



HISTORY CENTRE NEWSLETTER

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The NHS at 60: Three Anniversary Events

In November 2008 the Centre organised three events which marked the 60th anniversary of the British National Health Service. We decided not to focus on Aneurin Bevan and the foundation, which was such a popular theme in other quarters, but instead to take a contemporary historical slant. Our subject was the management and organisation of the service, considering in particular the reforms of the 1980s and their long term effects.

We began by convening a Witness Seminar on the 1983 Griffiths NHS Management Inquiry, when Margaret Thatcher's government invited supermarket boss Roy Griffiths to review the service. The result was his installation of general management and the beginning of more assertive lay and central control, which has gradually impacted on clinician autonomy. Amongst the witnesses were ex-Secretary of State Lord (Norman) Fowler, civil servant Sir Graham Hart, Inquiry member Sir Michael Bett, ex-RCN general secretary Christine Hancock and several others. Nicholas Timmins of the Financial Times chaired the event. The discussion explored the reasons for the appointment of Griffiths, his motives for conducting a swift investigation without open consultation, the effect on existing administrators of the introduction of general management,

and the long term significance of the Inquiry.

This was followed the next day by a conference which explored recent scholarly work on the history of the management of NHS. Speakers included both historians working on the NHS, like Martin Gorsky, Stephanie Snow and Tony Cutler, and policy analysts reflecting historically, like Mark Exworthy, Steve Harrison, Pauline Allen and Naomi Fulop. Papers reported results of interview studies with NHS managers reflecting on the meaning of the change from 'administration' to 'management' from the 1980s, the long history of performance indicators, the recent turns away from and back towards the market, and the uses of managerial restructuring with 'failing' trusts.



Griffiths NHS Management Inquiry Witness Seminar. L-R: Sir Michael Bett, Lord Fowler, Nicholas Timmins
Photograph by Anne Koerber

This was followed in the evening by the annual History Centre lecture, given this year by Rudolf Klein, who is Honorary Professor at LSHTM. Klein is the author of one of the major survey texts

on the political history of the NHS, and his lecture was entitled ‘The Bevan-Morrison debate: the shape of things to come in the NHS?’ The theme was the tension between localism and central control in the NHS, which he argued was present right from the outset, in the tussle between Bevan and Herbert Morrison over whether to give local government charge of the service. Klein then tracked the periodic resurgence of the question of how to balance local choice with national goals, showing how this was never resolved and is inherent to the structure established in 1948.

These events made clear the importance of a sound historical understanding of the NHS’s past if we are to make sense of the policy choices now facing us. We plan to publish the Witness Seminar text, and hopefully the papers too in the course of 2009, and will keep you posted!

Martin Gorsky

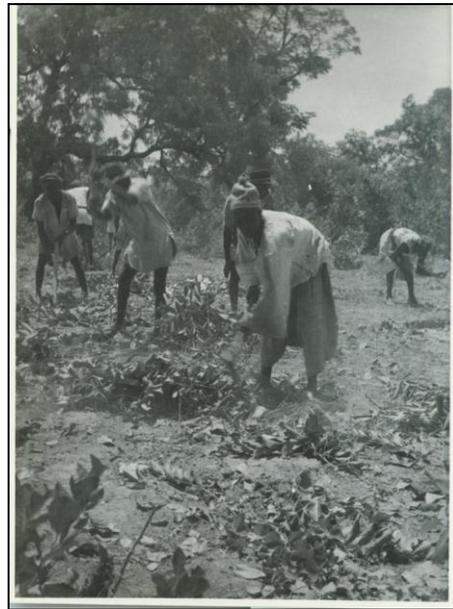
News from the Archives

Following the successful bid to the Wellcome Trust for funding to catalogue archival material from the nutrition collection, a great deal of progress has been made. Notable studies have been uncovered such as the Nyasaland survey papers 1938-1943 and the Gambia project 1946-1950 (see image). The project will run until September 2010 and has been undertaken by Richard Meunier, Assistant Archivist.

The School’s participation in Open House London in September was hugely successful. Over 400 visitors were taken on tours of the building and an exhibition of the history of the Keppel

Street building was put on display in the foyer. The Archives service also represented the School at the London Festival of Architecture for which tours of the building were organised along with an exhibition and a lecture by the chief architect of the current South Courtyard project. In addition, Victoria Cranna has begun a series of building tours for School staff which have been well attended and will continue into the New Year.

Victoria Cranna submitted recommendations to the SMT following the School-wide information audit. These recommendations were passed and work will now be carried out to ensure these are implemented. A new Freedom of Information publication scheme will be launched on the 1st January.



Photograph from the Gambia taken in 1948 during a nutrition survey there by the School

The acquisition of a software package, Photolibrary, will be used to store the School’s archival and current images. Work has begun to upload images onto

the database and it is expected that staff will have access to the images at the start of 2009.

