The British Association of Gynaecological Pathologists

BAGP NEWSLETTER 2020

FEATURES

BAGP Office Bearers Updates

Pages 1 – 4

Placenta & Trophoblastic Pathology on-line edition – view from our speaker

Page 4

Virtual Long Course – Views from our speakers

Page 5

Virtual Long Course – Views from our attendees

Pages 6-7

Annual Poster Prize Winner & Website Development

Page 7

EVENTS

Wednesday 27th January 2021
Tumour of the Female Genital Tract Updates from the 5th edition of the WHO classification – Virtual Conference via Zoom webinar
https://www.thebagp.org/events/list/

Spring 2021 – to be confirmed
Cervical pathology 1-day course – Virtual Conference via Zoom webinar

Thursday 10th & Friday 11th June 2021
17th Annual 2-day Meeting – Virtual Conference via Zoom webinar
https://www.thebagp.org/events/list/

September 2021 – Dates to be confirmed
Gynaecological pathology Long Course

From the President

Dear Members and Colleagues,



This has been a landmark year in many ways – a year when a sub microscopic particle brought the world to its knees, a year that brought differences and similarities into sharp focus, one where we learnt to value good health above all other possessions and one where teamwork has been of unparalleled importance. At the BAGP we have worked together to maintain and improve our society's work. It gives me great pride and joy to chronicle these events in this newsletter.

This year, the BAGP has produced documents and guidelines, several in collaboration with other societies. All of these documents are available on our website and readily accessible by everyone. In the early days of the pandemic, the BAGP produced guidelines on handling specimens. During the lockdown, when the instinctive intradepartmental consultation became difficult due to working from home and social distancing, we produced an IHC aide as a countermeasure tool. With intensive care beds being taken up by coronavirus afflicted patients, major surgical procedures were undertaken less often. There was an increase in use of ancillary testing. The BAGP in collaboration with the British Gynaecological Cancer Society (BGCS) produced consensus recommendations for BRCA testing in ovarian cancer.

Our website hosts an immunohistochemical database, providing information to pathologists as to which laboratories keep antibodies that are used infrequently. In October, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) published diagnostics guidance recommending that all persons diagnosed with

endometrial cancer should be offered testing for Lynch syndrome. The BAGP has produced a document, in association with the BGCS and the Royal College of Pathologists (RCPath), with a flow chart of the proposed pathway. We now have BAGP representation on the BGCS Council and guidelines group as well as the NCRI subgroups. The BAGP is also working on updating the RCPath tissue pathways. Our links with the National Gynaecological Pathology EQA remain strong. The EQA has provided BAGP with funds to create e-learning for cervical histology which will be available soon. Our R&D subgroup completed, presented and published the BAGP p16 project. The MMR IHC reporting guidelines that have been endorsed by NICE. We are proud to have such a thriving R&D group.

Our sincere gratitude goes to all the expert speakers who have given their time generously to support our activities. Our immense thanks go to all the participants in our virtual events and their tolerance of the minor glitches in the virtual world. Last, but not least, I would like to wholeheartedly thank all members and office bearers of the Council and our administrator – we worked as a team providing each other with wise counsel, unwavering support and guidance to deliver the essence of our mission – the promotion of the health of women by the study of the pathology of gynaecological diseases.

Our thoughts are with all who have been affected by the pandemic. We are immensely grateful to all those who provided medical, social and pastoral care in these difficult times. We are in awe of the scientists who have made a potent vaccine in record time and provided us with the possibility of an end to this pandemic.

Although we have spent the holiday season in tiers and some of us have not been able to spend time with our loved ones, let us ride on the glimmer of optimism provided by the vaccines and say cheers to comraderie and accomplishments and usher in 2021 with hope and determination.

With best wishes for the New Year,

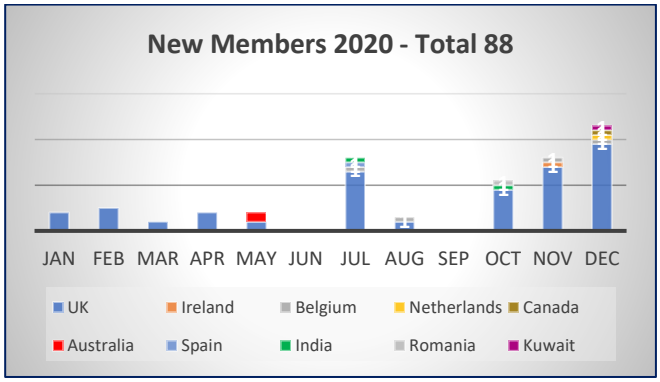
Raji Ganesan, Birmingham

Honorary Secretary Update



What a strange year 2020 has been! An unpredictable one that has changed the world forever. I am proud of the way the BAGP Council has met challenges head on and worked within the constraints imposed by the pandemic and to continue to deliver quality gynaecological pathology education.

