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Summary of the LXV Congress British Association of Paediatric Surgeons (BAPS) at Liverpool, UK, July 2018[☆]Mark Davenport^{*}

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ABSTRACT

This is a review of the 65th British Association of Paediatric Surgeons (BAPS) held jointly with the British Association of Endoscopic Surgeons (BAPES) during July 2018 in Liverpool, UK. The congress issue contains manuscripts prepared from papers and posters presented during the open sessions and transcripts based on invited lectures.

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The 65th BAPS conference was held jointly with the BAPES on July 17–19th, 2018, in Liverpool. More than 400 delegates signed on, coming from all corners including New Zealand, Columbia, Uganda, Japan, China, and the West Indies. We were privileged to receive more than 300 abstracts from which the programme was built.

The President of the Royal College of Surgeons of England, Derek Alderson FRCS, opened the congress with an oration on “leadership”. Among the guest speakers were Munther Haddad, in the **Storz GI Lecture** who peeped behind the curtain to glimpse the future and ranged from NOTES (Natural Orifice Transluminal Endoscopic Surgery) to artificial intelligence and a robot band actually, really playing ACDC. Professor Long Li, a hepatobiliary surgeon from Beijing, who has the most extensive experience of laparoscopic choledochal malformations in the world (numbering in the hundreds) and presented it in a characteristically understated but convincing fashion as the **Azad Najmaldin Lecture**. Mr. Peter Cuckow from GOSH delivered the **Storz Urology Lecture** on changes in reconstructive urology during his lifetime with an accompanying manuscript which is reproduced within this issue.

The **Journal of Pediatric Surgery Lecture** was delivered by everyone's favourite Austrian polymath – Benno Ure (Fig. 1). He not so much spoke but wove intertwining strands derived from Fritz Rehbein, Konrad Adenauer, Charles de Gaulle, and the fall of the Berlin Wall through a European evolutionary project and the evolution of oesophageal atresia surgery.

Our scientific highlights were the award winners from the **Peter Paul Rickham** and **Presidents' Prize** sessions. These were competitively fought over, as usual, and winners were: John Hallett from Edinburgh on cholangiocytes and their potential use in regenerative medicine and Naomi Wright on her project to document personally every single paediatric surgical event in sub-Saharan Africa.

Sir Denis Browne, the forefather of our specialty in the UK, endowed a gold medal which is given every year to individuals who have given outstanding meritorious service to the specialty. I do not think there is anyone more deserving of recognition than this year's medallist – **Alberto Pena**. His contribution to the surgery of the unfashionable end of the GI tract is undeniable, and even in his eightieth year he is still working and contributing in Denver, Colorado, and in workshops throughout the world. Furthermore, and uniquely, Denis Browne's son, Desmond, presented the medal and ran through intimate stories from the great man's life (Fig. 2). As we know Desmond Browne is a QC, and reached fame in the legal profession as an expert in media affairs, representing among others, Sir Elton John. Our own double qualified medicolegal expert Robert Wheeler from Southampton and Hugh Grant from Oxford presented a very-well received medicolegal symposium addressing some of the issues of when things go wrong and finding out what exactly a tort really is.

2018 is a key remembrance year for many with the centenary of the end of the Great War, but it is also 100 years since UK female suffrage (well householders, aged more than 30 etc.). This was not lost on the ever expanding group of female surgeons who celebrated together. Indeed, the 2nd BAPS President was Isabella Forshall from Liverpool, though it has to be noted there has been only one other since that time.

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Fig. 1. Benno Ure presenting the Journal of Pediatric Surgical Lecture.

The publications committee this year was composed of the redoubtable Prof. Paul Johnson (Oxford), Majella McCullagh (Belfast), Mike Stanton (Southampton) and Simon Eaton (London). Their role in sifting through 44 manuscript submissions is hard work, is admirable, and takes a certain fortitude. From this task we have uncovered 22 papers of original work and 5 invited submissions from the lectures. My thanks go out to them for their unselfish gift of their time and effort.

