



SFF

Journal of the RSM Senior Fellows Forum

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Cover: 'Up the spout' inside the lift chimney, Battersea Power Station, John Skipper

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Editorial

Catherine Sarraf

An important event, which due to similar out-put times appears little in this issue of the SFF journal, is any account of the one-day symposium **Recent Advances in Medicine and Surgery** which takes place at the RSM annually, usually on the first Thursday in December. This whole day of up-to-date lectures is the showcase organised by the Senior Fellows Forum. By definition, the great part of our careers by 2024 is complete, thus the symposium is avidly followed to keep us in close touch with the modern movers and shakers of current medicine and surgery. The scope of lectures is always wide-ranging, thus interesting and accessible to us all. Leading experts in the chosen topics address us and encourage discourse between us, more senior people and recent successes in clinical activity of all descriptions. This year the conference takes place on the **5th of December**, and lectures can be attended either in person or on Zoom; there are eight main sessions (through the morning and afternoon) with a splendid lunch in the middle. Thus we have the opportunity to chat in an informal way with our presenters as well as with further Fellows of the SFF. All lectures are written up and will appear in the next (April) issue of this journal. A splendid day for all.

On a general note, our Election has come and gone and we have Sir Keir Starmer; our Budget has come and gone and we have Rachel Reeves; the American Election has come and gone and we (and the rest of world, in its way) have Donald Trump. By springtime it will be time for us to have a holiday! A number of us SFF Fellows all decided to take the same cruise together. This is it, if anyone else fancies booking up to join us!

Bruges, Medieval Flanders, Amsterdam and the Dutch Bulbfields - MS Oscar Wilde.

April 2025

Riviera (European River Cruises)

1.4.25 – 8.4.25

I have been dealing with a very efficient 'consultant cruise manager' called Claire Maguire.

Claire.Maguire@rivieratravel.co.uk,
01283 742300.

One has to choose which standard cabin one requires, and from which airport one wants to depart. Prices differ according to those requirements but it's around **£2500pp**. Everything is on the website, just enter Riviera, the cruise name and date, for all details in full.

Claire is very helpful, and once one has contacted her, she leads one through the details, with great patience.

I do SO hope you decide to come! Claire recognises my name, either as Catherine Sarraf or as Catherine Alison (and Pat Last as Pat Last).

For more information, ask Catherine Sarraf (alison.catherine872@gmail.com) or Pat Last (patlbnl75@gmail.com)

Forthcoming Events

Programmes

Internal Events

Jane Reeback

2025

20 February **Alyssa Gilbert,**
Climate change: a closer look
at the challenge and solutions

20 March **Michael O' Brien,**
Hindu mythology: Vishnu's
avatars, Krishna and Rama

17 April **Shane O'Rourke,**
Grand Duchess Elena Pavlovna
and Princess Isabel and the
freeing of serfs and slaves
in Russia and Brazil

15 May **Judith Foy,**
Art and medicine: a historical
trawl through the pathology we
can find on the museum wall

19 June **Sir Jim Smith,**
Two hundred years of science
and conservation

External Events

Sue Weir

(Please contact Sue if you have any queries: **Tel:** 07713 402651 **Email:** sue.weir@btinternet.com)

Cancellations – contact Amanda Husak: amanda.husak@rsm.ac.uk

12 February

Apothecaries Hall & St Paul's Cathedral. A day-long event at these two exciting venues

Meet 10.15am exit barriers of Blackfriars underground station and 5 minute walk to the Apothecaries Hall, where we'll have a private tour of the Hall, home of the City Livery company founded in 1617 from which emerged today's General Practitioners in 1815.

Then free time for a self pay lunch.

1.30pm Meet on steps of St Paul's Cathedral for a private guided tour of the Floor, Triforium to see the great model, Trophy Room, Library and spectacular views down the nave (**there are 141 easy winding steps up to the Triforium & NO LIFT**) Finally down to the crypt to view the memorials to Wren, Wellington & Nelson, painters, medical men, & more.

3.30pm Finish - a cup of tea can be taken in the crypt cafe!

Cost: £55.00 per person

26 March

A guided tour to view the unique collection of theatrical portraits, at the Garrick Club, London

Meet 10.20am at the Garrick Club entrance, 15 Garrick St, WC2E 9AY, coffee followed by the tour of approximately one hour. Numbers limited to 20 people

Cost: £20.00 per person

Walks in 2025

29 April Exploring more hidden green spaces in the City

30 May Still waters and new buildings in the centre of London

11 June Finding the lost hospitals in Covent Garden

July (tbd) Exploring the squares, small streets and the village atmosphere of Kensington

Camera Club 2025 Richard Lansdown

Times of meetings 11am, location - the seminar suite, library RSM.

13 January	Members' Meeting	8 April	Members' Meeting
12 February	Speaker TBA	21 May	Speaker TBA
7 March	Barrie Parker <i>The Desert and Wildlife of Namibia</i>	21 May	Presentation Meeting

Contact: Richard Lansdown rglansdown@yahoo.co.uk

Abstracts and biographies of speakers

Climate change - a closer look at the challenge and solutions



by **Alyssa Gilbert**

20 February 2025

Climate change is one of the world's most pressing challenges. This talk will provide a brief update on our understanding of the challenge, but also dive deeper into solutions, with particular focus on solutions with a health dimension.

Alyssa has a background in climate policy and innovation and will explore some of the benefits that tackling climate change can bring, but also some of the solutions that we need to exercise with caution. There will be opportunity to ask questions and explore one's own particular areas of interest.

