

# BSMM News

August 2011



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## The President's Column

Chris Kibbler

## BSMM Travel Grant Applications

In order to make the application process and notification of results more efficient the Executive Committee will review Travel Grant applications every two months for the coming year. The deadlines for receipt of applications are: 30/09/11, 30/11/11. The criteria for eligibility and purpose of the award can be found on the BSMM website along with the application form. If you are planning to attend a meeting why not apply for some travel funds.

## Glyn Evans Award

The Society recognized the huge contribution Prof Glyn Evans made to the BSMM and mycology by providing an award to members to provide financial support to visit another laboratory for a period of training, usually to learn a specific technique. The Award contributes towards the costs of travel, accommodation and directly related expenses.

There are no set application deadlines for this award. And applications may be submitted for consideration at any time. An award will not usually be made if the applicant has received a previous award (Travel Grant or Glyn Evans Award) less than three years before the application date.

## Travel grant reports from grant recipients

*FEBS Advanced Lecture Course on Human Fungal Pathogens.*

First of all, I am truly grateful to the BSMM committee for the travel grant that kindly provided financial assistance towards my attendance at the 4th FEBS Advanced Lecture Course Human Fungal Pathogens: molecular mechanisms of host-pathogen interactions and virulence, which took place in La Colle sur Loup in France from 7th to 13th May 2011. This course is held every two years and it was the last opportunity for me to attend during my PhD studies. By attending the course I had a great opportunity to present my work, to meet leading experts in fungal research and to get inspiring feedback on my work from them.

The FEBS course covered various aspects of fungal pathogen research work and included five sessions of advanced lectures and workshops: genomic fungal evolution, environmental sensing, antifungal drug resistances, host-pathogen interaction and systems biology. All lectures and workshops were quite intense but incredibly inspiring. I was especially interested in environmental sensing and drug resistance mechanisms, which are a large part of my project. Furthermore, host-pathogen interaction and new antifungal drug discovery were also useful to my project and of great interest to me.

One of my favourite talks was presented by Dr Julian Naglik from King's College London Dental Institute. He showed a balance of *Candida albicans* between a commensal and opportunistic pathogen in oral candidiasis and also the responses of the host-immune system. Hyphal protein Ece1 in *C. albicans* contributes to activate the MAPK/c-Fos pathway resulting in cytokine production and initiation of innate immunity against *C. albicans*. Furthermore, many other talks expanded my knowledge, and I have learned about other fungal pathogen such as *Malassezia*, *Aspergillus* spp., and *Cryptococcus* spp. During the course I was fortunate enough to talk with researchers and PIs from other labs. It was a great experience. I strongly recommend this as an amazing course to attend. All those precious experiences gave me some ideas for my current PhD project and as a future post-doc. Once again I would like to express my deep thanks to the BSMM committee for the Travel Award and for supporting me in this excellent experience.

Kathy Lee Keunsook

**ECCMID/ICC 2011**

The 21<sup>st</sup> European Congress of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases (27<sup>th</sup> International Congress of Chemotherapy) took place in Milan between the 7<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> May 2011. The BSMM generously provided a travel grant that enabled me to attend the conference, and to present a poster during a session on the final day. The poster was entitled Expression of immune genes by human macrophages from healthy subjects and CCPA patients in response to stimulation with *Aspergillus fumigatus*, and was presented during the final poster session on Fungal infections: epidemiology, molecular basis and management.

The meeting was busy, with speakers and researchers from across the globe and sessions on a range of topics covering all areas of microbiology and infectious diseases. My particular field of interest is mycology, and I attended sessions ranging from discussing the new CSLI breakpoints for fungal resistance to next generation sequencing technologies and the current and future use of these in clinical microbiology. As an important and developing problem in the field of mycology, resistance was a major topic of discussion at the conference and some interesting questions were asked of the speakers by various members of the audience. PK/PD and its role in management of fungal infections was also a topic of major interest, and there were a variety of talks on this subject. The use of antifungals and the benefits of first line combination therapy were also discussed, particularly during some interesting panel sessions.

Along with the interesting presentations and poster sessions, there was a little time to visit the city of Milan, with flying visits to the Castello Sforzesco and the Duomo and time for a spot of ice cream. It was a lovely setting for an interesting conference, and I have brought home not only some new ideas but also some lovely photographs.

