



## Memories from EAHIL+ICAHIS+ICLC Workshop Edinburgh, 10-12 June 2015

### The Welcome Reception



When EAHIL members gathered for the Welcome Reception at the end of their first day in Edinburgh, the northern sun and the sound of bagpipes created a very special atmosphere in the courtyard of Old College. The evening sun lit up Playfair Library Hall, too, when we came upstairs – a splendid classicist room that is now used for events only, and is not an active library any longer. The welcoming speeches by our hosts showed how well Marshall and the medical team are embedded in and supported by Edinburgh Library Services.

Listening to the speeches and talking to colleagues from all parts of Europe, something struck me even more this time than at previous EAHIL gatherings: that incredible amount of mutual respect and professional solidarity which sets EAHIL gatherings apart from “ordinary” professional conferences. We medical librarians seem to be almost religiously committed to our cause, and we practice a level of

mutual support that other disciplines envy us for. The more we struggle with growing expectations on one hand, and budget cuts on the other, the more we are prepared to join forces and help each other out. I certainly left that reception with a kind colleague's offer to come to Bern for a day and deliver a challenging PhD students' training course. And I promise, I'll try and give something back to our community – next year, in Seville!



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### Gala Dinner and Ceilidh

I would like to state a conflict of interest right at the start of this reminiscence of the 2015 EAHIL conference and Ceilidh: I am a Scottish person who has never attended a Ceilidh I didn't enjoy. This may make some people think that my view of this (tremendous) evening's (fantastic) entertainment is slightly biased. But what makes me perhaps eligible to make a judgement is that I do enjoy a Ceilidh. But I've never danced to a band like Teannaich Ceilidhs – this means that I've never danced Strip the willow to a “God Save The Queen” by the Sex Pistols. I think that many others there had never dance Strip the willow (or any of the other dances) at all, and yet that they did so brilliantly, and seemed to be enjoying themselves too speaks volumes. We were all led through the steps by the seriously good



caller, and no

one broke any ankles: I call this a success!

This was all preceded by a lovely time chatting with friends and colleagues in the very dramatic entrance hall to the National Museum of Scotland, and then a delicious meal of fine Scottish produce (see previous disclaimer, but I'm sure we can all agree that chocolate with salted caramel was divine.) Thanks to all my dance partners (you know who you are!) and in particular the organising committee for the most inclusive, and pleasurable of evenings.



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### Visit to the Signet Library



After the address on the final day, on June 12th 2015, those of us visiting the town centre libraries assembled to catch the walking bus outside the Appleton Tower, and made our way through the streets to Edinburgh old town in glorious weather. The location of the Signet library, opposite the church of St Giles, in Parliament Square was soon reached, and we met James Hamilton, our tour guide, in the reception area. After listening to the history of how the WS (Society of Writers to Her Majesty's Signet) came about, and hearing the story of how the building was designed, we admired the magnificent staircase as we ascended to landing which led to the upper library. James explained the reason why we could not enter the upper library via the right hand door. The reason became evident once we entered the grand colonnaded space beyond and turned back to see the architectural deceit. We made our way through the room, out and down the service staircase from the far end of the upper library. In the Board room we stopped to hear a ghost story and inspected the bookcases containing among other things, the Roughead collection. James led us on to the Minto room where we sat around the table and were allowed to inspect various examples from the collection including a 1000 year old piece of music, and a list of the political affiliation of the Ladies of Edinburgh dating to the mid 1700's. The Lower library, another magnificent colonnaded room, currently being used to serve teas to the public, was our final stop before returning to the reception area. We said our goodbyes to our fellow travellers.



