



## Editorial

### An Old Wives' Tale

The editor once again issues a challenge to our readers to produce an authenticated first person account of a lady who had a dental clearance before marriage in order to avoid an anticipated financial call on her husband. It may be that if such things ever happened it was before the time of even the now elderly. We are all familiar with this story which has been a staple of prosthodontic teaching for as long as we can remember. The tale is told of the Glasgow slums, the Welsh Valleys, the East-end of London and the Belfast shipyards and, no doubt, any other area of traditional poverty.

Our late chairman was quizzed about it on a Radio Scotland history programme only last year, and I am reliably informed (by first-hand account!) that it is currently being referred to in teaching the Scottish Higher History curriculum.

But, is the story merely an "urban myth"? The evidence is awaited and we would be delighted to publish it.

## Update

The History of Dentistry Research Group has decided to add the name of its late Chairman to the Group title and so become the Henry Noble History of Dentistry Research Group. Other ways of commemorating Henry's outstanding contribution are under consideration. A bookcase is to be installed in the James Ireland - Memorial Library at the Dental Hospital and School to house Henry's papers and other historical material.

At the British Dental Association's Annual conference in Glasgow in May, John Craig, current President of the Association, presented the Lilian Lindsay Memorial Medal to Audrey Noble in appreciation of her late husband's contribution to the study of the History of Dentistry and in particular to the Lindsay Society. The Society's President, Geoffrey Gamett, gave the citation. Professor McGowan's Lillian Lindsay Memorial Lecture, which followed the presentation, was well received by a large and generous audience. The abstract is reproduced in this [newsletter](#), and the lecture will be the basis of an article being prepared for submission to "The Dental Historian".

The Henry Noble History of Dentistry Research Group now has 52 subscribers. Two to join recently are the Osler Library for the History of Medicine at McGill University, Canada, and David Fong of Shanghai, China. These further overseas connections are most welcome. Sir William Osler is a revered name in medicine and, of course, the eponymous founder of McGill matriculated at the University of Glasgow in 1756.

The BDA Museum has been reorganised and relocated within the Association's Headquarters at 64 Wimpole Street, and is well worth a visit if you are in central London with some time to spare. Opening hours are on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1pm to 4pm. The completion of the project will be celebrated at a reception and open evening on Thursday the 8th of December. The BDJ is republishing the entire contents of its

predecessor "The Monthly Review of Dental Surgery" for 1880, some 600 pages, on a CD. Copies can be obtained from Roger Farbey at the BDA Information Centre at Wimpole Street for £10 to members or £15 to non-members.

The Lindsay Society for the History of Dentistry held its first overseas meeting in Malta this month. The host, Professor George Camilleri, was a postgraduate in Glasgow in the 60's and still has many friends amongst our members. It was good to see a large contingent from Glasgow attending - a perfect venue for anyone interested in history and only a direct flight away.

We were delighted recently to give permission for Bill Hutton's article "[Among the Deep Sea Fishers](#)", to be reprinted in the USA in the "Journal of the History of Dentistry".

The article on "[The Seigneur De Joinville's cure](#)", is a welcome first contribution from Josephine Cummins (BDS Glasgow 1979) a young dental colleague who has also written a historical thesis on "Attitudes to old age and ageing in medieval society" (PhD, Glasgow, 2000)."

Stuart Taylor's article on the [philology of Orthodontics](#) is re-published for our readers' benefit since not many will have seen it originally in the "Journal of Orthodontics".

At a time when the use of Nitrous Oxide anaesthesia by dentists in their surgeries is fast becoming history, Rufus Ross reminds us of the benefits, and hazards, it brought in the days when it was a novelty.

This issue's reminiscences section represents a turning of the tables, as the subject is [Bob McKechnie](#), who has been our interviewer on many previous occasions. In addition to his clinical practice in the public service as an orthodontist, Bob had a distinguished career in administrative and public health dentistry. He has given a lifetime of service to the BDA both in the West of Scotland and nationally, and still continues as the enthusiastic organiser of the retired members Group.