



Balint Bulletin No. 12
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AUSTRALIAN NEWS

COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT NEWS

The Committee of Management (COM) now has members in Melbourne, Sydney and Queensland and meets with telephone link-up. This has changed the tenor of the organisation which is becoming more an Australia-wide organisation.

Subcommittees

Several subcommittees of the COM have been set up. These include:
Leadership, accreditation and training subcommittee, convener [Laurie Lovell-Simons](#)
Rural and remote subcommittee, convener [Leonie Sullivan](#)
Brochure subcommittee, convener [Marion Lustig](#)

Literature Review

Marion Lustig and Leonie Sullivan are part of an international group starting a project to document and review the complete Balint Literature.

Help wanted

There are vacancies for the following positions:
The Melbourne based Committee of Management is seeking new members and is particularly keen to have more GP members. Interested people should contact John Barton.

We are also looking for someone to help with the website. You would need to have the relevant IT skills or be prepared to learn them (which we can facilitate). Please contact John Barton.

Subscribe to Journal of the Balint Society

This journal is essential reading for Balint enthusiasts and is published annually by the Balint Society in the U.K. We are attempting to expedite subscriptions via a local distributor for Australians and price will depend on how many people are interested. If you would like to subscribe to this journal, please contact [Marion Lustig](#)

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Balint Intensive Workshop 2008

The BSA is running a Balint Intensive Workshop at Windsor just outside Sydney August 14th to 17th. This follows the highly successful Balint Leadership Workshop in Hobart last year and will be run on similar lines. The overseas leaders will be Ann Sinclair, Frank Dornfest and Albert Lichtenstein. and Don Nease. A call for expressions of interest elicited over forty replies which is very encouraging. The brochure and registration forms are now available and the early bird closing date is March 31 and the final registration closing date April 20. Registration forms can be obtained from [Dr Ann-Marie Diggins](#) or downloaded from the BSA website http://www.balintaustralia.net/Balint_Intensive_flyer.pdf

Medical Educators' Workshop

The first Medical Educators Balint Workshop in Australia will be held in Hobart from 30th April to 2nd May. It is expected that two overseas leaders will be present. The convener is [Frank Meumann](#).

Presentation at Sydney GPCE

Dr Raymond Seidler is presenting a session on Doctor's Mental Health on 25th May 2008 and as part of this will interview Ms Alexa Gilbert-Obrart and Dr Jan Orman about Balint groups.

WONCA/RACGP Melbourne October 1st to 5th

The BSA is hoping to run a Balint workshop at the RACGP Annual Scientific Convention which this year is combined with the WONCA (the world GP organisation) Asia Pacific Regional Conference.

Visit of Herbert Hahn October 08

Dr Herbert Hahn from UK is visiting Australia and will present to a Scientific Meeting entitled "Balint Groups with Psycho-sexual Cases" in Melbourne in October. Dr Hahn, with Alexa Gilbert-Obrart will also be presenting to a meeting in Sydney. It is hoped that he will visit other centres also.

Visit by UK Balint group leaders 2009

Drs Bitty Muller and Shake Seigel will be in Bendigo, Victoria in 2009.

Balint Weekend Workshops

Townsville and Cairns: Dates not set. Contact [Penny Love](#)

Wanaka (NZ) around July, contact [John Barton](#)

RECENT EVENTS

IBF meeting in Portugal

Six members of BSA attended the International Balint Federation Conference in Lisbon in September, 2007. They all thoroughly enjoyed the experience, especially being in and/or leading Balint groups with an international make-up.

Meeting in Perth

A weekend Balint workshop run under the auspices of the BSA was held at the Churchill Clinic in Perth in October, 2007. There were enough enrollments for two groups and Laurie Lovell-Simons, Leonie Sullivan, Marion Lustig and John Barton were leaders. The majority of those who attended have met together since the workshop and are exploring ways of having ongoing Balint group for a mixture of doctors and psychotherapists in Perth.

Balint weekend in Port Macquarie

A weekend Balint workshop was run at Port Macquarie in November, 2007. It was led by John Barton with Brenda Campbell (GP) and Marie Shaw (Psychiatrist) as co-leaders. Brenda and Marie are now leading an ongoing Balint group in Port Macquarie.

Meeting with registrars in Gippsland

On November 22, 2007 Marion Lustig and John Barton ran a three hour session with Registrars in Gippsland.

