Our President Elect

Our President Elect is Dr Margaret Kellett BDS MSC PhD FDS RCS (Eng.)
Margaret qualified from the Dental School in December 1978. After a first NHS job in the local Oral Surgery unit at Manchester Royal Infirmary, Withington and then North Manchester, she returned to the Turner Dental School as lecture in Oral Medicine and Oral Surgery in 1982.
Eventually she saw the light and migrated to a lecturers post in Restorative Dentistry. Over the next few years she completed an MSC and PhD in the field of cell kinetics working at the Patterson Institute of the Christie Hospital. One of the first academic staff to complete a formal consultant training programme, Margaret was appointed in 1991 as Consultant in Restorative Dentistry at the Leeds Dental Institute. Margaret went on to be Head of Department of Periodontology and the School of Dental Hygiene. Later introducing Dental Therapy education in Leeds, she became Clinical Director and Head of the Academic Division of Restorative Dentistry.
Since 2003 Margaret has been the Dean of School and Director of NHS services at the Leeds Dental Institute. As well as being on the GDC specialist list for Restorative Dentistry and Periodontics she was made a member of the General Dental Council itself in July 2013. She has been married to Russel since 1975 and they have two daughters. Hobbies are motorbike riding (GS1200) and horse riding (anything with four legs).

Professor Henry Atkinson’s celebrates his centenary

In the 13th issue of the Dentome in 2010, we published an article on Professor Atkinson, a Manchester graduate who emigrated to Australia in 1953 and became a Professor in the Melbourne Dental School, describing how he had reorganised and rescued the Melbourne Dental School Museum and was still working there two days a week at the age of 97.
On Monday 20th August 2012 “The Melbourne Age” carried an article on its front page of Professor Atkinson’s (Atky to his friends) 100th birthday which was also covered on TV. He continues to work in the museum one day a week and is described in the article as one of an increasing number of people in their 70s, 80s and 90s still working in Australia, although it conceded that he is the only centenarian that they are aware of amongst that number. He, himself, puts his longevity down to “playing soccer in his youth, growing his own vegetables, keeping a wide range of interests and remaining socially and intellectually stimulated”, others may say he had chosen his parents carefully. He said he has no plans to retire from the museum which was named after him in 2006. “It's been a tremendous amount of fun” he told colleagues at his birthday party.

In memoriam

Could members, particularly those who are no longer on the GDC register, please let me know of any change of address so that we can maintain contact. If you become aware of the death of any colleague I would appreciate being notified so that we can amend our records. If any member has any queries regarding their membership please contact the membership secretary, preferably by email. Thank you. Maureen Attrill

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John Edgar Lee  
Qualified 1942 died May 2012
Ann Maden née Parsons  
Qualified 1961 died May 2012
Professor Harry Aldred  
Qualified 1953 died August 2012
Ralph Grundy  
(former member of staff) died August 2012
Leon Paul Gross  
Qualified 1978 died Oct 2012
David Johnson  
Qualified 1977 died Nov 2012
John Drew Sproson  
Qualified 1953 died Dec 2012
Donald Cartledge  
Qualified 1945 died Dec 2012
Christopher Brown  
Qualified 1960 died March 2013
In this issue I have included a mixture of the Biennial meeting, news of the Dental School and what a number of graduates and one student are doing outside dentistry, plus an account of a 100th birthday.

The BGM was held this year on Friday, 19th of April, which was an ideal opportunity for former graduates to see how the Dental Hospital and Manchester itself has changed, to meet their contemporaries and members of staff who are still around, and generally to wallow in nostalgia for 12 hours ending with a dinner in the Midland Hotel. The biennial meeting included a tour of the hospital followed by lunch, then the business meeting which concluded with the outgoing president investing his successor. Next came Prof Newsome’s lecture, entitled “Dentistry a Business or a Profession” and the day finished with the dinner to which partners are invited.

