1. Student mentoring and hospitality - volunteer to assist with Sydney Medical School programs

We warmly thank those medical alumni and Sydney Medical School academic staff who responded to the request in the January newsletter and kindly volunteered to offer mentoring and/or hospitality to our Graduate Medical Program students.

But we need many more volunteers! Among the new GMP students in 2012, perhaps two-thirds are international students or have come to Sydney from interstate. Many are unfamiliar with life in Sydney and would much appreciate whatever you can offer by hosting a group at your home or by volunteering to be a mentor.

We are keen to hear from other medical alumni and Sydney Medical School academic staff who can assist. If you would like to volunteer to mentor our students, or if you can offer students some hospitality or other assistance, please provide your contact details in the brief survey by 31 March: http://surveys.med.usyd.edu.au/limesurvey/index.php?sid=33592

2. Alumni awards

Australia Day Honours. We warmly congratulate two other alumni who received awards in the Australia Day Honours and who were not included in the list in the January 2012 newsletter:

- Paul Anthony Fagan AM (1963) - for service to medicine
- John Stanislaus Roarty OAM (1947) - for service to medicine, particularly through contributions to St Vincent's Clinic.

Read more about Kathryn North AM (1985), Ian darnton-Hill AO (MSc, Med, 1990), and Kerry Moroney OAM (1969) in the Medical Journal of Australia:
http://mjacareers.realviewdigital.com/#folio=001

3. Forthcoming events

3.1 Writing Retreat and Writing Workshop for Doctors - 5-12 March 2012

Varuna, the Writers’ House, invites you to the program of the Eleanor Dark Foundation, which is aiming to bring together Australia's medical and writing communities with the goal
of improving communication about medicine, science, health and environment. Events include:

- A week-long writing retreat for doctors at Varuna: 5-12 March
- A Doctors’ Writing Workshop at Varuna, the Writers’ House: 10-11 March
- Inaugural Dr Eric Dark Memorial Dinner and Lecture at Fairmont Resort, Leura: 6pm, 10 March
- MC: Dr Tanveer Ahmed - psychiatrist, author and opinion columnist for the Sydney Morning Herald
- The inaugural Dr Eric Dark Memorial Lecture will be presented by Associate Professor Grant Blashki - Nossal Institute for Global Health & Melbourne Sustainable Society Institute, co-founder Doctors for the Environment Australia and lead editor of General Practice Psychiatry, published by McGraw Hill.
- It will be followed by: Q&A panel: *Doctors Writing/Righting the World*. From the personal to the political, doctors on a Q&A panel invite the audience to join them in discussing how creativity, innovation, advocacy and collaboration can contribute to building the 'health of the nation'.
- Bush walks, rock-climbing and abseiling.

Read all the details at [www.doctorswho.com.au](http://www.doctorswho.com.au)

3.2 **Medical Humanities** - subjects available in **Semester 1, 2012**

- **Medicine and War** Co-ordinator: Dr Estelle Noonan

>'In this unit we will examine the links between medicine and war. This will be done both through substantive topics and through exposure to different intellectual and methodological approaches drawn from the humanities and social sciences, such as communicable diseases; new psychiatric problems and techniques; torture; ethical considerations concerning the involvement of the medical profession; the representation of medicine and war in literature and film (eg Pat Barker's Regeneration trilogy); and in the visual arts (e.g. Picasso's Guernica).'

Medicine and War will be held on Mondays from 6-8pm in the Latin Room 2, S225, in the Main Quadrangle. Lectures commence on the 5 March.

- **Independent Study** Coordinator: Dr Estelle Noonan

>'Independent Study allows a student to pursue a directed course of reading and research in an area of their own choosing. This unit of study has been developed in order to give students maximum flexibility to pursue individual interests, and can be accomplished in any location and in flexible hours. Students consult the Coordinator to draw up a study plan and bibliography, and receive weekly feedback on their learning. A 5000 word essay is required as a summary of learning at the course conclusion. Many students have published these essays in peer reviewed journals. Several students may undertake the same course of study simultaneously if desired.'


Contact: Dr Estelle Noonan, Lecturer, Coordinator, Medical Humanities
3.3 Strengthening Prevention Policy forum - Friday, 9 March 2012, 8.30am to 1.15pm

The Sydney Health Policy Network and the Prevention Research Collaboration at the University of Sydney are pleased to invite you to this forum. With high level state and national speakers, this forum will provide an in depth analysis of current prevention policy, including structural barriers and strategies for strengthening practice. Our aim is to engage a wide range of prevention policy stakeholders and to foster ongoing exchange between research and policymaking perspectives.

