

BSMM News

August 2009



Contents

Welcome from the President.....	1
BSMM Travel grant reports.....	2
BSMM Annual Meeting, Exeter 2010.....	3
Website update.....	3
Standards of Care.....	3
Organisations of interest.....	4
Forthcoming meetings.....	4
Items for the next Newsletter.....	5
BSMM Membership.....	5
BSMM 45 th AGM minutes 2009.....	6

Welcome from the new BSMM President

So, it has been 100 days since I took up office and now is the traditional time to take stock. Inevitably, you will want to make comparisons with President Barack Obama and I would be flattered – the man can do no wrong. He has single-handedly sorted out the recession (although others might claim some role in that), started the closure process for Guantanamo Bay and set in train the withdrawal from Iraq. My achievements have been fewer so far, but, in fairness, he did start a few months before me!

In fact, I have been spending some time thinking about what sort of BSMM people want. The Society has been known for its friendly, inclusive feel for many years and we all love it for that. But it has evolved somewhat since I first joined nearly two decades ago. From an organisation which existed essentially for the purpose of an annual meeting, it has developed working parties tackling anything from onychomycosis to serology and plays a major role in mycology education at home and abroad. However, do we want to continue to develop in this way or should we try to control expansionist tendencies?

Other societies have their own journals but we have always thought that is beyond our size and financial capabilities. Should we consider e-publication of material from the annual or specialist meetings or indeed any other articles or presentations from members? Colleagues from Europe greatly admire our organisation, but some have said that they would like us to be more engaged. Some would say that members are already heavily involved in European projects, but should the Society itself play a more central role?

We have, therefore, decided to ask you for your views on the future direction of the BSMM and will be circulating a questionnaire in the coming months. Please take time to complete it so that you can make sure you get the BSMM you want (which may, of course, be the one we currently have!).

Frank Odds has been an essential part of the character of the Society since its foundation. He has given numerous inspiring talks at the annual meetings, led the BSMM as President and no meeting has been complete without Frank's piano accompaniment at the post dinner sing song (with the occasional impromptu sonata thrown in!). It is difficult to imagine the BSMM without Frank, so we have all been a bit stunned by the news that Frank will be retiring this summer. I am sure you will join with me in wishing him the very best for a long and healthy retirement and we hope that he will keep in touch over the years to come. We are going to miss you Frank.

The recent annual meeting in London was a great success and Elaine Bignell and Gary Moran should be congratulated on their superb organisation. The debate on the first evening was a new departure which provided much entertainment and food for thought. It was good to see so many members packed into the venue to enjoy such high quality science and clinical research, with talks from the likes of Jack Edwards, Julian Naglik and Luciano Polinelli. The large number of travel bursaries available meant that there were a record number of posters on display. We are looking forward to more of the same in Exeter next year.

Elsewhere things mycological are increasingly healthy. The BSMM/UCL course goes from strength to strength and the UK Clinical Mycology Network continues to expand. We know of several recently successful research grant bids and hope that these also reflect a positive state of affairs in mycology research, but please let us know of other recent successes on this front.

In closing, I wish you all an enjoyable and fruitful summer; we'll be turning the incubators off if these temperatures continue!

Professor Chris Kibbler

BSMM Travel Grant Report**BSMM 45th Annual Meeting, London 2009**

I was delighted to receive a BSMM travel grant this year to allow me to attend the 2009 BSMM annual meeting which took place in the luxurious surroundings of South Kensington, London. Elaine Bignell and Gary Moran put together an excellent meeting with an outstanding scientific programme. The conference covered a broad range of clinical, diagnostic and molecular subject areas and, with nearly 100 delegates, was a fantastic opportunity to meet researchers in the field.

The meeting kicked off with a reception and poster session followed by our very own "Question Time" where the role of translational research in medical mycology was debated. A panel of experts from academic, industrial and clinical backgrounds encouraged discussion on topics including the relevance of basic science in the clinical setting and the meaning of translational research in the funding context.

The 23 oral presentations covered a diverse range of topics and fungal species. Each session was comprised of keynote lectures which were followed by shorter talks. Joy Sturtevant began the Medical Mycology session describing mis-regulation of signal transduction pathways in *Candida*, this was followed by the Host Immunity section in which Julian Naglik and Jack Edwards told us about epithelial cell responses to microbes and *Candida albicans* vaccine development respectively. The afternoon session covered Antifungals including a description of antifungal antibody derived peptides by Luciano Polonelli.

The foundation lecture was delivered by Chris Hitchcock who gave an informative and interesting account containing personal reflections on the discovery and development of voriconazole. This was followed by the annual dinner - to the accompaniment of a string quartet and magician - and of course the traditional BSMM sing song!