Considering the work that goes into organising the day, it is a pity that it is so poorly attended. Fewer than 90 attended the dinner and a similar number attended Prof Newsome’s lecture, which, considering there are well over 2500 graduates, is a pitiful turn out, so I urge more of you to make an effort to attend in two years time; make up a party with some of your contemporaries, I’m sure you’ll enjoy it and want to make it a regular reunion.

The technological age is upon us, with the Dental School issuing iPads to all the students and staff who use them daily for communication, instruction, to store attendance and for grade collation. The short article by Prof Roberts explains it clearly.

Our students and alumni continue to surprise me. Hannah Shields who, I reported in a previous issue, had climbed Everest has also raced to the North Pole, an account of her experience is inside and I apologise for my “punny” title. Another article shows how one alumnus member combines dental practice with being a circus trapeze artist and a third describes how one of our current students juggles being a world class rower with being a full time student. Meanwhile Professor Atkinson in Melbourne has celebrated his 100th birthday, an illustrated report of which is also included. Tony Brooks’ autobiography entitled “Poetry in Motion” has been published and has had to go to second printing as the first issue sold out. There is an autographed copy in the Dental School museum and another in the BDA library.

The committee has been discussing ways of engaging with more recent alumni who do not appear as supportive of the society as do more “mature” alumni and one of the items suggested is greater use of social media. This may sit well with recent students who use iPads daily as a teaching aid and social media for keeping in touch with friends and colleagues while the more mature members prefer to handle paper rather than reading online. Your comments on this please, bearing in mind that the cost of publication and postage of the printed Dentome is high and publishing online would considerably reduce costs.

And finally, no editorial would be complete without the editor’s perpetual plea for articles and/or information that can be included in future editions. I have a broad back and thick skin so won’t take any offence from criticism, complaints about content or views that might conflict with my own. so please do get in touch: anything except silence.

Pip
Olympic hopeful, Zak Lee-Green, (far right) is 22 years old and will enter his final year in September. He comes from Cardiff and has already won a bronze medal in the 2010 Under-23 World rowing Championships at his first attempt and last year was selected to carry the Olympic Torch around his home city. It now sits proudly in his home.

He began rowing at school, Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Plasmawr, a school in which the students are taught entirely in Welsh, making him a fluent Welsh speaker. On reaching 16 he took up rowing seriously and must have been exceptional as, within 3 days of committing to the sport, he was invited to join the Welsh squad and went on to win 3 Welsh vests in the next two years.

On being admitted to study Dentistry in Manchester he joined Agecroft Rowing Club based in Salford Quays and was quickly accepted into the GB World Class start programme aimed at developing raw talent into Olympic champions. He quickly proved himself one of the fastest competitors and within 10 months had earned 2 Great Britain vests, the second when he won his World Championship Bronze Medal in the men’s quad, in 2010. He continues to train at Agecroft and has represented GB at 2 further U23 world championships. In 2012 he was 8th in the double sculls U23 World Championship and in the same year he contested the senior British Trials in Elton/ Dorney finishing 7th in the single scull. Despite missing almost 3 months of winter training this year due to illness he has been selected for this year’s U23 World Championships (which will be his last), and recently won the Marlow Regatta single scull title.

Being a lightweight rower means that he has to weigh 72.5kg (11st 7lb) or less and in crew boats the crew are allowed an average weight of 70kg. Being 6ft 1inch tall Zak often has to lose weight before an event. To ensure he meets this criterion he is weighed 2hrs before each race. This contrasts starkly with the unrestricted teams who stand over 6ft 7ins tall on average and weigh over 105kgs. This restriction in weight in Zak’s class takes away size advantage, putting all the emphasis on pure skill and strength. Each World and Olympic team is allowed a total of only 6 lightweight competitors per games.

