

Welcome to aabnews Issue 74...

News from Council

Council met on Wednesday 23rd November 2011 at Rothamsted Research.

Council thanked members attending the AGM and are pleased to report that the AGM accepted the Annual Report for 2010, which has subsequently been uploaded to the Charity Commission website; thus completing our reporting duty. The AGM also accepted the proposal of Council that there would be no change in the membership fees in £ for 2012; and that the fees for on-line access to *Annals of Applied Biology* would be maintained with an increase of 3% in the rate charged for printed copies. Council currently has a vacancy for a Membership and Communications officer. Two other Trustees also gave notice of their intention to stand down at the end of 2012. Consequently, please consider whether you would be prepared and interested to become either Publications Officer or Programme Secretary. More details of the roles can be obtained from the AAB office (contact carol@aab.org.uk) and the current post holders (Martin Parry and Graham Russell respectively) will also be happy to discuss what the roles entail. Council reviewed progress against the agreed targets for 2011-12. Council also agreed the AAB budget for 2012. The President, Trevor Hocking was happy to note that we were making good progress against the targets.

Council had some preliminary discussion of the issues arising from consideration of the current targets to inform the priorities and target setting for the AAB for 2013-2014. A paper will be presented to the AGM later in the year. In the short-term watch out in your in-boxes in February for a members' survey; Council would like to underpin the process by considering your feedback on whether what AAB provides meets the needs of its members at the next Council meeting in March.

The AAB is pleased with the breadth of the conference programme that is planned for 2012. All conference proposals for 2013 will need to be tabled at the Council meeting at the end of June 2012. If you have a good idea for a one day workshop or longer conference that would take place in 2013, please contact the relevant group convener or the AAB office directly, so that a proposal with associated budget can be developed in time. Council approved applications for membership from 65 new applicants and noted the breadth of interest amongst applications for membership and the number of international applications. We look forward to working with these new members in the months and years to come. AAB welcome the launch of the Plant Sciences Federation under the auspices of the Society of Biology. Peter Shewry, currently AAB Vice President, has been

acting as the key link in the development process for the AAB. We had a long-term Memorandum of Understanding with European Society for Agronomy. Under its new constitution, Council also agreed that the AAB should become a sustaining member of the ESA.

Council received reports on publications. There have been changes in the Senior Editorial Board at *Annals of Applied Biology*. Martin Parry has stood down and Danielle Way (Duke University, North Carolina, USA) has been appointed to replace him. Progress with the new journal "*Food and Energy Security*" which is a joint venture with Wiley-Blackwell continues on schedule. Martin Parry has taken on the role of Editor-in-Chief for this new Journal which will be published on an open-access model. Council agreed that AAB members will be offered a 20% discount on the article processing charge. As you read this newsletter, the first papers will be available online.

Council conveyed its appreciation to the office staff for their sterling efforts which have kept the office working during a difficult period as a result of staff sickness. Claire Hartry has been developing the AABs online presence – watch out for the AAB Wikipedia page wiki/Association_of_Applied_Biologists

-Elizabeth Stockdale



Brian Kerry (1948 – 2011)

Brian Kerry died on Monday 17th October 2011 aged 63. He had been in hospital since undergoing a brain operation in September 2009. Brian was appointed to Rothamsted in 1973 after completing a BSc degree in Agricultural Science at Nottingham University and a PhD from Reading University. He joined the (then) Nematology Department at Rothamsted and started work on biological control of economically important plant-parasitic nematodes, a theme which was to be his research remit throughout his career. In September 1987, Brian was appointed head of the newly formed Entomology and Nematology Department with

approximately 90 scientific staff, including 28 PhD students and an overall budget of ca £3.3 million per annum. He oversaw the successful amalgamation of what had been two separate departments. Successive redundancies reduced staffing levels but Brian was able to maintain a spectrum of research activities in the department. He was appointed as Deputy Director of Rothamsted in 1998, a position he held until his official retirement in 2010. From 2007 he was also Director of the Centre for Soils and Ecosystem Function, at Rothamsted.

Brian had a successful research career, having published a book and more than 100 research papers. In recognition of his contribution to nematology research, he was made a Fellow of the Society of Nematologists (1993) and given special awards by the Cuban Ministry of Agriculture and Environment (2003), and by the Organization of Nematologists of Tropical America (2011). He co-organised for the Association of Applied Biologists (AAB) a workshop at Rothamsted dealing with the latest issues and news about developments in nematocides as a tool for the management of plant-parasitic nematodes. That commitment to the aims of the

AAB remained firm and Brian became President of the AAB in 2004.

Brian's outgoing, cheerful personality made him friends all over the world and his scientific contribution to defining the basis of fungal control of plant-parasitic nematodes earned him scientific respect wherever he went. In 2008, he was awarded the MBE for services to science and the Queen conferred the award on him at a ceremony at Buckingham Palace. Brian was an effective communicator and in 1991 he was appointed Special Professor, Department of Agriculture & Horticulture, University of Nottingham. His enthusiastic, open approach enabled him to interact effectively with students and peer groups alike, and he successfully supervised several PhD students at Rothamsted and through his extensive overseas links. Brian is survived by his wife, Maxine, his daughter, Anna, and his brother and mother.

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Due to the rise in human population and inevitable consequences of climate change, we now know that we will need to produce 50% more food, 50% more energy, and 30% more fresh water within the next 20 years (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/7951838.stm>). Developing countries are often ill equipped to deal with these challenges making the global need for reaction ever more vital. And when better to start than now?

We have been getting the AAB

steadily up-to-date with social media and networking in order to exploit marketing capabilities for *Food and Energy Security*. Along with the Wikipedia page, we now have a fully functional Twitter page and Facebook. Soon we will have a Linked In page (social networking website geared towards companies and industry professionals) which means you can list us on your Linked In profile, if you are so inclined.

One other source of marketing we want to use is T-shirts!

AAB President Trevor Hocking has vowed to buy a (suitably expensive!) bottle of Champagne for any talented AAB member who can come up with a witty t-shirt design for the *Food and Energy Security* journal. So far the best we have is a cob of maize with running shorts on, and we welcome a challenger. The winner will be thanked in our next newsletter, receive a free t-shirt, and of course win the bottle of fizz, courtesy of the AAB President! All entries welcome. Winner announced March 2012.



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