Day two began with a session on Translational Research in which Concha Gil described proteomic techniques to study candidiasis and Arianna Tavanti the use of microarray methods to identify fungi. In the final session of the meeting, Signalling and Morphogenesis, Nick Read gave us a stunning overview of live cell imaging in fungi.

I would like to extend my thanks to the BSMM for providing me with a travel grant to attend this fantastic meeting and giving me the opportunity to present my research to the community.

Lucy Holcombe

25th Fungal Genetics Conference at Asilomar Conference Centre, Pacific Grove, CA. March 2009

The meeting saw the participation of nearly 1000 scientists from all around the world including 300 students. The subjects presented at the meeting covered the entire fungal kingdom including the most known human and plant pathogens *A. fumigatus*, *C. albicans*, *C. neoformans*, *U. maydis* and several others. The four plenary sessions were divided in Genome evolution and dynamics, Gene regulation and metabolism, Signalling, development and sex, Pathogenic and symbiotic interactions. They were attended by a high number of scientists and the level of information provided was extraordinary. Four concurrent sessions were scheduled in the afternoons that covered all the subjects currently studied in fungi. I have personally attended several talks that were related to my PhD project or that were of my interest including sessions of Interaction between fungi and their human host, Secondary metabolism, Cool tools for molecular biology and many others. 672 posters were presented, reflecting the high number of participants. The poster presentation was divided in three evening sessions in order to give the possibility to the scientists to walk around the room, read the posters, ask questions and enjoy a beer all together. I personally noticed a high number of posters were system biology and comparative genomics were used as research tools. These two research approaches are probably the present and the future of fungal research. During the presentation of my poster titled "Distinct and overlapping transcriptional responses to calcium and alkaline exposure in *Aspergillus fumigatus*" a good number of people stopped by it and asked me details about my project. The poster won one of the 10 Eukaryotic Cell Outstanding Young Investigator Awards sponsored by the American Society for Microbiology.

Omar Loss

ISHAM 2009 Tokyo, Japan, 25-29 May 2009.

I would like to thank the BSMM for granting me a Travel award to attend the 17th congress of ISHAM 2009 meeting in Tokyo in May.

The conference provided a wonderful opportunity to learn a wide range of medical mycology including pathogenesis, clinical, diagnosis, treatment, molecular genetic and immune response.

The conference lasted for 5 days and every day included various sessions of fungal pathogens in humans. An array of topics was covered with 48 separate symposium and 11 informal working or discussion groups took place. Especially, the keynote

lectures from the world leaders of medical mycology were very impressive.

I particularly enjoyed the poster sessions with nearly 500 posters on display throughout the meeting and got to know new people, all interested in medical mycology. It was very impressive to be able to attend some of Japanese culture in Japan night at the Four Seasons Hotel.

This conference also provided a new and unique forum dedicated to brief poster presentations, in addition to the regular poster exhibitions, to give poster presenters a good opportunity to explain and discuss their research and findings with potential new collaborators from all over the world. I was very pleased to be given the opportunity to exhibit my work at this conference.

Attending the meeting was a great opportunity to meet other people in the medical mycology field and talk about their work and interests. This will result in a collaborative project in the future. I really appreciated the opportunity to participate in this meeting and my new updated knowledge will help my research to be stronger. I would like to thank the BSMM one more time for supporting me to join the ISHAM 2009 conference.

Sirida Youngchim

BSMM Annual Meeting Exeter 2010

The 46th annual meeting of the society will be held at the **University of Exeter** from **Sunday 18th April to Tuesday 20th April 2010**. The annual dinner will be in the Woodbridge suite of the Reed Hall Events Centre (<http://www.exeter.ac.uk/reedhall/>) on the Monday evening after the annual general meeting and Foundation lecture. Accommodation will consist of en suite rooms in Holland hall (please see virtual tour at <http://www.exeter.ac.uk/virtualtours/accommodationbroadband/holland.shtml>) or details of local hotel accommodation can be requested from the local organiser. All conference facilities for meeting sessions, accommodation and the annual dinner are within five minutes walk across the beautiful campus grounds. The conference programme will consist of six sessions covering topics from all areas of medical mycology, further details will be provided nearer the time.

Steven Bates, Local organiser
s.bates@ex.ac.uk

Website update

Work continues to progress on the new look website and the launch is expected to take place over the next

few months. If anyone has any suggestions or material for the website please contact Carol at c.a.munro@abdn.ac.uk.

Standards of Care

Dr Silke Schelenz and colleagues from the BSMM completed and published an audit on standards of care for patients with invasive mycoses earlier this year. The full citation and abstract for the paper are shown below (downloaded from PubMed).

