Bulletin of the Surgical History Group

Papers from the 2016 Poster Competition
Acknowledgements

The activities of the Surgical History Group (SHG) are possible only because of the work of several key persons on staff at the American College of Surgeons (ACS). Connie Bura, Associate Director, Member Services, administers the SHG. She was responsible for making sure that article and files from the poster competition were collected and that this volume was produced. Patricia Turner, MD, FACS, Director, Member Services, gives overall leadership and guidance to the SHG. Dolores Barber, Assistant Archivist at the ACS, gives loyal support to the SHG activities and the maintenance of the ACS Archives. The ACS Division of Integrated Communications produced the present volume.

J. Patrick O’Leary, MD, FACS, Miami, FL, chaired the Poster Competition Committee and shaped its present success. He has been helped by his able assistant, Mariselly Rivero, in his present position as senior associate dean at the Florida International University. Dr O’Leary will step down as Chair of the committee and will be succeeded this year by Patrick Greiffenstein, MD, FACS, New Orleans, LA. Special thanks goes to the members of the Poster Competition Committee and those who spent time as judges at Clinical Congress 2016. The session's success was the result of their dedication to the program and interest in promoting surgical history.
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   Department of Surgery, University of Miami-JFK Medical Center, Atlantis, FL.
   
   First place, 2016 Surgical History Group poster competition.

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   Departments of Surgery, Naval Medical Center San Diego and Naval Medical Center Portsmouth.
   
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Preface

This is a collection of papers from the annual poster competition of the Surgical History Group (SHG) of the American College of Surgeons (ACS), one of the group’s most successful projects. Held at the annual Clinical Congress of the ACS, the session features the scholarly work of students and residents on a wide range of historical topics. More than 40 submitted abstracts for presentation at the Clinical Congress in Washington, DC, in October 2016. A panel of judges led by J. Patrick O’Leary, MD, FACS, Miami, FL, and Patrick Greiffenstein, MD, FACS, Chair and Co-Chair of the Poster Competition Committee, selected 21 for the program. The judges singled out two posters for top prizes, a task made difficult by the quality of the presentations.

The SHG agreed that the students’ and residents’ scholarship deserved wider distribution in a more permanent format than posters on bulletin boards. All participants therefore were invited to submit their work in written form for a collection of articles available for the study and enjoyment of the Fellows of the ACS and the public interested in the history of surgery.

A glance at the poster titles reveals the range of topics and interests certain to appeal to anyone with a passing interest in medical history. Topics include the use of primary sources (for example, payments to support the grave robbing activities of a slave owned by the faculty of the Medical College of Georgia in the antebellum South) and a review of how surgeons’ garb in the operating room evolved from blood-spattered frock coats to clean scrubs (first white, then green, then blue). Short biographies of figures familiar to surgeons serve as reminders of the contributions of Billroth, Liston, Halsted, and Kelly.

There are profiles of Letterman and Kountz, surgeons largely overlooked today but who had a lasting impact on military surgery and transplantation. Finally, there is Sidney Ringer, now completely unknown but whose name is on resuscitation orders in trauma bays across the nation.

The SHG was organized and spearheaded by former ACS president LaMar McGinnis, MD, FACS. He envisioned a group of surgeons dedicated to advancing the appreciation and study of American surgical history. Basil Pruitt, MD, FACS, has chaired the program committee since its first meeting in 2015. Dr. O’Leary organized the original poster competition that year and assured its continued excellence as shown by this collection. Their dedication and leadership embodies the purpose of the SHG. It is appropriate that the present collection is dedicated to Drs. McGinnis, Pruitt, and O’Leary.

The collection will be distributed as a bulletin of the SHG through the ACS Communities on the ACS website, facs.org. In addition to the history of surgery community, the general surgery and pediatric surgery communities will be included in the distribution of the collection. The articles will be housed in the Archives website of the ACS, the forum for SHG communications.

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