

Essen 2023

Last month we had a very successful conference in Essen. Many thanks to Kurt Trübner for all the organisational work.

The scientific programme was paediatric themed, and we had a fascinating talk on child maltreatment, child protection law in Germany, and the role of the forensic pathologist from Kurt Trübner followed by the role of the paediatric radiologist in medico-legal child protection cases.

We then had a talk on a case of sinus thrombosis which mimicked non accidental head trauma. A rare but important condition to consider.

We then heard about congenital heart disease, and management of arteriovenous malformation, in particular neuroradiology approaches in the Duisburg centre.

We shared some experiences of vaccination, and some thoughts on how we address vaccine scepticism.

Other sessions covered paediatric transplantation and post-transplant immunosuppression.

A lot of learning came from the informal chats around the coffee area where we compared practices.

We had an excellent social programme which started with a talk on the history of Essen which was originally founded around 845 as a small town based around a Abbey before becoming a coal mining and steelworks centre in the industrial era . We learned about the Krupp family's ironworks and how Essen has developed into a cultural centre since the demise of coal mining.

We had a fascinating walking tour around the Margarethenhöhe district built to accommodate people employed in the Krupp factories, followed by a bus tour around the City. The mayor kindly hosted us for lunch in the Rathaus (one of tallest buildings in the City with a superb view).

We ended with a visit to a Hausbrauerei in the afternoon. Many thanks to Ulrike for interpreting some vocabulary which did not have a true UK equivalent. We learnt the differences between top and bottom fermented beer: one is light, one is dark, and it depends on where the yeast is located. We also learnt why German beer was different (and arguably better) than Dutch.

We ended the weekend with a dinner at an Osteria.

All in all I think we enjoyed exploring the city, connecting with each other and sharing knowledge.

Which leads us to news about the 2024 conference. A lot of preliminary work has started, and to paraphrase the bard, "by the pricking of our thumbs, a Stratford conference this way comes".

We are pleased to say that we will be in the heart of Shakespeare country in the lovely Riverside town of Stratford Upon Avon.

It has good transport links to Birmingham.

The social programme and scientific programmes are in the very early stages, but will likely involve visits to Trinity Church and Shakespeare's birthplace amongst others.

Gavin and Ulrike have been busy already and are looking forward to welcoming you all.

ÓJackie Emery 09/2023