Schelenz S, Barnes RA, Kibbler CC, Jones BL, Denning DW. Standards of care for patients with invasive fungal infections within the United Kingdom: a national audit. Journal of Infection 2009; 58 (2): 145-153

OBJECTIVE: The objective of this study was to audit the compliance and implementation of the British Society for Medical Mycology standards of care for patients with invasive infections in UK hospitals. **METHODS:** A multidisciplinary audit questionnaire regarding the processing of microbiology and histopathology specimens, radiology imaging and clinical management of patients with invasive fungal infections was distributed to UK hospitals. **RESULTS:** The study has shown that speciation of *Candida* and *Aspergillus* isolates from sterile sites was performed in 42-98% of hospitals. Microscopy of bronchoscopy specimens was not undertaken in 13 of 62 (21%) laboratories. Cryptococcal culture and antigen were undertaken routinely in abnormal CSF in 40-75% and 31-83% of at-risk patients but only in 12% of abnormal CSFs in patients without risk factors. Detailed fungal morphology was provided by <50% of histopathology departments. Most hospitals provided a timely HRCT or MRI on patients suspected to have an invasive fungal infection, but early treatment failed to occur in 15% of hospitals. In patients presenting with candidaemia, central venous catheters (CVC) were not changed routinely within 48h in 15%. **CONCLUSION:** Improvement in microbiology and histopathology specimen processing as well as rapid interventions such as initiation of anti-fungal therapy or CVC line removal could improve diagnostic rates and clinical outcomes of invasive fungal infections.

Organisations of interest

The Biosciences Federation merged with the Institute of Biology on 23rd April 2009. The following press release was issued:

UK's leading biology organisations agree to unification

Members of the UK's two leading biology organisations, the Institute of Biology (IoB) and the Biosciences Federation (BSF), have voted overwhelmingly in favour of unification to form a single organisation, the *Society of Biology*. This positive development takes the IoB and BSF a step closer to the creation of an organisation that combines the expertise of the learned societies and other biology organisations with the professional skills of the IoB and its individual members.

The Government's Chief Scientific Adviser, Professor John Beddington, said, "I am delighted to hear this news. The Life Sciences have suffered in the past through fragmentation. The future health and wealth of this nation will depend increasingly on progress made in the biological sciences, and it is excellent that the scientists involved are now all pulling together."

The move towards creation of the Society of Biology coincides with Lord Drayson's establishment of a team, within the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills, which will carefully monitor the UK's standing in biotechnology and its applications. Professor Dame Nancy Rothwell, Chair of the Interim Council of the Society of Biology, said, "The vote of the membership demonstrates significant confidence in the work undertaken by many during the past few years to bring about this unification. The Society of Biology will have a sufficient critical mass to enable it to speak with authority over the breadth of topics covered by modern biology, and we look forward to working closely with Lord Drayson's team."

Professor Martin J Humphries, Chair of the Biochemical Society, said, "I welcome this decision because it will facilitate greater cooperation between the learned societies that represent UK Biology. The resultant synergies from these interactions will improve the ways in which learned societies represent their members, whether they are based in the UK or elsewhere in the world."

A clear majority of IoB members voted in favour of the move at the Institute's 60th Annual General Meeting, held yesterday - April 22nd. Professor Raymond Dwek, who will be the last President of the IoB, said how pleased he was that the members had put the best interests of their science first. "The Institute's proud and productive 60 year history will make a valuable contribution to the development of the new body in the years ahead." Member Organisations of the Biosciences Federation voted without objection at their Annual General Meeting, held on the 15th April.

The forthcoming integration of the Institute of Biology and the Biosciences Federation offers a unique opportunity to create the leading organisation for biology in the UK. For more information, see: www.newbio.info.

The Infectious Disease Research Network (IDRN) has undergone a facelift!

New website launched for 2009

We have updated our website, with a new, clean interface and uncluttered design. The site now incorporates the following features –

- A forum, for online discussion. Ask and answer questions, engage in debate, and share ideas. There is also the facility to create forums with restricted access, for private discussion.
- A revised and simplified researchers database. If you need an expert in a certain infection, a collaborator with the appropriate skills, or a speaker for an event, then simply login and enter your search criteria. Searches can specify a particular infection, theme or area of expertise (e.g. statistics, typing, economics).
- All existing IDRN resources, such as the extensive funding and training bulletins, information pages on the Human Tissue Act, presentations from our previous events, and the research mapping exercise.

