

BSHP GAZETTE

NEWS FROM THE BRITISH SOCIETY FOR THE HISTORY OF PHARMACY



A note from the President

*Professor Mark Nesbitt, Senior Research Leader,
Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew*

Heartfelt thanks are due to all involved in our very enjoyable Edinburgh meeting. The Scottish headquarters of the Royal College of Pharmacy (as we must now remember to term the Royal Pharmaceutical Society) proved an excellent base for three days of talks and excursions, all masterminded by our vice-president Catherine Walker. Conversation naturally turned to our next meetings; we have in mind two equally interesting locations, both with a wide range of attractions and affordable accommodation. We are looking at Norwich for 2027, recently named the most liveable city in the UK, home to the Museum of Norwich at Bridewell with its historic pharmacy, and rich related collections at the Cathedral Library and the Castle Museum.

We are also in touch with colleagues in Cardiff for 2028, which would mark the 60th anniversary of our first meeting, which was in Cardiff. At both sites we'll be looking to partner with regional societies so as to increase attendance while keeping our friendly ambience. We will also revisit the option of remote attendance, which works so well for our regular talks - it does depend on the IT facilities at our host auditorium.

At our AGM we were glad to welcome a new committee member, Kevin Goodman, medical historian and communicator, and author of "Ouch! The History of Arrow Wound Treatment" among many other works. The committee will now be putting our five-year strategic plan into action - on which more to report in the next newsletter.

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A NEW MEDIA PARTNERSHIP

We are delighted to announce a new media partnership.

HOSPITAL PHARMACY EUROPE

Hospital Pharmacy Europe (HPE)

Focusing on three key pillars of inspiring best practice, addressing unmet patient need and supporting multidisciplinary working, HPE serves a growing community of senior clinical and hospital pharmacists.

Regular news, clinical trial summaries, analytical features, interviews, expert commentary and case studies are shared across the website, newsletters and social media, alongside roundtable reports, handbooks, video articles and study days, to deepen hospital pharmacists' understanding of clinical, practice and professional topics and ensure optimal patient care.

HPE also collaborates with professional societies and associations to spotlight key issues facing hospital pharmacists and provide guidance on navigating challenges and opportunities in a pressured hospital environment.

The media partnership

The media partnership aims to support these goals and raise the profile of the BSHP among HPE's audience.

Quarterly articles from BSHP committee members will promote the society to new members and encourage more engagement with pharmacy history. For HPE, the articles will add to the brand's library of expert content, providing readers with greater insights into the context of modern pharmacy, current practices and the historic and future trajectory of pharmaceuticals.

Commenting on the partnership, HPE editor Helena Beer, said:

'I'm thrilled to be working with the BSHP on this exciting partnership throughout 2026.

As pharmacy and pharmaceuticals have such a rich and fascinating history, there's so much that can be learnt from the BSHP committee members and I'm looking forward to sharing this with our readers, as well as supporting the success of this important organisation.'

Dr Kim Walker, BSHP's programme secretary for the Gazette and website, added: 'The BSHP committee look forward to sharing the fascinating medical history of pharmacy to current practitioners and warmly encourage people to reach out to us if they are interested in their own pharmacy history research project or BSHP membership.'

Profile: Helena Beer

Editor, *Hospital Pharmacy Europe*



Originally from Leeds, Helena studied BA History at the University of Leicester followed by a Magazine Journalism Masters

at Kingston University, London. One of her first journalism roles was in the community pharmacy trade press where her interest in the subject developed. She was one of the Professional Publishers Association's '30 under 30' winners for her work during the Covid-19 pandemic. Now, with a focus on hospital pharmacy, establishing a media partnership with the BSHP has allowed her to combine her love of history with her professional interests. She looks forward to sharing BSHP's insights with her readers.

BSHP CONFERENCE 2026: REPORT

By Catherine Walker, Conference organiser

Our 2026 conference, held in Edinburgh, saw a packed programme of talks, visits, tours and social events enjoyed by a mix of BSHP members and new attendees. With a new format this year, the conference took place over three days, with optional excursions on the Friday and Sunday, and a formal programme on the Saturday. Optional dinners were arranged in Edinburgh on Friday and Saturday evenings.

The conference started with a visit on the Friday afternoon to the latest exhibition at the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh. Rachel Forrest, Heritage Engagement Officer led delegates on a tour of *Rag: A History of Blood*. Highlights included William Harvey's *De Mortu Cordis*, a varnished copy of *Breathing a Vein* by James Gillray and the Blood Bag Project by artist Leigh Bowser, exploring the importance of blood transfusions. Delegates also saw a Leech jar that had been loaned by the Royal College of Pharmacy, sparking a lively discussion on leech husbandry!

The Saturday programme was based in the office of the newly renamed Royal College of Pharmacy (formerly the Royal Pharmaceutical Society), a beautiful townhouse situated in Melville Street.

The following short papers, covering the usual wide range of research topics, were given throughout the morning and afternoon:

GAZETTE COVER IMAGE HISTORY:

Great Northern Central Hospital, Holloway Road, London: the pharmacy, 1912. After the reorganisation of the NHS, the facilities moved to other hospitals and it closed in 1992. The building was demolished in the mid 1990s.