Alyssa Gilbert is the Director of Innovation at the Grantham Institute - Climate Change and the Environment at Imperial College London where she leads Imperial's climate change and sustainability innovation activities, linking innovative students, staff and alumni to opportunities to make a difference. She is the Director of Undaunted, a collaborative climate innovation activity between Imperial and the Royal Institution. Alyssa is the co-founder and co-chair of the UK Universities Climate Network, which was formed to bring together UK academic expertise on climate change ahead of the international climate negotiations, COP26, in November

2021. She is part of the One Planet Advisory Council, a group of sustainability experts, created by Insider to advise on climate coverage. Alyssa is also co-convening a new 2024 Master's programme on Cleantech Innovation, designed to educate budding climate innovators and create revolutionary cleantech solutions. Previously Alyssa was the Director of Policy and Translation at the Grantham Institute. Prior to joining the university, she worked at a specialist energy and climate consultancy for nearly 12 years on a range of climate change mitigation and adaptation topics. Alyssa has worked with many local, national and international organisations on climate change activities. She has also been a member of the Natural Environment Council's Advisory Network.

Hindu Mythology - Vishnu's Avatars, Krishna and Rama



by **Michael O'Brien**

20 March 2025

This is a follow-up lecture by Dr Michael O'Brien to hear about the fascinating lives of two of Vishnu's Avatars, Krishna and Rama. He will explore the captivating life of Krishna: his birth, early years with the Gopis and Gopas, his uncle Kamsa's attempts to kill

him, his advice to Arjuna before the battle of Kurukshetra, and his reign as the ruler of Dwarka. Additionally, he will delve into the Ramayana, the epic story of Rama, which includes his marriage to Sita, his exile with Sita and his

brother Lakshmana, then the abduction of Sita by Ravana the demon King of Lanka, the meeting in the forest with Hanuman and Surgriva, the battle of Lanka and the rescue of Sita, and finally, Rama's reign as the ruler of Ayodhya.

Dr Michael O'Brien was a Consultant neurologist at Guy's and St Thomas' Hospital. He has a special interest in Hindu art, architecture and mythology and has visited South and Southeast Asia on numerous occasions. He has lectured to many Arts Societies (NADFAS) in the UK, France and Spain, and undertaken two extensive lecture tours in Australia, as well as lectures on Asian Art courses at The School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), the British Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum and in the USA.

Grand Duchess Elena Pavlovna and Princess Isabel and the freeing of serfs and slaves in Russia and Brazil



by Shane O'Rourke

17 April 2025

This talk will examine the pivotal role of two royal women in the emancipation of serfs in Russia in 1861 and slaves in Brazil in 1888. These two women were critical actors in the great drama of emancipation, but their contribution has largely been

forgotten. In an entirely male dominated political sphere these ladies through a combination of moral conviction, political intelligence and courage were able to decisively influence the course of emancipation in both countries. Female agency, politics and power will be the central themes of this talk.

Shane O'Rourke is a specialist in Russian and increasingly Ukrainian history, who has written in the past on the history of the Cossacks, Imperial Russia, Ukraine and the Soviet Union. He teaches in the History Department in the University of York.

Art and medicine - historical trawl through the pathology found on museum walls



by Judith Foy

15 May 2024

There has always been an interface between art and medicine: our births, deaths, diseases and all the vicissitudes of life have at some point been the subject of artists. As Vesalius, one of the most important early anatomists, observed,

'Illustrations greatly assist the understanding, for they place more clearly before the eyes what the text, no matter how explicitly, describes'. There is much pathology to be seen in the pictures on the walls of our art galleries. In this talk, you will have the opportunity to examine what can be found in the early anatomists from Galen to Damien Hirst, from Rembrandt to Henry Tonks. Art examines life in all its dimensions and endeavours to cast light upon the human condition.

Dr Judith Foy qualified at The Welsh National School of Medicine when there were quotas for women students, a concept unthinkable today. She trained in Anaesthetics at St. Mary's, Paddington then returned to Cardiff Royal Infirmary as a Research Registrar to Prof Mike Rosen in Obstetric anaesthesia and analgesia. She had two children early on then as a Senior Registrar went to Boston, USA for a dazzling year learning monitoring with the Swan Ganz catheter and exposure to the sort of massive trauma unseen in Cardiff. On her return she became a Consultant and took on Intensive Care for several years until she had her third child and moved to Cardiac Anaesthesia. At the same time she was the director of the Pain Clinic for 10 years which took her to New York. There she was involved with triage when 9/11 struck. On retirement she indulged her interest in the Arts by involvement with the Contemporary Art Society for Wales as Lecture Secretary. She is on the Board of Trustees for the Friends of the National Museum of Wales. In 2022 she was President of the History of Medicine Society of Wales.

The Zoological Society of London: Two hundred years of science and conservation



by Sir Jim Smith

19 June 2025

Jim Smith is a globally recognised developmental biologist whose research has focussed on inductive interactions in vertebrate development and on applying the principles of developmental biology to stem cell differentiation.

Most recently he and his colleagues have developed techniques to generate highly mature left ventricle-like cardiomyocytes from human pluripotent stem cells.

Jim's previous roles include Director of the Wellcome Trust/Cancer Research UK Gurdon Institute and Director of the MRC National Institute for Medical Research (NIMR), where he oversaw its transition to the Francis Crick Institute. He has also been Deputy CEO and Chief of Strategy at the Medical Research Council, and Director of Research and Group Leader at the Francis Crick Institute. Most recently he has been Director of Science and Director of Research Programmes at Wellcome, where he was responsible for establishing Wellcome's science strategy. He has a distinguished career in scientific research as a Fellow of the Royal Society (1993), a Fellow of the Academy of Medical Sciences (1998) and a member of the Academia Europaea (2000). He has also been awarded the EMBO Medal (1993) and the Waddington Medal (2013). Professor Smith was knighted in the 2017 Queen's New Year's Honours list. Two years ago Jim joined the Council of the Zoological Society of London, where he is now President, keen to help shape a world in which people and wildlife thrive.