Membership is completely free! To register as a member, and for any further information you need, please visit www.idrn.org

Forthcoming meetings

Yeast genetics and Molecular Biology

24th International conference, July 19 - 24 2009, Manchester, UK <http://www.yeastgenetics.org/home/>

The 27th International Specialised **Symposium on Yeast: "Pasteur's Legacy: Yeast for Health and Biotechnologies"** will be held in Paris, France, August 26 - 29, 2009. Email: claud.guillard@grignon.inra.fr

British Mycological Society

Annual scientific meeting, 1 - 4 September 2009, West Park Conference Centre, Dundee, Scotland. <http://www.britmycolsoc.org.uk/events/showevent.asp?EventID=111>

SGM Autumn

7th -10th September 2009, Edinburgh, Scotland. www.sgm.ac.uk/meetings/forthcoming.cfm

TIMM-4

4th Trends in Medical Mycology, October 18- 21, 2009, Athens, Greece. www.timm2009.org

SGM Spring

29th March -1st April 2010, Edinburgh, Scotland. www.sgm.ac.uk/meetings/forthcoming.cfm

ECCMID

10th -13th April 2010, Vienna, Austria. www.congress.ch/ECCMID2010/main.html

BSMM 46th Annual meeting

18th -20th April, Exeter UK. www.bsmm.org

ASID 2010

Australian Society for Infectious Diseases 26th-29th May 2010, Brisbane, Australia. www.asid.net.au

IMC9: The Biology of Fungi

1st-6th August 2010, Edinburgh, Scotland. www.imc9.info/

AICA 2010

Australian Infection Control Association 4th-6th October 2010, Perth, Australia. <http://www.aica.org.au/default.asp?PageID=14>

Items for the next BSMM newsletter

If you have any ideas, reviewed a mycology book, or come across something that would be of interest to our community, and that would be suitable for publication in the BSMM Newsletter please email Sue at susan.howell@kcl.ac.uk

BSMM membership

Currently the Society has 313 members. There are 234 UK members and 75 overseas members including 29 honorary and life members.

Since the AGM in March the Society would like to welcome the following members:

Rebecca Gorton, London

Timoleon Vyzantiadis, Greece

Jagdish Chander, India

Floencia Minussi, London

Luis Castillo (Aberdeen)

Hector Mora-Montes (Aberdeen)

And finally.....

Some photos from the dinner at the Annual meeting:

With thanks to the outgoing BSMM President, Dr Elizabeth Johnson.



And a welcome to the incoming BSMM President, Professor Chris Kibbler.



BSMM Annual General Meeting 2009

Minutes of the 45th BSMM AGM held on 30th March 2009 in London.

Members present: 38

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Prof J Muller, Prof R Kappe, Dr R Forster, Dr Michael Petrou.

2. Minutes of the 44th General Meeting held on 31st March 2008.

Item 10 Annual Scientific Meetings – The year for the London meeting was incorrect and should be amended to 2009. With this correction the minutes were accepted by those present and signed by the President.

3. Matters arising from the minutes.

There were no matters arising that were not dealt with in other parts of the agenda.

4. President's report

Dr Johnson asked for the membership to stand for a moment's silent respect for the passing of Dr John Edwards. She then spoke to a written report, as follows: It is my sad duty to report the death of Dr John Edwards one of the founder members of the BSMM, a past secretary of the Society from 1991 to 1994 and organiser of a memorable meeting in Cardiff in 1986. John will be remembered as a very warm and friendly person with a ready wit, sharp intellect, love of jazz and powerful baritone. His widow Julie has asked me to pass on her thanks to the many people who sent condolences and made generous donations in John's memory.

I will briefly summarise the activities of the Society since we last met at the annual meeting in Norwich last year. The Norwich meeting was a great success with an opportunity to view the unique Sainsbury museum before the annual dinner. We owe our sincere thanks to Silke Schelenz who was the local organiser, she did a remarkable job and earned the respect and admiration of all for her professionalism in the face of very difficult circumstances. Our thanks for the Norwich meeting also go to the rest of the local team for all their efforts on our behalf and of course to Gary Moran for organising such an interesting and thought-provoking scientific programme.

The BSMM/UCL Diploma/MSc in Medical Mycology continues to thrive, to continue our financial support and help secure the future of the course the BSMM

executive committee has decided to award annual bursaries on a competitive basis thus helping to fulfil several of our charitable functions in the advance of education. We will be hearing more about this course from Chris Kibbler, the course director, later in the agenda. As always we extend our sincere thanks to Chris.

The UK Clinical Mycology Network (UKCMN) once again has a half day meeting immediately following our annual meeting. I will leave it to Chris Kibbler the Chairman to update us on progress with this initiative.

As regards the formal working parties we will hear about developments with these later in the agenda but thanks and congratulations go to Silke Schelenz, as chair of the BSMM working party on standards of care for conducting an audit of the 2003 standards which has recently been published in the Journal of Infection. I currently chair the working party for the Registry of Invasive Fungal Infection, Carol Munro chairs the working party on updating and improving the web presence of the BSMM and Richard Barton chairs the working party on serology.

