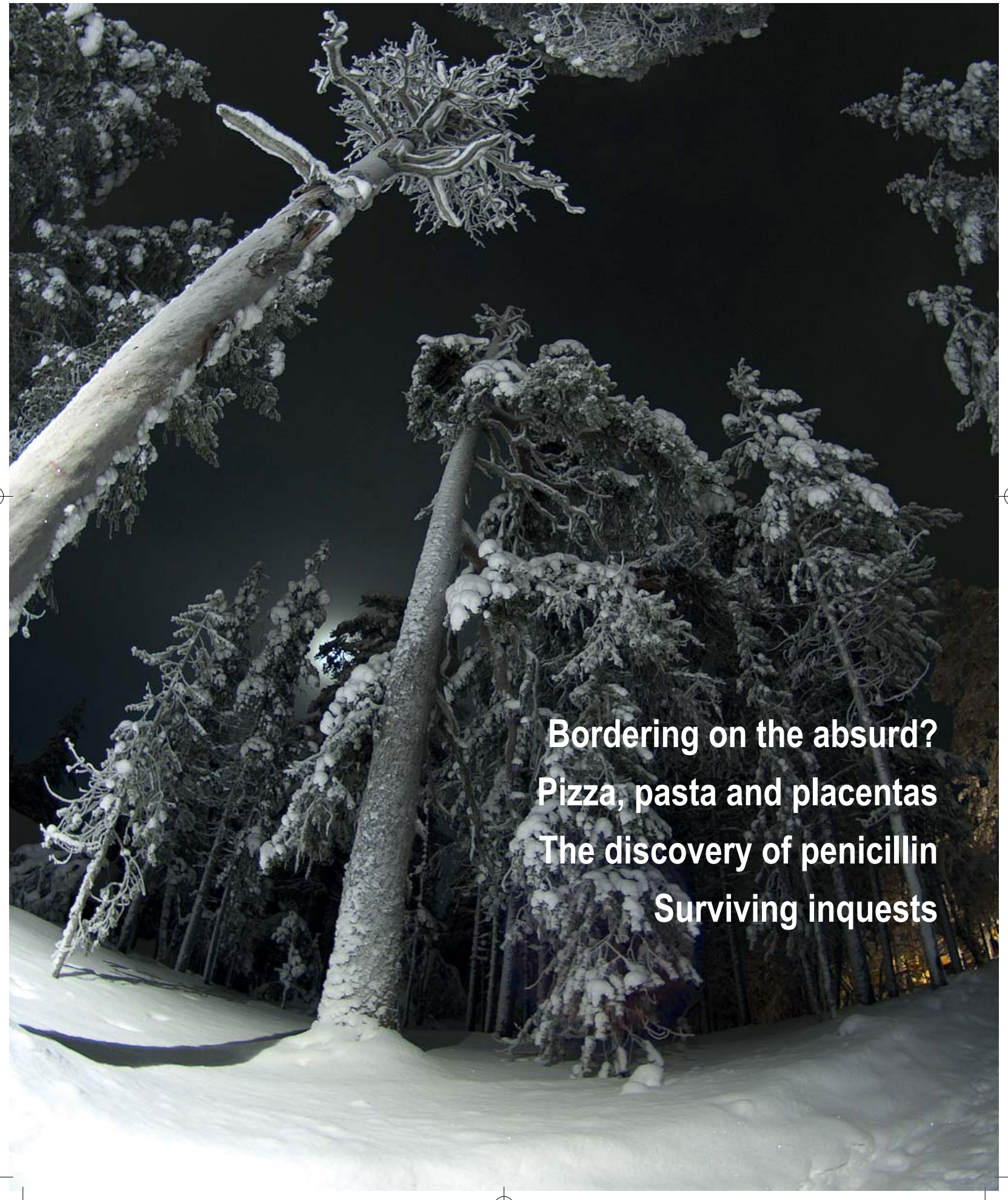


ACP news



**Bordering on the absurd?
Pizza, pasta and placentas
The discovery of penicillin
Surviving inquests**

Association of Clinical Pathologists

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Calendar of Forthcoming Meetings
DIARY DATES FOR 2012