Recent exhibitions in the library have included material taken from the Draper collection and a display of posters and ephemera concerning AIDS awareness and campaign material for World AIDS day.

Richard Meunier

Snow, Sanitation and Parliament

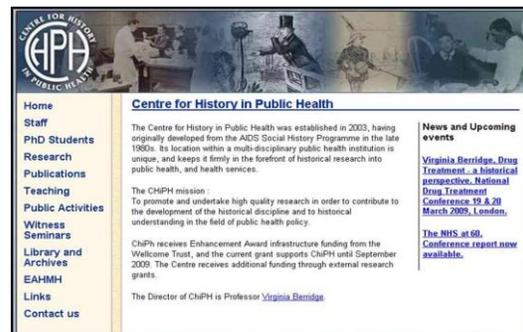
The WHO Year of Water and Sanitation in 2008 received little media attention and ended with the grim reminder of the need for safe water and sanitation in the epidemic of cholera in Zimbabwe. But there was at least one highlight when the anniversary of Dr John Snow's death (16 June 1858) was marked with a plaque to be erected at the John Snow pub in Soho. Dr Ros Stanwell-Smith wrote up the event and the Snow-cholera story for *Science in Parliament*, the journal of the Parliamentary and Scientific Committee and was asked to address a meeting of the Committee in December. Her lecture '*From drains to health gains: a brief history of Public Health*' will be published in the same journal. As well as featuring the Great Stink of 1858 – which drew cynical laughter from MPs and Lords when told that the legislation for London's sewer system was introduced and passed in just 18 days – she compared the now discarded triumphant history of public health linked to improvements in water and sanitation to the multidisciplinary and multi-focused public health of today. Dr Stanwell-Smith also led a walk on the theme of 'Snow and Sanitation' in 2008 and in December took part in a

documentary examining the decline in public toilets, to be televised on BBC1 in the spring.

Rosalind Stanwell-Smith

New Website for the Centre for History in Public Health

The Centre for History in Public Health has an exciting new website. Designed by Dan Forys, it provides easier access to information about our research, publications, teaching and public activities. Please check www.lshtm.ac.uk/history to view the new design and to find details about upcoming history walks, seminars and conferences.



Suzanne Taylor

External Activities

Members of the Centre have been involved with the work of a number of different groups and organisations in the field of the history of medicine and health. Alex Mold, as Secretary of the European Association for the History of Medicine and Health (EAHMH), has – together with Adrian Cousins from the LSHTM's audio-visual department – re-developed the association's website. The new website can be seen at www.eahmh.net. The site also contains

details of the EAHMH's upcoming conference, which will be in Heidelberg 3-6 September 2009. This will focus on the relationship between the global and the local in the history of medicine and health. The call for papers closes on 31 January 2009, so any one interested in giving a paper should check out the new website soon!

The Centre also continues to work with the Society for the Social History of Medicine (SSHM). Ornella Moscucci has taken over as an editor of the society's book series, 'Studies in the Social History of Medicine', published by Pickering and Chatto. Virginia Berridge has also taken on the role of chair of the editorial board of the SSHM's journal, the *Social History of Medicine*.

Alex Mold

Forthcoming Events

Seminars Spring 2009

This term's seminars will focus on the history of alcohol. Speakers will approach this topic from different perspectives and draw on a range of national case-studies.

29 January, '*Public drinking, public health and bureaucratic territorialism. The case of post-prohibition Ontario*' Dan Malleck, Brock University, Canada. 12:45-2pm. Venue: The Bennett Room (LG 80), Keppel Street Building.

12 February, Steve Kunitz, '*Alcohol use among American Indians*', Stephen Kunitz, University of Rochester, USA. 12:45-2pm. Venue: Rm 364, Keppel Street Building.

5 March, James Nicholls, '*England's bane?: The role of tradition in English drinking cultures*', Bath Spa University. 12:45-2pm. Venue: Rm 101, 49 Bedford Square.

30 April, Bill Luckin, '*Alcohol and the Social Relations and Regulation of Mobility in C20th Britain*', University of Bolton. 12:45-2pm. Venue: Rm 101, 49 Bedford Square.

14 May, Gayle Davis, '*The politics of reproductive health in post-WWII Scotland*', Gayle Davis, University of Edinburgh. 12:45-2pm. Venue: Lucas Room (LG 81), Keppel Street Building.

Public Health History Walks



Ros Stanwell-Smith leading students 'Further round the block' in October 2008

A new programme of public health history walks is planned for 2009. On Wednesday 11th February 2009 Ros Stanwell-Smith will lead a group 'Further Round the Block' from 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm; and on Wednesday, 18th March 2009 she will take people on the 'Snow and Soho' walk from 5:00 pm - 6:30 pm. The walks are free, but places are limited to 20 people. Please book with Ingrid James: Ingrid.James@lshtm.ac.uk.