



Dear Member

I have great pleasure in welcoming the following new members to the Society, who have joined since my last Newsletter – Diana Salomonson, Robert Miller, Libby Constance, Deborah Fenelon, Steve Morris, David Cooke, Elizabeth Wood, Helen Atkinson, Mamidipudi Krishna, Liane Smith, Louise Tilley. I hope you will enjoy your membership of the Society and I look forward to meeting you at our future lectures, visits and social events.

Regretfully, I have to report the death of Brian Teall. Brian was a great stalwart of the Society for many years, regularly supporting our lectures, visits and social events and he will be greatly missed.

Next President – I have pleasure in informing the membership that Professor Corinne Spickett has agreed to be our next President. Corinne is Professor of Redox Biochemistry in the School of Biosciences at Aston University and lectured to the Society in April 2024 on “Oxygen: Essential but Detrimental – A Fine Balance”. Corinne will be elected at our AGM in May and installed by our outgoing and highly supportive President, Professor Janet Lord at the Society's Annual Dinner on Wednesday 14 October.

Committee – our Chairman-elect, Dr David Dimeloe, has confirmed that due to a change in his personal circumstances, he is able to undertake the role of Chairman only for 2026-27. Consequently, the Society will be seeking a Deputy Chairman for 2026-27, who will then be appointed Chairman, following the completion of David's tenure in May 2027.

Educational Support – I am pleased to report that we continue to regularly welcome many groups of students and staff at our monthly lectures. It is appreciated that attendance at our lectures by the students would not be possible without the support of our dedicated school teacher contacts and I would like to convey the Society's appreciation for the staff's time and effort in making the necessary arrangements.

The Society continues to support, both financially and personally, educational outreach projects at Erasmus Darwin House and we continue to financially support a PhD student at Keele University.

Providing financial help to support local schools in advancing their understanding of science and engineering remains a key ethos of the Society. Should any member have a close relationship with any of our local Junior and High schools, please let Jenny Arthur, our Education Officer or myself know.

Monthly Lectures and Social Events

Since my previous Newsletter, the Society has held the following lectures:

Our first lecture of 2026, was on held Wednesday, 7 January, when Dr Liane Smith of Larkton Limited, gave a talk entitled “**Materials and Corrosion Engineering in New Technology Developments**”. Trained as a metallurgist, Liane had worked for over 40 years in the fields of oil and gas, where material selection processes were generally well covered by international standards. Louise gave a fascinating insight into her own company which specialises in projects, where there are no standards for selection, in fields such carbon capture, hydrogen storage and geothermal energy supplies. She talked about the Rough Gas Field, the UK's largest natural gas storage facility, located 18 miles off the East Yorkshire coast under the North Sea.

On Thursday 5 February, Dr Louise Tilley of NHS Blood and Transplant, gave an interesting lecture entitled “**Fantastic Blood Groups and How to Find Them**”. Louise started her talk with a history of



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early blood research, blood transfusions and the identification of different blood groups, of which surprisingly, there are now 48. She talked about Rare Blood Groups, which by definition, are ones which affect less than 1% of the general population. For her research into new blood groups, in 2025, Louise was honoured to receive an award from the American Association for the Advancement of Blood and Biotherapies.

Dr Cathy McClay, on Tuesday 10 March, gave a talk entitled “**Distribution Networks – Delivering for our Local Communities**”. Dr McClay explained the role of the National Grid Distribution System Operator (DSO), which is responsible for redesigning the way local networks are planned, operated, and managed to support a future powered by clean energy. Cathy explained the shift from traditional, one-way power flows to a far more dynamic system shaped by electric vehicles, heat pumps, local renewables and flexible customers. She talked about decentralised energy systems, driven by rapidly changing customer needs ie electric vehicles, heat pumps etc and the anticipated huge growth in renewable sources of energy.

On Wednesday 15 April, Dr Leanne Cullen-Unsworth gave a talk entitled “**Saving Seagrass For People and Planet**”. Leanne, a renowned marine biologist, is CEO of the Seagrass Project, based in South Wales. She explained the importance of seagrass, which flowers underwater and is pollinated by marine life and the action of the water, to human wellbeing and biodiversity of our seas and the fact that over the last century, around 90% of the UK’s seagrass has been lost, due to changing human habits and pollution. Leanne talked about the ability to restore “meadows” of seagrass and gave the example of the successful seagrass restoration in Dale Bay in West Wales.

Financial – the Society’s end of year financial position will be reported at the AGM on Thursday 14 May at 7.30pm in the Garrick Studio. However, I would like to make the membership aware that, due to escalating postage costs, the Summer Mailing will now be sent out by e mail to the vast majority of members. Details of the 2026/27 lecture programme will be included with the mailing and printed programme cards will be available from the signing in desk at the September lecture and at monthly lectures thereafter. To give you advanced knowledge, the September lecture will be held on Tuesday 8th and will be given by Mr Dan Matthews, a Forensic Scientist at Lincoln University, who will be explaining his involvement with the Grenfell Tower Inquiry.

Annual Supper will be held on Wednesday 17 June, once again at Whittington Golf Club and I look forward to seeing many of you there, at what is always a convivial, high summer social event. This year our after-supper speaker will be Colin Walton, a member of our Society, who will be speaking to us about the Lichfield Tower Clock and his time as the Honorary Clock Winder. Included with this mailing is your invitation to the Supper and Carol would be grateful if you could send your confirmations back to her as soon as possible.

Visits – None to report.

This will be my last Newsletter to the members. It has been a privilege to be the Chairman of our wonderful Society and I have thoroughly enjoyed my tenure, which would not have been possible without the unstinting support of your terrific Committee and Presidents and you, the members.

Alan

Alan Hooper

Chairman