**Nicola Smith**

**Glyn Evans Award – report from recipient**

I travelled to the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota to spend a week with the serology and mycology departments, observing how they test for *Histoplasma*, *Coccidioides* and *Blastomyces*. The Mayo Clinic is a centre of excellence and they have a strong ethos of teaching and sharing of knowledge. Geographically this is an endemic area for *Histoplasma* and *Blastomyces* and they also receive *Coccidioides* samples for testing from a sister clinic in Arizona, greatly enhancing my chances of seeing a few positive results. Whilst out

there, I spent most of my time at their Superior Drive Support Centre which houses their serology laboratories. Over the course of the week, I observed how they use a combination of ELISA, Complement Fixation Technique and Immunodiffusion to detect these organisms. How they standardise their tests and quality control their reagents and also the criteria they use to interpret positive results. For myself, working in a laboratory where positive cases of *Histoplasma*, *Coccidioides* and *Blastomyces* are relatively rare, it was quite overwhelming to see so many positives in such a short space of time (although I was a little jet-lagged at that point). However, it was also hugely rewarding to see those doubtful ‘funny’ results that occur from time to time and to see first-hand how the experienced staff interpreted these.

I also spent a day with the mycology department observing their fungal identification procedures for these organisms and also how this involves molecular identification and DNA sequencing of both cultures and raw samples. Linked to this it was interesting to see the safety procedures and protocols that are routinely in place for handling these high risk organisms. The staff at the Mayo Clinic were so welcoming and so generous with both their time and knowledge. I hugely enjoyed my time there and have learnt so much. I am very grateful to the BSMM and the Glynn Evans Award for allowing me such a rewarding learning experience.

**Deborah Whitehead**

**BSMM Annual Meeting Glasgow 2011**

The 47<sup>th</sup> Meeting in Glasgow was a great success and was blessed with beautiful weather to enjoy the nearby Botanical Gardens, which was also the venue for the civic reception.

**Notices, useful information bites.....**

The 2010 Journal Citation Reports have been published with impact factors for 10196 journals. There are 22 journals within the mycology and the impact factors for the top 5 journals dealing with human or animal mycoses are: *Medical Mycology* (2.329), *Mycopathologia* (1.810), *Mycoses* (1.6670), *Rev Iberoam Micol* (1.074), and *J Mycol Méd* (0.605). Further information is available from the publishers, Thompson Reuters, at their website.

A report on the ECCMID and ICC meetings held in Milan in May 2011 can be read at <http://www.isham.org/pdf/ECCMID-ICC%202011%20-%20IFD%20meeting%20report%20FINAL.pdf>



Dr Astrid Leck at the London School of Hygiene and tropical Medicine has a list of books that have been earmarked for disposal. Any members interested in obtaining a book on this list please contact Astrid on: [astrid.leck@lshtm.ac.uk](mailto:astrid.leck@lshtm.ac.uk)

Henrici, A.T.	Molds, yeasts, and antinomycetes	Wiley
Skinner, C.E. et al	Henrici's molds, yeasts, and antinomycetes (2nd ed.)	Wiley
Ainsworth, G.C. & A.S. Sussman (eds)	The fungi: an advanced treatise (3 vols)	Academic Press
Hawker, L.E.	Physiology of fungi	University of London Press
Lilly, V.G. & H.L. Barnett	Physiology of the fungi	McGraw-Hill
Esser, K. & R. Kuenen	Genetics of fungi	Springer-Verlag
Thom, C. & M.B. Church	The Aspergilli	Baillière, Tindall & Cox
Thom, C.	The Penicillia	Baillière, Tindall & Cox
Thom, C. & K.B. Raper	A manual of the Aspergilli	Baillière, Tindall & Cox
Ainsworth, G.C.	Medical mycology: an introduction to its problems	Pitman
Riddell, R.W. & G.T. Stewart (eds)	Fungous diseases and their treatment	Butterworths
Emmons, C.W. et al	Medical mycology	Kimpton
Hildick-Smith, G. et al	Fungus diseases and their treatment	Churchill
Fiese	Coccidioidomycosis	Charles C. Thomas
Cox, L. & J.C. Tolhurst	Human Torulosis	Melbourne UP

Transvaal Mine Medical Officers' Association	Sporotrichosis infection on mines of the Witwatersrand: a symposium	Transvaal Chamber of Mines
Winner, H.I. & R. Hurley	Candida Albicans	Churchill
Lafar, F. 1930 (repr. 1947)	Technical mycology, vol. II	Griffin
	1965	

Oxford University Press (OUP) will partner with the Pediatric Infectious Diseases Society (PIDS) to publish the Journal of the Pediatric Infectious Diseases Society (JPIDS). This new quarterly journal will be dedicated to perinatal, childhood, and adolescent infectious diseases. It will be a high-quality source of original research articles, clinical trial reports, guidelines, and topical reviews in an essential publication that will span from bench to bedside. JPIDS will publish its first print and online issue in March 2012. All members of PIDS will receive an online and print subscription to JPIDS as part of their membership. There will be an option for subscribers to purchase it with the Infectious Diseases Society of America journals, Journal of Infectious Diseases and Clinical Infectious Diseases, which also are published by OUP.

