

## Letter from the President



Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to this latest edition of the College newsletter. In this edition we are very much looking forward with some details on both our 'Innovations in Eye Care Delivery' meeting and our 2013 Conference and also reflecting on the past with a tribute to Dr Philomena Guinan who many of you will have been acquainted.

I do hope that you are available to attend the meeting in Dublin on December 6th. It promises to be an interesting discussion and your participation will be a welcome contribution to it.

Looking forward to the 2013 Conference, I am particularly delighted that Gordon Plant has agreed to give the Mooney Lecture and will also speak at the Neuro-ophthalmology symposium. The Scientific & Yearbook Committee is assembling a very comprehensive agenda for the meeting which, together with the lovely location of Killarney should ensure that next year's meeting is a success.

With Best Wishes

PATRICIA LOGAN, *President,  
Irish College of Ophthalmologists*

## Reaching out

As part of the College's on-going communications strategy and our overall objective to play the leadership role on eye care in Ireland, the goal is to involve as many of our members as possible in delivering this message.

The ICO must be clearly identified by key policy and decision makers as the expert body in discussions on eye healthcare provision.

We are encouraging our members to be proactively involved in helping us raise the profile and awareness of the college amongst the public and key stakeholders during what is a very challenging time for the Irish healthcare system.

We would be delighted to hear from you in relation to any community news that you may be directly involved in or indeed any projects you feel would help communicate a positive message about our role in the wider community and our overall vision strategy goals which aim to

result in better eye care provision in Ireland.

We wish to clearly explain the important role of eye doctors and communicate to the public that our overall aim is the preservation of sight and to educate people on the prevention of eye health problems.

Our message is to encourage people to take positive steps to protect their eye health and to seek early medical intervention if they have concerns.

For those who feel they would like to be more involved or have a voice in their community, the college is here to provide advice and media training facilities in the event of a request from a local media publication or radio station for your comment or an interview. The college believes it is beneficial to all to have spokespeople at both a national and local level in order to give a complete representative view of our work.

Your support and feedback is very much appreciated.

## Montgomery Lecture

The Annual Montgomery Lecture will take place on Friday December 7th in the Albert Lecture Theatre at the RCSI. This year's lecture will be delivered by Dr Gerrit Melles who will give a talk titled "Endothelial keratoplasty: DMEK or DMET – what if Fuchs endothelial dystrophy does not exist?"

The RAMI Ophthalmic Section winter meeting will also take place on Friday December 7th, in the RCSI. The meeting runs from 1pm and both events on the 7th will be CME accredited.



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If you would like to make any suggestions for future issues of the College Newsletter please contact  
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# Conference 2013



The 2013 Annual ICO Conference will be held in the Malton Hotel, Killarney from Wednesday 29th to Friday 31st May.

The 2013 meeting will see a return to the traditional three day Wednesday through Friday format, kicking off early on day 1 and with a full programme until the afternoon of day 3.

There will be many highlights to the programme which will include three main symposia focusing on neuro-ophthalmology, myopia and plastics. A new addition to next year's programme will be a 'trends in ophthalmology' session where a range of sub specialists will give a short update on what's new in their area. The medical ophthalmologists committee are organising a special session which will feature a discussion on the value of new medicines and treatments for eye conditions.

Dr Diarmuid Smith endocrinologist at Beaumont hospital and clinical lead for the diabetes programme will give a keynote talk on the opening morning. The conference will also feature the usual paper sessions and a range of workshops.

Several international speakers will travel to Killarney to speak at the meeting including Gordon Plant from Institute of Cognitive Neuroscience at University College London. Gordon is an expert on visual disorders in neurological disease and will give the annual Mooney Lecture. He will also

speak at the neuro-ophthalmology symposium where he will be joined by Mike Burdon, Chairman of the British Isles Neuro-ophthalmology Club. Pat Logan will chair the Neuro symposium.

Tim Sullivan will travel all the way from Brisbane, Australia where he specialises in eyelid, lacrimal and orbital disease in adults and children. Tim will speak during the plastics symposium and will also give a keynote talk on orbital disease.

We plan to make the most of the beautiful surroundings of the lakes by organising both the usual golf competition and a run/cycle combination with possibly even a swim for the really energetic amongst you so don't forget to pack suitable footwear!