Zak trains twice a day, 6–7 days a week, and each session lasts between 40 and 100 mins varying between training on the water, on a rowing machine and doing weights. He does a lot of cycling to and from university which is factored into his training. He trains for 50 weeks a year providing he doesn’t have to take time off for illness or injury. Fitting training in around university is difficult as it involves early starts and late finishes and means getting up at 6am and not returning home until 8pm having done 2 training sessions and 9–5 attendance at the Dental Hospital, but he finds that EBL, which is the method by which the students are taught in Manchester, allows him to work in his breaks and to catch up at the weekends. His schedule is pretty tough on his girlfriend, he says, who has to put up with him being tired, hungry and aching a lot of the time, but alongside his physio, she keeps him going and well grounded. He feels confident going into his final year but says his biggest dilemma will be to decide what to do once he has graduated. Should he do his VT straight away or should he train full time for the 2016 Olympics? It’s a decision he will need to make in consultation with his coach, GB rowing and the Dental School (not forgetting his girlfriend).

Despite being supported by sponsors he still has to buy a top of the range boat to give himself the best chance of making it to the top spot in his sport. The best single scull costs around £9,500, towards which he has £6,000 consisting of his present boat, plus some savings. In the London Olympics the lightweight competitors won 2 silver medals, Zak wants to go one better in Rio; so if anyone would like to sponsor him or knows of anyone who can, please contact me and I’ll put them in touch with Zak. In the meantime, I’m sure I speak for the combined membership of Somanda when I wish him every success in both his rowing and his dental careers.
Lena Burns is a dedicated dental practitioner who qualified in Manchester in 1990 having won numerous undergraduate prizes and now works in private practice in Didsbury where she has been for the last 13 years.

As well as keeping up to date with the fast moving changes in clinical dentistry by attending numerous CPD courses, this mother of two combines her dental practice with being a circus performer. She is an aerialist and performs mainly overseas for hotel entertainment on trapeze and corde lisse (rope). Lena says “Circus has allowed me to travel the world and make friends with some incredible people, from award-winning circus performers to Hollywood stunt men. My patients are always asking about my ‘other life’ and enjoy hearing my stories when I return from my travels.”
Lena first got interested in circus 10 years ago while on holiday in Jamaica when her daughter was chosen to train for a little circus act with the hotel circus entertainment team. To Lena this seemed like lots of fun so she asked if she could have a go and ran through a whole basic double trapeze routine straight away. The French female instructor, who has since become one of her best friends, next had her climbing a rope, which she had never done before, and try the Spanish Web, a spinning rope act. Following this came the flying trapeze which she didn’t really want to do but was pressured into trying. After a couple of goes she was hooked and 6 weeks later she returned to perform her first double trapeze routine in the show.

To improve her performance Lena travelled to Bristol once a fortnight for private lessons at a circus school run by an award winning aerialist with the original touring Cirque du Soleil. As an indication of how committed she is to her new pastime she has had a large extension built on the back of her house to accommodate a trapeze and corde lisse.

About 3 years ago Lena began pole dancing and was surprised by the very negative reactions she got compared to the positive ones she received when said she was an aerialist. This is because pole dancing is associated in most peoples’ minds with dancers in tawdry sex and strip clubs, which only started in the 1980s, whereas historically it originated in ancient India from pole gymnastics called Mallakhamb and was performed by men. Similarly Chinese pole dance, which is often seen in circuses, dates back to the 12th century and is also performed by men. Pole dance is a performance art; a combination of dance gymnastics and acrobatics. A phenomenal amount of core strength and control is needed to make smooth transitions and to perform the seriously hard moves such as the ‘human flag’ in which the arms and body are held out at right angles to the vertical pole. As Lena says “ if the pole we used was horizontal rather than vertical, it would be deemed acceptable and we would be applauded for what we do.”

The International Pole Sport Federation is pushing for a place in the 2016 Olympic Games, if that happens then, or in subsequent Games, people will be forced to recognise that as a discipline of gymnastics it requires just as much balance, flexibility and core strength as the asymmetric bars, vault or beam. Who knows we could have two Manchester alumni competing in Rio in 2016.
The Department of Child Dental Health has received a much anticipated refurbishment

The result is a vibrant and welcoming clinic with a state of the art sedation suite to support the Adolescent Intravenous sedation Service as well as treatment with Inhalational Sedation.