Thanks to our guide James Hamilton for the tour. James is Research Principal at The Society of Writers to Her Majesty's Signet

The WS website library page: <http://www.wssociety.co.uk/index.asp?cat=Library>

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### Remembering Edinburgh

It was not my first time in Edinburgh. I had visited Edinburgh, Scotland and England 25 years earlier in 1988 for tourism with my family and relatives. From that time I saved a very good memory of Scotland, very kind people and evocative landscape. The EAHIL Workshop in 2015 was great: very innovative indeed in its organization, topics, and colleagues. At the same time, it was located in a town where libraries have great tradition and power because of their role in drawing together past and present to build the future. On the other hand, it was also an opportunity to visit Edinburgh again. My memory of Edinburgh is associated with a new discovery of the city whole architecture and particularly of three historical-mythological aspects: a) the Witch trials, b) the Greyfriars Bobby and c) the story of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde.

- Many hundreds of women were put on trial during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Any excuse would do for an accusation, often there was no excuse at all, as it was simply an attempt to settle old scores. Once found "guilty" – almost certain to happen if they survived the interrogation and "tests" such as ducking – the alleged witches were usually burnt alive at the stake on Edinburgh Castle hill.
- The story of Greyfriars Bobby, a Skye Terrier that belonged to John Gray, a night policeman, better known as Auld Jock. The two were inseparable for approximately two years. After John's death in 1858 for tuberculosis, despite the efforts of the local people to keep the little dog away from the graveside, it returned and refused to leave for fourteen years, whatever the weather conditions. Although dogs were not allowed in the graveyard, the people built a shelter for Bobby and there it stayed, guarding Auld Jock forever.
- The link between the novel by Robert Louis Stevenson "Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde", 1886 and the Burke and Hare' murders, a series of murders committed in Edinburgh, over a period of about ten months in 1828, that very likely satisfied the need for cadavers of the Edinburgh Medical School of Anatomy!

There are many other ways for Edinburgh to be told. It seems to me that being the birthplace of Harry Potter, and of his author JK Rowling, is an excellent synopsis of past and future.



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### Visit to the Library of the Royal College of Physicians Edinburgh

We were about 15-20 EAHIL Workshop attendees to embark on a visit to the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh, attracted, no doubt, by the promised splendours of the history of medicine. The very façade of the building situated in Queen Street, practically in the city centre, speaks of the roots of medicine, with the three majestic statues of Aesculapius, Hippocrates and Hygieia standing above the entrance.

We were met on the steps by the Iain Milne, the Head of the Library, who was to be our enthusiastic and humorous guide. As it is known the Royal College of Physicians is a professional body in the UK that sets medical training standards. The RCP of Edinburgh was founded by the Scottish physician Robert Sibbald and established by Royal Charter in 1681. The Library bears his name. The current building dates from 1844, while the adjoining building, acquired as an extension, is by the famous Edinburgh architect John Adam and was built in 1771.

We toured the beautiful rooms one after the other, not knowing what to admire first: the decorated walls and ceilings, the encased shelves full of old books, the furniture, the gallery of portraits of illustrious physicians... The so called New Library (picture) was one of the highlights. The visit was accompanied by Iain Milne's explanations and interesting stories about the eminent scientists, like William Cullen and Joseph Black. Without missing of course the view of some of the library gems, rare books and exquisitely hand-drawn atlases.

Stepping out of the building was like stepping out of a wonderful world and a lesson of Scottish medical history.

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Photograph of the New Library: ©RCPE, reproduced with kind permission



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### Walking tour of historic Edinburgh Veterinary locations



On a beautiful sunny afternoon, Alastair Macdonald and Colin Warwick, from the University of Edinburgh's Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies (known as the Dick Vet) led us on a fascinating two-hour walking tour of Edinburgh, highlighting some key locations in the development of veterinary education in Edinburgh.