The Society continues to try to raise the profile of mycology in the UK and to this end sponsored Dr Hobson and Dr Schelenz to talk at the FIS meeting in November 2008.

It has been heartening to see the numbers of BSMM members acting as faculty for the forthcoming ISHAM meeting in Tokyo in May and the Trends In Medical Mycology meeting in Athens in October proving that UK Mycology is alive and well and making a continuing impact on the world stage.

Thank you to Elaine Bignell for facilitating our 45th Annual meeting here at Imperial – you have done an excellent job. Thanks also to Gary Moran who steps down as meetings secretary this year and who has got us off to a promising start with what I am sure will continue to be a very interesting programme. Thank you as always to our sponsors from the pharmaceutical industry who are in alphabetical order Astellas Pharmaceuticals, Cape Cod Associates, Gilead, MSD, and Pfizer.

Finally I would like to extend my very warm thanks indeed to all the committee members with whom I have greatly enjoyed working during my term as President. It has been a pleasure and an honor to act as President for this society and thank you all for making our society such a great one!

The report was proposed by Dr Hobson and seconded by Dr Barnes.

5. Treasurer's report

Dr Donna MacCallum spoke to a written report for the financial year ending 31st December 2009, the text of which was as follows:

It is my duty to present the financial accounts to members of the society for the year ended 31st December 2008.

The accounts are broken down into a statement of the financial activities on page 1 and the balance sheet on page 2. Notes attached to the various financial activities follow on pages 3, 4 and 5. For all financial activities of the Society, figures for the previous financial year are shown on the right for comparison.

The financial activities of the Society are shown on page 2. The income of the society was as follows: subscriptions amounted to £3089 and the Leeds course generated a profit of £10,246. The Society would again like to thank Dr Ruth Ashbee for all her hard work in organising and running such a successful course once again. No figures are shown for the previous year as the course runs every two years. The accounts for the Leeds course can be found in Note 3 (page 4).

The 2008 Annual BSMM meeting was held at the University of East Anglia, Norwich and generated a surplus of £6546. The Society would like to thank Dr Silke Schelenz for all of her hard work in organising such an enjoyable meeting under difficult circumstances. The accounts for the meeting are shown in Note 4, with the accounts for the previous annual meeting (Leeds, 2007) shown on the right.

Other income for the society included bank interest of £1298 and support of the fungal registry of £26,667.

Expenses of the Society for the year ending 31st December 2008 included the payment of 6 travel grants, amounting to £2430 (Note 6, pg 5). Travel grants allowed members to attend the ASM Candida and Candidiasis meeting in New York and the Advances against Aspergillosis meeting in Miami, Florida. This level of funding exceeds the amount paid out in the previous financial year (£1016).

Other expenditure of the Society included financing of two working parties; Fungal Registry and Standards of Care. The Society also made a payment of £26,667 to maintain the Fungal Registry. Management and administrative costs of the Society for 2008 amounted to £3255 (note 2, page 3), which included £1303 of committee expenses. These costs are of a similar level to those of the previous financial year.

The balance sheet on page 1 shows that the society presently has accruals of £230, which represents the accountancy fee. The balance sheet also shows that the current assets, and hence net worth, of the Society amount to £148,799 (an increase from the previous financial year).

The President informed the AGM that following the recent instability of financial institutions the Treasurer will be looking into splitting the BSMM assets into £30 000 quantities and spreading them across different banks/building societies, as this sum is currently guaranteed by the government in case of bank collapse.

The report was proposed by Dr Moran and seconded by Dr Shankland.

6. Secretary's report

Dr Sue Howell spoke to a written report, the text of which was as follows:

Dr Richard Hobson is thanked for handing over such a well organised data management system, which has made the administration and extraction of the Society's membership information straight forward.

The total membership is 302 with 229 UK and 74 overseas members, of which 28 are honorary and one is a life member. Compared to this time last year we have five fewer members. The Society would like to welcome six new members: Rebecca Hall, Elaine McCulloch, Jill Cheetham, Margherita Bertuzzi, Nicola Smith, Veronica Ogunleye, and Purnima Ramnarain. Five members have resigned this year, amongst them Professors Keith Holland and Wolf Meinhof who are retiring, and the Society lost one of its long standing members Dr John Edwards as mentioned by the President earlier.

The Society offers funding for members to attend meetings using a Travel Grant or to gain experience and training in another laboratory using the Glynn Evans Mycology Award. There were no applications for the Glynn Evans Award but there were eight applications for Travel Grants. A total of £6780 was requested to support travel to ISHAM, BSMM, and a Fungal Genetics meeting, and £4560 was awarded. A condition of the award is to write a report of the meeting for the Society and these will be published in the Newsletters in the coming months.