World Psychiatric Congress, Melbourne

Don Nease (President, American Balint Society) and Albert Lichtenstein from USA presented a session on Balint work at the WPA congress in Melbourne on December 1, 2007. The highlight was a demonstration Balint session which involved all participants.

Meeting in Sydney Don Nease & Albert Lichtenstein

Twenty-seven people attended a Scientific Meeting in Sydney in December, 2007 with a powerpoint presentation about Balint work and a fishbowl Balint group.

Scientific Meeting Melbourne

A meeting was held on Saturday 1st March entitled "Turtles All the Way Down". Shake Seigel and Bitty Muller, Balint leaders from the UK talked about their experience of using Balint work with medical students, GP trainees and GPs. They then ran a fishbowl Balint group. Fourteen people attended.

BALINT GROUP OPPORTUNITIES

Please contact state representatives to enquire about joining or starting a Balint group in your area.

Perth Following the weekend Balint workshop in October a group of people are working towards starting a Balint groups in Perth. Contact [Sonya Smuts](#)

Sydney Contact [Laurie Lovell-Simons](#)

There are groups looking for additional members in Sydney.

Rural Australia [Leonie Sullivan](#) is exploring the possibility of a Balint group by audio- or tele- conferencing. A few more participants are needed.

Port Macquarie contact [Brenda Campbell](#)

Canberra contact [Jane Sheedy](#)

Melbourne contact [John Barton](#)

There are groups in Frankston, Richmond, Footscray and Heidelberg.

Queensland contact [Penny Love](#)

Northern Territory contact [Sam Heard](#)

South Australia contact [Jill Benson](#)

New Zealand Contact [John Barton](#)

There are Balint groups running in Nelson, Hutt Valley, Hamilton and one about to start in Auckland.

ARTICLES

[Lustig, M. \(2007\)](#). From psychoanalytic psychotherapy to Balint groups: what do leaders need to know? *Australasian Journal of Psychotherapy* 26:1, 40-46. This article, aimed at psychoanalytic psychotherapists and psychoanalysts interested in leading Balint groups, considers the nature of general practice, the Balint group model, and using psychoanalytic knowledge in the role of Balint group leader.

The same issue of the journal includes two other articles about Michael Balint which may be of interest:

Don Meadows (2007). Balint's Legacy. *Australasian Journal of Psychotherapy* 26:1, 32-34.

and **My experience of Michael Balint: a patient's anonymous bequest.** 26:1, 34-39. A fascinating account of a patient's analysis with Balint.

[Lustig, Marion \(2008\)](#). Humanising medical practice: the role of empathy. *Medical Journal of Australia* 188 (4): 263-264. This letter is a reply to an editorial by [Haslam, Nick \(2007\)](#). Humanising medical practice: the role of empathy. *Medical Journal of Australia*. 187: 381-2. and highlights the role of Balint groups in developing empathy.

Kjelmand, D. and Holmstrom, I. (2008). Balint groups as a means to increase job satisfaction and prevent burnout among general practitioners. *Annals of Family Medicine*. 6:2, 138-145.

<http://www.annfammed.org/cgi/reprint/6/2/138.pdf>

This is a qualitative study from Sweden in which GPs were interviewed about their experience of participating in Balint groups and its influence on their work lives.

Dr Gillie Bolton is an English GP who now makes a living running workshops for GPs in which they write about their experiences and lives. She describes it as "sort-of-Balint-in-writing" and, drawing a long bow, she could be right.

Her website is: www.gilliebolton.com

OVERSEAS NEWS

American Balint Society Leadership Intensive Workshops

These workshops are held twice yearly. The next one is from April 3rd to 6th in Seattle. Register from the website: <http://americanbalintsociety.org>

A course in Balint work is offered by the Muradif Kulenovic School of Balint in Dubrovnik, Croatia, June 2-7, 2008.

The working language is English. Each day will start with a short paper after which there will be small group work (Balint groups). There will be free time to explore Dubrovnic.

Contact: Email sanja10@net.hr

Oxford Balint Weekend

This annual weekend workshop will be held on September 5-7, 2008 in Oxford, UK. For details contact Dr David Watt at David.Watt@gp-f84093.nhs.uk

The second IBF Council meeting for 2008 will be in Leiden, The Netherlands, from October 18-19, 2008.

16th International Balint Congress:

The next of these 2 yearly congresses will be held in Brasow, Romania. around August/September, 2009. – exact dates not yet announced.