**UKCM BSMM/UCL MSc/ Diploma Course**

The BSMM/University College London MSc/Diploma Course in Medical Mycology Applications are invited for this unique distance learning based course. The programme is based at University College London and run jointly by UCL and the BSMM. Teaching is provided by the leading UK experts in mycology, by means of DVDs, web-based materials and practical courses, and includes a research project conducted at the student's home institution.

A bursary may be available from the British Society for Medical Mycology to support the costs of this course. Details are available on the BSMM website.

Places are limited, so if you wish to find out more please contact Anne Dickens, the course administrator at [a.dickens@medsch.ucl.ac.uk](mailto:a.dickens@medsch.ucl.ac.uk) as soon as possible to register your interest. Further details may also be found on the BSMM website at [www.BSMM.org](http://www.BSMM.org)

**Society of Biology news**

*Select Committee report on Peer Review in Scientific Publications*

The House of Commons Science and Technology Committee have published a report following their consultation on Peer Review in Scientific Publications. The Society of Biology responded to the consultation, highlighting the importance of Peer Review in driving up research standards, contributing to research funding assessment, and broadening the intellectual input to projects.

The report recognises the importance of the peer review process, however calls for improvements to the system, including;

- Use of innovative approaches such as open peer review, increased transparency and online repository-style journals. For example, pre-print servers used to allow researchers to share preliminary research.
- Encouraging publishers to work together to develop peer review standards, and use of these standards in training of editors, authors and reviewers.
- Making data publicly available, especially where the research is publicly funded.

The committee warns against the use of statistics on publication in high-impact journals as the hallmark of individual impact, as factors beyond research quality (e.g. topicality) can influence editorial decisions to include papers in very high impact factors journals. The committee is concerned that this should not hinder the career progression of researchers who publish good research in less-quoted journals, stressing instead that the quality of research is best served by looking at reports and articles themselves. The report also calls for greater oversight of research integrity, recommending a UK overarching external regulator, and within employers, a specific member of staff dedicated to this role.

Report:

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201012/cmselect/cmsctech/856/85602.htm>

The summary of the Society of Biology response can be found here:

<http://www.societyofbiology.org/policy/consultations/view/43>

*New Technicians' Register Scheme*

Technicians often have unique skills and expertise that are essential to the successful running of many companies, universities, and research establishments, covering such diverse biological areas as general and clinical microbiology, animal husbandry, plant science,

ecology and health care to name but a few. This diversity in itself often means that it is difficult for individual technicians to have a sense of being part of a wider profession, and to assess and recognise competence across the whole profession.

Membership of the register will give technicians a new shared sense of identity, a professional code of conduct, and provide a common platform for assessing competency. This in turn will also provide a framework for continuing professional development and a professional career pathway. Timescales are not yet fixed but the launch of a pilot, after wider consultation in the spring, should be possible.

In parallel, the NHS is looking at ways to develop the NHS career framework through its "Modernising Scientific Workforce in the UK" initiative. This will include the work of many technicians and the associated training and education needed to support them professionally. In looking at the Technicians' Register we will seek to work closely with the NHS to ensure as much synergy as possible.

This new initiative alongside broader work on apprenticeships and sector skills gaps is set to be a major area of work for all professional bodies over the next five years. The Society of Biology is pleased to be working with the Science Council and the Gatsby Charitable Trust to provide this significant opportunity for technicians working in biology in its widest sense everywhere.

<http://www.societyofbiology.org/newsandevents/news/archive/newtechniciansregisterscheme>

**Forthcoming meetings**

The International Union of Microbiological Societies (IUMS) will organize next congress in Sapporo, Japan, September 2011. The bacteriology and mycology sessions will be 6-11 September

<http://www.congre.co.jp/iums2011sapporo/data/general.html>

The European Microscopy Congress at Manchester Central on 16 – 21 September, [www.rms.org.uk](http://www.rms.org.uk)

The 5th Trends in Medical Mycology (TIMM) will take place in the Valencia Conference Centre, Valencia, Spain, 2-5 October 2011. [www.TIMM2011.org](http://www.TIMM2011.org).

**Host-fungal interactions: pathogenicity versus immunity.** EuroSciCon, BioPark Hertfordshire, Welwyn Garden City, 21 October 2011

**Black Yeast: Hidden Danger Unexplored Potential,** Curitiba Brazil, 1-4 December 2011. For information go to: <http://www.blackyeast.org/Curitiba/program.html>

The **12th Western Pacific Congress on Chemotherapy and Infectious Diseases** entitled "New Pathogens New Challenges" will be held in Singapore, 2-5 December, 2010. For information and registration, see the website <http://www.wpccid2010.org/>.

