

ANDREW F. HOLMES DEAN OF MEDICINE AND HEALTH SCIENCES DISTINCTION LECTURE



Sam Alberti, PhD

Director of Collections, National Museums Scotland

Honorary Professor, University of Stirling

Title:

Museums and Medical Knowledge: past, present, and future

A special Bicentennial Holmes Lecture on the history and current relevance of museums in the university setting.

Hosted by David Eidelman, MDCM, Vice-Principal (Health Affairs) and Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences and organized by the Maude Abbott Medical Museum and the Department of Social Studies of Medicine, this lecture opens the two-day Bicentennial celebration,

[Maude Abbott and the Medical Museum.](#)

The Holmes Lecture will be preceded by a virtual tour premiere of the Maude Abbott Medical Museum, with an exclusive in-depth look at the Museum's two new exhibitions and a live Q&A with museum director Richard Fraser, MDCM.

When:

Thursday, March 17, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. EDT

Where:

Virtual

[Watch the Video](#)

Synopsis:

Museums and Medical Knowledge: past, present, and future: Although populated by the dead, medical museums are for the living. From their roots in the Enlightenment, medical practitioners have gathered pathological and anatomical material for clinical and educational benefit. This practice reached its zenith around 1900, when Maude Abbott led a generation of medical curators who gathered, arranged and taught with extensive medical collections in universities and elsewhere. Over the twentieth century, their functions and audiences shifted, as the profession and public alike became more interested in medical heritage. This gave rise to the flurry of redevelopments in the past two decades, when museums and universities alike activated their collections for public benefit. This is evident not only in their galleries but also in their collecting and programming – as illustrated by one area of particular relevance, the use of medical museums to promote a deeper understanding of disability and difference. What links these curators, collections and activities is the intention to use medical collections for the public good: whether clinical, educational, social or cultural. The Bicentennial of McGill’s world-class collection is an apposite time to reflect on the past, present and future of the use of varied medical knowledge by medical museums around the world.

Sam Alberti, PhD, FRSE

Samuel J. M. M. Alberti, PhD, FRSE, is Director of Collections at National Museums Scotland, and an Honorary Professor in Heritage Studies at the University of Stirling in Scotland. For 20 years he has worked at the intersection of museums and universities, first in Manchester, then as Director of Museums and Archives at the Royal College of Surgeons of England (including the Hunterian Museum), while holding visiting research appointments in London, Philadelphia, and Edinburgh. While his recent practice has focussed on the role of museums in the climate emergency and Cold War museology (he is currently Principal Investigator on the AHRC project, ‘Materialising the Cold War’), he maintains an affectionate interest in medical museums.

Maude Abbott and the Medical Museum Symposium

On Friday, March 18, 2022, the *Maude Abbott and the Medical Museum* symposium will take place on the life and work of Dr. Maude Abbott, former Curator of the McGill University Medical Museum. It will showcase research from a variety of disciplines and topics, including Dr. Abbott’s medical innovations, museology experience, publications, teaching, exhibitions, role as a pioneering female doctor, and relationships with other individuals. Please consult the full program [here](#).