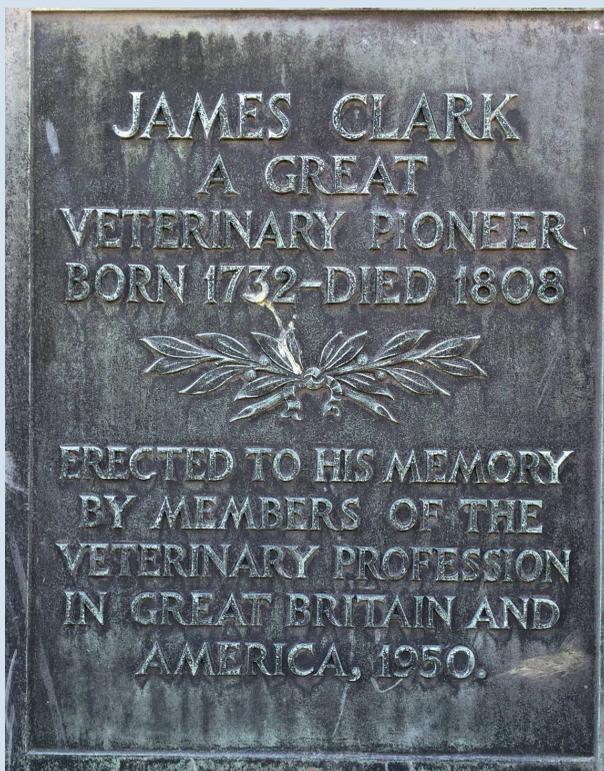
The tour began at the foot of the Royal Mile, next to Holyrood Palace. Here we were given a brief history of the foundation of Holyrood Abbey and its sanctuary before visiting the birthplace of William Dick, the founder of the Dick Vet in Edinburgh. Dick was born in White Horse Close, a small and quiet courtyard just off the Royal Mile. This was named after the 17th century White Horse Inn, but prior to that the location was the royal stables for Mary Queen of Scots. Dick's father was a blacksmith and had a forge in the close. Dick learned the farriery trade here prior to studying veterinary medicine at the Royal Veterinary College in London. Farriers were the forerunners of veterinary surgeons.

The tour then moved to Canongate Kirkyard (churchyard) where we saw the graves of Adam Smith and several famous blacksmiths and veterinary surgeons. Here we also saw the grave of Nancy McLehose who Robert Burns (Scotland's national poet) called Clarinda. Burns wrote the poem "Ae fond kiss" for Clarinda.

We then stopped at another court, just off the Royal Mile. In Chessels Court there was a hotel and horse stables owned by the Farrier to Queen Victoria. The hotel later became a tax office. Deacon Brodie, a famous Edinburgh 'gentleman thief' planned a raid on the tax office and this led to his capture and ultimate execution. Deacon Brodie was the inspiration for RL Stevenson's Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde. We continued on to Surgeon's Square, where Dick studied comparative anatomy.

The tour ended at Summerhall. This was the location of the Dick Vet from 1916-2011 and is now home to "The Royal Dick" bar. They brew their own beer and distil their own gin on the premises. This was an excellent place to end the tour as we were ready for refreshments and some Summerhall ale (or gin)!

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### Tour to St Andrews and the East Neuk of Fife

Saturday a fully booked tour of EAHIL participants and guests travelled the scenic routes to visit the town of St. Andrews, St. Andrews University, their library's Special Collections, and Anstruther hosted by Vicki Cormie, a native of Fife and librarian at the university.

