

## Conference Report

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# 7th Congress of the European Society for Analytical Cellular Pathology, Caen, France, 1–5 April 2001

One of the attractions of a career in science is the opportunity to make friends with people across the globe. A parallel advantage is the opportunity to visit attractive cities in a variety of countries. Sometimes, the science is an added bonus!

Caen, in Normandy, combined all three – good science, good company and excellent sightseeing. Although 70% of the city was unfortunately destroyed during the Second World War, much was preserved or has now been restored. This is the city of William the Conqueror who was buried here in the abbey he founded, L'Abbaye aux Hommes. The remains of his castle are opposite the University and the venue for the 7th ESACP Conference.

The bottle of cider on the lunch timetable reminded me that I was truly in the heart of Normandy. However, the organisers ensured that we had time to appreciate some of the other delights of the region. We were welcomed to Caen by the Mayor at a reception in the second large abbey, L'Abbaye aux Dames, founded by William's wife, Mathilde, in 1067. On the penultimate day, a coach tour of the Fleurie Coast visited Honfleur and Deauville. We finished the tour in Beuvron-en-Auge, a typical Norman village in the "Pays d'Auge", at a converted manor, 'Haras de Sens'. Alfred Böcking gave the Distinguished Ploem Lecture entitled 'Towards a non-invasive, objective single cell cancer diagnosis'. Haras de Sens is famous for its horses trained for dressage. An exhibition of these skills accompa-

nied by a local brass band was followed by an excellent meal, introducing us to some of the regional cuisine.

There was also some first class science. I will not give you a blow by blow account of the lectures – you can read the abstracts in an earlier volume of this journal. The highlight of the plenary sessions was probably Oli Kallioniemi's lecture on 'Tissue Microarray ("tissue chip") Technology for high-throughput molecular profiling of cancer'.

In the parallel sessions, it was heartening to hear so many good papers from younger scientists. The Organisers had underlined the importance of youth by devoting a large part of the available funds to the sponsorship of students.

The poster that did not win a prize but drew the most attention was an evaluation of the biological safety of condoms by Pretorius et al. tested on *in vitro* cultures. While spermicides had no effect, flavoured condoms were toxic to the cells. The unanswered question was: 'What effect do these flavours have on the oral mucosa?'

The next Congress will take you further back into European history. It will be held on 14–21 September 2002 in Crete in partnership with the International Society for Diagnostic Quantitative Pathology.

Michael G. Ormerod  
21 April 2001



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