For more information: http://sydney.edu.au/news/health_policy_network/2481.html?eventid=9220. Please note that the conference program will be updated on a regular basis. Please check the conference website for the latest version.

Location: Common Room, The Women's College (University of Sydney)  Cost: Free

RSVP: by COB Wednesday, 29 February 2012  Contact: Shauna Downs  Phone: 02 903 65443
Email: shpn@sydney.edu.au

3.4 Ethical Issues in Immunisation - 26 March 2012, 10am to 5pm

This seminar will address the major ethical issues facing immunisation programs in Australia today. It asks:

What level of vaccine risk is acceptable and who decides?
Is it unethical not to have a no-fault compensation scheme for serious adverse events attributed to vaccination?
How far can we go in getting people to be vaccinated?
Is the current system for funding vaccines in Australia sufficient?
How can vaccine programs incorporate public values?

Speakers and chairs include: Marie Bismark, Stacy Carter, Andrea Forde, Claire Hooker, David Issaacs, Heath Kelly, Ian Kerridge, Julie Leask, Kristine Macartney, Roger Magnusson, Helen Marshall, Peter Massey, Terry Nolan, Cameron Stewart, and Glenn Salkeld.

Venue: Darlington Centre, University of Sydney. For enquiries, email Ms Joanne Perkins, or phone 02 9845 1433.

To register, complete the registration form on the NCIRS website and return as instructed. Places are limited.

4. Alumni news

4.1 Alumni books

- *In Good Hands: The life of Dr Sam Stening, POW*

*In Good Hands* is the biography of Surgeon Lieutenant Commander Samuel ‘Sam’ Stening (1933), DSC, Royal Australian Naval Reserve. A paediatrician, like his three brothers Sam joined the services at the outbreak of war. He chose the RAN and served in the Indian Ocean and then in the famous ‘Scrap Iron Flotilla’ in the Mediterranean, where his ship, the *Waterhen*, was sunk in June 1941. Posted to the cruiser *Perth* for her final deployment to Java and sinking in Sunda Strait on 1 March 1942, although wounded, Sam found himself plunged into the POW doctoring experience upon his rescue by a Japanese destroyer.

This was only the start of a gruelling three and a half years of captivity, during which he served in eight POW camps in Japan. With few medical supplies, his ingenuity, and some surprising help from Japanese civilians, Sam battled the effects of extreme weather, constant punishment, overwork, starvation, and disease on his patients.

After liberation, physically and mentally exhausted by his experiences, Sam drew on the strength of his wife, Olivia, and the support of his family to re-establish himself in paediatrics, and rose to the top of his profession. A stalwart of the Women’s Hospital in Crown Street, where an intensive care ward was named after him, and of the Royal Alexandra Hospital for Children, Sam helped gain professional respect for his specialty, establishing it as a ‘proper’ field of medicine, until his death in 1983.

Bellona, an imprint of Publish-Me! Published: February 2012 - ISBN: 9780987227836 Price: AU$39.95


Wayne Donaldson (1974), a retired orthopaedic surgeon with a BA (Hons) in Classics, reviewed a chapter in the Galen books and tells me that the introduction to Volume 1 gives the best overview available of Galen's writings. He also strongly recommends the following book by Vivian Nutton: *Ancient Medicine*, Routledge, 2004 - Medical - 486 pages.

'As well as telling the story of the development of medical ideas, from the early Greeks to the massive handbooks of Late Antiquity, this book looks at the place of medicine in ancient society. Vivian Nutton explores the life and work of doctors, looking at the diseases they faced, the ways in which they obtained their knowledge, and whether they were respected by
the community. He also investigates the relationship between medicine and the various
religious beliefs of antiquity, asking if there were fixed boundaries between medicine and
magic; finally he examines the differences in approaches to medicine between a great city
such as Rome to territories such as Egypt or Roman Britain.'


- A piece of my mind: a psychiatrist on the couch by Gordon Parker AO (1967), Sydney

'Gordon Parker AO, one of Australia’s foremost clinical psychiatrists, is known for having
strong and provocative views. He’s been described as 'charming, witty and erudite',
sometimes 'intimidating and intolerant', and 'variously regarded with fear, loathing,
admiration and respect'. In this autobiography, the founder of the Black Dog Institute and
Scientia Professor of Psychiatry at the University of New South Wales recounts early
formative experiences that eventually led to a career in psychiatry, and what he has, in turn,
contributed to the profession over four decades. He also records his concerns about the
current models for diagnosing and managing mood disorders, and their weighting to often
politically-driven clinical guidelines. And he offers his views, informed by experience,
research and respect for human resilience, on what is 'good psychiatry' and its rewards.'