**BSMM course on Fungal Identification and Fungal Infections** will be held on 19-23 March 2012 in Leeds UK.. For details and more information on the course contact Dr Ruth Ashbee at [R.Ashbee@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:R.Ashbee@leeds.ac.uk)

Course on **Medical Mycology** 30<sup>th</sup> July to 7<sup>th</sup> August 2012 in Innsbruck Austria. For more information go to: <http://www.cbs.knaw.nl/service/CoursesDetails.aspx?Rec=78>

A **Symposium on Molecular and Cellular Biology** with the theme "Fungal Pathogens: from Basic Biology to Drug Discovery" will be held in Santa Fe, New Mexico, U.S.A., 15-20 January, 2012. Program and other information can be found <http://www.keystonesymposia.org/meetings/viewMeetings.cfm?MeetingID=1164>

**18<sup>th</sup> ISHAM** meeting Berlin, Germany, June 11-15 2012, <http://www.isham2012.org/index.php>

51st Interscience Conference on **Antimicrobial Agents and Chemotherapy** (ICAAC) will be held in Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A., September 17-20, 2011, <http://www.icaac.org/>

The **Mycology Study Group** (MSG) will be held during the ICAAC Meeting in Chicago, U.S.A., on Monday evening of September 19. For information, contact [Janeth Beth Deerman](mailto:Janeth Beth Deerman).

Links to Societies and webpages of interest: [http://www.rms.org.uk/events/Forthcoming\\_Events](http://www.rms.org.uk/events/Forthcoming_Events) for events sponsored by the Royal Microscopical Society

#### 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](mailto:susan.howell@kcl.ac.uk)

#### BSMM membership

Currently the Society has 349 members. There are 268 UK members and 77 overseas members, including 26 honorary and two life members

The Society would like to ensure that it acknowledges the contributions of its members and welcomes nominations for life and honorary membership. Life and honorary members have all the privileges of ordinary membership but are exempt from paying any annual subscription charges. The Constitution states that "Members of at least 10 years standing, who have retired from active practice, shall be eligible to become life members. Members who have made a notable contribution to medical or veterinary mycology and/or to the work of the Society, shall be eligible for nomination to honorary membership."

A member can be nominated for either life or honorary membership by the Committee or by two members, as long as the nomination is received by the General Secretary two months before the AGM. The award of life or honorary membership is then voted upon at the AGM.

The minutes of the AGM welcome a number of new members, but since the meeting three further members have joined the Society and are welcomed:

Jason Hart from London

Sarah Morgan from Aberdeen

Filomena Nogueira from Aberdeen.

#### Minutes from the 47<sup>th</sup> AGM in Glasgow April 2011

The meeting was held on 18<sup>th</sup> April 2011 at the Hilton Grosvenor Hotel in Glasgow, commencing at 17:00 and chaired by Professor C Kibbler (President).

Members present

25 members were in attendance at the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from:

Dr Veronica Hearn, Dr Elizabeth Johnson and Dr Michael Petrou

#### Agenda items

1. Apologies – see list above
2. Minutes of the 46<sup>th</sup> AGM held on 17<sup>th</sup> April 2010. The minutes were approved as an accurate record.
3. Matters arising from the minutes

All matters arising were being covered elsewhere in the agenda

#### 4. President's report

What follows is a brief summary of the activities of the Society since we last met at the annual meeting in Exeter last year. That was a great success and Steve Bates and Julian Naglik should be congratulated on their superb last minute re-organisation of the meeting as a result of the volcanic eruption. The Society as a whole rose to the occasion magnificently in providing "emergency" talks, so that, in the end, it was one of our best meetings.

This has been another good year for the Society. The BSMM/UCL Diploma/MSc in Medical Mycology continues to thrive and I will be discussing this in more detail later on in the AGM. As regards the formal working parties we will also hear about developments with these later in the agenda. Liz Johnson currently chairs 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, Richard Barton chairs the working party on serology, Silke Schelenz chairs the working party for the revision of the BSMM Standards and William Hope chairs the working party on therapeutic drug monitoring.

I have included a discussion on the results of the Society questionnaire further down the agenda, as I think this is sufficiently important to stand as a separate item. In the same way, we are going to hear about the new ECMM journal under a separate agenda item.

Thank you to Gillian Shankland for organising our 47<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting here in Glasgow and to Julian Naglik who has again provided able assistance in putting together 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.

Proposed by Dr Rosemary Barnes, seconded by Dr Ruth Ashbee.

#### 5. Treasurer's report

The Treasurer then thanked Keith Thompson who had been the Society Accountant for the last 5 years and had always been helpful, and Dr Ruth Ashbee for her careful and detailed accounting for the BSMM Course in Leeds. Lastly The Treasurer wished good luck to her successor Dr Amanda Barnes.

Proposed by Dr Julian Naglik, seconded by Professor Rod Hay.