Date 2012 & Organisation	Title	Venue	Contact Details
8 February East Pennine Cytology Training Centre	1 day masterclass Breast cytology	Raynham House Capital Park West Leeds	Dr J H F Smith 0113 246 6330 Kathryn.hawke@nhs.net www.cytologytraining.co.uk
23 February Association of Clinical Pathologists	Liaison & Branch Officers Meeting	Institute of Physics 76 Portland Place London	Rachel Eustace 01273 775700 rachel@pathologists.org.uk
7 March Association of Clinical Pathologists	Basic Management Course 1 day basic level management course	Newcastle upon Tyne	01273 775700 info@pathologists.org.uk www.pathologists.org.uk
7 March East Pennine Cytology Training Centre	Cytopathology in the FRCPath Examination A tutorial for trainees in cellular pathology	Raynham House Capital Park West Leeds	Dr J H F Smith 0113 246 6330 Kathryn.hawke@nhs.net www.cytologytraining.co.uk
27-28 June Association of Clinical Pathologists	2012 National Scientific Meeting (multi-disciplinary)	RIBA, 66 Portland Place, London	01273 775700 info@pathologists.org.uk www.pathologists.org.uk

The ACP accepts no liability for errors or omissions in this calendar of meetings. Readers are reminded that advertised meetings may be cancelled. Those intending to attend are obliged to check the details on booking with the organiser in every instance. There will be a £25 administration fee per issue for entries in this table.



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ACP news

Winter 2011

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Cover Story



Dr Paul McCoubrie is a Consultant Radiologist. While in Lapland visiting Santa he was hoping to see the Northern Lights. Due to government cut backs they had been turned off but, despite the freezing temperatures and with the aid of a fisheye lens and a tripod, he was able to capture this stunning image of snow-laden trees.

Invitation to Contributors

In addition to the constant flow of material from ACP Council, ACP committees and ACP branches, *ACP news* needs new material from you, the members of the ACP.

Pathology news items (1200-1500 words): Any items related to the ACP or the College, pathologists in general, or medical and management matters that may have an impact on pathologists.

Articles (1500-2000 words): These can be papers, reviews, essays, commentaries, critiques or polemics. Submitted articles are always very welcome, as well as suggestions for articles and/or details of people whom the editor may approach.

Reports (1000 words): These may be personal views and reports on interesting meetings, travel or anything else of interest to the readership. Travel reports are specifically for holders of ACP travel fellowships; however, other reports from abroad are welcomed.

Columns (600 words): Regular and irregular columnists exercise their thoughts. Please feel free to rant.

Pathological creative writing: All literary forms, including short stories, serials, surrealism and even poetry.

Appreciations (1000-1500 words): We prefer appreciations on retirement, rather than obituaries. Please discuss these with the editor before submission.

Photo-journalism: Favoured subjects include pathologists doing something interesting, or College and ACP officers doing anything at all. Interesting or artistic photographs are welcomed.

Cartoons: Suggestions are welcomed.

Curetings: Jokes and humorous titbits are always needed.

Debate: Letters to the editor are welcomed, but may be shortened for publication, or even converted into articles. Please try to refrain from writing unless you are prepared to be published. All criticisms of organisations or named individuals will entitle the parties to a right of reply. Please bear in mind the UK libel laws!

Trainees: Trainees are especially encouraged to submit material in any and all of the above categories. These will normally be placed in the trainees' section. Appointments committees in particular value publications in *ACP news*.

Editorial Policy: The editor would particularly encourage overseas contributors, material from trainees, material from nonhistopathologists, commentary on current affairs in pathology, occasional columnists, innovations in pathology, humorous writing on pathology-related topics, and anything downright cantankerous.

Format: The *ACP news* style guide is now available on line via the ACP website in PDF format at: http://www.pathologists.org.uk/allpagestuff/publications_frameset2.htm. The publication is a magazine, not an academic journal, and long lists of references are generally considered unnecessary. Where given, references should be in the Vancouver style and should be kept to a maximum of around six per article, unless absolutely necessary. Alternatively, authors may prefer to give a recommended reading list, or a list of relevant internet links. The editor prefers these as they take up less space.

All suggestions are welcome; however, the editor's decision is final.