Meetings report

Leonardo da Vinci. Anatomical studies. Anatomy and dissection in pre-Vesalian Italy

Leonardo was born in 1452 and although illegitimate, he was acknowledged by his lawyer father, and as such received a basic education. Latin, in which all the educational texts were written in those days however, was not part of his studies at this stage, and his later notes indicate that he was rather dismissive of book learning, but preferred to call himself a 'disciple of experience'. He moved to Florence when he was around 20 years of age and by 1472 had joined the painters Confraternity, the 'Company of St Luke', where he worked in the studio of Verrocchio. This was more a collaborative than master-assistant role, and at this time he painted the 'Annunciation'. By 1483 he had moved to Milan where his interests widened. This was the centre of the weapons industry, and he drew several cannon and gun barrels, and although there is no evidence that these were ever made, it expanded his range as an artist.

There was a sense in 15th century Italy that an artist could educate himself to gain intellectual knowledge, thereby becoming a more liberal artist. Here he studied architecture, engineering and began to assemble notes towards a treatise on painting, which was intended to equip an artist to be able to paint true to nature, based on observation of reality. This encompassed every aspect of the physical world, optics, geology, hydraulics and the human body. The scope of this was huge and was narrowed down to a treatise on the anatomy of the human body on which he was working as early as 1489. This should start with conception. His diagram of coition has several theoretical pathways later proven to be inaccurate. It would include drawings of the universal conditions of man; joy, with different ways of laughing, weeping, fighting, and labour.

His early drawings are based on a combination of observation, guesswork and received wisdom. The last, because at that time anatomical studies were expository, using established texts rather than investigative. He was able to dissect animals and some of these have been adjusted to help explain human anatomy. The drawing of the lungs done at this time looks as though it was a pig's lungs, put upright to make it look human. His dissection of a bear's foot was much more close to accurate, as this is the only large animal with a plantigrade gait like that of a human. Leonardo's observation of the tendon of flexor digitorum longus passing through the bifurcated flexor digitorum brevis is clearly seen. He found the same feature when he examined the human hand twenty years later. In 1489 he examined and drew a human skull very

Martin Clayton, Head of prints and drawing Royal Collection Trust at Windsor.



Da Vinci arm, Martin Clayton

accurately, to find the path of the sensory nerves and to understand the phenomenon of the senses relative to the emotions. The notes accompanying this do not match, because he described the cavities of the face as though they were equal, as he was still trying to attune a harmonious relationship, which he also tried to do in 'Vitruvian man' fitting a man into a square and a circle, according to ancient authority, but this hit a dead end because it does not work.

He was commissioned in the 1480s to model and cast a huge equestrian monument to Francesco Sforza in Milan. For this he dissected and made anatomical studies of many breeds of horse. The horse though is not an 'ideal' body, and this project petered out when Ludovico Sforza was overthrown by French forces. Leonardo returned to Florence where his horse studies were put to good use

in the unfinished painting of the Battle of Anghiari. By 1507 he had access to human subjects, and dissected a man who, just before he died, had told Leonardo that he was over 100 years old. At the same time he dissected a two year old child. He was therefore able to make a comparison of their blood vessels. This is the earliest study of the effect of coronary vascular occlusion in the elderly man, his vessels are tortuous, in comparison with the straighter vessels of the young subject.

By 1510 Leonardo was working in the University of Pavia with the Professor of Anatomy, Marcantonio della Torre. This collaboration meant that he had access to many corpses. He could now develop a more methodological approach, seeing how the detail of anatomy fitted into the whole. His intricate, accurate drawings date from this period. The notes are much less detailed and are often just reminders to himself. Bones and muscles became the focus of his investigations. He compiled a manuscript of 18 sheets with 240 individual drawings and over 13,000 words. He illustrated every bone in the body except the separate bones of the skull, and also most of the individual muscle groups. Nerves and vessels are occasionally included but it was the mechanics of the body that interested him.

His experience in architecture made him illustrate the body from all aspects, and his engineering experience led him to use exploded views of the bones and muscles. A serial dissection of the shoulder and arm and a rotating view of the same are particularly fine. In another series he builds up the hand and in yet another he breaks down function to simple movements. The drawings are a distillation of his observations following dissection. Any drawings made during dissection must have been messy and had necessarily been destroyed. The remaining ones show how Leonardo had extreme hand control, making the flexible tip of a quill draw exactly as he intended. The dissections and drawings were performed by the same hand, unlike those of Vesalius, which were published a few years later. However, when della Torre died of plague, Leonardo lost his easy access to human corpses, and he moved to Rome.

His final campaign was on the heart, which he realised was the centre of the vascular system. He made a glass model of the aortic valve and, using water with grass seed, demonstrated that the turbulent eddies in the Sinus of Valsalva closed the cusps of the valve. This mechanism was not appreciated again until late in the 20th century. Although he understood the movement of the heart, he had no conception of circulation of the blood, and always believed that the arterial and venous systems were separate. His last years were spent in France where he performed no anatomical work although he had all his drawings with him. He died in 1519, and all his drawings went to Italy with Francesco Melzi where a few artists had access to them. They were later sold to Pompeo Leoni who mounted them in several large albums. By 1630 they came into the Royal Collection, but were not published, therefore having little impact on the study of anatomy until the 20th century.

Questions followed, and the answers were of great interest: Leonardo was a most perceptive scientist, he had the ability to hold a snapshot view of what was happening, for example water flowing and bubbling, which he was able to hold in his mind and draw later. We are not privy to his professional relationships, but he must have had many discussions with colleagues especially at Pavia. He mirror-wrote, simply because he was left handed. Writing done in wet ink would have smudged had he written left to right. He was perfectly capable of writing left to right, as he did when he was annotating maps, and the handwriting was identical.



