

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*

As the end of the year approaches, we are looking forward to an exciting 2026. There are two important conferences in beautiful locations. Our own annual meeting will be in Edinburgh from 8-10 May, hosted by the Royal Pharmaceutical Society's Scottish office, and organised by our Vice-President, **Catherine Walker**. Edinburgh is a hotspot for the history of medicine and we plan to build in joint activities with sister institutions. Please save the date in your diary, and consider giving a paper – the call is overleaf.

Several of us also plan to attend the centenary Congress of the International Society for the History of Pharmacy in Innsbruck, 2-5 September 2026. An amazing programme, with many excursions, is already online at <https://ishp2026.com/> with the call for papers open to the end of March. At the Congress we will be remembering **Dr Andreas Winkler**, distinguished pharmacy historian and instigator of this Congress, who died earlier this year.

In the meantime, your committee is meeting for an away day, kindly hosted by the Royal Pharmaceutical Society, on 5 February. This is an opportunity for us to step aside from the running of the Society and to think about how we can best support the history of pharmacy over the next decade or so. We look forward to sharing our thoughts with you.



WWW.BSHP.ORG

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A New Pharmacy Display Down Under

BSHP member, **Jon Dickson** (above), has shared photos of a new history display in the School of Pharmacy, University of Newcastle, Australia. With the aim to engage current students in the profession's history, he and another local retired pharmacist have created an eye-catching mini-exhibition in just four-metres of floor space. The pharmacy school is located in Hunter Valley and is only 20 years old, but the first pharmacy in the area was recorded in 1838.

Can you help? Dr David Goodrum picked up the brass object on the right in a charity shop and asks if any members can shed light on its history and provenance.

Any tips, please email over to:
davidgoodrum@talktalk.net

If you have any notes or queries, please email: Kim info@bshp.org

Society of Apothecaries Adopt-a-book scheme

The Apothecaries' rare books collection of some 250 largely medical and herbal texts date from the 16th century to the mid-19th century and includes volumes in need of conservation. The ongoing scheme aims to restore these volumes for research and display use. Individuals are invited to sponsor the restoration of a book for which they will be acknowledged in a bookplate, or it is also possible to support one in memoriam. Examples of publications currently on the priority list are *The Gardener's Kalender* by Philip Miller, 1732; *Pharmacopoeia Bateana*, 1719; and *Epitomes Omnium Galeni*, 1548

Contact: archivist@apothecaries.org



A Mystery Mortar?



Peter Homan
Small Grant Award

Apply for up to £500 - Deadline 30 May 2026
<https://www.bshp.org/awards>

8-10 May, 2026

BSHP ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Theme: Pharmacy Communities:

Local & Global Perspectives

📍 *Royal Pharmaceutical Society, Edinburgh*



We hope you will be able to join us in beautiful Edinburgh for a sociable weekend of talks, visits and our Annual General Meeting.

Call For Papers

We welcome short talks (20 minutes), posters or panel submissions, either directly linked to the conference theme or any other aspect of pharmacy history that you're currently exploring. Topics can explore the history of Scottish pharmacy, as well as international perspectives.

You do not have to be an experienced speaker or seasoned researcher to take part - we are always very keen to support those new to pharmacy history. Perhaps you'd like to explore the history of a specific pharmacy? You might have a case study showcasing how you brought pharmacy history to your local community? You could explore the philanthropic work of a pharmacy figure.

Please Contact Conference Organiser **Catherine Walker** (conference@bshp.org), with a short outline of your proposed contribution (250 words) - or with any queries – **by 6 February, 2026**.

Full programme details including an associated social programme and booking form will be issued with the Spring issue of our Gazette and via our website at www.bshp.org/events.

Please note Accommodation will not form part of the booking, Early booking of accommodation is recommended. Options include: Premier Inn Hub, Haymarket; Voco Hotel; The Resident Hotel. Other options are available.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS:

Beth Austin, Kendal
Annabel Oates, Southsea
Jane Wolstencroft, Reading

GAZETTE HISTORY HIGHLIGHT:

As seen in the banner image from the Wellcome Collection, an x-ray of Foxglove, *Digitalis purpurea* L. The plant is the source of the cardiac glycoside digitoxin used in cases of heart failure. William Withering first published on its use for dropsy in 1785. The first branded digoxin tablets were licensed by the US Food and Drug Administration in 1954.

OTHER EVENTS

Wednesday 4 Feb 2026, 5:30pm - 7:45pm

Representing medicine in the past
Richard Ormond CBE, art historian and
Stephanie Snow, Professor of Health, History
and Policy at the University of Manchester.
In-person or online.

Wednesday 11 Mar 2026, 5:30-7.45pm

The Norah Schuster Prize Ceremony,
In-person, Royal Society of Medicine, London

All the above organised by the History of Medicine Society. www.rsm.ac.uk/events

BSHP NEWS

Membership news

You should have received with this mailing an invoice for your 2026 membership fee, which remains the same this year at £30 for full members and £15 for students.

When paying your subscription, include the invoice reference in your payment method to make it easier to attribute the payment to the right member. If you are eligible, please also consider adding Gift Aid to your subscription payment. This enables us to reclaim UK tax from HMRC on subscriptions and donations.

Many thanks for your continued support, which allows us to promote pharmacy history through the publishing of the *Pharmaceutical Historian* and by organising events such as our annual conference and online lecture series. Matthew Johnston, Honorary Secretary

Pharmaceutical Historian

With this mailing you are receiving the December 2025 issue of *Pharmaceutical Historian*, (Volume 55, Number 4), our flagship international journal.

BSHP ONLINE LECTURE SERIES

[BOOKINGS: BSHP.ORG/EVENTS](https://www.bsHP.org/events)

RESCHEDULED: January 2026, 6.30 -7.30 pm (BST)

LUCY JANE SANTOS

Author & Researcher

Radioactive Remedies: The unlikely history of uranium and radium in pharmaceuticals



Monday 15 June 2026, 6.30 - 8.00 pm

DR STUART ANDERSON

Editor, *Pharmaceutical Historian*

What's in a name - College of Pharmacy or Pharmaceutical Society? Deciding what's best for British Pharmacy 1841 to 2026

& CATHERINE WALKER

Museum Manager, Royal Pharmaceutical Society

The history of the RPS Museum



Thank you for your patience while we re-upload past talks to www.youtube.com/@PharmHist

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