



CHEIRON

Newsletter

of the

HISTORY OF MEDICINE  
ACTIVITIES OF THE  
PHYSICIANS AND MEDICAL  
STUDENTS OF CALGARY



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### CHOMS Meeting - Hy's Steak House

Twenty-eight members of the Calgary History of Medicine Society met in the wine cellar of Hy's Steak House on Wednesday night, 22 October 1997 for the first meeting of the academic year. Those attending were: Martin Austin, Peter & Diana Cruse, John & Pauline Dawson, Hugh & Dorothy Gallie, Roy & Betty Hamilton, Noel & Lil Hershfield, David Hogan, David & Kit Lewis, Charles McCulloch, Malcolm MacDonald, Gregory McKinnon, Brendan McKenna, Tait McPhedran, Robert Pow, Tom Ringrose, Julius & Ginette Szekrenyes, Keith & Jane Todd, John & Naomi Tyberg, William Walker and Jack Wootliff. After libations and a sumptuous meal a short business meeting was held. Dr. Keith Todd, until recently Head of Chemical Pathology at Foothills Hospital, then gave an illustrated lecture on "Those other Doctors."

In his talk Keith Todd reviewed a number of physicians who had gained fame in fields other than medicine. These included politicians, military men, musicians, writers, inventors, explorers and murderers.

For example:

**Dr. William Brydon** was a doctor in the Army of the Indus which was an 1838 expedition from India to

Afghanistan to show the flag and counter a perceived threat of increasing Russian influence in the region. The army was 17,000 strong and included political representatives and some officers wives and children.



"The Survivor"\*

The conditions were difficult with cold winds, high snowfalls, lack of food and sleep so the army welcomed the promise of an escort. After a year of troubled residence in Kabul they were forced, on January 6th 1842, to leave Kabul and march east to the nearest British garrison at Jalalabad. Afghans.

Instead of protecting the 17,000, the escort steadily massacred them on the way, pausing the bloodshed long enough to take some 30 women and children hostage. The final few continued the struggle and all, except one, were killed within a day's march of the fort at Jalalabad. This sole survivor made the last day of this epic journey alone and reached safety on January 14th 1842. Of this tragic retreat of the 17,000 strong Army of the Indus this lone survivor was the army doctor William Brydon.

**Dr. Ernesto (Che) Guevara de la Serna**, the Argentinean Physician who graduated from the University of Buenos Aires and left a promising career as a researcher into asthma and allergies to become a revolutionary hero. Dr. Guevara became a Marxist-Leninist, played a major role in converting Fidel Castro to communism and landed in Cuba with

play a direct part in revolutionary struggles in other countries. He was captured in Bolivia and executed on the orders of the Bolivian military commander. His body, less his hands which were removed to confirm identification, was buried in an unmarked grave. The grave was discovered earlier this year and Dr. Guevara's body was returned recently to Cuba where hundreds of thousands of people paid him an emotional homage.

The next meeting of CHOMS will be held at the Faculty Club, University of Calgary, on Thursday 20 November 1997. The speaker will be Dr. Roy Hamilton (anaesthetist) who will speak on Mr. Harold Ridley, the surgeon who developed Intraocular lenses. Dr. Hamilton recently interviewed and video-taped this 90 year old Pioneer.

For more information contact any of the officers:

Peter Cruse	President	220-7195
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### THE COURSE IN HISTORY OF MEDICINE FOR MEDICAL STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

History of Medicine Seminars are held at lunch time on Mondays in the Health Science Centre and all physicians and medical students are welcome. The Preceptor provides a review of the subject under discussion and the students then present their research. Thus, on 6 October 1997 Dr. Julius Szekrenyes gave a stimulating overview of the Medical History of Ancient Egypt.

Jason Brunetta spoke on the contraceptive methods employed by the women of ancient Egypt.

Chris Robertson explored the therapeutic uses of honey as reported in the various papyri.



Che & Friend +

Castro from Mexico in 1956 to lead a band of guerrillas in the fight against the oppressive regime of Batista. DeGuevara became Fidel Castro's confidant and closest advisor and was appointed Minister of Industry in Cuba, a post he held from 1961 to 1965. He was by choice a revolutionary rather than a desk-bound politician and he left Cuba to promote and

A spirited discussion followed these presentations.

On Monday 20 October 1997 Peter Cruse reviewed the history of Greece from the Trojan War to the end of the Age of Pericles with emphasis on Asklepiian and Hippocratic medicine. Medical student, Amanda Fortin, then presented The Death of Socrates. She contrasted the pharmacology and toxicology of hemlock with the serene death described in the Phaedo of Plato.

Future lunch time sessions:

On 3 November 1997 Dr. Gregory McKinnon, surgical oncologist and medical student, Eric Lehr, will present the Medical History of Rome and Alexandria.

On 17 November 1997 William Whitelaw, Head of Respiriology, and Vanessa Weir will discuss aspects of medieval medicine and surgery.

20 November 1997 will be the next meeting of the Calgary History of Medicine Society, as mentioned above.

For seminars in December, January, February and March, please see the syllabus of the History of Medicine Course - or future issues of this newsletter.

### **History of Medicine Section of Royal College Vancouver Meeting September 1997**

Twenty-six medical students from across Canada presented their research in three sessions. The talks were so well attended that at times there was standing room only. Fourteen of the 26 students were from The Faculty of Medicine at the University of Calgary.

They were:

Steve Tsekrekos  
Hippocratic Orthopaedics  
Jillian Baker  
Broussais & Bloodletting  
Ian Digby  
The Stigma of Leprosy  
Janine Przysiezny  
Medicine in the Gold Rush  
Melanie Stapleton  
Leprosy in Canada  
Alan Abraham  
Marfan Syndrome & Music  
Sharon Ong  
Domagk & Sulphonamides  
Sarah Weeks  
Alexander Fleming's Myths  
Bryn Watson  
Willem Kolff  
E. Everson  
Cimino and Vascular Access  
Anna Tinker  
Pirogov & the Crimean War

After the two-day meetings the students went by bus to a Reception at the Woodward Rare Book Room at the University of British Columbia. Dr. Bill Gibson, Emeritus Professor of History of Medicine at UBC, discussed a number of the valuable books in the collection. The reception was generously funded by the Alberta Medical Foundation.

The Royal College will meet in Toronto next year in September.

\*Dr. William Brydon - "The Survivor."  
Painting in oil by Lady Elizabeth Butler in India  
Britannica by Geoffrey Moorhouse, Harvill Press.

+Dr. Che Guevara and Fidel Castro 1964\* from "Che  
Guevara - A Revolutionary Life" by Jon Lee  
Anderson, Grove Press.

**Quote for the Month:**

**"The difference between a professional and  
a technician: a professional is a technician who  
knows the history of his technology."**

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