Da Vinci ankle, Martin Clayton

Leonardo was known as a serial non-finisher even in his lifetime, but this is probably because he was a perfectionist. He worked very slowly, partly due to external forces, and there were good engravers at the time who could have done the drawings practical justice. Drawings can all be seen online at Royal Collection Trust, UK, and in 'Leonardo da Vinci Anatomist' by our speaker, Martin Clayton, Royal Collection Publications. A Dover publication contains translations of the notes. There will also be some drawings by Leonardo in the Exhibition 'Drawing the Italian Renaissance' at the King's Gallery starting November 1st 2024.

We have permission to publish without cost the two drawings, shown, as I requested, and were supplied by Martin Clayton. Copyright, Royal Collection Enterprises/HM King Charles III 2024.

Ann Ferguson

External events reports

Rotherhithe to London Bridge

On the 10th of July, I was most fortunate to join 12 other SFF and RSM members on the latest of Sue Weir's wonderful historic walks around London. As ever, Sue provided detailed notes to facilitate writing this report. Rotherhithe means 'landing place for cattle' reflecting the major importance of the area for trade in medieval times. We strolled around the corner from Rotherhithe Overground Station to the Brunel Museum incorporating the Engine House to provide steam power for the construction of the Thames Tunnel, a remarkable pioneering feat of underwater engineering. In 1869 the tunnel was converted for a railway line to Wapping; one of the oldest sections of underground railway in the world. Next, the Mayflower pub which evoked memories of my student days. The pub is said to be close to the site from which the Pilgrim Fathers departed for Plymouth, Massachusetts in 1620. St Mary's Church opposite built in 1715 by John James, an associate of Christopher Wren, contains a memorial to Christopher Jones, Captain of the Mayflower. We also visited the grave of Prince Lee Boo from the Pelew Islands (Now Palau) who was sent to England for education but died of smallpox aged 20 in 1784. Across the road we noted St Mary Free School founded in 1613 by two seafarers to educate the sons of sailors. We also noted the grade II listed Grice's Granary circa 1780 and now Sands Films Studio.

We progressed along the Thames footpath to the Leaning Tower, previously the offices of Braithwaite and Dean, Thames lightermen, so called because they used smaller flat bottom boats to 'lighten the load'. Sue reminded us that a licence was now required to mudlark (scavenge) along the Thames. Next the Angel pub dating back to the 15th century enabling monks of Bermondsey Priory to refresh pilgrims. Captain James Cook was reputed to have drunk there. A little further along we came to the ruins of what was believed to be the Manor House of King Edward III (1312-1377). Opposite, also facing the Thames were splendid sculptures by Diane Gorvin commemorating Dr Alfred Salter, his wife Ada and daughter Joyce. Dr Salter, a Guy's graduate, practised in Bermondsey before WW1 and later became an MP. He and his wife, a social reformer, did much to improve the lives of slum dwellers in the area. Tragically their daughter died from scarlet fever aged eight.

Further along we paused at Cherry Gardens Pier where JMW Turner used considerable artistic licence to paint the 'Fighting Temeraire' picture in 1838, now in the National Gallery. The pier had also been visited and recorded by Samuel Pepys. Next the delightful Barge Gardens with its community of houseboats. More historical delights at St Saviour's Dock, outlet of the River Neckinger where pirates were executed (perhaps the name being derived from the term 'devil's neckcloth' a slang name for a hangman's

noose). Then what had been a slum named Jacob's Island, with noxious mudflats where Bill Sykes fell to his death in *Oliver Twist* (Dickens 1838) now the location of blocks of luxury apartments. The incredible mix followed, of converted warehouses, Shad Thames and Butler's Wharf, against the backdrop of Tower Bridge, the Bridge Theatre, the Tower of London, HMS Belfast and City Hall. The term 'wharf' derived from Old English and Germanic *hwearf*, meaning a heap or embankment. Our walk in the warm sunshine ended at Hays Galleria, a 1651 brew house and later a tea dock, now home to a plethora of eating and drinking establishments. This is within a stone's throw of Borough Market (1276) protected by an Act of Parliament (1754) stating that the market must remain 'an estate for use and benefit of the local community for ever'.

Another fascinating and engrossing experience thanks to Sue Weir. My final comment on heading to London Bridge Station was that the Bermondsey of my student days some 60 years ago was unrecognisable, but now aware of its hidden and past history, not on the medical school curriculum!

Jeffrey Rosenberg



Squirrel monkey trying to chill, Jeffrey Rosenberg and friends

‘Up the spout’ in Battersea Power Station



Group visiting Battersea Power Station, John Skipper

‘Up the spout’ was Sue Weir’s apt shorthand for our SFF visit to Battersea Power Station on 18th of September. It was also appropriate because, surprisingly, the station was not bombed in the war, possibly because its flumes were thought useful as a navigational aid for the Luftwaffe. In her usual firm but friendly style, Sue got most of us to meet at the new Northern Line Tube and thence into Turbine Hall A. Strung with banners and surrounded by emporia, and therefore different from Tate Modern, its sheer size is hugely impressive. As timed tickets are necessary, we went through several ‘holding’ points before arriving near to Chimney Lift 109. At these various waiting stages there were informative guides and plenty of maps, pictures and explanations of the origins, history, architecture and more. It was Giles Gilbert Scott (he of the restorations of the bombed-out House of Commons and much more) who designed the iconic Battersea Power Station A in the 1930s – B wasn’t finished till post WW2. Among other things we learned that the Station required 10,000 tons of coal per day in winter. That reminded some of the older amongst us of the London smog of December 1952. For a few days it was so bad that, walking over Westminster bridge from St Thomas’s, you couldn’t see more than a couple of yards in front of you. City pollution had been a massive problem for many years, but that ‘worst ever’ event did lead to massive and rapid change with the passing of the 1956 ‘Clean Air Act’, though it took many years to clean London’s buildings.