'A skink is a creature that can sacrifice part of itself to escape a predator and when times are
good, regrow what has been lost. Can Daniel, a boy who doesn't read or write, who doesn't
speak to adults, who life has battered to the point of surrender, regrow what he has lost?
Skink is a story of the healing power of love in one troubled boy's life.'

See: http://www.smashwords.com/books/view/127807

4.2 New website: www.dyingathome.org

Comments on the website from Libby Anderson (1988). 'Just a quick note to say that the
"Dying at Home" website is an excellent resource. I went through that with my father two
years ago and learnt a lot about the process (hard way to learn it!), and I have found this
experience to be invaluable in assisting the families of patients contemplating a similar
situation. It is wonderful to know that there are resources like this to which I can direct
people in future..... I am a cardiologist, so it certainly is not my area, but I know I will use
this resource in the future and am very glad that I was avoiding my dictation for a few
minutes and took the time to look at the site!'

4.3 Sydney alumni and the media

5. History of medicine

5.1 First Tuesday History of Medicine Club - from Cate Storey

'I would like to thank you all for replying to the first notification of this History of Medicine Club. I was overwhelmed by the response which is very reassuring for the future of the History of Medicine locally. The first meeting went well, and judging by the excellent attendance and the positive feedback there is a need for this informal approach to the subject.

At the first meeting we discussed the Historical Club initiated by Sir William Osler at the Johns Hopkins School in the late nineteenth century and the discussion led on to other aspects of Osler's writings, biographies etc. (A review of proceedings will be sent around shortly).

At the first meeting we also discussed "a way forward". At the meeting there were many participants who had either successfully completed histories of organisations/specialties, many who were in the process of doing so, and many who had at one time considered the possibility but were yet to start.

For the next meeting, and possibly extending to April, we will be discussing "The Writing of Medical Histories". I would like to ask all of you who have completed such histories to consider giving a brief talk of your work; while those who are "in transit", might also like to report progress. (Could you please let me know beforehand so that we can programme the discussion). For the others, I have attached a list of references that you might find helpful and
will provide a focus for further discussion.'

Next meeting: Tuesday 6th March, 5.30 – 7.00 pm, Edward Ford Building, University of Sydney

For the proceedings of the first History of Medicine Club meeting held on Tuesday, 6 February, and for her 'reading list', contact Cate Storey: cestorey@bigpond.com

5.2 RACP History of Medicine Library Lecture Series 2012

Except on Wednesday, 18 April, lectures are held on Monday evenings at 6.30pm at the Education Centre, Level 8, 52 Phillip Street, Sydney. Enjoy wine and refreshments after the lecture. Entry is $10 at the door.

- Wednesday, 18 April, Alex Cameron Smith - Doctor across borders: Raphael Cilento, Public Health and Social Welfare from Empire to the UN
- Monday, 4 June, Dr Peter Tyler - European medical science under the Southern Cross
- Monday, 30 July, Dr Diana Wyndham - Dr Norman Haire and the study of sex: the birth control crusader who gave his money to Sydney University 'to upset the wowsers'
- Monday, 10 September, Dr John Carmody - The triumph of the “Wet Brain” over the “Dry Brain”: an overview of the development of modern neuroscience.
- Monday, 5 November, Dr Judith Godden - History of Crown Street Women's Hospital

For bookings, contact the Librarian, Liz Rouse, on (02) 9256 5413 or racplib@racp.edu.au

5.3 Quarantine Station Lecture Series - Sunday, 25 March, 2-4pm

These public lectures are held at the Quarantine Station, North Head, Manly, on the fourth Sunday of each month at 2-4pm.

- Medicine in early colonial Sydney: Michael Kennedy
- You should have your head read. The popularity of phrenology in colonial Sydney Town: Catherine Storey

Michael Kennedy is a consultant physician in Manly and a VMO cardiologist at the Mater Private Hospital in Crows Nest. He has a special interest in cardiovascular therapeutics and non-invasive cardiac diagnosis, and in the history of medicine.

Catherine Storey is a neurologist with a passion for the History of Medicine and in particular the History of Neuroscience. She has written several book chapters for authoritative works in the History of Neurology and is President-elect for the International Society for the History of Neuroscience and will be organising the annual scientific meeting of this organisation in Sydney in 2013.

Summary. 'In the early years of the 19th century a German physician Franz Joseph Gall (1758-1828) developed a “science” which would become known as phrenology. Gall taught that the certain areas of the brain were responsible for certain emotions, characteristics and attributes and that these in turn caused “bumps” on the skull. According to Gall and his followers by feeling the bumps on the skull, it was possible to determine if the person was
trustworthy (perhaps criminal tendencies?); a good marriage partner; a good employee. The good folk of Sydney town flocked to community lectures; to practitioners to have their head read; while authorities used phrenology to manipulate views on criminals; aboriginals; the insane.