Mike Burdon



Tim Sullivan



Gordon Plant

## The Gathering

The dates for the 2013 meeting run into the June bank holiday weekend so it might be an excellent opportunity to bring along the family and spend a few extra days in the Kingdom. To support 'The Gathering' initiative it is also a good opportunity to reach out and invite Irish colleagues now working overseas or those who trained in Ireland and are working across the globe to attend the conference.

The Gathering Ireland 2013, the most ambitious tourism initiative ever undertaken in Ireland and its success relies on the people of Ireland getting behind the initiative and reaching out to people at home and abroad to celebrate this one-off yearlong celebration.

Over 70 million people worldwide claim Irish ancestry. The Gathering Ireland 2013 provides the perfect excuse to reach out to those who have moved away, their relatives, friends and descendants, and invite them home. It provides an opportunity for those with links or an affinity to Ireland to play a part in and benefit from our economic recovery.

The Gathering Ireland 2013 will bring new momentum to the development of the global Irish network and deliver not only short term benefits next year but longer term rewards as relationships develop. Why not play your part by making contact with a colleague overseas and invite them to the ICO 2013 Conference?



# OBITUARY – Dr Philomena Guinan Hyland

Dr Philomena Guinan served as a consultant in St. Vincent's Hospital, the Royal Victoria Eye and Ear and the Combe Lying-in Hospital and introduced laser technology as a central tool in eye surgery in Ireland and Britain.

Phil was born in Dublin on 11 August 1916, to John Guinan from Clareen, Offaly and Marion Hume from Portlaoise, in the Guinan Brothers pub on Mount Street, now known as Howl at the Moon. She was the youngest sister to Maureen, Una, Aileen and Joseph. At the age of three, her father died, and her mother insisted that all the girls receive a professional qualification.

The Guinan girls went as boarders to Dominican College Cabra, where Phil recalled excelling in English, Latin, Music and Drama. As for science, it did not figure. Her plan was to study English, but after a conversation while travelling by train to Irish College in Ring, medicine emerged as her new choice.

Her lack of science made for a bumpy start but after pre-med she finished each year with prizes and exhibitions. In her final year she achieved first-class honours, first place in the class, and a gold medal. This meant she was the candidate for the Travelling Studentship. When seeking advice from the Dean of Medicine on where she might go or what she might do, he replied with a question: "Would you not think of getting married now?" On this one rare occasion Phil was speechless.

Phil's brightness extended to the hockey field where she excelled both in Cabra and at University College. Having started in UCD in 1934, she quickly found the Hockey Club, then out of town in Belfield, where she made life-long friends. She went on to captain UCD Hockey Club, and to organise a tour to London and Oxford. The triumph of this tour was to beat Oxford's first team in Oxford. In 1936 she won the gold medal in the Irish Inter Varsity Athletic Championship 100 yards.

She broke new ground in golf. At that time all male medical students were free members at Milltown Golf Club. Phil wrote to the Captain of the Club and the doors were opened free to female medical students. That was back



Dr Philomena Guinan Hyland

in 1930s. Her clubs were made by the then famous Portmarnock professional, Willie Nolan.

Graduating in 1940, Phil bravely headed off to London to train as an ophthalmologist in what is now called the Western Eye Hospital in Marylebone, London. It was a challenging time with regular air raids on

London. When possible she went to her sister in Harwich for some quiet weekends. One weekend Harwich was bombed and Phil found her medical knowledge stretched to the limits. In later life she recalled it as the most traumatic event in her life.

At the end of the war, Phil, just 29, was appointed as a consultant in St Vincent's Hospital. Within a month, an opportunity arose for her to work for Displaced Persons (or refugees) in Germany, with the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Organisation (UNRRA). Her young colleagues advised against going, her older colleagues encouraged her and Sister Canisius O'Keeffe, one of the famous matrons at St Vincents, actively supported her. Phil spoke lovingly of how this matron mentored her and other women.