We were now ready for ‘The Power Station Experience’. That meant air-line type security, the excitement of crowding into Lift 109 and being warned of the need to climb the 39 steps. Those steps intervene at 67 metres up before entering the final stage and being ‘whooshed’ up to the viewing platform at 109 metres. It was a glorious day, and during the seven minutes allowed, we enjoyed the most spectacular views in all directions, south to the Shard (306 metres), east to the North Downs, and as far as Hampton Court in the west. Bizarrely, looking down on the approaches to Victoria Station at our feet, was rather impressive too.



The Royal Hospital Chelsea from Battersea Power Station, John Skipper



Southbank of the Thames from Battersea Power Station, John Skipper

It was all too soon ended, and we descended to the massing outlets below – restaurants, bars, high-end shops, a cinema, ‘pop-up’ workstations and much, much more. There was more to reflect on with coffee and a bite to eat, either inside or on the terraces outside. Station A was decommissioned in 1977, and B a few years later. What to do with these massive empty shells which despite being granted Grade 2* status, and numerous possible re-use schemes, became unloved and near derelict? Clearly not entirely unloved as (1) ‘Pink Floyd’, in promotion of a 1977 album, pulled off a spectacular, in attaching an inflatable pink pig to one of the chimneys and (2) a pair of peregrine falcons took up long term residence in one of the chimneys. When in 2012 a consortium of Malaysian investors bought the site and began the amazing re-creation which we enjoyed on our visit, their engineers had to make suitable provision for the falcons which are still there today. We are all tremendously grateful to Sue for discovering such an amazing event for us!

Michael Vaile

Wellington's monuments



Wellington arch, Ian Stephen and Ann Ferguson

On Friday 11th October, Sue Weir took us on a spectacular visit. Hyde Park Corner is a late 18th century idea for a western entrance to London and is home to the Wellington Arch - the nation's gratitude set in stone, iron and bronze for the great Duke's victory at Waterloo in 1815. It was first imagined by John Nash at the request of King George IV who lived down the road at Buckingham Palace - 'royal favour', expressing one man's pomp and circumstance and so fitting that the Royal Society of Medicine Senior Fellows Forum group met Sue Weir under this Arch on a sun-splashed day to pay homage to the military man whose actions enabled Great Britain to permanently wave goodbye to Napoleon. Wellington Arch was actually designed by Decimus Burton and built as an entrance to the new Green Park between 1826 and 1828, but crept through committees undergoing changes to its role, monumental top and position, over several decades, until it was rebuilt and conquered its current site in 1884; sadly the traffic which now charges around it moves much more quickly.



Cavalry exiting the Arch, Ian Stephen and Ann Ferguson

Visiting this arch is fascinating, as it offers three floors of interest - the top being given over to an Art Exhibition, allows access to the roof which provides spectacular views on all four flanks. The Household Cavalry in full regalia parade down Constitution Hill each day at 12.30 and pass under the Arch on their way to Hyde Park - we of course had a superb viewing platform and whilst we were not given any salute we were all very much impressed and showered praise upon Sue for providing such a shiny treat! Interestingly, the Arch also housed London's smallest Police Station, probably from its first build right up to 1959. Its rooms could accommodate a considerable number of officers in the event of a riot - perhaps we are better behaved now?



Wellington statue, Ian Stephen and Ann Ferguson

From the Arch we then proceeded in orderly fashion through the underpass to the north side of Hyde Park Corner to regroup in Apsley House where Sue delegated her General Command to a knowledgeable English Heritage guide, who led us in square formation around this fascinating home. The original red brick house was designed by Robert Adam for the 1st Baron Apsley who became the 2nd Earl Bathurst - the 3rd Earl sold the house, to Wellington's older brother, in 1807; our glorious Duke bought the lease from his brother in 1817 and set about remodeling and extending it using Benjamin Dean Wyatt as his architect. He then acquired the freehold in 1828 whilst living in Downing Street as Prime Minister. The duke lived in this house for over 30 years whenever he was in London, but the Bathurst family have been allowed to live in part of it throughout and still do to this very day. There are two spectacular visual treats here and one (to my mind anyway) surprise. The first treat is the huge marble statue of Napoleon as Mars the Peacemaker (akin to offering Ghengis Khan the Nobel Peace prize) in the ground floor hallway. The floor had to be reinforced to tolerate its weight and the surrounding spiral staircase was customised to accurately entwine this impressive art work by the sculptor Antonio Canova. It took over a decade to chisel and even longer to find a suitable

lodging for this former Emperor of France, as time obviously had shown this iconic man of Europe to be like his physical height, a little short, on peacemaking!



Statue of Napoleon, Ian Stephen and Ann Ferguson

The second treat is the very large dinner table with its very large silver and silver gilt centrepiece which was a gift (with a full dinner service) from the regent of Portugal; other grateful heads of Europe also presented porcelain fit for our victorious Wellington, and has impressed the legions of visitors ever since.

The surprise is that other than one room housing a cabinet with the duke's army uniforms and one oil canvas depicting the Battle of Waterloo, there is no sense of military might or fight in this mansion but instead its many rooms and walls are adorned with magnificent paintings - most given by the King of Spain after their capture at the Battle of Vitoria. Our guide shared that Wellington's favourite picture was 'The Agony In The Garden' by Antonio Allegri (1489-1534) depicting Christ beseeching God through an angel, perhaps reflecting on his career of sacrificing many men on the field of battle, or to disease during his various campaigns. My own favourite is a portrait of the duke on horseback, by Goya, which Wellington very much loathed (you certainly can never please all of the people but a good artist should never try) this picture was not hung during Wellington's lifetime.



Staircase Apsley House, Ian Stephen and Ann Ferguson

Our morning's education and entertainment came to its conclusion at the end of our guide's tour and a number of the group joined Sue in a local pub, hopefully to set the world to rights, perhaps in post 1815 or else our modern day. I descended the steps of Apsley House to saunter down Piccadilly then the Mall to join my son for lunch, humming two well-known tunes - one by Abba and the other by the Kinks - we all know both of them well as they also have become part of the Wellington monuments - one man's past brought back to the present. Many thanks to Sue for providing this lovely half day.

