

SCIENTIFIC AND MEDICAL NETWORK ANNUAL GATHERING 2009

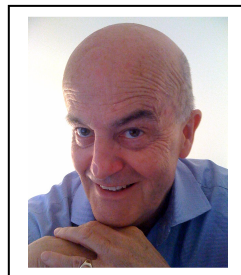
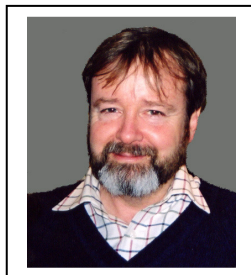
Science and Imagination

Poetry is the breath and spirit of all finer knowledge; it is the impassioned expression which is the countenance of all science. William Wordsworth.

**Lindors Country House Hotel,
Wye Valley, Glos.
3-5 July 2009**



**Keynote Speakers:
Dr. Iain McGilchrist
Prof. Lance Butler**



Excursion to Tintern Abbey

Programme

The 2009 Network Annual Gathering will be held at Lindors Country House Hotel in the Wye Valley, from 3 – 5 July 2009. The Programme will begin on Friday evening with a wine reception and dinner, after which Prof. Lance Butler from the University of Pau will give what is sure to be an entertaining and instructive talk on *Imagination, Literary Language and Connectedness*. On Saturday morning, Dr Iain McGilchrist will present the thesis of his forthcoming book, *The Master and his Emissary*, to be published by Yale University Press in September. He will be speaking to the title *Two Hemispheres, Two Worlds: Aspects of Neuroscience and Culture*. There will be an opportunity after coffee for members to make short presentations on the theme. On Saturday afternoon there will be an excursion to Tintern Abbey, where Iain will expand on his close knowledge of Wordsworth. We will hold our traditional entertainment on Saturday evening, and on Sunday we will hold our formal Annual General Meeting, where Members have a chance to hear from the officers about our work since last year, to contribute to the evolving direction of the Network and to elect new members of the Network Board.

During the meeting, periods will be set aside for informal networking. For those of you who have not yet attended the Network Annual Gathering, you will find it a wonderfully stimulating and sociable event where you can meet other Members in relaxed surroundings to exchange ideas and experiences.

All Members wishing to make 15-minute presentations on the theme should submit abstracts of their proposals by **31st May** at the latest. We will then inform you in whether your proposal has been accepted as part of the programme. Please send abstracts to info@scimednet.org

Book Bazaar

This year we will again be holding a fundraising book bazaar and invite Members to bring their surplus books for sale.

Travel and Costs

Lindors is a charming 19th century property situated in the Welsh borders between Monmouth and Chepstow. It lies approximately one mile on the Coleford side of Bigsweir Bridge. The south front of the house looks down its own valley into the main body of the beautiful Wye Valley, with Offa's Dyke beyond the wooded slopes of Cleddon and Trellech Hill. Set in nine acres of gardens through which a brook descends by a series of waterfalls and pools to the River Wye, Lindors is an ideal base from which to explore the Wye Valley and the Royal Forest of Dean. It has a tennis court, swimming pool and wi-fi access.

Lindors is easily accessible by road, and is under 10 miles away from both Chepstow and Lydney railway stations. However, there is no taxi rank at Lydney, and taxis are infrequent from Chepstow, so pre-booking is advisable. Members coming from London are advised to take the 14.15 from Paddington (change at Newport) arriving at Lydney at 16.53. A taxi can then be booked and shared by delegates. Please indicate your intentions on the booking form then we can email a list and you can arrange a taxi between you. Sovereign Taxis are 01594 836757. Detailed directions will be sent on registration.

Accommodation is in single or double rooms, some en suite and a few sharing a bathroom with another room. Rooms will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. Rates include all meals and coffee/tea breaks and admission to Tintern Abbey. For the excursion, we plan to go in as many cars as are available, but if extra transport is required, the cost will be spread among those requiring it. Since space in single rooms is limited, it would help if you were prepared to share and pay a lower rate. Please reply using the booking form. Due to stipulations from the venue, we are asking you **TO BOOK BY MAY 22**. Accommodation at the venue cannot be guaranteed after that date. In the event of cancellation, a fee of £20 will be retained, and no refunds can be given after 20 June.

The Master and his Emissary

In his remarkable and absorbing book, Iain McGilchrist argues that the two hemispheres have not only different specialities but different perspectives on the world. Making full use of the multi-faceted experimental research into the brain in the last two decades, he suggests that the left hemisphere's main aim is self-interested manipulation, and it is narrowly-focussed, yet at the same time obsessed with theory at the expense of the unique reality. It misunderstands everything that is not explicit, lacks empathy, construes us, our minds and bodies, as machines,

and is unreasonably certain of itself. And it is in denial about its limitations. The right hemisphere, on the other hand, while having a much broader and more generous stance towards the world, and understanding far more than the left, lacks the necessary certainty to counter this onslaught, since its knowledge is far more complex and less conducive to propaganda. Traditionally the two hemispheres have worked together, but McGilchrist believes that in modern times the left hemisphere has grabbed more than its fair share of power, resulting in a society where self-obsession, greed and plodding rationality hold sway, at an enormous cost to human happiness and the world around us.

Iain McGilchrist is a Fellow of the Royal College of Psychiatrists, and has three times been elected a Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford. He intended to read theology and philosophy at Oxford, but was hi-jacked into reading English literature, and published *Against Criticism* in 1982. He retrained in medicine in order to understand better the 'mind-body problem', and has been a neuroimaging researcher at Johns Hopkins in Baltimore and a Consultant Psychiatrist at the Maudsley Hospital. He has mis-spent the last twenty years gestating this book, which relates the bihemispheric structure of the brain to the history of Western culture and its present predicament.

Lance Butler is Professor of English Literature at the University of Pau in France. His work has for many years concerned Philosophy and Literature, now a topic fruitfully overwhelmed by Poststructuralism, with particular emphasis on Thomas Hardy and Samuel Beckett. He is interested in the relationship between language, creativity and consciousness. He has come to realise that his own work, in publications such as *Victorian Doubt* or *Registering the Difference* (a Bakhtinian study in Stylistics) unconsciously reveals the interconnectedness of humanity by stressing the importance of the world-language interface. Also that we cannot, after all, entirely avoid metaphysics.