There followed some discussion on three items mentioned in the Treasurer's report:

- i). The Fungal registry – The Registry was industry sponsored until 2010 when the BSMM took over support costing approx. £6-7000. The Executive agreed to sponsor the Registry for another year but felt that it had to have demonstrable value if funding was to be continued, therefore it was agreed that there should be an evaluation and review of the data collected so far. If an analysis demonstrated that the Registry was collecting useful data which could also lead to publications the Executive Committee would then look to identify other sources of sponsorship.
- ii). Payments to the Society – the website is now able to take payments through PayPal, which makes it much easier for people to pay by credit cards, especially for meeting registration.
- iii). Direct debit originator – The society had been looking into being able to originate direct debit requests, rather than have subscriptions paid by standing order. This would require a one off payment of £250 and then 32p to set up each direct debit. David Denning felt that this was unnecessary unless the Society was planning on increasing fees. Gillian Shankland said that the current system of standing orders was problematic and should be changed, as when subscription was raised 8 years ago this created big problems because it relied on receiving new instructions from members, and not all members were contactable. It was agreed that this would be costed up and the benefits clearly explained.

#### 6. Secretary's report

##### Membership

The total membership is 347 with 266 UK and 77 overseas members, of which 27 are honorary and 2 are life members. This year our membership has increased by 24 with Aberdeen contributing 50% of this. The Society would like to welcome its new members: Celine O'Gorman, Shaun Robertson, Rhiannon Pursall, Ali Robb, Sophie Clarke, Silvia Wehmeier, David Moyes, Kanya Preechasuth, Lieghann Sherry, Deborah O'Neil, Derry Mercer, Shane Smith, Joanna Potrykus, Vanessa Duncan, Edina Szabo, Francisco Alvarez, Liliane Mukaremera, Sami Alawfi, Christopher Grice, Elaine Taylor, Nichola Duddy, Riina Richardson, Emma Williamson, and Gareth Weaver. One member resigned this year, Michael Bell.

##### Grants and Awards

The Society continues to offer funding for members to attend meetings via Travel Grant applications, or to gain

experience and training in another laboratory through the Glynn Evans Mycology Award. There were two Glyn Evans awards granted this year totalling £2530: to Jill Cheetham to learn how to take videos of fungal growth at Sheffield University, and to Deborah Whitehead to visit the Infectious Diseases Lab in the Mayo Clinics to observe Histoplasma and coccidioidomycosis testing. There were five Travel Grant applications received and four were granted with a total of £1923 awarded. Meetings attended included the Yeast genetics and Molecular Biology meeting in Vancouver, the Wood's Hole course on Molecular Mycology, ECCMID and IMC9. Although a condition of these awards is to prepare a report for publication in the newsletters, there are several recipients that have failed to do so. The reports serve as a means of informing the Society of how the money has been spent and the benefit gained, and to publicise the availability of the grants and how they can be used. The Secretary will continue to follow-up on the most recent recipients.

#### Newsletters

Two newsletters were published last year and emailed to as many members as possible to cut down on production costs. Some time has been spent this year contacting members by post when their email addresses are no longer functioning. There are a number of members where no response has been received by email or by post and we will continue to try to obtain current contact information. If anyone has moved job or changed their email address please remember to contact the Society so we can forward you newsletters and information that might be of interest. If anyone would like to contribute an article on news, job opportunities, or is trying to track down a book or reference please do contact the Secretary for inclusion. Any photos from the Annual meeting would also be welcome.

#### Executive Committee Membership

At the last meeting in Exeter, Amanda Barnes kindly agreed to take on the role of Treasurer following this meeting allowing Dr Donna MacCallum to hand over the reins after seven years. There were three vacancies on the Executive Committee following the AGM this year as Richard Barton, Brian Jones and Carol Munro had completed their 3 years in office. Carol maintains the Society website and although she is stepping down from the Executive Committee she has agreed to attend meetings as a non-voting member in order to participate in discussions concerning the website. Richard Barton has been involved in a number of projects for the Society and currently is leading the Fungal Serology working party, Richard offered himself for re-election to provide continuity to these projects. We would like to thank Donna, Carol, Richard and Brian for all of their hard work and commitment to the Society during their

terms of office. Three nominations were received for the vacancies on the Executive Committee: Richard Barton, Gordon Ramage and Robin May. As the three nominations fill the three vacancies there was no need to send out ballots for an election by the membership. The three members are duly welcomed to the Executive Committee for the next three years. Lastly we would like to thank Gillian Shankland for her hard work making this meeting in Glasgow so successful, and welcome Rosemary Barnes as the local organiser for the meeting in Cardiff in 2012, and Julian Rutherford as local organiser for the meeting in Newcastle in 2013.

Proposed by Professor Rod Hay, seconded by Professor Rosemary Barnes.

#### 7. Working party reports

##### i). BSMM/UCL Certificate /Diploma/MSc in Medical Mycology –Professor Chris Kibbler

The course has now been running for seven years and continues to recruit well. This year we have 8 students in the first year, including overseas ones from the RSA and Uganda.