The annual meeting was cancelled but we were delighted to be able to hold a virtual Annual General Meeting and interact with our members. Our membership has continued to grow, and we now have 379 members with 88 new members in the last year.



I would like to thank Dr Pinias Mukonoweshuro for his excellent contribution as he steps down from the Council after completion of his term of office. He continues to represent the BAGP on the NCRI. I welcome Dr Duaa Abu-Sinn to the Council. I am sure her enthusiasm will set her in good stead for the role of a Council member.

I will continue as the Honorary Secretary for my last term and look forward to continue working with the Council to take a stronger, more robust BAGP into a post Covid world.

Bruce Tanchel, Birmingham

Money matters – an update from the Treasurer



As the year divides into pre-Covid and post-Covid, we have continued to be successful and have been adaptive to the changes needed, often at short notice.

The BAGP poster competition and research bursary continued virtually despite cancellation of the annual meeting. This year's annual research award bursary winner is Dr Luiza Moore for a project on 'Genomic and evolutionary landscapes of the normal fallopian tube'.

Our planned educational day in March and our Annual Meeting in June were cancelled due to coronavirus situation. However, we have been able to provide a virtual weeklong course and an upcoming one-day educational day in January 2021. Due to the inability to return to normal, the council took the decision to cancel the face-to-face annual meeting scheduled at the Royal College of General Practitioners. A 2-day virtual meeting will take place instead and details will be available soon.

As Treasurer, I am pleased to report that our finances are in good condition. We incurred some significant losses due to meetings cancellations. However due to our investment into significant website development that has taken place we have been able to provide our members with online courses and virtual meetings many of them free of cost for members and non-members alike.

The BAGP is growing from strength to strength and the team involved have been instrumental in making this happen. Our mission to promote health of women, advance knowledge and practice of gynaecological pathology, improve accuracy of diagnosis, educate and develop is due to the continued support of all our members and council.

I wish all our members a prosperous New Year!

Gerry van Schalkwyk, Derby

BAGP Meetings Matters

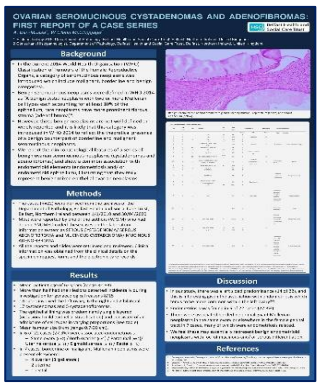
In a year that was dominated by the COVID 19 pandemic, we at the BAGP continued to serve the educational needs of our membership and the wider audience by adopting a virtual format for all our educational activities.

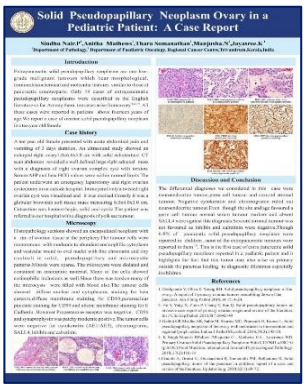


In response to the rapidly evolving coronavirus situation in March, to protect both our delegates and speakers, we cancelled the face to face 'Placental and Trophoblastic Pathology 'course scheduled for 20th March 2020. In its place, we launched our very first virtual educational event on the BAGP website - the 'Placental and Trophoblastic Pathology online course'. The success of the online course was evident by the excellent feedback received from over 170 delegates from UK and overseas.



As the Covid pandemic continued its assault, we postponed our highly anticipated 17th Annual Meeting, to June 2021. We look forward to welcoming all our members to our virtual annual meeting in 2021 in collaboration with the International Society of Gynecological Pathologists – with a galaxy of internationally acclaimed speakers.