Two newsletters were published last year and Geoff Gadd is thanked for always providing a cartoon to liven

things up. The last newsletter featured a book corner to help a member locate a mycology text book and this reached a successful conclusion thanks to the kind help of Dr Gillian Shankland.

Three terms of office for the Executive Committee come to completion with this meeting; the President, the Treasurer, and the Meetings Secretary. Dr Elizabeth Johnson, Dr Donna MacCallum, and Dr Gary Moran are thanked for the huge contribution they have made to the Society during their terms of office. The membership was invited to forward nominations for these posts to the Secretary. The Executive Committee nominated Professor Chris Kibbler for President and this was not contested by the membership. One nomination was received for the Meetings Secretary for Dr Julian Naglik, but no nominations were received for the position of Treasurer. Dr MacCallum has kindly agreed to remain in post for one more year while a successor is sought.

Points raised from the membership included:

- that the provision for life and honorary membership should be better publicised on the website and in newsletters.
- that it was a pity no one had applied for the Glyn Evans Award to gain experience and that this should be better publicised.
- That the incoming President should be congratulated and the outgoing officers thanked.

The report was proposed by Dr Ashbee and seconded by Dr Kibbler.

7. Working party reports

(i) BSMM/UCL Diploma/MSc – Professor Chris Kibbler

Prof. Kibbler spoke to a written report, as follows:

Although there are currently more than 20 students on the course, only two joined in this last academic year. Students dropped out for a number of reasons during the enrolment process, but concern about finance was one of them. As a consequence, the BSMM executive has agreed to make one or more bursaries available to support students who have difficulty in supporting their fees. We are pleased to say that we have had more interest in next year's enrolment already and we are more optimistic about the numbers than last year.

Several changes have been made to the course this year. The Diploma has been brought more into line with UCL's diploma courses and, amongst the changes made, a project is no longer part of the course structure.

These amendments have meant that the course can now be completed in between two and five years, which we hope will appeal to those wishing to complete in a shorter time.

During the past year, the DVD content has been extensively updated and we are grateful to all those who have given up their time to do this - it has not been an easy task.

The financial arrangement between UCL and the Society has been revised and the Society is currently no longer contributing to the running of the course. This will be kept under review and, hopefully, the Society will receive a share of any surplus income in the future. This will, of course, depend upon student numbers.

Thanks should, once again, go to the Course Committee and the module tutors, the BSMM supervisors and departmental mentors, Tim McHugh (the other UCL tutor), the external examiners and Anne Dickens, our course administrator, for all their efforts in keeping the course running smoothly.

The President outlined the initial discussions on the bursary scheme: applications would be invited to submit a 500 word essay on how undertaking the course would contribute to mycology in their country of origin, and that a sum would be set aside to be distributed amongst suitable applicants. The exact sum is yet to be decided upon as the financial details need to be established to ensure that the commitment can be sustained for the duration of the student(s) registration.

(ii) Standards of Care – Dr Silke Schelenz

A paper entitled "Standards of care for patients with invasive fungal infections within the United Kingdom: a national audit" was published in January 2009 in the *Journal of Infection*. The working party is planning to meet soon and it is hoped that a draft of the revised standards will be ready by summer 2009.

(iii) Website – Dr Carol Munro.

Dr Carol Munro has been liaising with the website designer to update the appearance and to provide additional features such as the ability to register and pay for meetings on-line. The launch has been delayed until after the Annual Meeting to ensure that any teething troubles would not affect the meeting this year. Carol will be taking over managing the site from the designer when it is launched.

The new site has a new front page, online application

forms for membership and grants which will be emailed directly to the Secretary, payment option with Paypal, and a paper based option for registration and payment. There will also be an ability to view abstracts from the annual meeting. As a result of these significant changes the website will be moved to a new server able to facilitate these new functions, but the web address will remain the same: www.BSMM.org

Dr Munro asked that members email her with any ideas of what they would like to see on the website.

(iv) Fungal Infection Registry – Dr Elizabeth Johnson

The Registry was designed to capture data on the incidence and management of systemic fungal infections. So far there are 4 centres registered and 3 that have expressed an interest, and data has been entered on 117 patients. Leeds have been very active in using the Registry, as heard in one of this mornings presentations at the annual meeting. A limiting factor for uptake is identification of an individual to take responsibility for entering the data at each site. Gilead, who have supported the Registry, have expressed a willingness to provide travel funds to scientific meetings for participants. The President thanked Witold Malyszczak from Gilead for all his enthusiasm, help and support with the Fungal Registry, although he has now left the company Gilead are still committed in their support for the venture.

Other pharmaceutical companies have also expressed an interest in helping to support this initiative..