In this talk we will see how this “science” arrived in Sydney town, its effect on both the general public and the authorities of the time, and the lingering influence of this now defunct method even today.'

Please contact Paul Lancaster if you have any suggestions about possible speakers or topics, mainly on themes related to infectious diseases, immunisation and vaccination, quarantine, and public health.


For bookings, or to be put on the email list for the monthly lectures, contact Kelly - tours@qstation.com.au, or call her on 02 9466 1551.

### 6. Reunions

Reunions for graduating year of:

- **1962** – Saturday, 10 March 2012 - contact: Barbara Slater bb slate@bigpond.net.au or Shailendra Sinha sinhasklw@gmail.com
- **1950** – Tuesday, 13 March 2012 – contact: Brian Pollard bpoll79@bigpond.net.au
- **1967** - Saturday, 17 March 2012 - contact: Steve Andersen: stea@ozemail.com.au
- **1955** - Saturday, 21 April 2012 - contact: John Wright: rebjohj@netspace.net.au
- **1972** - Saturday, 29 September (weekend) 2012 - contact: Harry Merkur: hmerkur@bigpond.net.au
- **2002** - Saturday, 20 October 2012 - contact: Helen Benham helenh1@med.usyd.edu.au, Luke Murtagh ljm@gmp.usyd.edu.au
- **1977** - Saturday, 3 November 2012 - contact: Tony Joseph t joseph@med.usyd.edu.au
- **1973** - Saturday, 6 April 2013 - contact: Phil Cocks: pcocks@ozemail.com.au
- **1978** - Saturday, 9 November 2013 – contact: Chris Ingall: cingall@bigpond.com

Please contact Diana Lovegrove (diana.lovegrove@sydney.edu.au) if your graduating year is due for a reunion and this has yet to be organised.

### 7. Death notices and obituaries (year of graduation in brackets)

#### 7.1 Obituaries

While obituaries of some medical alumni may appear in the Sydney Morning Herald or medical journals, we often have very limited information about the lives of other alumni who have died recently. If you have any comments about those colleagues, please send them to me, or request their family members to contact me, so we can remember them by more than a simple record of their death.
Recent obituaries published since mid-2011 in the Sydney Morning Herald and elsewhere included:


### 7.2 Death notices of alumni

Vale to other medical friends and colleagues. Death notices of medical alumni in the Sydney Morning Herald or elsewhere since mid-2011 included (most recent first): Joy Stuart Morton (1953); Struan Birrell Robertson (1952); Bruce Douglas Adam (1958); Geoffrey Hamilton White (1976); Alexander Allan (Sam) Palmer AM (1941); Noel Vincent Sweeney (1953); John Brian Greenwell (1946); Leonard Bruce Lilley (1954); Michael Keith Logan (1962); Grahame John Robards (1969); John Efstratios Venerys (1958); Peter Gordon Sharp AM (1984); Maurice John Brookes (1964); Shirley Isobel Penney (1956); Bruce Warren Gunner (1951); Kenneth Thomas Rawle (1947); Paul Aston Peirce (1954); Marietta (Mim) Jan Gadd (1970); Brian William Barr (1972); Aubrey (Toby) Charles Bowring AM (1948); Brian Patrick Nolan (1953); John James Douglas Dyce (1952); Harold John White (1951); Henry Gayst (1944); Kenneth Halford Mackey (1953); Gordon Ernest Middleton White (1960); Peter Alan Stanton-Cook (1945); Max Henry Williams (1964); Richard Henly Picker (1967); Stanley Victor Cohen (1948); Denise Vial (nee Wallis) (1960); Douglas Harry Cohen (1942); John Henry Temple Ellard AM (1952); Roger Selwyn Barrow Hudson (1944); and (Jonathan) Peter Halliday (1951).

8. Updating your University records

A link has been set up where alumni can make changes to emails and addresses: http://surveys.med.usyd.edu.au/limesurvey/index.php?sid=14261

I thank Alan Concannon (1966) and Jim Biggs (1955) for noting omissions in the Australia Day Honours list.

Please inform me about alumni news and activities that would be of wider interest. We would much appreciate your efforts in encouraging other alumni who do not receive the newsletters to register their email addresses (see above in section 8).

Paul Lancaster
Medical Alumni Association Council and Alumni Council, University of Sydney
Email: pallancaster@gmail.com Tel. 02 9660 0576

29 February 2012