gave a summary of several of the other animals he had jointly operated on.

The meeting was supported by several commercial firms and there was a varied trade exhibition during the meeting. Finally, our President gave a summary of the arrangements that he has made with his friend Professor Roberto Brusati for the next meeting on May 15th and 16th 2008.

During the scientific meeting the accompanying persons went on a tour of Wessex leaving the Hotel by coach at 9.30 am. They visited two Thomas Hardy sites on the way to Dorchester where they went on a guided walk of various sites of interest and after lunch proceeded to Lulworth Cove before returning to the Hotel.

In the evening the Annual Dinner was held in the Dorchester Suite in the Hotel. This was the first formal dinner of the club that accompanying persons attended.

On the following morning 18 members proceeded to Tony's home in Tarrant Keyneston, where we were treated to an excellent buffet lunch.