(v). Serology working party – Dr Richard Barton

The working party met on 19/11/08. The discussions covered what tests were offered within each member's laboratory, the pros and cons of each test and of the methods of detection. It was decided that the output from the working party would include a peer review paper and a series of documents along the lines of an HPA guideline for fungal serology. These would also be put onto the BSMM website. The scope of the working party would be confined to 6 tests: antibody tests for *Aspergillus* and *Candida*, and antigen tests for *Aspergillus*, *Candida*, *Cryptococcus* and B-glucan detection. Infections with dimorphics fungi and sporotrichosis would be outside the remit, and avian antigens and farmers lung would not be examined. The framework for consideration would follow ACCE: analytical validation, clinical validation, clinical utility, ethical, legal and social implications. It is planned for the work to be completed and published within 2 years.

Dr Barton felt the working party was a timely development in light of the Carter report which has an objective of standardisation of tests.

The next meeting is scheduled for May 2009.

8. UK Clinical Mycology Network

Professor Kibbler gave a brief outline of the achievements and activities of the UK Clinical Mycology Network.

Since its inception in 2006, the Network has continued to establish its identity and remit. The website, hosted on the HPA web pages, has recently been revised and contains a lot more material. It provides access to the constitution, the membership, levels of service provision and the HPA document on future proposals for mycology services in the UK, as well as details of other UKCMN activities. This site will continue to expand to provide a valuable resource for members of the Network and others.

Current UKCMN membership consists of five regional centres in Leeds, Manchester, London, the MRL in Bristol and Cardiff. Several centres have joined at the level of specialist microbiology laboratories and recently a number of local level laboratories have joined, so the network is expanding outwards into the mycology community. Members are now increasingly becoming involved in SOP revision and guideline review, such as the "Quickguides" to fungal infection and the Clinical Knowledge Summaries, used by GPs and other healthcare workers.

The Network is continuing to focus on mycology training and accreditation and Dick Hobson, together with Rosemary Barnes, has spent a considerable amount of time developing a syllabus for mycology training to form the basis of an accreditation process via the Royal College of Pathologists. This has been agreed in principle by the College Specialty Advisory Committee and, although it will take some time for the details to be finalised and a lot of work for the members of this society in the future, this is very encouraging progress.

The members of the Network would like to express their thanks to Chris Lucas, who has provided such excellent support during the evolution of the Network and the Steering Committee.

9. Annual Scientific Meetings

(i) Norwich 2008

Thanks were extended to Silke for her hard work and

for making a profit for the Society of approximately £6500.

(ii) London 2009

Dr Elaine Bignell is the local organiser and provided the following report to the meeting. Having made significant profit from several previous Annual Meetings, The Society last year decided to implement a new model for expenditure which included subsidy for younger researchers and clinical trainees, firstly to boost attendance and scientific content of the Annual Meetings, and secondly to foster networking among the next generation of researchers and clinicians. Subsidies were conditional upon the acceptance of oral and poster presentation abstracts.

The Society therefore waived registration fees for 8 poster-presenting students and completely subsidised the attendance of 5 trainees making oral presentations. 4 of the latter 5 are presenting data of an applied or clinical nature, all of the subsidised poster presentations detailed laboratory research of a more basic nature. We have also subsidised the attendance of 8 invited speakers, two of whom have travelled from the US.

Accommodation costs have been high this year due to the London location, this was reflected in the cost of registration. The sum of subsidised accommodation (for students and invited speakers) was £2834. The total accommodation bill will be £12532.

Conferencing costs for Sunday, Monday and Tuesday amounted to £16 500, sundries including stationary, printing, poster prizes and entertainment (which was sourced from Imperial College clubs and societies) amounted to £1200, bringing the total meeting costs to £30232

Registrations for the meeting raised approximately £18000 and we attracted sponsorship of £10000. On balance, therefore, the meeting will have cost the Society approximately £3000 once travel expenses for invited speakers have been covered.

Based upon this working model, it is evident that for future meetings, with sustained contributions from sponsors and lower running costs outside of London, it will be possible to fund still more contributions from younger members of the Society.

In terms of location, I believe the meeting benefitted from its London location by attracting a higher than usual number of day delegates (=20). In terms of timing, the proximity of the Asilomar meeting likely had a negative impact, along with imminent FEBS and

ISHAM meetings both of which will be taking place next week.

(iii) Exeter 2010

Dr Steve Bates is the local organiser and confirmed the dates for the 2010 meeting to be 11th to 13th April 2010. This will be the week after Easter in order to prevent the clash with the biennial ASM Candida meeting. Accommodation will be in the University of Exeter in an attempt to keep costs down.. Members were invited to send suggestions for the programme to himself or to the Meetings Secretary Dr Julian Naglik.