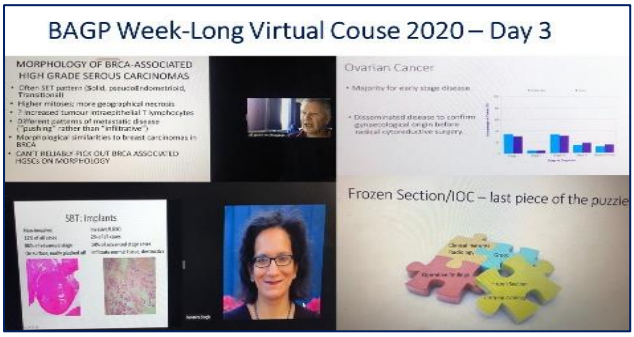




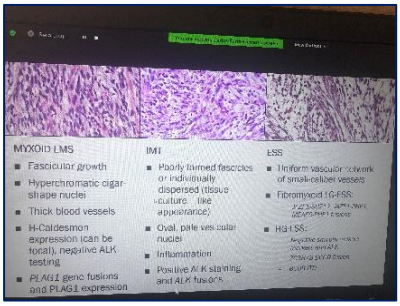
In the summer we held our very first virtual poster competition which attracted 33 poster submissions. The e-posters were exhibited on the BAGP website from July and the best submissions in UK and overseas categories received awards. Our UK winner is Dr Ali Ben-Mussa and our

overseas joint winners are Drs Sindhu Nair and Dr Preethi Ramadas. The posters were judged on their scientific merit and presentation by international panel of eminent gynaecological pathologists.

Continuing to adapt to the limitations imposed pandemic, we ran our weeklong course virtually in September 2020. The course comprised mostly of live lectures delivered by UK and overseas speakers - Professor Glenn McCluggage, Professor Naveena Singh, Dr Paul Cross, Dr Raji Ganesan,



Dr Ayoma Attygalle, Dr Phil Cox, Dr Baljeet Kaur, Dr Nilu Wijesuriya, Dr Richard Wong, Dr Carlos Parra-Herran, Professor Xavier Matias Guiu - and pre-recorded lectures by Dr Simona Stolnicu, Dr Karen Talia and Professor Blake Gilks. The 30 delegates engaged in interactive Q&A sessions with the speakers. It was an excellent opportunity for consultants and senior trainees to update themselves on many aspects of gynaecological pathology in the space of one week.



In November 2020, we launched our series of monthly virtual seminars for trainees via Zoom. Our excellent inaugural session was run by Dr Jason Wong on 'Ovarian Epithelial Tumours'. This was followed by an impressive session in December by Dr Sudha Desai on 'Endometrial Biopsies'. Nearly 300 UK and overseas delegates attended which is a real testimony to the superb quality. We will continue to host these monthly virtual teaching sessions in 2021.

Although the year 2020 has brought many challenges, we are proud to have successfully encountered these by adapting quickly to cater to the academic requirements of our membership and continuing to expand the spectrum of our educational activities.

We are proud of the RCPath Achievement Awards' commendation for contribution to education.

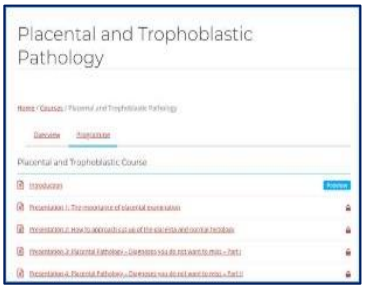
Next in our busy educational calendar is a one-day virtual conference on 'Tumours of the Female Genital Tract – updates from the 5th edition of the WHO classification', scheduled for 27th January 2021. Registration is now open on the BAGP website and we look forward to welcoming you to this and future conferences in 2021!

Saimah Arif and Rupali Arora, London

Placental & Trophoblastic Pathology Online Edition – A view from our speaker



I was looking forward to being a speaker on the BAGP's Placental Obstetric and Trophoblastic Pathology course, which then became an online series of recorded lectures due to pandemic restrictions. Like for many others, this was my first experience of recording lectures, and this required some experimentation to optimise the sound quality. Although a good solution under the circumstances, not being able to take questions during the lectures, or to assess how the audience was responding to the content and adjust appropriately, inevitably made this an unusual lecturing experience. However, I was pleased to see from the feedback that the lectures were well received despite their virtual nature and faceless delivery.



Jo McPartland, Liverpool

Virtual Long Course - A view from our speakers



It was a thrilling experience to give a live online presentation in the BAGP long course. Thanks to the support from BAGP colleagues, I could interact with the audience through polling questions and the chat function, pretty much like a real lecture. I did feel energized seeing the nice feedback from our participants! Thanks all of you who attended the talk.

I also took the opportunity to join some of the lectures and slide seminars in the BAGP long course. The course has provided a comprehensive overview of the latest concepts in the field of gynaecological pathology. I am sure that all of us learnt something new from the course as I did. The interactive elements are exceptional – there was an active dialogue between the audience and our speakers which made me feel like sitting in an amazing multi-head teaching session!