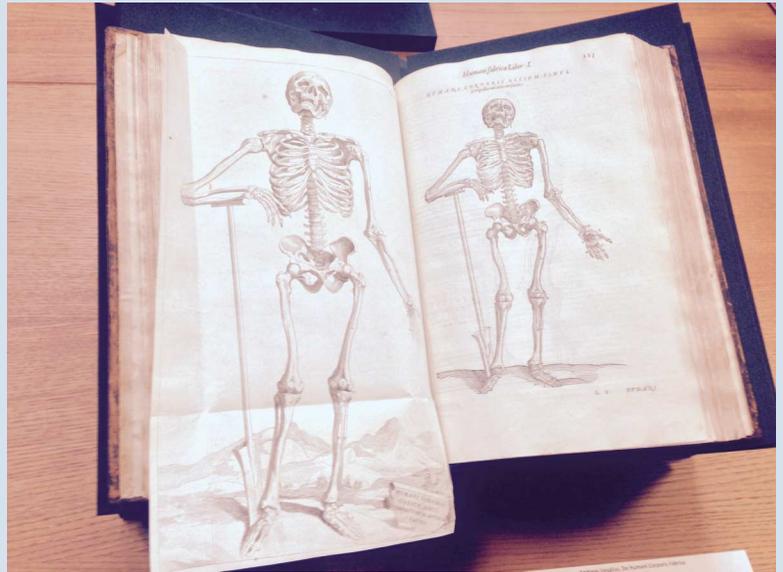
St. Andrews, famous for their "Old Course" golf, is also home to Scotland's oldest university, St. Andrews, founded in 1413. The library has been collecting for six centuries and their special collections,

<http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/library/specialcollections>, truly inspire awe. Medicine was one of the higher faculties mentioned at the time of founding and the library still holds some of the original copies of works used in the early years of medical instruction. For our tour the staff displayed a selection of their medically themed treasures. The tour also included the Thomson Reading Room in the Martyrs Kirk Research Library, which was

a particular treat because it is a converted chapel replete with stained glass windows and pipe organ. The organ has been removed although the pipes remain. Inside the organ is now a photocopy/scanning room.

After our tour we explored the town before moving on to Anstruther, a working fishing village and home to the Scottish Fisheries Museum and Anstruther Fish Bar (winner: UK Fish and Chips shop of the year)

On a personal note, Vicki told us that the tours to the Isle of May, a National Nature Reserve, embark from Anstruther. Two of us took her advice, booked tickets, and traveled back a few days later for a boat trip across the Firth of Forth to the island which is home to 250,000 seabirds including 49,000 pairs of breeding puffins. If you can't visit the reserve in person, you can virtually at <http://www.nnr-scotland.org.uk/isle-of-may/>



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*St Andrews*

### Royal Botanic Garden of Edinburgh Library and Archive

Those delegates who made the journey across Edinburgh to the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh's (RBGE) Library and Archive enjoyed a rich and fascinating afternoon. Lorna Mitchell and her colleague Graham Hardy had prepared some of their treasures for us and explained these in the context of the history of the garden and its collections, showing for example, the first catalogue of plants in the garden, the 1683 Hortus Medicus Edinburgensis.

As well as their collection of rare books, they also showed us exquisitely beautiful examples from their collections of plant illustrations and told us about the role of the Library and Archive in the RBGE's scientific work. The visit was made even more exciting as Lorna gave the news that the garden's Titan Arum, *Amorphophallus titanum*, vulgarly known as the corpse flower, because of its distinctive and unpleasant smell of decomposing flesh, was about to flower. The arum has its own Twitter account as @TitanArumRBGE.

Lorna and Graham told us about how the Library and Archive supports the RBGE's extensive publications programme. We are most grateful to them and to the RBGE for their hospitality and for a fascinating afternoon. <http://www.rbge.org.uk/science/library-and-archives>

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## Edinburgh Workshop in numbers

283 participants  
 96 first time attendees  
 52 session leaders  
 43 workshop sessions  
 33 countries represented  
 28 exhibitor/sponsor representatives  
 19 IPC members  
 16 rooms/lecture theatres being used  
 11 exhibitor stalls  
 9 LOC members  
 4 keynote speakers  
 3 plenary sessions  
 3 int. org. combining for the  
 Workshop  
 2 satellite conferences  
 1 bag-piper  
 1 Ceilidh band

