

Introduction

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## 51<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting of the Society for Research into Hydrocephalus and Spina Bifida

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The 51st Annual Meeting of the Society for Research into Hydrocephalus and Spina Bifida was held in the University of Heidelberg, Department of Neurosurgery at the invitation of Professor Andreas Unterberg and Dr. Alfred Aschoff. We are indebted to Alfred for his hard work in making the meeting such a success.

Scientific sessions were held in the impressive auditorium of the new *Kopfclinic* and the social program took place within the old city of Heidelberg. Home to the oldest university in Germany, Heidelberg was largely rebuilt in the 18th century. Delegates were able to enjoy the charms of this beautiful city, the more adventurous tackling the Philosopher's Walk (*Philosphenweg*) high above the banks of the Neckar River.

The Annual General Meeting and Reception were held at the university *Alte Aula*, (Old Assembly Hall) built between 1712 and 1718. The Society dinner was held in the magnificent setting of Heidelberg Castle, with the famous Heidelberg Tun (A wine barrel made in 1751, with a capacity of 220,000 liters) visible in one corner of the hall.

The Outing was a boat trip on the picturesque river Neckar, giving excellent views of Heidelberg and the surrounding countryside. The society's amateur photographers were given many excellent opportunities for landscape photography under rapidly changing skies. The evening was rounded off with a hearty stew and German

beer in one of the many famous student haunts in the Old Town.

The scientific sessions as usual covered a wide range of topics on basic scientific research and clinical topics. Sessions were held on *Chronic Hydrocephalus, Spina Bifida, Bowel and Urodynamic Function, Hydrocephalus Pathology, Shunts, Psychosocial Issues* and *Hydrocephalus and CSF*. Our President, Ray Fitzgerald presented this year's Casey Holter Essay Prize to Dr. Helen Williams for her essay entitled 'An Essay Concerning the Pathogenesis of Hydrocephalus'. This essay will be expanded and published in *Cerebrospinal Fluid Research* in the near future.

The abstracts of all the presented papers are published in this supplement. It is the Society's policy to publish abstracts without editing. Any comments should be addressed directly to the authors.

The meeting closed with an invitation from Drs John Duncan, Conrad Johanson and Gerald Silverberg to the 52<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference to take place in Providence, Rhode Island on 11–14th June 2008.