

ACP news



Future of the non-forensic autopsy
A life at the coalface
Dying for a cigarette
Natural causes

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Calendar of Forthcoming Meetings
DIARY DATES FOR 2013

Date 2013 & Organisation	Title	Venue	Contact Details
Tuesday 30 April	ACP Basic Management Course 1 Day Basic Level Management Course	Taunton Musgrove Park Academy	01273 775700 info@pathologists.org.uk www.pathologists.org.uk
Thursday 6 & Friday 7 June	ACP Annual Scientific Meeting	RIBA 66 Portland Place London	01273 775700 info@pathologists.org.uk www.pathologists.org.uk
Wednesday 4 to Friday 6 September	27th ACP Management Course	Hardwick Hall Hotel, Sedgefield	01273 775700 admin@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.



**Dr Ed Carling is
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of ACP news and
Consultant
Histopathologist at James
Cook University Hospital**



**Dr Abigail Pugh is
Trainees Editor of
ACP news and ST4
in Histopathology at
Birmingham Children's
Hospital**

ACP news

Spring 2013

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Cover Story



Chill

A bank of mortuary refrigerators stands empty but waiting...

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 tidbits 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 non-histopathologists, 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	5 December
SUMMER	May	5 March
AUTUMN	August	5 June
WINTER	November	5 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

Happy New Year to you all.

Few things in this life are certain

There are only two things that are certain in this life – death and taxes. In this issue of the *ACP news* we take a good look at the first of these. Our deaths are a certainty, but the nature of the autopsy in 5, 10 or 20 years time is by no means certain. The hospital (consent) autopsy has all but disappeared in many centres and I think that this is deplorable, but a reality of modern times. The future of the coronial autopsy is at the same time both uncertain and exciting.

Normally we have only one or two leader articles. But this time we have three. We begin this issue therefore with a superb philosophical consideration of death, the final frontier, the autopsy and investigation of death by an esteemed former Editor of this publication, Dr Carl Gray. Initially I had thought that Carl's piece would appear as a column but it is such a good introduction to the topics covered in this issue that I instantly promoted it to pole position. I think this is one of (if not the) best expositions on the subject that I have read in some time, and I am sure you will enjoy it. After this, Dr Terence Jones and I take up the baton and consider whether non-forensic medicolegal autopsy practice will become a subspecialty of pathology in its own right in the foreseeable future. I think the answer is yes, and Dr Jones thinks it is no. I of course leave it to you to decide, but I am sure we would both be eager to see your views in the next issue of this publication. The issue is of interest to the ACP council, as you will see in the report on the 336th Council meeting by Dr Marion Wood, the Honorary Secretary of the Association.

Another of our esteemed former Editors, Dr Mike Harris rounds off the issue with an insightful consideration of just what it is we might mean when we say that someone has died of "natural causes". I find myself very much in agreement with him, though I get around the problems posited by regarding "natural causes" as a coronial verdict and not a pathological diagnosis. The words "natural causes" do not feature in my autopsy reports, though I would not criticise you if they appear in yours.

(I remember back when I was an Assistant Editor several colleagues commenting that it was all too easy for the Editor to over-expose themselves. Already I am stopped in the street by complete acquaintances, who recognise me from these pages. Therefore, as this editorial carries my likeness, itself enough to curdle milk no doubt, there is no mug shot of me against my leader article. I trust you will understand.)



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Elsewhere in this issue

In this issue we have an unusual obituary. It is unusual because firstly it was not written as an obituary and secondly the deceased himself wrote it. Dr Ron Parry retired as a Consultant Histopathologist just a couple of years before I entered medical school. After retirement his interest in pathology did not wane and he recounts some of his experiences during his 70 or so years as a doctor and pathologist. I felt both honoured and humbled to read his article and I hope that you will find it of interest. Truly it seems he dedicated his life to our profession.

Death and the autopsy are pervading themes in this issue. This was partly by design and partly it was fortuitous. Mr William Lloyd takes a good look at the emergence of evidence that smoking causes lung cancer. This now is a common cause of death but it was not always so. And it was not always apparent that smoking played an important role. Mr Lloyd considers how it came to be established that tobacco smoking was not good for the lungs, and you will see that autopsy examinations played a vital role in this discovery.

Dr Ian Chandler has been out and about once more. In the past I have likened him to the Bill Bryson of pathology and I think that his latest offerings run true to this description. Dr Chandler gives us the heads-up on a wonderful exhibition at the Museum of London that focuses on Doctors, Dissection and Resurrection men. If you find yourself at a loose end in London, I urge you

to go – it is fascinating. Dr Chandler also recounts his recent explorations of both Germany and his genetic roots elsewhere in the issue.

Not such a long time ago if you had a peptic ulcer you were very likely to have a fairly miserable time of it, and there was a good chance that you would suffer a fatal complication. These days, deaths due to peptic ulcers are rare. I think I have seen perhaps only one or two in the past five years. Peptic ulcer has risen and declined as a cause of serious morbidity and mortality. In his article Dr Alexander Pollock considers some of the developments in our understanding of gastric physiology that marked this course.

On top of all of this we have news from across the Pond from Dr Anna Piskorski, and Professor Kerr considers some of the vexations of modern training and the hoops we have to jump through.

Where are all the trainees?

You might be wondering where the Trainees' Zone has gone in this issue. Well, articles from trainees remain very firmly welcome. In this issue we do not have a dedicated Zone, but the activities of trainee members are distributed throughout the issue. This time around you will find many reports of the activities of non-consultants that have been supported by the Association.

Situations vacant

In this issue we bid a fond farewell to one of our Assistant Editors and columnists, Dr Su Enn Lowe, who leaves the editorial team due to pressures of the day job. We wish her and Rory-cat well. This means that a position of Assistant Editor of the ACP news is once again vacant. If you are interested (and it isn't that onerous), please express interest by emailing the Editor.

The Association's link officers provide an invaluable connection between the centre of the Association and the membership. Council is aware that there are parts of the UK that currently lack link officers. The ACP is looking for more link officers and if you are interested, please contact Rachel Eustace at head office (Rachel@pathologists.org.uk).

Finally, this is my 10th issue out of a tenure of 12 issues. Being the Editor of the ACP news is great fun, earns you a place on Council, and comes with training and huge support from former editors, your editorial team and the ACP head office. The Editor has control of the contents and appearance of the ACP news during their tenure and receives solicited and unsolicited articles through the year. And, of course, you need to write an editorial every quarter. The role takes perhaps a full day every three months and is hugely rewarding. I shall be sorry to let go of the role. If you are interested in taking over the editorial reins, please email me with an expression of interest, accompanied by a curriculum vitae.



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