

BIR Wessex Branch

Did you know that the British Institute of Radiology was born in Wessex in 1897? We have had an active branch there ever since, and pride ourselves both on the quality of papers presented at our scientific meetings and on the stature of the guest speakers we manage to attract (current BIR President included!) **Dr Jo Fairhurst**, *BIR Wessex Branch Chairman*, tells us more.

How it all began...

It was the friendly atmosphere of the branch meetings which prompted me to join the BIR as a trainee radiologist in 1987. The meetings have always provided an opportunity for imaging professionals to meet together to exchange news and ideas, keep in touch and develop vital professional links between the major imaging centres in Wessex.

As a trainee, one of the most daunting challenges I faced was standing up in front of an audience of experienced imagers to deliver a paper or talk. The Wessex BIR scientific meetings allowed me to practise these skills in a supportive environment, and I believe this contributed greatly to increasing my confidence and improving my delivery. These opportunities still exist in the Wessex branch today: our Autumn meeting is always held in Southampton and focuses on presentations from radiologists in training. The Spring meetings are held in centres across Wessex, with occasional joint meetings held in conjunction with the South West Radiology Group every 3–4 years.

A strong and meaningful collaboration

The existence of the Wessex Branch has promoted a very strong and cohesive radiological community in the south of England. The opportunity to meet regularly under the auspices of a BIR Regional Meeting has fostered a tradition of collaboration, as well

as providing an excellent forum for dissemination of good practice and promoting novel diagnostic and interventional techniques. Above all, the Wessex BIR Branch provides us with a means of highlighting the importance of education and research in enriching our professional lives and improving the diagnostic service we can offer to patients.

Exciting meetings ahead

This year we will be holding an Extraordinary Scientific Meeting in September, in addition to our biannual events. The meeting will celebrate the contribution of Dr Keith Dewbury to ultrasound locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. We hope that Keith's colleagues, young and old, present and retired, will join us at what should be a very special event. The programme features a sparkling collection of internationally renowned speakers who will be addressing cutting-edge issues in key areas of ultrasound practice.



Dr Jo Fairhurst, BIR Wessex Branch Chairman

I would like to extend an invitation to all BIR colleagues across the UK to meet at Chilworth Manor in Southampton on 18 September. This is a delightful venue, with excellent meeting facilities in a beautiful rural setting. The meeting will be followed by a dinner and entertainment. Places will be limited to 120, so I advise early registration!

Ultrasound: As Good As It Gets?

A Meeting to Mark the Retirement of Dr Keith Dewbury

Friday 18 September 2009
Chilworth Manor, Southampton

This meeting is aimed at all imaging professionals involved in ultrasound, but will also be of interest to general radiologists and radiologists in training. Lecture topics will include elastography, contrast agents, 3D/4D imaging and screening.

Full programme can be found at
www.bir.org.uk/wessex.html