



AUCKLAND MEDICAL HISTORY SOCIETY

2023 Lecture Series

Venue

The Ernest and Marion Davis Library (EMDL)
Building 43, Auckland City Hospital

Thursday 2 March 2023 at 7pm

Welcome to the first lecture in our series

Victor Horsley: founder of scientific neurosurgery

Presenter

David Abernethy

Formerly Neurologist and Clinical Senior Lecturer
University of Otago, Wellington

We look forward to you joining us for an evening of medical history.
EMDL will open at **6pm** with tea and coffee available prior to the main
presentation beginning at **7pm**.

Bookings are not required, all welcome

Highlights of the Ernest and Marion Davis Collection

Dr Keith Eyre's briefcase

(Neurologist, Auckland Hospital 1958-1991)

At **6.15pm** there is an opportunity to see the fascinating contents of
Dr Eyre's briefcase!
(In the Kaye Ibbertson Room)

A koha will be invited at the conclusion of the meeting.

We are grateful for your support

Donations to enable the continued operation of the Society may be made to:

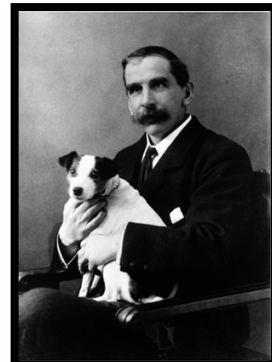
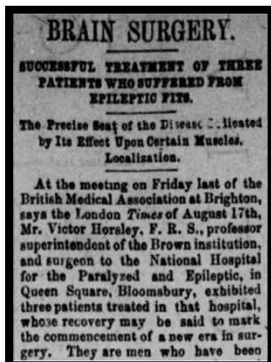
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AUCKLAND MEDICAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Sir Victor Horsley



Presenter

Dr David Abernethy FRACP

Biography

David graduated from Otago medical school in 1979 and trained in Wellington where his mentors were Jack Bergin, Dick Hornabrook, and Lindsay Haas. He did experimental work on peripheral nerve regeneration at the Royal Free Hospital with PK Thomas under an educational paradigm similar to that followed by Horsley, who was one of its most outstanding products. David's early training antedated high quality imaging of the nervous system, when diagnosis depended almost entirely on history taking and examination, with its accuracy revealed post mortem, much as it did for Horsley. From 1991 until retirement in 2020 he was senior lecturer, more lately clinical senior lecturer, at the University of Otago, Wellington; and consultant neurologist at Wellington regional hospital.

Presentation topic

Victor Horsley was a physiologist, surgeon, pathologist, researcher, constant innovator, mentor and internationally recognised leader in his field. Early in his career he ran an animal research facility where he investigated rabies for the British Government, advising on effective measures for its control, thyroid physiology and he performed the first transcranial pituitary surgery. He took knowledge gained from cortical stimulation and ablation studies in primates combined with the surgical techniques and skill those studies required. Lister's new antiseptic principles, and innovations in anaesthesia were applied to achieve astonishingly successful treatment of patients with epilepsy, space occupying lesions and spinal cord compression. He became if not the first neurosurgeon, the first and justly most famous truly scientific neurosurgeon. He was also a brave and visionary medical leader, reorganising the MDU to better protect doctors, persuading BMA of the value to patients and to their own self-interest, of Lloyd George's detested national insurance, a loud and unpopular proponent for reform of the GMC while a member, and of the College of surgeons, and a somewhat counter-productive scourge of the anti-vivisectionists. He was an indomitable advocate for the disadvantaged, unjustly treated and oppressed, even when their cause was highly unpopular and whatever the personal cost. He died prematurely age 59, during WWI, of heat stroke in Kut while investigating and railing publicly against the appalling state of the medical care of the poorly led Indian army soldiers.