Phil wrote a wonderful reflection on her time in Germany, published in the Journal of the Medical Association in November 1946. While it deals with medical issues, it also reveals a wonderful insight to the great spirit of life there. "On the way [to Mass] we passed a roofless shattered house in which remained one room, from this came the strains of a piano, a violin, and a flute playing Mozart. In the midst of a deepfelt hopelessness the Germans cling to their music as to nothing else."

UNRRA folded a few years after the War but much of its work is continued by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. It is amusing to note that Phil was a very close friend of a fellow medical student, Tessa O'Donnell, from Donegal. Tessa married a Ballina man called Aubrey Bourke, and their daughter, Mary Bourke Robinson, went on to serve as High Commissioner for Refugees. One can wonder if Tessa ever spoke with her daughter about her good friend Phil's work for refugees.

Back at her consultancy post, her new knowledge and exposure to the

German language resulted in her being the first in these islands to introduce laser surgery in the care of eyes. Her friendship with a German doctor, Gerd Meyer-Schwicherath, proved key to this new technique called "Retinal Photocoagulation Surgery". She was invited to lecture in Boston and San Francisco on what was then groundbreaking surgery. Many diabetic eye conditions have been saved by this work.

In 1977-1979 Phil served as President of the Irish Ophthalmological Society. In her Presidential Address she reflected on her use of laser treatment with emphasis on diabetic retinopathy and photocoagulation. Among the prizes awarded to Phil were the World Health Fellowship and the Somerville-Large award. Phil served as a consultant in St. Vincent's Hospital, the Royal Victoria Eye and Ear and the Combe Lying-in Hospital. She lectured in UCD and the Royal College of Surgeons.

Not long after her return from Germany, Phil married an old college friend, Charles Hyland, a young solicitor in Dublin who was her life-long companion and friend. Both shared that awful pain of losing their fathers to death in early childhood. Charlie's father, a dentist, died while aiding injured soldiers during the rebellion of 1916.

During these busy years of work, Phil also enjoyed hill walking, continental holidays, skiing in the 1950s, art and music and not least was a voracious reader. Recent reading included Ryszard Kapuscinski's, *The Shadow of the Sun*, which led her to buy all his books. To the end she had a very keen interest in current affairs, and politics, voting in both the General Election and the Presidential Election of 2011. Women died for the vote and she was going to use this hard-won right to the full.

Phil was pre-deceased by her husband Charles in 1996 and is survived by three generations of nieces and nephews, all known to her by name. Her love of friends extended to their children and their grandchildren, again knowing each by name. She loved life, never losing her deep thirst for knowledge, and was in no rush to go. It was a life packed to overflowing, a life full of energy, of art, of music, of reading, a life dedicated to healing, to family and to friends.

Philomena M. Guinan Hyland, b. 11 August 1916, d. 2 December 2011, survived by nephews and nieces to three generations.

# 4th Annual Adare Retina Meeting

The 4th Annual Adare Retina Meeting took place at Adare Manor Golf Club, Thursday October 4th. Here are some of the people who attended.



Left to right - Mark Kerins, Rob Acheson, Marie Hickey Dwyer, Dara Kilmartin, Patricia Quinlan, Philip Cleary



Michele Coffey & Fiona Harney



Alison Blake & Fiona Darcy



Marie Hickey Dwyer & Raymond Niland



Geraldine Comer & Collette Dalton



Barry Quill & Olya Pokrovskya



Philip O'Reilly & Sinead Fenton

# The Forum Trainee Subcommittee – the national voice for trainees in Ireland

**Michelle McEvoy – Chair Forum Trainee Subcommittee**

## The Forum

In 2006, the Forum of Irish Medical Training Bodies (The Forum) was established. The purpose of the Forum is to promote common strategies and enhance universal efficiencies of the accredited postgraduate medical training bodies. The membership of the Forum includes all the postgraduate medical training bodies in Ireland, including the Irish College of Ophthalmologists.

## The Forum Trainee Subcommittee

Many training bodies have their own individual trainee committees. However, no platform for trainees, from all the various specialities, to work together had been created in Ireland. Therefore, in June 2012, the Forum Trainee Subcommittee was established to promote greater involvement of trainees and contribute towards continued improvements in the standards of postgraduate training in Ireland at a national level.