- *A History of Pharmacist Antivaxxers* by Anthony C. Cartwright
- *The Trajković Apothecary Family – The History of a Victim* by Jelena Manojlovic MPharm, University of Belgrade, Faculty of Pharmacy
- *Understanding and Constructing Apothecary Communities in 16th Century England* by Miss Elizabeth Austin
- *“First, Do No Harm”: Charles H. Gare, Chemist and Druggist and the Murder of Joseph Oliver, 1869* by Kevin Goodman
- *A MANX Medicinal Mixture: Sharing pharmacy history with the community in the Isle of Man* by Paul Richard Lewin MRPharmS
- *The Medical, Pharmaceutical and Historical Significance of Peter of Spain's Aqua Mirabilis* by Dr Maria do Sameiro Barroso M.D, Portuguese Medical Association

In the afternoon delegates enjoyed a fascinating keynote speech by Sophie Goggins from the National Museum of Scotland on Eric Knott, The Last Apothecary, and his work at the Royal Public Dispensary. This prompted reminiscences of the man himself, and the way pharmacy education has changed in Scotland in particular, and across Great Britain in general.

Delegates finished the day with the Annual General Meeting, including an update from President Mark Nesbitt on the new strategic plan for 2026 – 2030. The new plan focuses on:

- Strengthening research
- Supporting museum, library and archive collections
- Education and dissemination
- Sustaining membership and the Society

The final excursion for the conference took place on Sunday, hosted by Professor Olwen Grace, Deputy Director of Science (Collections) and Curator of the Herbarium, with a guided tour of the Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh by Dr. Gregory Kenicer, Botanist at the RBGE, exploring the medicinal plants in the gardens.

Peter Homan
Small Grant Award

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

Delegates finished with refreshments in the Botanic Cottage, which had been moved from its original site in Leith Walk where the Botanic Gardens once stood, to its current location in the gardens, thanks to a Heritage Lottery grant.



Many thanks to our hosts for their fantastic hospitality and to our speakers for a thoroughly enjoyable programme. It was agreed at the AGM that we would investigate Norwich as next year's venue, with more details forthcoming.

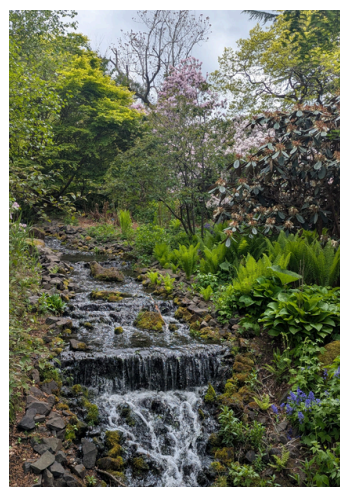
See you next year!



Call for Committee Nominations

Fancy joining us as on the committee? We have spaces for committee members. Any interested parties can view the officers on the committee here: <https://www.bsph.org/officers>

Nominations by email to president@bsph.org.



Left column: Delegates tour of the Edinburgh Botanic Gardens. Top: Delegates at the conference. Bottom left: More of the gardens. Bottom right: The Royal College of Pharmacy, Edinburgh.

A BSHP LEGACY

By leaving a gift in your Will you could help support future research into the history of British pharmacy.

If you would like to discuss this, please email Treasurer, Jemma Houghton: treasurer@bsph.org

**Peter Homan
Small Grant Award**

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OTHER EVENTS

Saturday 20 June

University of St. Andrews

Scottish Society for the History of Medicine

Summer meeting & Poynter Lecture

See website for announcements

www.sshm.co.uk

Friday 26 June, 7pm

Osler Lecture - Knowledge, Networks and

Influence – Osler, the Great War and

Cerebrospinal Fever,

Edward Wawrzynczak

Royal College of Physicians of London, 11 St

Andrews Pl, London NW1 4LE

www.bshm.org.uk

Thursday 9 July 2026, 4pm - 5pm

Francis Crick Institute

The Crick Lecture: Did LSD Turn Crick Into a

Neuroscientist? by Professor David Nutt,

Imperial College London

<https://www.crick.ac.uk/whats-on/crick-lecture-david-nutt>

September 2026 - March 2027

Society of Apothecaries

The History of Medicine course (DHMSA)

A mixture of online and in-person lectures

AcademicTraining@apothecaries.org

BSHP ONLINE LECTURE SERIES

[BOOKINGS: BSHP.ORG/EVENTS](http://BOOKINGS:BSHP.ORG/EVENTS)

Monday 15 June, 18.30 - 20.00 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

Museum Reports: The changing role of the Museum at the Pharmaceutical Society.



Monday 19 October, 18.30-19.30 BST

KATHLEEN CRUZ GUTIERREZ

Assistant Professor, History, University of California, Santa Cruz

A Narrative of Reiteration and Repetition: Medicinal Plants, Nationhood, and the Postwar Philippines

Our past lectures are now being regularly uploaded to:

www.youtube.com/@PharmHist

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