The team sought the views of young service users as well as receiving expert input from the Youth Forum to influence design, colours and themes.

Interactive play equipment for the waiting area has been made possible through generous donations to the Dental Hospital Charity.
The past year or so has been one of a major technological leap for the staff and students truly, consolidating Manchester’s position as a leading institute for teaching and learning.

Prof Anthony Roberts

LIFTUPP

A separate investment, also using iPads, has involved the collaborative purchase of LIFTUPP (Longitudinal Integrative Foundation Training: Undergraduate to Postgraduate Pathway) from our colleagues at Liverpool Dental School.

This time, clinical staff are provided with iPads and use them to grade the full range of clinical activities. These grades are transmitted to a central database where the grades are sorted and collated for staff to monitor the clinical progression of students. The value of the system is highest when considering that staff in all of the outreach clinics have also been trained in the use of this system, allowing an up-to-date centralised database of all clinical information relating to students. No more bits of paper to get lost… particularly those conveniently lost when the odd bad grade came along! As a further advantage, an analysis of staff grades can be performed, so that the hawks and the doves can be readily identified and managed. Students can monitor their own progress through a web interface and more is planned! A portfolio of experience is envisaged at the end of their studies to pass to their Foundation Trainers, so that the transition from undergraduate to Foundation Trainee is as seamless as possible.

iPad Loan Scheme

It was a pleasure to address the members of SOMANDA during their meeting on 23rd April to update them on the technological advances that are supplementing the student experience, feedback processes and quality assurance of the undergraduate programmes in the School.

iPad Loan Scheme: The delivery of dental education takes place throughout the Greater Manchester region with patient contact across multiple outreach clinics as well as General Dental Practices and District General Hospitals. Whilst ‘on placement’, away from the Dental School/Hospital hub, students felt distant and communication became difficult. To overcome this issue and allow students to engage with learning opportunities during any travelling or ‘down time’, the School invested heavily in loaning them iPads for the duration of their clinical studies. Initial feedback, has been exceptional with students fully engaging with the opportunity and realising the potential of this mobile and flexible technology. The only difficulty might be when they are asked to return them…!
The President’s Statement

I am deeply honoured to be your new President. SOMANDA provides a vital additional dimension to the dental careers of colleagues who have trained in Manchester and it is essential that we continue with its work.
We had a very successful meeting in April this year with Phil Newsome coming from Hong Kong to challenge us with the subject “Is Dentistry a Business or a Profession” in which he described the varying marketing strategies used by big business and discussed whether they could, with some modification, apply to Dental Practice. It proved to be very thought provoking and was well received by all who attended the lecture.

SOMANDA is at a crossroads in that I believe it needs to start to appeal to younger graduates of the school by engaging with them in a different way. The committee, you will be pleased to know, is looking to update the website, engaging with social media to communicate with our alumni and increasing our presence in the Dental School in terms of increasing the number, scope and possibly value of undergraduate prizes. I look forward to leading SOMANDA over the next two years and hopefully meeting many of you during that time.

Paul Brunton.
Hannah’s Close Encounter of the Furred Kind

In issue 14 of the Dentome in 2011, Hannah Shields told us about her success in reaching the summit of Everest in 2007 having narrowly failed at her first attempt in 2003. Following that failed attempt she was given no time to lick her wounds and reflect on her near miss, as in January 2004 she was offered the chance to race to the North Pole by Richard Dunwoody, the ex jump jockey and Grand National winner, who she describes as “a good mate”. The race was due to start in mid-April 2004 but before that Richard Dunwoody had to withdraw due to other commitments and in his place a young doctor from London, Chris Van Toulkin, became Hannah’s partner.