## So what does this mean?

It means, that for the first time, we now have a formal channel for communicating and representing trainee opinion to the Forum of Irish Postgraduate Medical Training Bodies and other stakeholders such as the HSE, Department of Health and Medical Council – giving us a national voice for postgraduate medical trainees in Ireland.

## What is our purpose?

Specifically the purpose of the Forum Trainee subcommittee is to:

- Represent trainee opinion to the Forum
- Provide a channel for communication between trainees and the Forum

- Provide a forum for discussion of issues relevant to postgraduate medical trainees at a national level
- To enhance dissemination of trainee information to trainees across all the postgraduate training bodies
- Explore areas of collaboration and information sharing. For example, the trainees in RCSI or the College of Anaesthetists are doing something innovative or interesting, this can be formally shared with trainees across all the specialties.

## So what have we done?

Since our formation we have conducted two national surveys and represented the views of trainees at meetings with the Minister and the HSE. As many of you may be aware, the first survey sought trainee opinion on the Department of Health's proposal to introduce a consultant level 1 grade and the second determined the potential impact on medical retention that the introduction of a new salary scale for consultants may have.

Earlier this year, the Forum Trainee Subcommittee submitted a proposal calling for the introduction of a flexible consultant post that would support the development of a consultant delivered service and formally utilise the full breadth of

consultants' expertise, experience and formal postgraduate qualifications in research, management and medical education and training for the betterment of the health service and patient care.

## Future projects?

We are also exploring other initiatives such as the development of an on-line, updatable information guide on training sites across Ireland to help trainees who are constantly on the move to provide them some important, essential information on their new hospital or city. In addition, we are planning the first national careers night for interns to provide them with information about the various career pathways and training options that exists in Ireland.

## Representing trainees

We are a new committee, and are very much in the early stages of establishing our national role, but are committed to providing a voice for trainees. So it's important that trainees get involved in the workings of the group and contribute their ideas, their suggestions and show their support for a committee that has huge potential to unite us as a group and represent our views at a national level to improve the standard of training and care that we can provide to patients.

## Medical Council Accreditation

Under the provisions of the 2007 Medical Practitioners Act the Medical Council is undergoing a process of formally re-accrediting the post graduate training bodies. Each body is required to compile a detailed submission with comprehensive information on the specialist training programme delivered by the College and covering the full trainee journey from initial selection through to completion of specialist training. Dr Denise Curtin is chairing the group compiling the information which will be subject to a detailed review by the Medical Council in the New Year.

# Thomas Bernard Kelly by Vincent Marmion



*At foot of Chumolhari 22 March 1904 -Lt Macleod, Capt. R F Baird and Capt. T B Kelly on the right. Reproduced with permission from the British Library*

**T**B Kelly was born in Galway on the 11th March 1870 (second son of the family) and matriculated through the Royal University (Dublin) October 1887

He was an Exhibitioner and Anatomy Scholar and held the post of Demonstrator.

He proceeded LRCP & S Edinburgh in 1891 and at the same time the LFPSG.

He is recorded as holding 'house jobs' in Edinburgh one of which included six months at the Eye Department of the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary under Argyl Robertson.

He was appointed to the house surgeon post at Bristol which he held from 1895 to the end of 1896. He was the third appointee to this post. During his time in Bristol his mother died, Mr F R Cross arranged that all the expenses to attend her funeral were met by the hospital and that he did not lose any salary.

In Bristol he had a wide surgical experience and made observations on cataract surgery. The adult cataract cases he operated upon can be segregated into four groups, these were 1 cataract extraction with iridectomy, 2 Preliminary iridectomy with the cataract removed later. 3 Round pupil extraction – no iridectomy. And 4 the same as 3 except that at the end of the operation Eserine and Morphia were applied to the eye. Outcome is based on the length of inpatient stay, the level of intra operative

complications, post operative healing and the final visual acuity. Group 4 emerges as the most impressive followed by group 3 and Group 2 the least.

The instrumentation available is known, suture materials had not emerged for cataract surgery. Techniques for detailed examination of the eye were then limited and the ever present possibility for sympathetic ophthalmia led to a removal of eyes which showed delayed healing or 'irritability'.

Two other forms of surgery are interesting, in cases of strabismus recessions, advancements and tenotomies are all recorded. Periorbital tumours were removed and the defect covered by a rotational flap.