(iv) Glasgow 2011

Dr Claire Alexander and Dr Gillian Shankland will be hosting the meeting in 2011. Dr Shankland extended a warm welcome to the BSMM and reminded us that Glasgow was a popular location for BSMM meetings as it has been held there on 5 other occasions in the Society's history.

(v) Cardiff 2012

Dr Rosemary Barnes will be the host for this meeting.

10. Election of Honorary and Life members

Members may be nominated for honorary membership after making a significant contribution to the Society. Members may be nominated for life membership when they retire and are no longer active in the mycological community, but have contributed a great deal during their working life.

No nominations have been received for Honorary Membership. Professor Wolf Meinhof has been nominated for Life membership by Dr Donna MacCallum and Dr Elizabeth Johnson. Professor Frank Odds knew Professor Meinhof personally and described his contribution to the BSMM and mycology as a whole. Professor Meinhof has been a member for over 30 years and in the 1970s and 80s always attended the BSMM annual meetings. He had been nominated for Secretary of ISHAM and was a prominent figure in German mycology. It was agreed that this nomination was entirely appropriate and the membership agreed unanimously.

Following a question it was agreed that the new website should include a list of the current life and honorary members.

11. Election of Executive Committee members

(i) President (2009-2012) – One nomination was received for Professor Chris Kibbler who was duly elected to the post and congratulated by the

membership.

(ii). Meeting Secretary (2009-2012) - one nomination was received for Dr Julian Naglik who was duly elected to the post and congratulated by the membership.

(iii). Treasurer (2009-2014) – no nominations were received. Dr MacCallum has kindly agreed to continue for one more year while a successor is sought. Any one interested in taking on this post was encouraged to talk to Dr MacCallum during the meeting.

12. Any other business

Mycology online tool – Dr Richard Barton

i). This tool is envisaged as supplementing the existing practical laboratory courses and to enable training to take place at a time and at a pace to suit the individual. The tool will consist of a web-based programme with a series of cases associated with virtual specimens. Individuals would work through the cases selecting tests and making decisions on results, ending up with a diagnosis with or without a fungal identity. There would be hyperlinks to a library of information pages about fungi, the infections they cause and the diagnostic tests available. Cases could be structured by difficulty and immediate feedback given on the correctness of the answers, and the optimal approach that should be taken. Application could be made to the appropriate bodies so that CPD credits could be obtained for work completed. Such software would lend itself to training and examinations for example for the BSMM Diploma/MSc.

Waypoint (waypointsystems.co.uk) has worked extensively with clinical geneticists and immunologists to develop computer based external quality assurance schemes where participants work through cases and report their results with appropriate comments for assessment of their competence in their respective fields. Thus, while a training tool for mycology would be designed afresh, Waypoint have the experience and expertise to enable them to do this. It may be possible to develop a mycology EQA scheme from this software at a later stage.

Waypoint have been delivering online external quality assessment websites and training tools since 2003. It is proposed that they develop a pilot training tool to be used as proof of concept. The pilot will contain most of the main features and functionalities of the full working tool, but larger areas of functionality such as the main information website, administration system and online help encyclopaedia would be held back for the finished tool. The funding required for the pilot is £4500 +VAT and it would be expected to take 2-3 months to develop. It has been estimated that the full costs for a completed

version could be £22000, and that assistance in funding would be sought from other sources.

Dr Barton approached the Executive Committee with this proposal, who thoroughly supported the idea and suggested it be presented to the membership at the AGM.

This item generated considerable discussion and what follows is a summary of the questions, comments and responses from the discussion:

Would the system be eligible for CPD? – The RCPATH could be approached for CPD approval.

What is the target audience? - It is hoped that laboratory staff and clinicians would be able to use the tool as there should be information relevant to both groups. There is no equivalent course available in the USA so there would definitely be a market for such a product there.

Perhaps ISHAM could be approached to help with the costs and to provide a wider resource for materials for the tool.

There are cases on the Aspergillus website and Prof Denning invited Dr Barton to use some cases to help develop the tool.

Funding of £4500 seems a lot as it will be the mycologists that provide the materials for the tools, while the company just inserts it into a web designed programme. Could the existing web designers known to the BSMM do a similar project for less? - It was agreed that other design options would be explored to ensure that the best deal was being obtained.

There needs to be careful discussion around intellectual property rights for the tool, and what happens if the pilot isn't suitable. Dr Barton will investigate these aspects and report back to the Executive Committee.

At the close of the discussion it was agreed that an online mycology tool would be very useful and was an excellent idea. The Executive Committee will act on behalf of the Society in supporting Dr Barton in the development of the tool and in ensuring that the Society's interests are protected.

ii). There were no other items raised.

Meeting papers:

Agenda item 2: Minutes of the 44th Annual General Meeting held on 31st March 2008

The meeting closed at 16:50.