The introductory module will be offered as a CPD option for the first time this year and should again bring in additional income to the Society. We have also been granted approval for a certificate award for students choosing to take the four assessed distance taught modules plus one assessed practical module. We hope that this would be attractive to students unable to commit to longer study periods and for those who find themselves unable to continue for personal or work-related reasons. Once again, the course has achieved a surplus, shared with UCL, resulting in a payment of £11,768.79 to the Society for this past year.

As ever, this course could not run without the commitment of many members of the Society and I would particularly like to thank the module tutors, those responsible for running the practical modules and Anne Dickens, who keeps the whole show on the road. Questions arising from this item included: from David Denning asking if the course was ever oversubscribed and from Silke Schelenz asking what backgrounds students were from. In some years there is a waiting list but not always. There is no advertising for the course except through the BSMM website, ECMM, ISHAM and word of mouth. Approximately 1/3 of the students are from clinical backgrounds and 2/3 from scientific backgrounds.

##### ii). Fungal Registry

Dr Elizabeth Johnson provided the following report: "The BSMM Fungal Registry Working group was initiated in 2006 and a web-based reporting system, hosted by Abacus International and with M-REC approval, was launched in September 2007. All the

initial development and start-up costs were met by Gilead but the continuing costs for hosting (since 2010) are being met by the BSMM.

This remains an under-utilised resource due in most part to the lack of time available at interested centres for data entry. However, Brian Jones (one of the working party members) is in talks with Abacus about adaptations to make the registry suitable for data capture for a planned candidaemia study in Scotland. Moreover, Pfizer has agreed to look at a proposal with a view to providing funding for an individual to attend selected sites to input data.”

The finances around the registry and further developments were discussed under the Treasurer’s report.

iii). Fungal serology – Dr Richard Barton

At the 2008 AGM in Norwich the BSMM agreed to support a working group on fungal serology and asked me to chair this group. At the AGM there was some discussion as to the scope and output of this working party. Should it include antigen as well as antibody detection methods, should it aim to produce, in addition to peer reviewed paper, a “little black book” of methods as did a similar working group in 1976 (BSM, 1976). The initial aim was to propose: i) some terms of reference and aims of the working group and ii) a proposed membership (subject to confirmation by the people themselves). And these are outlined below.

**Proposed aims of working group**

I propose that the working group should consider all the above issues and:

- 1) Agree a formal set of terms of references and scope for this working group
- 2) Discuss the practice of antibody and antigen testing for fungal diagnostics and its clinical use
- 3) Identify useful diagnostic tests – in-house and commercial and produce a database of information and evidence (where available) of
  - a) details of methods
  - b) analytical validity (accuracy and precision of test)
  - c) clinical validity including approximate indications for use
  - d) clinical utility
- 4) Produce a manuscript to be submitted to a peer reviewed journal and consider the possibility of producing a manual (equivalent of the previous “little black book”) of methods to be published by the BSMM.

Proposed membership of working group

Dr Richard Barton, Chair, Mycology Reference Centre, Leeds

Dr Chris Linton, HPA Mycology Reference Laboratory, Bristol

Dr Gillian Shankland, Medical Mycology Reference Laboratory, Western Infirmary, Glasgow

Dr Graeme Wild, Protein Reference Unit, Department of Immunology, Northern General Hospital, Sheffield.

Dr Caroline Moore, Regional Mycology Laboratory, Manchester

The proposed aims were accepted by the BSMM Executive and all of the persons who were invited to participate accepted.

So far 5 meetings have been held. The following issues/projects have emerged:

- 1) An audit/survey of 6 different serological assays or types of assay: using the ACCE framework of analysis
- 2) A survey of the use of fungal serological assays in microbiology and immunology laboratories in the UK
- 3) A plan to produce a series of HPA style examination procedure documents
- 4) A serum exchange project specifically to compare different assays for the detection of antibodies to *Aspergillus*
  - 1) ACCE Audit

The ACCE framework stands for “Analytical validation, Clinical validation, Clinical utility and Ethical, legal and social implications” and is a framework developed in clinical genetics for the assessment of the value of an assay by the CDC in the US

(<http://www.cdc.gov/genomics/gtesting/ACCE/index.htm>) and has been suggested as a useful framework for other areas of pathology. The group agreed to look at six specific tests or types of test *Aspergillus* antigen, *Aspergillus* antibody, *Candida* antigen, *Candida* antibody, *Cryptococcal* antigen and 1,3 β- D-glucan (BDG). The ACCE framework consists of 44 questions and these questions have been applied to most of these tests in a preliminary way. Our focus now has been to look in detail at the first part of the framework, the analytical validation where questions about the setting of the test and test indications, as well as analytical sensitivity and specificity and other analytical parameters are examined. It is hoped to discuss the evidence in these areas and also to develop a series of standards in order to audit these tests in a more meaningful way. It is hoped to publish this audit. Ultimately, the aim of this exercise is to provide information to a clinical microbiological laboratory in order that they can make decisions about which tests to employ and how. Most recently we have discussed the issue of whether this group has the time to spend in reviewing the literature, which in some cases is

extensive, and whether we need to seek for funds to engage someone to help take this project forward.