ACP news is published quarterly. Regular publication dates are:

Issue	Publication month	Copy date
SPRING	February	5th December
SUMMER	May	5th March
AUTUMN	August	5th June
WINTER	November	5th September

Copy is best submitted by email, or on disc if the file size is large, in any version of Microsoft Word, although it should be possible to accommodate other formats. Submissions on paper by snail mail will also be accepted. Illustrations should be sent as JPEG digital images or hard copy prints. **Please do not embed images in your text. Send them as separate files.**

Please send email submissions direct to the editor at julianburton@doctors.org.uk

From my vantage point in mid October it is hard to predict what things will be like when you receive this Winter issue. So much seems to be happening. A certain bill is working its way through the Lords, a certain North African dictator has just been killed and the economy seems as shaky as ever. We live in interesting times. Outside, the weather oscillates between gloriously summery to numbingly arctic. Indeed I am only confident that it actually is autumn because the shops seem full of pumpkins. This of course is good, because it allows me to fill the freezer with enough homemade pumpkin soup to last a year. The cold weather reactivated the central heating which, true to form, almost immediately stopped working. Yup – it's autumn alright.

Baby, it's cold outside

Being obsessed with the weather is of course a very English thing but the weather does have an impact on the health of the nation. I see this every year in the post mortem room. Infective exacerbations of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease become more common. As the leaves fall from the trees its time to dust off the virology swabs and start hunting deaths from influenza. When the snows come, we see an upsurge in sudden cardiac deaths and, a month or so later, deaths following hip fractures. Before you know it, Christmas and New Year's Day are upon us, and the festive season sees a rise in suicides. Cold weather brings with it the spectre of hypothermia. The steady trickle (or ooze) of decomposing bodies seems to remain constant, but as outside temperatures drop they arrive without an infestation of maggots.

The seasonal increase in the number of deaths coming to coronial autopsy results, some months later, in an increase in inquests. With practice, most inquests are straightforward, though you always need to be on your toes. If you haven't given evidence at an inquest before, or if it isn't something you do often, it can feel daunting. In this issue I present you with my thoughts on how to prepare for and survive the inquest.

In this issue

Sometimes an issue comes together by design, and sometimes it happens more by happy accident. In the Autumn issue I said that I'm interested to know what people get up to on their travels, and you listened. This issue developed a life of its own. The ACP supports members with funding for a range of activities. The issue began with a number of reports about these activities, and so we'll hear from the United States, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Turkey.



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It is pleasing to learn that I am not alone in seeking out medicine-related activities when on holiday. Italy, perhaps not surprisingly, seemingly has a wealth of museums relating to the history of medicine and anatomy. In his article "*Pizza, pasta ... and placentas?*" John Nottingham discovers there is more to Italy than stodgy carbohydrate and tells of the corpse he found in a darkened room off a grubby Bologna street (which suggests he has more exciting holidays than I do!).

Carl Gray pulls this issue together with his superb leading article, "*Bordering on the absurd*". As someone who has a pathological fascination with globes and maps I can certainly relate to Carl's fascination with borders. Borders are where cultures and nations collide. Carl presents his experience of some of the most fascinating borders in the world.

And is that all we have to offer you this quarter, dear reader? Certainly not! Lovers of medical history will enjoy Jessica Thiele's consideration of the discovery of penicillin. Everyone knows that Sir Alexander Fleming is credited with the discovery of penicillin, but does he deserve the credit? I'll leave that for you to decide. Those of you engaged in managing pathology services should find Len Fielding's case study on the consolidation of pathology services of interest. Wendy Osborne and Mike Harding also report on the 25th ACP Management Course.

If, after all that, you crave more then there is good news.

Editorial

While the Trainee's Zone is closed for festive redecorating it should return in 2012, as will our book reviews section. In the meantime, our columnists have been busy. Mike Harris has even been reading the *ACP news*! Well, I suppose someone has to.

Season's greetings and a plea

The end of the year is a time for giving and receiving gifts and eating huge quantities of food. Come Boxing Day you may be so sick of Brussels sprouts and festive carols that you are tempted to run screaming out into the night. Not being the most sociable of people, and loathing office Christmas parties, my patience with the whole thing (which seemingly starts in August when shops replace their displays of T-shirts and barbecues with tinsel and baubles) has usually evaporated by the third turkey curry

of the week. The cure, I find, is to write something for the *ACP news*. It can also be a good way to try out that new piece of computer equipment that someone gave you. Whatever your excuse, I do hope you will consider writing something for the *ACP news* for 2012. The editor warmly considers all contributions. Articles relating to pathology management, politics and history are especially welcomed. Pathologists in training are also urged to share their experiences and thoughts.

Finally, as the year comes to a close it is a time for many to huddle together with their friends, family and loved ones (who, if you are lucky, are also amongst your friends and family!) and take a well-deserved holiday. I hope you have a wonderful winter break, and indeed a happy and prosperous 2012.



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