It would be great if more pathologists and trainees from different countries could join the course in the future. Maybe just allow more time for questions to accommodate a bigger class!

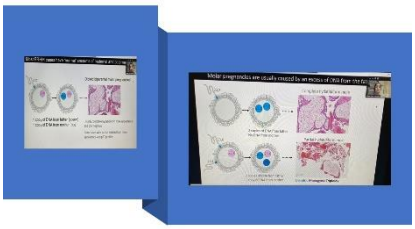
Richard Wong, Hong Kong



2019 was a spectacular year when BAGP hosted a series of very successful and well attended meetings including the last one in Singapore [November 2019] which attracted 171 delegates from over 10 countries.

COVID-19 forced us into a new era where standard ways of sharing, learning, and collaborating were taken away. However, this did not break the BAGP spirit. The society rose to this unprecedented challenge.

These small successful steps enabled BAGP for a giant leap. The weeklong course that is held annually in September, since 2018, went ahead. But this time, instead of sitting around the multi header and face to face lectures this was programmed as a virtual event. The course programme comprised spectacular array of lectures and slide seminars by national and international speakers. It was a true feast where one could soak and immerse themselves in the sea of knowledge and latest developments from the comfort of their own home.



I got to experience this course from both the sides- as a student listening to my mentors and luminary speakers and as a teacher sharing my insights into trophoblast and germ cell pathology. I've thoroughly enjoyed being a part of this accomplished faculty since the inception of this course. Not only did we had to make sure that our course material was educational and up to date but also that our IT skills to deliver it were sound. The energetic meetings team was always there to help and support. They worked with me on minute details such as sound settings, connectivity and the background. A few dry runs conducted with the team before the main event promoted the confidence for live action amongst the speakers!

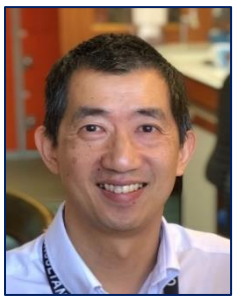
The course was fully booked and oversubscribed this year with a few international delegates in addition to the UK consultants. The 10-15 minutes informal chat with the delegates every morning followed by stream of knowledge and well-spaced rest breaks made the day fulfilling and enjoyable. Although we all missed being under one roof sharing, stimulating conversations over coffee and lunch, we appreciated ingenious efforts and the novel use of technology in bringing people from different parts of world together and promoting learning and advancement.



A successful organisation needs a team that is agile and can 'fix the plane while it flies'. The pilot and crew of the BAGP have proved themselves capable of this task.

Baljeet Kaur, London

Virtual Long Course - A view from our attendees



Having attended a previous 1-day BAGP course, as well as the 2-day BAGP annual meeting on a number of occasions, I was looking forward to this week long course which would allow me to immerse myself more deeply in the field of gynaecological pathology than is possible on shorter courses.

The online nature of the course, dictated by necessity rather than by design, made it more accessible to me than the usual face-to-face course as there were fewer issues with childcare and no additional expenses for travel or accommodation. The downside was that there was no opportunity to interact socially with the faculty or other attendees.

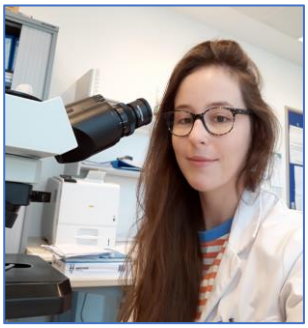
The meeting comprised 5 long and intense days, usually from 9am until well after 5pm, and incorporated both lectures and slide seminars. This compared favourably to other online courses I have attended recently which have kept their usual scheduling with late starts, long coffee breaks, even longer lunch breaks, and early finishes to allow travel home. The programme was nicely stitched together, with themed days filled with complementary but non-overlapping talks. The virtual format allowed for a number of overseas guest speakers, from Europe, North America and even Asia, providing access to truly world-class experts in each field. Handouts for the talks were provided, mostly in advance, as downloadable pdfs which saved me struggling to scribble illegible notes whilst also paying attention to what was being said.

Instead of the usual evening social events, there were approximately 60 virtual slides available to preview in advance of each day's talks. Although I appreciated having access to this material, it was difficult to find the time to study them carefully between the usual family commitments which arise when studying from home.

Having organised a few short virtual meetings myself, I can appreciate that the organisational effort involved in producing this week-long online course for the first time must have been phenomenal. It was particularly impressive that almost all of it was invisible to the participants, who saw a virtually seamless transition from one speaker to the next with remarkably few technical issues.