- 2) A survey of the use of fungal serological assays in microbiology and immunology laboratories in the UK

This survey took place during 2009 and 25 replies were received. A copy of the questions is available on the website. The questionnaire was sent out to BSMM members and members of the NEQAS Immunology Fungal antibodies scheme many of whom are Immunology laboratories. Seven laboratories carried out *Aspergillus* antigen testing, two *Candida* antigen testing. Nineteen offered some form of *Aspergillus* antibody testing, five laboratories were doing some form of *Candida* antibody testing. Seven laboratories were doing cryptococcal antigen testing and at that time none were carrying out BDG testing.

- 3) A plan to produce a series of HPA style examination procedure documents

This part of the project will await the completion of the ACCE audit.

- 4) A serum exchange project specifically to compare different assays for the detection of antibodies to *Aspergillus*

It was realised that tests to detect antibodies, specifically IgG, to *Aspergillus*, mainly *A. fumigatus* are one of the commonest fungal serology tests but where there is a lot of variation in methodology. In the questionnaire above 5 laboratories used counter immunoelectrophoresis (CIE), 2 used double diffusion methods, 2 used commercial ELISAs and ten used fluorescent enzyme immune assays (ImmunoCAP). The group is in the process of a serum exchange project to compare three different assays, CIE, a commercial ELISA and the ImmunoCAP system each between two different laboratories and between methodologies for a collection of 100 sera. The aim is to enable laboratories to be able relate the results of different tests and look at the interlaboratory reproducibility of these tests.

Richard also outlined that that the working party would be looking for funding to do extensive literature searches for a detailed analysis for publication.

Chris Kibbler asked if it would be worth sending the questionnaire through the RCPATH? Richard would discuss this with the working party, and recognised that some people may be doing tests now that they weren't a year ago.

David Denning also suggested that the working party consider if the tests were available in the USA and if

there was any information comparing the repertoire of tests used between the USA and the UK.

- iii). BSMM website- Dr Carol Munro

The second phase of the website improvements would be commencing soon. Ideas include a members only providing access to presentations, plenary lectures, an archive area for the Society's history, an image gallery and an area for students attending the Leeds course. Carol invited suggestions from members for further improvements and her contact details are on the BSMM website. Another initiative that is working very well is using the website for online registration and payment for the annual meeting.

Further suggestions for the membership included access to CPD materials and papers published by members.

- iv). Revision of Standards of Care – Silke Schelenz

The first Standards of Care were published in 2004 led by David Denning. In 2007 a national audit was conducted by Silke Schelenz on how the standards were perceived and being followed. This was published in the Journal of Infection in 2009. A great deal has changed since then, and Silke Schelenz was currently leading a revision of the standards to include sections on diagnostic, histologic, radiologic and clinical criteria. This will include input from Sebastian Lucas on histology, Joanne Cleverley on radiology and Richard Barton on the use of serology.

- v). Azole drug monitoring – William Hope.

William Hope was not present at the meeting and no written report has been received.

Action point: The Secretary to request an update from William Hope that can be published on the website and in the newsletter.

- vi). *Candida* syndrome

The BSMM has been asked to join with the British Infection Association (BIA) to produce a position paper for GPs and those with a general interest to understand the evidence for this syndrome. A similar paper has been published by the BIA on Lyme disease, and the Association has experience in dealing with these difficult and misunderstood topics. Professor Frank Odds had agreed to Chair the working party on behalf of the BSMM if the Society approved of the undertaking.

Joy Stuvesant felt this would be very useful in the USA to be able to give facts and counteract misunderstandings.

Silke Schelenz felt it would be unlikely to eradicate the concept of a *Candida* syndrome.

David Denning questioned whether there would be enough scientific evidence to disprove the syndrome, and suggested that a list of differential diagnoses would be helpful.

Rod Hay suggested that the patients questioning candida syndrome were usually investigated for other underlying problems. Clinical Knowledge Summaries had covered another misunderstood condition candida mastitis very well and produced a useful guide.

The membership approved of the working party and Frank Odds agreed to be the Chair.

#### 8. UK Clinical Mycology Network – Dr Rosemary Barnes

Rosemary Barnes took over the Chair from Professor Kibbler after the 3rd Annual Meeting in June 2010 and a Steering Committee meeting was held at the HPA Headquarters in London on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2010. Amongst other business, an application for membership from Cambridge (with Papworth) was considered, the SOP for yeast identification was approved and extensive discussion regarding the proposed annual meeting took place. A provisional programme and educational objectives were agreed.