The pair first met on the flight from Heathrow to Resolute in Canada, the meeting point for those taking part in the race, where they soon realised that their competitors had been hand-picked by various organisations and companies and had been in training for a few years. Foremost amongst these was a team of ex-Royal Marines who had been arctic warfare experts for 7 years. In contrast, Hannah had never cross-country skied or pulled a pulk (the sleigh that carries all the equipment and food etc) before and knew little about Arctic conditions.

The first few days were spent preparing their food and equipment and for Hannah, learning to ski the conditions, pull a pulk and handle a double barrel shot gun, which was their only defence against Polar bears (an 8ft tall stuffed example of which was displayed in the luggage hanger). After five days of preparation they began their “warm-up” to the start line. This trek of 110 miles was expected to last 5-6 days and was to prepare the competitors for what conditions they could expect. The frozen sea is not flat, as it freezes it expands, throwing up stugies or pressure ridges of ice which can range from a few inches to over 10 feet in height. Furthermore icebergs can get trapped in the ice forming mogul fields that can extend from 2-60 miles making it difficult for skidoos, let alone planes, to effect a rescue if things go wrong. After 9 hours they reached the coordinates of their pre-arranged stop for the night, which she found took a bit of getting used to as, from Spring onwards, there are 24 hours of sunshine in the Arctic. After 6 hours sleep they set off again to ski to the start line. Over the next few days the temperature dropped to -45°C and, with the wind chill of the blizzards, they found themselves skiing in temperatures of -89°C. No surprise then that by the 6th day, at the start line, a third of the competitors had withdrawn due to injury or frost bite.

On the first day of the race itself they
felt scarily alone, as up to that point they were being filmed by the BBC but now there was no-one else around and 230 miles to go. They did however have to rendezvous at two points where support teams would refuel and restock their supplies.

Their regime over the next 21 days consisted of 15-16 hours skiing, 1 hour melting snow and eating, 5-6 hours sleeping then another hour melting snow before starting to ski again. Every day, at the same time they had to make a call back to Resolute to inform the base team of where and how they were. Hannah says, “We were in an amazing wilderness which I never thought I would enjoy so much. There was a magnificence in the isolation and the basic nature of what we were doing. Simply surviving and travelling in the old traditional ways of the Inuits”.

And so it continued, uneventfully, until the day that Chris noticed a polar bear in the distance. They had been warned about the possibility of such an encounter and had a set rehearsed procedure but as Hannah says “it’s a lot more panicky when you’re doing it for real”. They quickly took off their skis, un- clipped themselves from the pulk and while Chris loaded the gun, Hannah removed the batteries from her next to skin clothing to activate the GPS, camera and satellite phone. This took almost 10 mins in the -40 ºC degree cold, while the bear ambled towards them. Hannah said she could not resist taking photos of the advancing bear but just after she had given their coordinates to base camp the bear dropped its head and charged them. They followed procedure and both faced the bear waving their arms and screaming; Hannah also brandished her skis while Chris got off some shots intending to startle it and if that hadn’t work, it was shoot to kill. Fortunately the tactic worked but the bear continued to stalk them for several anxious hours.

Although there were to be no further polar bear encounters the arduous journey continued, at less than one mile per hour, until they reached the finish to find that only 5 competitors had completed the race and the 3 marines had only managed to beat them by 90 minutes over the 21 days. During this prodigious effort Hannah had lost one and a half stone in weight. At a presentation back in London they received their runner up prize and Hannah was thrilled to receive the Polar Endeavour Trophy, which is awarded by the polar expedition leaders and adventures to an individual who shows courage, leadership and humour. For the next few years, Hannah spent her time between doing dentistry locums and teaching survival skills to such TV celebrities as Jeremy Clarkson et al and Ben Fogle, on their respective Arctic and Antarctic programmes, but now works in a specialist orthodontic practice in Northern Ireland. Her main focus is competing in ultra endurance mountain running races of between 50-120 miles, all over the world.