



Lichfield Science & Engineering Society

PATRON

Ian Dudson CBE

H.M. Lord-Lieutenant of Staffordshire

PRESIDENT

Dr Zsuzsanna Nagy

MD, MA, DPhil

CHAIRMAN

Carol Hannam BSc

Summer 2016

Dear Member,

We are at the end of another year, during which we have struggled with the headaches caused by some of our speakers. I trust that you have found the programme exciting and interesting, enjoying not only the lectures but visits and social occasions too. The programme committee has worked hard on the programme for 2016 - 2017 which you will find in this mailing. I hope you find it to your satisfaction.

Monthly meetings

The May lecture was given by Professor Yvonne Elsworth, from the University of Birmingham, and was entitled 'Taking the Pulse of the Sun'. Professor Elsworth, a Fellow of the Royal Society, described how, using helioseismic data from the Birmingham network of observatories, she was able to maintain her important investigations into the internal structure of the sun. She explained her investigations using sound waves inside the massive bodies that are stars. Sound waves inside the sun give small but measurable effects on its surface. She encouraged us to consider the Kepler Mission, sunspots and the work which she is now undertaking on the giant stars.

There were 127 Members and 5 visitors present.

This lecture was preceded by the AGM during which I presented my report and Deputy Chairman and Treasurer Bob Giles presented his Treasurer's report. Because of our sound financial position Bob advised us not to increase the subscription rate. There was a question from the floor about the funds which we hold. I have since had indication from the Garrick that they are likely to increase the rental rate for the theatres. So if you marry the previous two comments together you may well agree that it is as well we are not running the Society on a shoestring and that Paul Bettson's demand that we 'have some for a rainy day' may well come in handy!

President Zsuzsanna Nagy took the Chair to re-elect me as Chairman. Bob has come to the end of his term as Treasurer and will now continue in post as Deputy Chairman and Membership Secretary. Bob proposed David Ward as Treasurer and David was duly elected.

The rest of the committee agreed to complete their terms and were elected en bloc: Irene Ordidge will continue with her sterling work as Secretary, Mike Beeson will continue to handle publicity, maintain the website and, with his invaluable assistant Tim Sims, continue as Visits Secretary. Jenny Arthur will maintain her contacts with the schools and Roy Foster will organise our social events. Claire Robinson remains an important member without portfolio whilst Mark Richards records our lectures for the website and, along with Claire, advises on those aspects of social media which some of us don't understand. We were delighted that Alan Hooper agreed to return to the committee and he was duly elected.

June brought the final lecture of the year during which Dr Peter Sheldon, consultant rheumatologist at Leicester Royal Infirmary, explored 'The History of Aspirin'. Dr Sheldon looked at the early uses of aspirin in the form of willow bark but he brought us right up to the present day and the new uses to which aspirin is put. There were 129 people present of which 5 were visitors, 2 were Peter's family members and 2 were from Stoke on Trent Association of Engineers.

Summer Supper

Once again we enjoyed the delights of a buffet at Curborough Hall Farm and relaxed into the last meeting of the Society's year. It wasn't the sunny evening we usually enjoy but that did not seem to matter as Bruce Wilkinson, co-founder and brewer at Burton Bridge Brewery entertained us with his talk called 'It's not all Beer and Skittles'. It became apparent as Bruce talked to us in his quiet and humorous way, that making beer is a complex study of chemistry, mathematics, taste, colour and sheer determination.



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Visits

Not a good time for visits, several potential hosts agreeing to a visit but not coming up with a date or changing their minds, and worst of all a visit to Luxfer cancelled owing to lack of interest. This doesn't seem to have happened before, if anyone wanted to go on this visit but couldn't make the date please tell the Visits Secretary and he'll try to rearrange it. Hopefully the list included with this mailing will prove to be more successful, especially the combined technical visit and competitive social evening at the brewery.

27th Erasmus Darwin Memorial Lecture

Professor Dame Nancy Rothwell has agreed to deliver this year's Erasmus Darwin Memorial Lecture entitled 'A Life in Science'. Dame Nancy is President and Vice Chancellor of the University of Manchester. She is a Fellow of the Royal Society and in 2012 was appointed to co-chair the Council for Science and Technology. Her current research is focused on strokes, what causes them and what happens in the brain when it is deprived of blood and oxygen, and on trying to find better treatments and preventions. This now leads her research into how infection, obesity and atherosclerosis cause a stroke and stimulate inflammation.

Tickets are on sale now at The Garrick Box Office at £10 for members and £12 for the public. I urge you to buy them quickly as we anticipate that it will have a wide public appeal.

The Members' Area of the Website

As you are aware the last date for renewing membership of the Society is October 31st [AGM 2015]. If subscriptions have not been received by this date then the Member will be removed from the Society's database. This means that access to the Members' Area of the website must be denied. **I need you all to realise that the password will change shortly after this date. Members will be notified of the changed password by email, or by post if we do not hold your email address.**

Within this mailing

You should find your membership renewal notice, programme card, documents for autumn visits, the September discussion lunch and the annual dinner in October. I have to repeat the following requests from last year:-

- The Treasurer asks that you please remember to pay your subscription early.
- The Visits Secretary has asked me again to urge Members applying for visits to return, either by e-mail or post, the form enclosed with this mailing and also to acknowledge receipt of details for a visit. The Members' Area will have a note of when they have been sent out.
- Not to be outdone, the Social Secretary requests that you remember to enclose a stamped addressed envelope with all lunch, supper and dinner applications.

Copies of all forms are posted in the Members' Area of the website.

In closing

We are thankful to all the speakers who have enlightened us this year and given us their time and shared with us their expertise and to all the businesses who have allowed us onto their premises to see their production skills.

I think that is all my news for you and so all that remains is to wish Members a lovely summer. Enjoy every minute and join me in September on Wednesday 14th to hear Professor Ian Crawford deliver his lecture 'The New Science of Astrobiology and the Search for Life in the Universe'.

That's right up my street, so hope to see you there!

Carol Hannam
Chairman