Richard Moore

Snake oil salesman Humphrey Gyde

The Second World War had been over for a year, leaving restrictions and rationing, though life was slowly returning to normal. Ten years old, I was in Newbury's marketplace with Hanni Gloor a level-headed Swiss girl, descendant of the religious reformer Huldrych Zwingli. She had stayed with us in England for the duration of the war, taking care of me (but later she rose through NHS nursing levels to become a matron). Her attention was caught by the crowd in front of a stall where the salesman was encouraging people to buy mainly toiletries and canned goods, which at that time were in short supply. It was a mock auction and members of his audience were bidding enthusiastically for anything offered them. Hanni had spotted photographic film on display. This had been unobtainable since 1939 so she bid and was successful. We stayed on a little as the salesman's patter was compulsive. When he offered to auction the contents of his closed fist there were several bids. The hand was proved empty. The victim was given something from the remaining stock restoring general goodwill. I remember the skill of this man in selling goods but then our finding the film fogged and useless!



Knocking on his own front door, Richard Lansdown

Article

Admiral Nelson's post-mortem: Mr Beatty's masterpiece?

Ian Douglas Fraser



Mr Beatty in attendance in The Death of Nelson by A W Devis, 1807. National Maritime Museum, Greenwich. Photograph by Ian Fraser

For two centuries it was believed that exsanguination following transection of a branch of the left pulmonary artery from a penetrating chest wound was the cause of Vice Admiral Lord Horatio Nelson's death, at the Battle of Trafalgar on the 21st October 1805. Mr William Beatty was the surgeon on HMS Victory and it fell to him to perform the postmortem on Nelson's preserved corpse on their return to England. Mr Beatty's detailed, but fragmented, report was documented in his book *Authentic Narrative of the death of Lord Nelson* where he described the transection of Nelson's spinal cord. A reappraisal of Beatty's findings two centuries later suggested that neurogenic shock was the dominant factor in his demise. By using word processing it is possible to reconstruct his autopsy report verbatim, into a single coherent account, thereby revealing the true gravity of the injury. In this presentation that autopsy report is copied directly from Beatty's *Authentic Narrative*.

Mr William Beatty's text

'On the day after the battle, as soon as circumstances permitted the Surgeon to devote a portion of his attention to the care of Lord NELSON'S honoured Remains, measures were adopted to preserve them as effectually as the means then on board the Victory allowed. On the Surgeon's examining the nature of the wound, and the course of the ball, a quantity of blood was evacuated from the left side of the breast: none had escaped before. The ball was traced by a probe to the spine, but its lodgment could not at that time be discovered. There was no lead on board to make a coffin: a cask called a leaguer, which is of the largest size on shipboard, was therefore chosen for the reception of the Body; which, after the hair had been cut off, was stripped of the clothes except the shirt, and put into it, and the Cask was then filled with brandy.

'On the 11th of December therefore, the day on which the Victory sailed from Spithead for the Nore, Lord NELSON'S Body was taken from the cask in which it had been kept since the day after his death. On inspecting it externally, it exhibited a state of perfect preservation, without being in the smallest degree offensive. There were, however, some appearances that induced the Surgeon to examine

the condition of the bowels; which were found to be much decayed, and likely in a short time to communicate the process of putrefaction to the rest of the Body: the parts already injured were therefore removed. It was at this time that the fatal ball was discovered: it had passed through the spine, and lodged in the muscles of the back, towards the right side, and a little below the shoulder-blade. A very considerable portion of the gold-lace, pad, and lining of the epaulette, with a piece of the coat, was found attached to the ball: the lace of the epaulette was as firmly so, as if it had been inserted into the metal while in a state of fusion. The following is the professional Report on HIS LORDSHIP'S wound and death, made by the Surgeon on this occasion:

His Majesty's Ship Victory, at Sea, 11th December, 1805.

'About the middle of the action with the Combined Fleets on the 21st of October last, the late illustrious Commander in Chief Lord NELSON was mortally wounded in the left breast by a musket-ball, supposed to be fired from the mizen-top of *La Redoutable* French ship of the line, which the Victory fell on board of early in the battle. HIS LORDSHIP was in the act of turning on the quarter-deck with his face towards the Enemy, when he received his wound: he instantly fell; and was carried to the cockpit, where he lived about two hours. On being brought below, he complained of acute pain about the sixth or seventh dorsal vertebra, and of privation of sense and motion of the body and inferior extremities. His respiration was short and difficult; pulse weak, small, and irregular. He frequently declared his back was shot through, that he felt every instant a gush of blood within his breast, and that he had sensations which indicated to him the approach of death. In the course of an hour his pulse became indistinct, and was gradually lost in the arm. His extremities and forehead became soon afterwards cold. He retained his wonted energy of mind, and exercise of his faculties, till the last moment of his existence; and when the victory as signal as decisive was announced to him, he expressed his pious acknowledgments, and heart-felt satisfaction at the glorious event, in the most emphatic language. He then delivered his last orders with his usual precision, and in a few minutes afterwards expired without a struggle.'

'Course and site of the Ball, as ascertained since death.

'The ball struck the fore part of HIS LORDSHIP'S epaulette; and entered the left shoulder immediately before the processus acromion scapulae, which it slightly fractured. It then descended obliquely into the thorax, fracturing the second and third ribs: and after penetrating the left lobe of the lungs, and dividing in its passage a large branch of the pulmonary artery, it entered the left side of the spine

between the sixth and seventh dorsal vertebræ, fractured the left transverse process of the sixth dorsal vertebra, wounded the medulla spinalis, and fracturing the right transverse process of the seventh vertebra, made its way from the right side of the spine, directing its course through the muscles of the back; and lodged therein, about two inches below the inferior angle of the right scapula. On removing the ball, a portion of the gold-lace and pad of the epaulette, together with a small piece of HIS LORDSHIP'S coat, was found firmly attached to it. W. BEATTY.