TB Kelly passed fourth in order of merit in the first competitive examination (1897) for the Indian Medical Service IMS. Commissions were not awarded until the applicant was fluent in two Indian languages. TBK joined Skinners Horse the

1st Bengal Lancers in 1897, his posting is listed as at 1st January of that year. TBK served throughout the Younghusband mission to Tibet from December 1903 to September 1904. Essentially the mission was stranded at a village called Tuna, which was at

14,000 ft, during the worst of the severe winter weather. There are no detailed medical reports on the illnesses or war wounds amongst the mission force which initially numbered about 900 men. There were 75 cases of severe snow blindness recorded in one non medical report on the mission. This infers that this was a corneal and not retinal condition.

He is given mention for his services during a battle at Niani in June, this was an important strategic post as it was on the Mission's supply lines.

Re enforcements in May increased the number in the mission to close on 2,000 men.

Seven other medical staff are identified who dealt with, over a six month period, two hundred and two casualties amongst the mission and in excess of seven hundred Tibetans were treated. There were two actions to clear high passes which took place at 16,000 feet these probably presented the medical staff with special problems.

In September 1904 at Lhasa TBK and another doctor were attacked by a monk wearing body armour and they suffered cuts.

Most IMS doctors were expected to attend to the local population which included cataract camps. TBK was responsible for the control of an outbreak of the Plague in Seistan 1906.

He was in charge of the Military Hospital at Basra from July 1917 to September 1918 and was awarded a DSO for the 'outstanding performance of the hospital doctors and nursing staff under extreme conditions'.

In 1922 he was appointed Surgeon to the Viceroy of India; he retired in 1927. He died in London in January 1949.

# AMD Week

AMD Awareness week ran from 22-30 September and this year's campaign, which the College supported, included a mobile testing unit and follow up review for those who were detected with the disease. Thanks to all those College members who supported this campaign.

A very special 'Sensory Event' took place in the National Concert Hall during AMD week. Hosted by Mary Kennedy, who was joined by a collection of special guests including

Jimmy Magee and the Vard Sisters, the blindfolded audience members were entertained with a selection of music, story-telling, comedy and chat.

For the first half of each act, the audience remained under blindfold and relied entirely on their other senses to guess the mystery performers' identities before they are unveiled. The blindfolded experience had a powerful effect on the audience and highlighted the impact of vision loss.



RTE's Mary Kennedy is pictured with The Vard Sisters and Siobhan Kelly from the ICO to publicise AMD Awareness week and Ireland's first Sensory Entertainment Event. Proceeds raised benefited NCBI and Fighting Blindness.

## Basic Specialist Training Scheme Recruitment 2013

Training posts on the basic specialist training programme in ophthalmology are centrally recruited through the College. Posts on the scheme will be advertised through the College website and the press in January 2013 with Friday January 25th, 2013 the closing date for receipt of applications. All applications will be shortlisted and a panel of representatives of the three rotations will interview suitable candidates in late February.

Candidates are scored and ranked during the interview process and then matched with their preferred rotation according to rank. The clinical sites will be advised of the selected trainees in March. HSE Medical Education Training guidelines now require that only doctors appointed through the training body programmes are eligible for Medical Council trainee specialist division registration. NCHDs appointed directly through the units are fixed term local appointments for service.

## ONE Network

The College has signed all members up to the American Academy of Ophthalmology ONE Network which is a great resource for all eye doctors.

The Ophthalmic News and Education (ONE) is an online educational resource centre that brings together the most clinically relevant content, news and tools from a variety of trusted sources for eye doctors worldwide.

*The ONE Network helps eye doctors maintain skills, get targeted information and keep up to date with*

- A broad array of current ophthalmic information and education
- Tools for lifelong learning
- Latest research in peer-reviewed publications
- Precise clinical searches

- Self-assessment tools to test your knowledge
- A custom learning plan with automated reminders and a
- Review of the standards of care with the Academy's library of practice guidelines

Online self-assessments allow you to measure your knowledge on specific subjects and suggest materials specific to those areas in which you need more information. Access to journals, cases and subspecialty newsletters keep you informed on the latest techniques, findings and news.