Concerns regarding the future of the UKCMN as a network under the HPA who provide administrative, secretarial and web-based support were also raised. Since that time, no minutes or action list have been forthcoming despite numerous requests and agreed deadlines and there are concerns that the HPA have withdrawn support from the UKCMN.

Rosemary Barnes and Chris Kibbler have written to Christine McCartney seeking clarification but no reply has been received. Efforts are ongoing to resolve the situation and Professor Kibbler has been in discussion with Rohini Manuel. It is hoped a decision to continue with some level of support from the HPA can be reached by end of May.

Without this guarantee, it is unlikely that we can continue at our previous level of activity and alternative ways of maintaining the Network will need to be considered. The minutes and action list from our last meeting in September have yet to be distributed and the 4th Annual meeting planned for the summer of 2011 is looking doubtful.

#### 9. Annual Scientific Meetings

##### i). Cardiff 2012

Rosemary Barnes confirmed the dates of the meeting as 29<sup>th</sup> April to 1<sup>st</sup> May 2012, avoiding the Bank Holiday, Easter, ECCMID and ISHAM. The accommodation would be in the Mercure Hotel in Cardiff as the University cannot offer accommodation for this time. Costs are estimated to be about £30 lower than the

Glasgow meeting. Dr Barnes has negotiated a rate of £85 a night for room sharing and suggested this might appeal to PhD students.

##### ii). Newcastle 2013

Julian Rutherford confirmed that he plans to use university accommodation which is close to the city.

##### iii). Venue for 2014

David Denning will approach Malcolm Richardson to see if he would be able to host the meeting in Manchester in 2014.

##### iv). Aberdeen 2015

Carol Munro and Donna MacCallum said they would be willing to host the meeting in Aberdeen in 2015.

#### 10. Election of Honorary and Life members

i). Dr Donna MacCallum was nominated by the Executive Committee for Honorary membership in recognition for her services to the Society as Treasurer for 7 years.

ii). Dr Julia Douglas was nominated by the Executive Committee for Life membership in recognition of her services to mycology during a lifetime of research.

Both nominations were unanimously approved.

Ruth Ashbee asked if lists of Honorary and Life Members could be posted on the website so members can check prior to nominating individuals.

Action point: The secretary to produce lists and send them to Carol Munro to display in the members only area of the website.

##### iii). Election of Executive Committee members

Three nominations were received for the vacancies: Richard Barton, Robin May and Gordon Ramage. All three were accepted by the Committee and were approved by the membership at the AGM. See Secretary's report for more information

#### 11. ECMM journal

The BSMM is a member of the ECMM who have adopted *Mycoses* published by John Wiley as its journal. As a result an online subscription to *Mycoses* is available to BSMM members for 5 Euros pa. The Executive Committee suggested that this be incorporated into the subscription fee to make this manageable administratively as the BSMM will be responsible for supplying the administrative support for this. This would mean that the annual subscription fee is raised to £25pa. The Committee need to establish

how access to Mycoses will be achieved, either through the ECMM website or the BSMM website.

The Committee also thought this might provide a route for publication of the proceedings of the Annual Meeting, perhaps abstracts, and manuscripts of the Foundation lecture.

The membership approved this initiative and the increase of subscription fees.

**12. Membership Questionnaire**

Chris Kibbler reviewed the results from the membership survey conducted in 2010. Overall ~12% of the membership responded to the questionnaire and the following were the main responses:

The size of the BSMM membership is:		The number of meetings organised by the BSMM is:
1. About right	29	1.
About right	35	
2. Too small	10	2.
Too few	4	
3. Too big	0	3.
Too many	0	

The Society should increase its income in order to fund more activities

- 1. Agree 17
- 2. Disagree 8
- 3. Don't know 9

The Society should commission a range of merchandise for sale to members:

- 1. Agree 8
- 2. Disagree 21
- 3. Don't know 11

The BSMM's activity on an international level:

The BSMM should publish more guidelines:

- 1 About right 29
  - 1. Agree 26
- 2 Too little 7
  - 2. Disagree 5
- 3 Too much 0
  - 3. Don't know 8
- 4. Don't know 1

There should be more working parties:                      The BSMM should have an academic publication:

- 1. Agree 15
  - 1. Agree 25
- 2. Disagree 11
  - 2. Disagree 13

- 3. Don't know 12
- 3. Don't know 0

Overall it was felt that the membership did not want any change in income generation, it did not want merchandise, and no change in the number of working parties. The membership did wish to see more guidelines published and have some sort of academic publication. The Society has an opportunity to consider publication of meeting proceedings in Mycoses as the journal is now "owned" by the ECMM, of which the BSMM is a member. This would enable the Society to have a means of academic publication. The Society will continue to encourage publication of working party findings and recommendations in peer reviewed journals.

- 12. Any other business. None.

The meeting closed at 18:15.