'The Surgeon had, on the occasion of opening HIS LORDSHIP'S Body, an opportunity of acquiring an accurate knowledge of the sound and healthy state of the thoracic and abdominal viscera, none of which appeared to have ever been the seat of inflammation or disease. There were no morbid indications to be seen; other than those unavoidably attending the human body six weeks after death, even under circumstances more favourable to its preservation. The heart was small, and dense in its substance; its valves, pericardium, and the large vessels, were sound, and firm in their structure. The lungs were sound, and free from adhesions. The liver was very small, in its colour natural, firm in its texture, and every way free from the smallest appearance of disorganization. The stomach, as well as the spleen and other abdominal contents, was alike free from the traces of disease. Indeed all the vital parts were so perfectly healthy in their appearance, and so small, that they resembled more those of a youth, than of a man who had attained his forty-seventh year; which state of the body, associated with habits of life favourable to health, gives every reason to believe that HIS LORDSHIP might have lived to a great age.

The immediate cause of HIS LORDSHIP'S death was a wound of the left pulmonary artery, which poured out its blood into the cavity of the chest. The quantity of blood thus effused did not appear to be very great: but as the hemorrhage was from a vessel so near the heart, and the blood was consequently lost in a very short time, it produced death sooner than would have been effected by a larger quantity of blood lost from an artery in a more remote part of the body. The injury done to the spine must of itself have proved mortal, but HIS LORDSHIP might perhaps have survived this alone for two or three days; though his existence protracted even for that short period would have been miserable to himself, and highly distressing to the feelings of all around him. W. BEATTY'

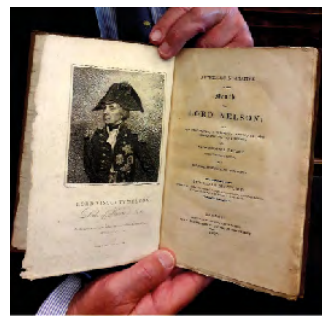
Comment

Beatty's thorough account requires neither explanation nor embellishment. He concluded that Nelson died of exsanguination as a result of 'a wound of the left pulmonary artery'. This remained the accepted view until his autopsy findings were reviewed by Mr Mick Crumplin in 2005 and later by neurosurgeon, Daniel Nijensohn in 2017. In their retrospective analyses of Beatty's findings they concluded that neurogenic shock from transection of the spinal cord at T6/7 was the major factor in Nelson's death in addition to the other injuries sustained.

William Beatty

Beatty is the subject of an excellent biography, *Nelson's Surgeon*, by Brockliss, Cardwell and Moss. The authors, all historians, considered Beatty's later success was due to his 'luck to be on board the Victory' at Nelson's finest hour. Perhaps so, but on reflection we might rate him more generously.

Born in 1773 he came from a modest Irish family and as a teenager probably apprenticed to his uncle, a Royal Navy surgeon. His later medical training is uncertain but, clearly, he received a good education in anatomy and, possibly, participated in dissections or post mortem examinations. Schools of anatomy, such as that of William and John Hunter, flourished in London at this time. In 1791, aged 18, he was examined in London by The Company of Surgeons for accreditation as 'Surgeon's Mate' and later in 1795 as 'Surgeon' considered fit to serve on a highly rated ship carrying over seven hundred men. With almost ten more years of experience at sea and aged 32 he secured the position as the surgeon on Victory.



Frontispiece and title page of William Beatty's *Authentic Narrative*. 1807. Photograph by Ian Fraser

After Nelson's funeral Beatty forged ahead in his career. In 1806 he obtained an MD degree, completed his ninety-nine-page book, *Authentic Narrative*, and secured promotion to Physician of the Fleet. When the Napoleonic war concluded in 1815, he studied at St. Andrews University for two years for the MD degree. Thereafter

in London, he became a Licentiate of the College of Physicians and was elected a member of both the Linnean Society and The Royal Society. In 1822 he was appointed Physician to Greenwich Hospital from which followed directorships of The Clerical & Medical Life Assurance Company, the London and Greenwich Railway Company, the Greenwich and Deptford Gas Company and the Nelson's Column project. He received Royal recognition by serving King George IV as his physician and later, the sailor King, William IV. He was knighted Dr Sir William Beatty in 1831. He died with pulmonary disease, aged 68, in 1842.

Conclusion

D'Arcy Power reflecting on Pathology in 1800 said 'A hundred years ago modern pathology was in its infancy, but its students had begun to place the new science upon a firm footing of morbid anatomy'. Power's observation is reflected in Beatty's autopsy report. The thorough anatomical examination by Beatty, undertaken in difficult circumstances at sea, is a credit to his ability and the tuition he received in the 1790s. He proffered an implausible cause of Nelson's death mainly because he did not have a knowledge of then-current pathophysiology. However, what he did leave behind in description is a masterpiece from which we can apply our own understanding and complete the story.

A tale of (very) ordinary folk in the USA

Nick Coni



I yield to none in my admiration of the USA, which is a brilliant country, boasting the best scientists, engineers, writers, musicians plus sports-men and -women, in the world. But any nation that has made such inexplicable choices of its President as some of those which it has made in the recent past, and (who knows!) might repeat, clearly has more than its share of fruitcakes too, as a recent story released by the Springfield, Illinois police, makes abundantly clear. (Springfield, it should be noted, has an excellent record of nurturing presidential candidates, including Abraham Lincoln in 1860 and Barak Obama more recently).