## Participants by country

Australia	2	Norway	19
Belgium	2	Poland	2
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1	Portugal	2
Canada	1	Romania	1
Croatia	1	Russian Federation	1
Czech Republic	3	Rwanda	1
Denmark	7	Slovenia	2
Estonia	1	South Africa	2
Finland	12	Spain	5
France	6	Sweden	31
Germany	9	Switzerland	12
Hungary	2	Tanzania	1
Ireland	3	Turkey	4
Italy	12	Uganda	1
Lithuania	1	United Kingdom	105
Netherlands	22	United States	8
Netherlands, Dutch Caribbean	1		





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### “I’ll tak’ the low road”

#### The day trip for the accompanying persons, EAHIL 2015

##### The background

Research minded as I am and locked out of all the EAHIL workshops, due to my own late booking, I decided to investigate the accompanying person’s day trip to see Rosslyn Chapel and the Borders. Thus, in one fell swoop I added to my travel experiences and brought to life my reading and cinema viewing. This proved to be an excellent decision; the sun shone brightly, sandwiches were packed and we sped off down the road, we happy band of travellers. It rapidly became clear that our guide was an energetic person as at 9.25 am she declared “We can still make the 10.00 am talk at Rosslyn if we leave now”. The driver duly obeyed and remained a stoic presence in the light of 16 people back-seat driving his mini bus throughout the day.

##### The sample population

As a regular conference delegate you might well be wondering who usually goes on these trips? Well I was also suitably intrigued. Let me enlighten you. There is an old saying that when you “assume” it makes an ass out of you and me. Well, dear reader, this was the case on this trip for me. I had assumed that all of the accompanying persons would all be the husband or wife of an EAHIL conference delegate. “Au contraire”, as I soon discovered this was not the case. We were a mixed bunch of relatives, friends and partners of the EAHIL delegates, amongst them a Son, a Niece, a Husband, a Wife, a Partner and a couple of truanting EAHIL delegates. This was a good mix as there was plenty of conversation about the sights and not the office.

##### Rosslyn Chapel

Our first stop was at the Rosslyn Chapel and we did indeed arrive at in time for the 10.00 am talk. The Chapel was formally known as the Collegiate Chapel of St Matthew. It is situated in the village of Roslin, Midlothian, Scotland and owned by the Earl and Countess of Rosslyn. The two different spellings of the village and Chapel gave rise to some confusion and before we arrived I wondered if they were actually in the same place. Happily they were and we sat down in the pews to listen to the history of the Rosslyn Chapel.

The talk was given by a competent young French woman. She would not have been out of place at the EAHIL workshop as she could speak confidently and easily on her subject. She did this with no microphone whilst a hoard of French school children were running around the place trying to complete their workbooks, and a large group of wandering Japanese tourists with 30cm long lenses protruding from their cameras. Delightfully one of the members of our group had the resident cat sit on her lap during the entire talk. I think animals have a sixth sense; cats and Librarians, need I say more!

Now back to the Rosslyn ... we learnt that the chapel had been build some 500 years ago probably in 1446. The structure is entirely built in stone there has never been any timber used in the construction. It has been said that “Rosslyn is a Tapestry in Stone”. The tale of the murdered apprentice Stonemason certainly bears this out. Once upon a time a Master Stonemason had no inspiration for his carving; he went to Rome to seek inspiration for his carving from the Pope. When he returned, he found that his ambitious apprentice had completed the pillar, and made an exquisite masterpiece out of it. Enraged, he is said to have struck him dead on the spot in a fit of jealousy. Whether this is pure myth or based on a real event is not known.

On hearing this tale I thought that Dan Brown had got it absolutely right for the setting of his novel *The Da Vinci Code*. Treachery and suspicion is abundant in the history of this Chapel and yet, conversely, the overwhelming aspects of the carvings are the hundreds of Angels. There are carvings of them everywhere you look and I mean everywhere. The Chapel is tiny and the growing number of visitors since the publication of Dan Brown’s book and subsequent film starring the gorgeous Tom Hanks has obviously been a blessing, bringing many more tourists to the sight. We were privileged to visit and see it in all it’s glory on a perfect summer’s day.

