

Oral Surgery Club of Great Britain

Worcester meeting

9th November 2018

The Autumn Meeting of the OSCGB was held at Stanbrook Abbey near Worcester under the presidency of Phil Earl. An interesting programme of talks was presented by members of the local medical establishment.

Mr John Black; former consultant surgeon in Worcester and past President of the Royal College of Surgeons, spoke about **Surgeons, War and Worcester**. He discussed the role of Surgeons in Nelson's navy when all 600 ships had their own surgeon and the efforts required to train enough surgeons, 50 at a time, at the RCS. World War One had many documented accounts of heroic deeds by surgeons, including several with Worcester connections. 7 surgeons won VC's, principally in WW1, and two of the only three double VC's ever awarded were gained by surgeons. However, after WW1 it was realized that medical personnel were too precious a resource to be risked on the front line and the role call of VC's ended.

The question **What's wrong with my mouth? Ask a Rheumatologist** was posed by Ashok Rai, Professor of... Rheumatology. He presented three patients with Rheumatological conditions and oral findings as pertinent aspects of their presentation. These presentations included the inherited disorder Sticklers Syndrome with a cleft palate evident, the protein folding disorder amyloid with a swollen tongue and small vessel vasculitis with an area of tongue necrosis. An erudite synopsis of each of these conditions was given.

Beekeeping was the subject of Martin Porter, a consultant ENT surgeon. He highlighted their role as top pollinators and outlined the structure of their colonies with female workers, male drones and queen bees. With deforestation and woodland management removing their natural habitat of hollow trees, he outlined the essential features and evolution of man-made hives. The need to swarm with a new queen as the old queens eggs dry up and the handling of a swarm were discussed, together with feeding and the means of harvesting honey. An account of disorders and predators' concluded this most interesting talk.

The retired and honoured GP, Dr John Harcup OBE, outlined **900 years of medicine in Worcester**. A millennium ago wise women and monks were the source of medical treatment in cathedrals and lay hospitals. The balance of the humors; phlegm, black bile, yellow bile and blood was paramount with blood letting a key means of restoring the balance. This phlegmatic, melancholic, choleric and sanguine approach was supplemented by cupping and uroscopy at the Malvern Priory by the mid 14th Century. By the 16th Century, waters from Malvern's Holy Wells were being promoted as an aid to healing many disorders and within a few years 1000 bottles a year were being transported all over England. In 1746 the Silver Street Infirmary was established by the Bishop of

Worcester to treat anyone who wasn't dying, pregnant, infectious or a child. A new Infirmary built in 1771 served the population until its recent replacement and proved home to a range of eminent Worcester physicians, including Dr Hastings who was instrumental in the introduction of the Anatomy Act, the registration of deaths, the Vaccination Act and the founding of the GMC.

Julia Sen, Consultant Ophthalmologist, outlined **Oculoplastic Surgery and training**. She discussed a number of conditions, many of them age related, including exposure keratopathy, ectropion and entropion and floppy eyelid syndrome and their management.

Medicine in the Premier League was the topic of Mark Gillett, Head of Medicine at Nottingham Forest Football Club. He outlined his career progressing from Emergency Medicine training via Sports Medicine to becoming Team Doctor for Chelsea, West Brom and Forest. He stressed the advances introduced over the past 15 years following previous episodes of major on-field injuries with lack-lustre immediate care. The challenges in caring for young footballers who would rather play in the Premier League than protect their health in middle age were described together with the use of match metrics to guide training and prevention of injuries. Finally, the experience of working with high profile managers and coping with relegation was discussed.

Steven Thrush, Consultant Breast Surgeon, outlined his experience in **Developing a breast cancer service** from an initial well meaning but old-fashioned provision. His efforts started when still a trainee by establishing the Mammary Fold group of trainees to bring a coherence to this emerging group of young surgeons. The new PFI hospital in Worcester wasn't flexible enough to accommodate a modern breast service and so he set up a charity the 'Worcester Breast Unit Campaign', which did exactly what it said on the tin, to raise funds for a stand-alone facility. The efforts weren't helped by a time of change in Worcester including 4 Chief Execs, 5 Chief Operating Officers, 3 Chairman and numerous business cases. However, the money kept rolling in and, with local support and an independent review, the Unit was opened in 2017. The service aims to provide aesthetic mastectomies with breast conservation where possible, a range of breast reconstruction options and post-operative care including targeted physiotherapy and nutritional advice.

Following this stimulating day, members and partners gathered in the bar prior to transfer to Worcester Cathedral where we were treated to a series of presentations on the extensive crypt, the Nave containing the final resting place of King John and the library where we could see and handle many medical books from the Middle Ages. Following a choral entertainment by the Cathedral choristers, the party adjourned to the Chapter House for a convivial meal to round off a successful meeting.

Jon Hayter

Honorary Secretary OSCGB