I would whole-heartedly recommend this course to anyone wishing to improve their knowledge of gynaecological pathology.

Jason Wong, Ipswich



It was during my 5th year as a trainee that I discovered the BAGP. It was a very important experience for me, and it certainly did play a part in my decision to invest more in Gynecopathology as it became obvious to me that the BAGP was a rare and very precious tool in this field.

I believe I belong to a fairly young generation of pathologists; digital tools and increasing free access to the ever-growing scientific literature open doors to the largest library there is... and it can be overwhelming! Obviously, all of this content cannot be implemented in routine work as it stands. The BAGP has an invaluable role in helping sourcing, updating and sorting out all that information. It is needless to say that starting as a young pathologist and signing out on your own can be terrifying, and after 2 years as a delegate I sometimes feel like the BAGP is this wise and experienced pathologist working next door that I can go to and ask about anything, from the most simple terminology question to the most complex and advanced molecular biology new classification.

Participating to the BAGP long course clearly confirmed that role. Seeing congress and events cancelling one after another as the pandemic was rampaging through year, it was with great joy that I learned the BAGP long course decided to take up the challenge of a digital edition. They did it with great success and a heartening good spirit. As always with the BAGP the quality of the speakers was inspiring, the choice of the topics was very exciting, and the organization was impeccable. Presentations and discussions through Zoom were surprisingly intuitive in the end, and still very warm and interactive thanks to the

moderators who conveyed each and every single question to the speakers who took the time to answer all of them and to share their experience. I really appreciate this BAGP´s unique spirit to always aiming at, not only didactically present the latest scientific knowledge, but also giving you the very practical tips on how to report cases in your daily routine. In sum, participating to the long course was a thrilling experience, especially I believe in this peculiar year. More than ever I needed to feel the comforting presence of a creative, generous and dynamic scientific community and the BAGP long course most certainly did the job!

Quitterie Fontanges, Belgium

Congratulations! Poster Prize Winner 2020



After attending the BDIAP gynaecological pathology symposium (November 2019) I collaborated with Professor McCluggage on a study of benign seromucinous neoplasms. He recommended to me submitting our poster for the upcoming BAGP annual meeting and I was delighted to know that the BAGP encourages trainees to submit their work by waiving registration fees even if they are not members and that they provided a best poster prize incentive. The registration process and abstract submission guidelines were clear, with all my queries answered promptly and courteously. It was quite unfortunate that the poster submissions became virtual due to COVID19, however I was kept updated about the situation and I am glad that the competition took place regardless of the difficult circumstances. I was thrilled and honoured to know that I won the trainee poster prize, and I am grateful for all the support and the encouragement.

I will be looking forward to participating in future BAGP organised events and thank you once more for everything.

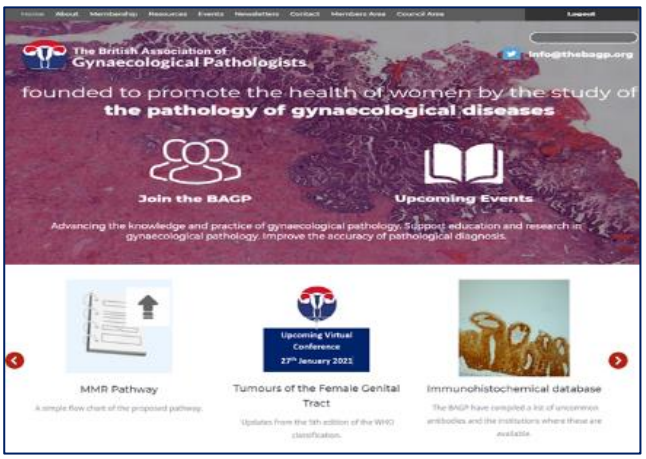
Ali Ben-Mussa, Belfast

Website Development



Our website continues to be developed and improved through suggestions from our members and council. Our new 2020 development has been the online learning platform through a feature called 'Learn Press'. A team of us have developed the learning platform in conjunction with our website developers. This section of the website is to be used for online courses which do not require live interaction. One course developed to date (Placental and Trophoblastic Pathology) with futures courses in the pipeline.

The site has been refreshed this year and includes a useful 'news' carousel on the home page. As we move into a more virtual world we are keen to continue updating our website to offer the best experience for our members and non members.



Please feel free to offer any suggestions you would like to see developed to info@thebagp.org

I wish all our members a Happy New Year!

Elsa Taylor, BAGP Administrator, Derby