Though science and surgery are key to our congress, it is important to hold it in places which mean something. So, traveling to a major city such as Liverpool quickens the blood. Our **Welcome Reception** was held in what is one of Liverpool's most iconic skyline locations – the Anglican Cathedral of the Risen Christ (Fig. 3). It is comfortably the largest religious building in the UK, designed more than a hundred years ago by Giles Gilbert Scott but only finished in 1978. Its Organist Titulaire, as he is titled, is Prof. Ian Tracey. He filled the internal space magnificently with a demonstration of organ power, serenity, and subtlety. The audience augmented by those whose hearing aids were turned up to 11 included some of our own forefathers such as David Lloyd and David Drake and the Australian veteran, Durham Smith. Later, in the more intimate setting of the Lady Chapel, international opera mezzo-soprano, **Emma Carrington** (Fig. 4) blew people's minds with arias from Handel's *Serse*, Saint-Saen's *Samson* and *Delilah*, and "O Mio Bambino Caro" from Puccini's *Gianna Schicchi*.

Of course, these occasions work because people make them work putting in endless hours and pints of perspiration. Due credit must therefore go to Evelyn Peng Ong, the ring-mistress and Honorary Secretary of BAPS and the combined talents of Shan Teo and of course, Katie Billington PhD. The local team was led by Simon Kenny, Fiona McAndrew, and Prof. Paul Losty with great junior support from Anna-May Long.

This was my last year as President (Fig. 5), and I handed the keys and chain of office over to Richard Stewart. I believe that making BAPS a welcoming, all-inclusive, professional organisation with an international future not just a past is shared by him. We look outside for ideas, contributions, and collaborations, and as custodian he will be the face of next year's congress in Nottingham, alternatively, Sheriff of Nottingham or Robin Hood. Only you can decide.



Fig. 2. Alberto Pena receiving the Sir Denis Browne Medal from his son Desmond Browne [original photograph courtesy of Alex Lee].

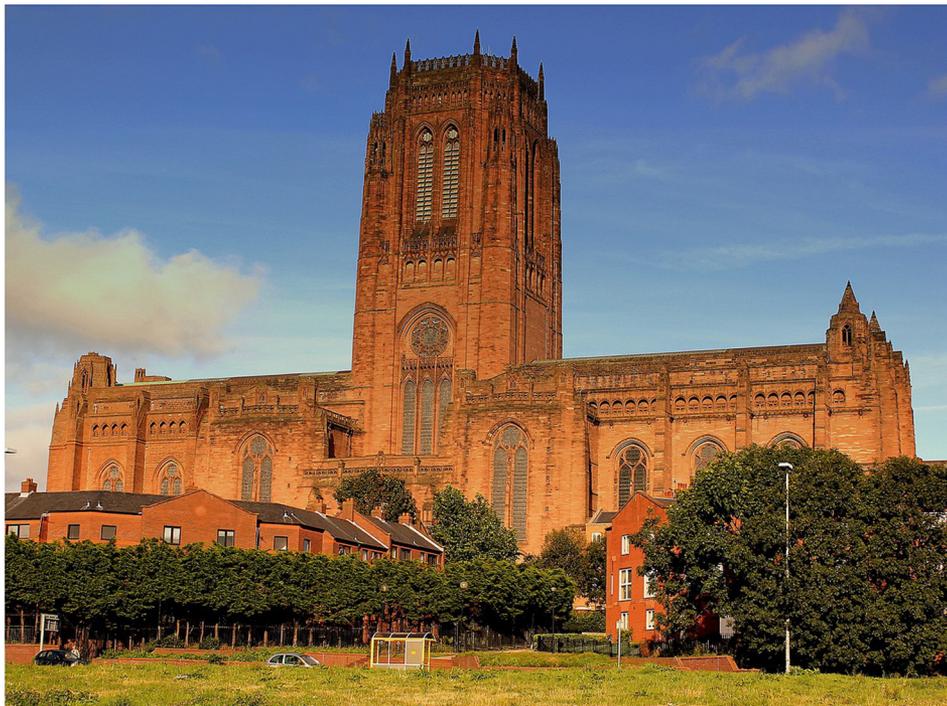


Fig. 3. Cathedral Church of the Risen Christ, Liverpool [Original photography by calfler001 - LIVERPOOL ANGLICAN CATHEDRAL SEP2012, CC BY-SA 2.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=26362107>].



Fig. 4. Ms. Emma Carrington, mezzo-soprano, in the Lady Chapel of the Anglican Cathedral [original photograph courtesy of Alex Lee].



Fig. 5. Prof. Mark Davenport — President of BAPS (2016–2018).