The story starts with the perfectly reasonable response of a 36-year-old female resident of that city, who suffered from 'mental health issues', to an all-too-common problem. She spotted one of its more cognitively challenged citizens prowling around her neighbourhood and put a pot of water on the stove to boil, possibly with a view to making a cup of tea to soothe her nerves. She then, even more reasonably, dialled the emergency services to report the matter to the police. The local police despatched the Sheriff's Deputy and another officer to deal with this emergency. On arrival, the former prudently took the precaution of ordering the householder to take the boiling water off the stove in case it caught fire. This she did, rewarding him most ungraciously, if devoutly, for averting the catastrophe by telling the officer 'I rebuke you in the name of Jesus'. He replied 'You better f***ing not!' and reached for his gun (as you do), whereupon she said she was sorry and raised her hands – as you do. This agent of the law then shot her three times – as you do, and then denied the charge of first-degree murder. President Joe Biden described it, perceptively, as 'a senseless loss'. This seems to have been a wise and balanced conclusion to a touching tale of ordinary people who have been educated to reject Darwin's theory of evolution, but have nevertheless risen to the challenge of dealing with critical emergencies¹.

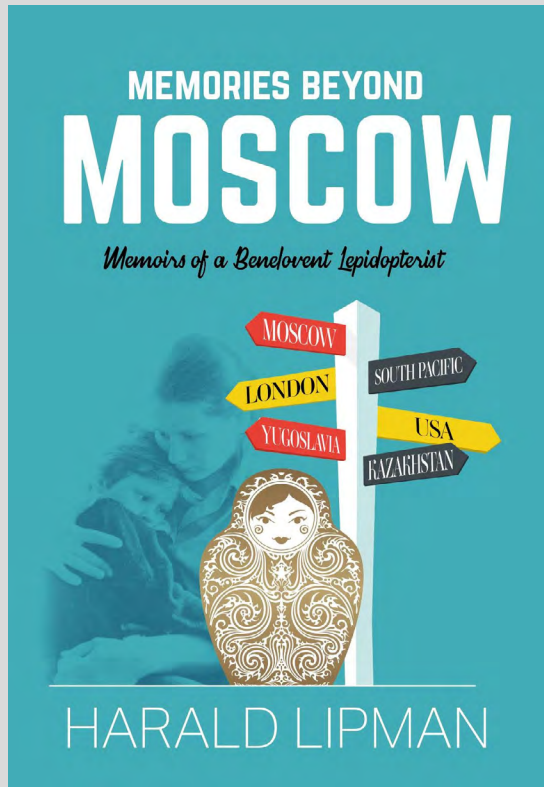


¹ Google tells me that in states having low standards for teaching Evolution, such as Illinois, Kentucky, Ohio, Georgia, and Kansas, relatively large percentages of biology teachers believe that creationism should be taught in science classes in public schools. In some of these states, significant percentages of biology teachers actually teach creationism in their classes, despite the fact that the US Supreme Court's decision in 2000 established that it is unconstitutional. The presence of low standards for teaching evolution also correlates with biology teachers' lack of emphasis on Evolution. As Lawrence S Lerner of the National Center (sic) for Science Education noted, although low standards for teaching evolution are concentrated in the Bible Belt, they also occur elsewhere (for example, Ohio and Illinois).

Book by SFF Fellow

Memories beyond Moscow

Harald Lipman



Good news fellow SFF members! You will shortly be able to read the long-awaited sequel to *Memories of Moscow, Memoirs of a Medical Diplomat*, by Harald Lipman. *Memories beyond Moscow* covers the 35 years after Harald Lipman and Nahid, his wife, finally left the Moscow Embassy at the end of their posting there during the height of the Cold War. Much relates to their continuing ongoing interest in Russia and Russians, which significantly influenced these years following their return to the UK. The author's life has been a potpourri of fascinating and worrying events, including Brexit, the war in Ukraine, visits on behalf of the Foreign Office to the Balkan states and the South Pacific, and the Covid pandemic. The book tells how, following the tragic death of Princess Diana, the Patron of their charity for Russian children, they, in conjunction with Great Ormond Street Hospital, established Diana Memorial Scholarships for young Russian paediatricians. It also covers in detail their efforts to reduce heart disease in the Russian population by introduction of lifestyle changes.

The book will be available on Amazon, Barnes and Noble and several other platforms and 50% of royalties will be donated to The BEARR Trust, which assists with the care of deprived adults and children in the former Soviet republics.





New-born rhino, Jeffrey Rosenberg and friends



Lion cub, how they grow, Jeffrey Rosenberg and friends

Information for Authors

There are three issues per year of the Journal of the RSM Senior Fellows Forum, which appear in April, August and December. Articles may be submitted at any time, and accepted ones are compiled into the next available issue space.

Each manuscript should bear the title of the article, name, address and email address of the author. Please write in Arial Narrow, 12 point, 1.5 spaced and do not justify the text. Spelling needs to conform to the Oxford English Dictionary.

Text **MUST** be submitted electronically, as a fully editable Word document.

Authors also please be sure to complete your submission with your name on it.

Accepted articles for the *Journal*:

- Solicited articles, on a topic agreed with the editor, and should be 1,500 to 2,000 words in length.
- Articles submitted by readers - 500 to 1,500 words.
- Reports of presentations at meetings of the Senior Fellows Forum - 500 to 1,500 words, the author invited by the Chair of the corresponding day.
- Reports of extramural events of the Senior Fellows Forum - 500 to 1,000 words, the author invited by the leader of the event.
- Reports of Senior Fellows Forum tours - 1,000 to 2,000 words, the author invited by the leader of the tour.
- Short 'fillers', text and/or photographs. Poems, quotes, amusing items, brief - under 200 words.
- Submit to Catherine Sarraf:
alison.catherine872@gmail.com

Imagery:

With reference to submission of images (which is encouraged), it is important that each image is accompanied with a title, description and photographer acknowledgement.

Photographs should be uploaded digitally and be as high resolution as possible.