

Chairs' Reports

It has been an unexpected honour and a pleasure to serve as chair for the past year. In the members of the BMSS committee, the society is well served by an experienced and dedicated bunch of people, all of whom have chosen to put themselves forward to stand for election and give up their time to do the sometimes thankless jobs required to keep the society going and organize the annual meeting. When we are elected we aren't experts in the roles we take on but do our best often learning as we go. I would like to take a moment to reflect on the BMSS annual conference this year; it was my first trip to Eastbourne and I

was pleasantly surprised by the conference facilities and impressed by the standard of science in the meeting, including some feedback I received that the science was better than at the recent international meeting! On a personal note it was great to see a number of old faces, including getting together with Professor Dai Games and Professor Jack Henion, two of the original gurus in LC/MS (see the photo).

I was also very pleased to present a number of awards during the conference dinner. Life membership of the BMSS went to Anna Upton, who was the first BMSS administrator and also to Professor

Alison Ashcroft, who has served as chair and president of the BMSS. I also presented the BMSS medal to Professor Gareth Brenton for his long-term commitment to the BMSS and to mass spectrometry. I know I leave the society in good

hands with Gavin O'Connor, who has taken over as BMSS chair.

*Christine Eckers
BMSS Immediate Past Chair and Chair
of the Advisory Board*



Firstly I consider it a huge privilege to serve the society as Chair. Having being a Committee member and trustee for over ten years I am well aware of the demands placed on the limited resources of the Society. The Society exists to promote and disseminate knowledge of mass spectrometry and allied subjects for the benefit of the public. This may seem somewhat strange to current users. However, in the not too distant past mass spectrometry was a fringe science. It was considered awkward, difficult to master and was banished to the basement of most institutes. Now we no longer exist on the fringes, but at the centre of most laboratories. The user base and application areas are countless. More recently

we have seen mass spectrometry move out of the conventional lab setting and starting to appear in operating theatres, airports and even on distant comets. This move will surely be as significant to our subject as the ability to directly measure large molecules from liquids. It will require not only innovation in instrument design but also engagement with a much wider and possibly less scientific user base. Therefore, you could consider the society's aims have been achieved. But our membership remains static and the Committee have worked hard to try and ensure our bank account at least does likewise.

In trying to achieve our aims the committee have focused not only on the next generation but also on the continued education of all. Over the past decade the society has provided over 500 travel grants, recently named the John Beynon travel and conference fund, using over £100K of the charities reserves. We have spent over £81K on summer studentships. These are often done in partnership with other learned societies, hopefully encouraging the further integration and understanding of our subject area. These studentships not only

provide a link to support very new users gain experience of mass spectrometry but enable more established users fund a small piece of research. Also under our education initiative, the Society has funded four BMSS Lecturers. The appointment, which normally lasts for a year, requires the individual to travel the length and breadth of the UK speaking in more generic terms about how mass spectrometry is helping to address many different areas.

The Society currently has eight special interests groups (SIGs). The topics covered have changed over the years depending on members' needs. As such, many are at different stages of maturity. While the BMSS co-ordinates the SIGs, the workings and activities are very much controlled by them. The needs of the different SIGs are very different with most focusing on running meetings or sessions at our Annual meeting. All aim to foster and establish best practice and more recently this has involved the sharing of samples to evaluate different technologies for direct analysis. If you wish to find out more about this why not sign up to attend the upcoming

Ambient Ionisation SIG meeting. In 2016 seven of our SIGs organised successful one day meetings and many do so on an annual basis. This year the London Biological Mass Spectrometry discussion Group celebrates its 10th birthday. Over 40 meetings! Many congratulations on this success. As mentioned the BMSS helps co-ordinate the SIGs, their success if very much due to the hard work of the SIG leaders or organising committees. Many thanks and please keep up the good work.

Finally the Committee is voluntary and I hope you can see from the above it is hard working. It is here to serve the needs and wishes of our members, within our remit as a charity. We can only do this if we know what these are. So please share your ideas. If you would like further details about any of the above please visit our website or feel free to contact me directly.

*Gavin O'Connor
BMSS Chair*