

RES MEDICA

Journal of the Royal Medical Society



Editorial

The Editor

Abstract

"The Society dates from the year 1737, when ten medical students agreed to meet weekly in a tavern to hear one of their number read a dissertation on some medical subject. It is the oldest medical students' society in Great Britain, and the only one to hold a Royal Charter (which was granted by King George III in 1779) The Society has a long and distinguished tradition, and its history is the history of the Edinburgh Medical School. Amongst its past members it boasts the names of Lister, Simpson the chloroform pioneer, Joseph Bell of Palsy fame, Charles Darwin, and Andrew Duncan. Today as in the past the Society's business comprises the reading of dissertations by members, the arranging of talks given by men eminent in the contemporary medical world and the organising of symposia on subjects of current interest."

Since the founding of the Royal Medical Society in 1737 it has always sought to broaden the educational horizons of its members. *Res Medica* was first published in 1957 to augment learning and provide a platform on which members ideas and work could be aired out with the walls of the Society's hall. This edition of *Res Medica* represents its resurrection after a dormancy period of eight years and it is hoped that this tradition will be supported and maintained in future years. Over this eight year period we have witnessed numerous changes in the practice and teaching of medicine and the Royal Medical Society has remained in touch with these new ideas especially with its recent investment in a variety of computer aided learning facilities.

Copyright Royal Medical Society. All rights reserved. The copyright is retained by the author and the Royal Medical Society, except where explicitly otherwise stated. Scans have been produced by the Digital Imaging Unit at Edinburgh University Library. Res Medica is supported by the University of Edinburgh's Journal Hosting Service url: <http://journals.ed.ac.uk>

ISSN: 2051-7580 (Online) ISSN: ISSN 0482-3206 (Print)

Res Medica is published by the Royal Medical Society, 5/5 Bristo Square, Edinburgh, EH8 9AL

Res Medica, 1998 : 1

doi: [10.2218/resmedica.v0i0.974](https://doi.org/10.2218/resmedica.v0i0.974)

Editorial

“The Society dates from the year 1737, when ten medical students agreed to meet weekly in a tavern to hear one of their number read a dissertation on some medical subject. It is the oldest medical students’ society in Great Britain, and the only one to hold a Royal Charter (which was granted by King George III in 1779) The Society has a long and distinguished tradition, and its history is the history of the Edinburgh Medical School. Amongst its past members it boasts the names of Lister, Simpson the chloroform pioneer, Joseph Bell of Palsy fame, Charles Darwin, and Andrew Duncan. Today as in the past the Society’s business comprises the reading of dissertations by members, the arranging of talks given by men eminent in the contemporary medical world and the organising of symposia on subjects of current interest.”

Since the founding of the Royal Medical Society in 1737 it has always sought to broaden the educational horizons of its members. *Res Medica* was first published in 1957 to augment learning and provide a platform on which members ideas and work could be aired out with the walls of the Society’s hall. This edition of *Res Medica* represents its resurrection after a dormancy period of eight years and it is hoped that this tradition will be supported and maintained in future years. Over this eight year period we have witnessed numerous changes in the practice and teaching of medicine and the Royal Medical Society has remained in touch with these new ideas especially with its recent investment in a variety of computer aided learning facilities.

For some time, our national headlines have been preoccupied with reports on how our food is a threat to our health. The BSE crisis has undoubtedly had the greatest immediate impact. It therefore seems highly appropriate that in this edition of *Res Medica* Dr. Jeanne

Bell from the Western General has provided us with an overview of the current understanding of BSE and its links with CJD. It appears that this disease is indeed transmissible as well as carrying a genetic predisposition.

Edinburgh is a city rich in history and The Royal Medical Society is extremely fortunate to have ex-presidents such as Professor Kaufman with his enthusiasm about Edinburgh’s past and we are very grateful for his splendid account on the history of the RMS buildings.

We are always happy to receive contributions to *Res Medica* and welcome support in any manner. Many thanks must go to all the contributors of this edition as well as to our sponsors and in particular to the Royal Medical Society Trust whose financial support has brought *Res Medica* back to life.

Editorial Committee: Simon Pridgeon , Lucy M’Dowall
Jacob Mushlin, Phillipa Crompton, Rae Davidson, Paul Huggan, Kevin Dhaliwal.