With the ONE Network, you are able to perform targeted clinical searches quickly. To locate the information you need, enter your search item into the ONE Network search box, located at the top of every page. Your search results will include content ranging from the Basic and Clinical Science Course to publications

and guidelines. If you want to filter your search results to only content in peer-reviewed journals, click on the PubMed icon.

You can make the ONE Network most relevant and useful to you and your needs by having it display targeted information in your subspecialty. When you first launch the ONE Network, you will see content displayed for comprehensive ophthalmology. You can set them ONE Network to display news in your subspecialty in the "Select a Subspecialty" menu at the top of the page.

All ICO members should have received a username and password directly to their own email account from the AAO. If you have not received this information or have any difficulty accessing the content please call the College office. The ONE Network is accessible at <http://one.aao.org>

# “Innovations in Eye Care Delivery – Embracing New Challenges”

**T**he College’s Eye Care Conference will take place in the Alexander Hotel in Dublin on December 6th. The meeting will discuss how the key elements of better healthcare – patient safety, quality of care and professionalism - can be maintained and improved without compromising the patient experience or the caring culture of medicine.

Remarkable changes in life expectancy at birth mean that half of all those born in 2000 may live to the age of 100. Similar remarkable advances in healthcare and treatments for chronic disease mean that people who are diagnosed earlier have much improved outcomes than before.

These two major changes pose considerable challenges for the State, with increasing pressure on the health service to deliver advanced medical care to an expanding older population. This is all the more daunting where there is less money available to pay for care.

The conference presents an opportunity to the College, in its leadership capacity to facilitate discussion on the delivery of care in Ireland.

Representatives from the Department of Health, HSE, Allied Health Professionals, patient advocacy groups and other interested parties will attend also. The meeting is also an opportunity for the College to communicate its central goal to invited guests; which is to maintain standards of excellence for the restoration of vision and the perseveration of sight. With this goal the College can act as an advocate for patients by providing accurate medical information to the public and by focusing on a leadership role through its policy guidance for government.

*Speakers from Ireland and overseas will address their talks to three overarching topics;*

## **Panel 1 – An Eye Care Model for Ireland**

A successful model of care will have quality outcomes and patient safety at the centre. The ICO advocates for greater integration between all eye care providers with the eye doctor playing the central role in interacting with other service providers. Improved access must not be at the cost of patient safety. The development of a shared care model must be clinically appropriate based on clearly defined referral pathways with agreed protocols. Such a model must be supported by robust IT systems, open to scrutiny and with appropriate levels of regulation and formal protection for the both the private and public patient.

Appropriate education with proper oversight and regulation is also essential.

The presentations from these speakers will look at other eye care models and consider how the lessons learned could be best applied in the Irish context.

## **Panel 2 – The Role of the Allied Health Professional**

Allied health professionals have an important role in all healthcare models, providing a range of direct patient care and support services that can be critical to other health professionals and patients. Within the changing healthcare environment clearly defined roles and responsibilities for each category of professional is essential. The responsibilities of each must be clearly defined and indemnified with proper regulation by an

independent body and appropriate oversight to ensure practitioners remain within the guidelines of professional conduct. This panel will look at how roles and responsibilities for allied health professionals can be defined and regulated.

## **Panel 3 – Commercialisation of Medicine – Issues for Patient Safety and Quality of Care**

The caring culture of medicine is based on best patient outcome. Eye doctors have an extremely long tradition in professionalism, including a well established culture of placing both the individual patient and the public welfare as top priorities. A strong focus on high standards for ethics and professionalism validates the view of medical doctors as a credible voice for protecting patients' interests and the public health in matters of eye care.

Advances in technology have made the treatment of certain conditions commercially attractive. One of the challenges with the commercialisation of medical procedures is that the quality of patient outcomes may not be the primary focus. Direct patient advertising is increasingly used and the potential downsides to treatment are not revealed. This advertising is often unregulated. The College must take the leadership role in advising on appropriate standards for the promotion and marketing of medical and surgical procedures.

The speakers on this panel will talk on how the challenge of growing commercialisation and demands for increased access and affordability must be balanced with ensuring the highest standards of patient safety and quality outcomes.

A post conference report will be published.