

BDIAP Symposium on Gynaecological Pathology 2019 report

The 2019 BDIAP Symposium on Gynaecological Pathology was held over two days in the wonderful building of The Royal Society of Medicine, 1 Wimpole St, of London's Marylebone. The first day comprised a programme of speakers of some of the most esteemed gynaecological pathologists from around the world, starting with Dr Robin Young, an Irish-born pathologist of Massachusetts General Hospital and the Robert E Scully Professor of Pathology of Harvard Medical School. Dr Young reflected on his experience with sex cord-stromal tumours of the ovary over his forty year career, dedicating much of his presentation to the original research of his mentor and pioneer in the field, Dr Robert Scully. Dr Young would later give a presentation on metastatic tumours to the ovary, including the historical basis of the Krukenberg tumour, as well as discussing other potential sites of origin and their distinguishing features.

Dr Xavier Matias-Guiu of the University Hospital Arnau de Vilanova in Catalonia, provided an update on the current histopathological classification of endometrial carcinoma and the pitfalls of the current system. He provided compelling evidence for incorporating a molecular classification in to future classification systems, specifically focusing on the POLE mutation.

Dr Matias-Guiu's talk was complemented by a presentation from Dr Teri A Longacre, Richard L Kempson Professor of Surgical Pathology of Stanford Medical School in California. Dr Longacre discussed the testing for mismatch repair proteins and somatic mutations in the female genital tract, considering the two antibody approach to MMR immunohistochemistry and its possible issues as well as providing a flow chart for the use of germline and somatic mutation testing. Dr Longacre would give a second presentation on the recent advances of mesenchymal tumours of the uterus, including new additions to the smooth muscle and endometrial stromal index as well as discussing varieties of uterine inflammatory myofibroblastic tumours.

Dr Marisa R Nucci, of Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston, also gave two very engaging presentations. Firstly, Dr Nucci presented cases of diagnostically challenging endometrial polyps and practical solutions to identifying and reporting the diagnosis. Secondly, she discussed the difficulties in definition, terminology and diagnosis of stromal tumours of uncertain potential and provided a histological guide to diagnosis.

Dr W Glenn McCluggage of the Royal Group of Hospitals Trust and Honorary Professor in Gynecological Pathology of Queen's University of Belfast, gave an update on premalignant and malignant cervical glandular lesions, including the roles of immunohistochemistry, prognosis and treatment as well as future inclusions to the WHO 2020 classification.

Dr Naveena Singh of the Barts Health NHS Trust, delivered a presentation on the diagnostic challenges of serous borderline tumours of the ovary, provided an update on the recent literature and concluded with a list of specific factors associated with both a more favourable and worse prognosis with these tumours.

Dr McCluggage returned to end the first day's programme with a reflection on his 20 year career in gynaecology referral practice. This included the "do's and don'ts" of referring cases (a handy guide for a trainee pathologist), tips for the use of immunohistochemistry and for diagnosing lesions that are

typically referred, as well as presenting new entities that Dr McCluggage has identified through referred cases during his distinguished career.

The Symposium Dinner, held in the Royal Automobile Club on Pall Mall, was a highlight of the event. The auspicious setting with vintage cars in the lobby, grand oil paintings and an elegantly set dining room was a delightful place to socialise after the challenging (for a trainee!) first day. A champagne reception followed by three course dinner was excellent and provided a great chance to meet fellow pathology trainees and consultants from Europe and North America.

I was delighted to meet Dr Nafisa Wilkinson, Chair of the Education and IT subcommittee in the BDIAP, Dr Ray McMahon, President of the BDIAP (and fellow Irishman) and the other bursary recipients from across the world at the dinner. We even managed to get our photograph taken in the shadow of the grand paintings in the halls of the Automobile Club.

The dinner concluded with presentations of the BDIAP's Cunningham and President's medal to Dr Sarah Pinder and Dr Robert Young respectively. Both of these recipients gave equally inspiring acceptance speeches and it was a privilege to be in attendance.

The second morning of the symposium was dedicated to unique case examples from some of the notable speakers of the first day including Dr Nucci, Dr Longacre, Dr McCluggage and Dr Matias-Guiu as well as presentations from Dr Katherine Vroobel, Dr Helen Stringfellow, Dr Rupali Arora and Dr Baljeet Kaur. These cases were certainly complex for the budding trainee but provided an exceptional insight in to the working minds and processes of these pathologists at the forefront of the specialty.

Overall, the symposium was a fantastic opportunity to listen, to learn and to speak with, some of the leading pathologists in the field of gynaecological pathology. I am very grateful to Dr Wilkinson and all at the BDIAP, for providing me the opportunity to attend such a prestigious event and would highly recommend all histopathology trainees to consider applying for BDIAP bursaries in the future.

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