

## Obituary

JOAN LANE  
(1934–2001)

The death of Dr Joan Lane after a short illness in May of this year is a great and sad loss to her colleagues and friends and to the history of medicine community. Joan was about to take retirement from the University of Warwick, where she had taught for the past twenty-two years. Although she had no intention of ceasing with her research activities, she was planning to spend more time with her family.

After completing her PhD on apprenticeship in the eighteenth century under the supervision of Professor Dorothy Thompson at the University of Birmingham in 1977, and a short period as a Research Fellow at Lanchester Polytechnic, Joan Lane came to the University of Warwick in 1979. There she held the post of Senior Teaching Fellow until her death. Joan will be remembered with great affection by generations of students at the University of Warwick who participated in her courses in the social history of medicine and local history. These courses always attracted huge numbers, and Joan inspired her students with her enthusiastic teaching and vast knowledge of her subject areas. She was Director of the MA in Local History and over the years supervised numerous PhD students at Warwick in local history and the history of medicine. She devoted a great deal of time to her students, and was famed in the Department for her insistence on following scholarly protocols and the development of writing skills in those she taught.

Few, if anyone, knew as much of the history, families and archives of Warwickshire, Worcestershire and Herefordshire as Joan Lane, and it is with local history that some of her strongest interests lay. She was a board member of *Midland History*, editor of *Warwickshire History* from 1969–1990, and general editor of the Dugdale Society since 1990. She was elected a Fellow of the Society of Apothecaries in 1987, and in 1999 was awarded the Monckton-Copeland Medal by the Society of Apothecaries. Joan also had a deep and abiding interest in the history of sport, especially cricket, which was her great passion, and the last event she organized at the University in October 2000 was a history of cricket conference.

It is for her publications that most will best remember Joan. They are numerous and cover many areas, some outside the history of medicine. Over the years Joan published on such diverse areas as apprenticeship, the patient's view, provincial surgeons, medical relief under the Old Poor Law, medical education, veterinary medicine, but also eighteenth-century luxury goods, church history, the Warwickshire gentry, and business history. She was working on a book on English actresses when she died. For many of us, Joan's special talent lay in capturing the day-to-day work and lives of the eighteenth-century medical practitioners and patients whom she came to know so intimately. Her research was based on a close and intense knowledge of the archives and packed with detail, and then with a skill few can master she

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literally breathed life into her provincial surgeons, complaining gentry, pauper patients, and young apprentices. Joan's work had gathered momentum over the last few years. In five years she had published four major studies, *John Hall and his patients: the medical practice of Shakespeare's son-in-law* (Sutton, 1996), *Apprenticeship in England, 1600–1914* (UCL Press, 1996), *The making of the English patient: a guide to sources for the social history of medicine* (Sutton, 2000) and *A social history of medicine: health, healing and disease in England, 1750–1950* (Routledge, 2001).

Joan was a tremendous teacher and a deeply committed supervisor and researcher. She is sadly missed by her friends, students and colleagues.

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