##### The Borders

From the Rosslyn Chapel we ventured on to Melrose a beautiful little town in the Borders. The “Borders”, obviously enough, are considered to be the countryside and towns between England and Scotland, i.e. just south of Edinburgh. Once we entered Melrose I spied a notice for a Book Fair but sadly we did not have enough time to participate in this event.

Standing in Melrose are the ruins of Melrose Abbey founded in 1136 by Cistercian monks and built on the request of King David I of Scotland. Our guide agreed to lead a tour around the Abbey if anybody wished to visit. Several members of the group did and thoroughly enjoyed it. It is claimed to be the home of the buried heart of a King of Scotland, Robert the Bruce. Derick, Herman and I however, were happy enough to chat whilst sitting in the sunshine enjoying a reviving drink in a beer garden!



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### Scott's View

With no time to lose we headed back to our mini bus and on to Scott's View, near St. Boswells. This is truly a wonderful sight over the valley, plus we had an added bonus of being able to see the three Eildon Hills in the distance very clearly. It is reported that Scott loved this view so much that his funeral cortege stopped here to give him a chance of one last look. Our Scottish Safari continued as some lovely wild life came out to see us. Sheep were in abundance, posing quite happily for many a photo shoot. Regrettably the Haggis are nesting in June so none were seen at anytime during the day!

### William Wallace statue

Pressing on we headed up a rather non-descript road in the Dryburgh area and came to an abrupt halt in a small car park. "Follow me" said our guide and we did, along a small wooded track, with wild garlic and flowers on all sides. We walked for about 10 minutes then on rounding a corner we saw "it". "It" being a statue of William Wallace. It is enormous and stands over 30 feet or 10 metres tall. Wallace was reported to be only 5ft 3in (160 cm). It is fabled that he was 6ft 5in (195 cm) as he often rode a Shetland pony to create an image of his perceived size but never the less the statue is out of all proportion. The statue is orange looking and very scary, apparently built out of sandstone.

William Wallace was the Scottish Clan Chief who led the Scots into battle against the English. The reasons for the war are complicated but mainly due to the tyranny used by Edward I to rule Scotland. When the two countries faced each other at the Battle of Stirling Bridge in 1297, Scotland was led to victory by William Wallace. A truly national hero.

Below the statue, on the plinth, the following words are inscribed:

*Sacred to the memory of Wallace  
The peerless Knight of Ellerslie  
Who wav'd on Ayr's Romantic shore  
The beamy torch of Liberty  
And roaming round from Sea to Sea  
From Glade obscure of gloomy Rock  
His bold companions call'd to free  
The Realm from Edward's Iron Yoke.*

If I were numbered amongst the English Sassenachs invading Scotland I too would have been afraid, very afraid. You can almost hear the battle cries around you. He truly is ruler of all he surveys.

I think that Braveheart – Mel Gibson – moulded his looks on this statue.

As you can imagine it was a unanimous decision to have the group photograph taken here. NB: there has been no Photo Shop activity on this image; we really were dwarfed beside the Wallace statue.

After this stupendous and unexpected discovery we found ourselves heading home with happy memories of a good day's sightseeing and the thought of the conference dinner in front of us. What great memories we were taking with us of Scottish heritage and history. It was a trip and a half and I can thoroughly recommend this EAHIL accompanying person's event.

### Conclusions

At the next EAHIL conference why don't you take a day off and go on one of these trips yourself? However, perhaps not as we would have to rename the event and besides shhhh!, the accompanying people want to keep these special trips to themselves whilst we work!

Finally after my small adventure with the EAHIL non-delegates I would like to suggest that we do away with the words "accompanying person", call these lovely people, "Supporters of EAHIL", because that is who they really are and they are a big part of the International EAHIL family.



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**EAHIL 2016 Conference**  
**"Knowledge, Research, Innovation...eHealth"**  
**8-10 June 2016, Seville, Spain**  
**<http://www.eahil2016.com>**

