

## The President and General Secretary's Report to the 2020 AGM

### Introduction

Welcome to the 2020 Annual General Meeting of the Aerosol Society. Ongoing social distancing restrictions have meant that we have been forced to hold our AGM, along with the Annual Aerosol Science Conference and indeed most of our other events this calendar year, via online platforms. We appreciate this is far from ideal, but we have attempted as best we can to continue our engagement with members throughout this challenging time, and hope that those able to attend our previous online events and today's meeting have a positive experience. We look forward to future events when Society members can again meet in person to exchange scientific knowledge and network. At the same time, the COVID-19 pandemic has placed aerosol science at the forefront of national and international science and healthcare, in policy, academia, industry and the public eye, like rarely before. This reinforces the need for a strong skills, expertise and knowledge base in the UK and Ireland in our multidisciplinary research field.

### Drug Delivery to the Lungs 2019 and Focus Meetings

The 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary edition of the *Drug Delivery to the Lungs* conference was held in December 2019 in Edinburgh. Once again, DDL proved to be an exciting and well-attended conference, with 875 delegates from 35 countries and 113 exhibitors. There were 40 speakers (40% female) and 82 posters presented. Unfortunately, like many other events in 2020, hosting the usual face-to-face DDL will not be possible. However, a series of "DDL220 Christmas Lectures" is planned, including invited speakers, flash presentations and pre-recorded 'on-demand' talks, which will focus on recent developments in the field of inhalation therapy. This will not be a commercial event and the lectures will be accessible to all. However, the DDL committee have successfully secured considerable sponsorship despite the online nature of the event, an indicator of the importance of the conference to our industrial partners.

In January, we supported the Third Atmospheric Ice Nucleation Conference (Aerosol Society Focus Meeting 14) which was held in Boston, USA. In April we hosted Focus Meeting 15 on the subject of Bioaerosols, a follow-up to a meeting the Society organised in 2017. Although originally intended to be hosted in Bristol, the national lockdown led to us moving the conference online, our first foray into online conferencing at very short notice. With over 60 virtual attendees and no major technological difficulties, we considered this a great success for discussion of a very timely topic under very trying circumstances!

More recently, our Focus Meeting 16, held as a series of seminars over 4 weeks, examined 'COVID-19 and related inhalational infections', with keynote talks from Linsey Marr (Virginia Tech, USA), Don Milton (University of Maryland, USA), Paul Dabisch (National Biodefense Analysis and Countermeasures Center, Maryland, USA) and Lisa Ng (NIST, USA). These keynote lectures were supported by 15 contributed presentations over the first three sessions (*Quantifying and measuring the sources of respiratory infection*, *Factors influencing disease in humans and development of experimental models* and *Understanding exposure and transmission in the indoor environment*). All of these presentations are now available to view on our website, an excellent resource. The final session was a panel Q&A discussion on the topic of *Pharmaceutical and risk mitigation strategies*. The sessions had an attendance of over 100 on average, reaching new audiences beyond our regular Society membership.

As always, we warmly welcome proposals or ideas for future Focus Meetings from our membership, and can provide facilities for online conferences to members interested in hosting.

### 2019 Annual Aerosol Science Conference

Our Annual Aerosol Science Conference in 2019 was held at the Edgbaston Park Hotel and Conference Centre, University of Birmingham on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2018. 71 delegates

attended, a slight decrease from previous years. The plenary speakers were Prof. Nicola Carslaw (University of York) "*Indoor air chemistry as a source of indoor aerosol?*", Dr. Anni Määttänen (LATMOS/IPSL, France) "*Detecting, observing and explaining the mesospheric CO<sub>2</sub> clouds on Mars*" and Prof. Yannis Hardalupas (Imperial College London) "*Temporal and spatial characteristics of liquid atomisation and dispersion of aerosols and consequences for applications*". The programme included a range of contributed presentations and posters across a wide range of aerosol science topics, covering aerosol technology and fundamentals, combustion, synthesis, indoor air, atmospheric aerosol and health. It is our intention to give more prominence to our student and early career researchers and actively encourage award winners to step forward to showcase their work at the conference. As always we are very grateful to our exhibitors and sponsors, and we thank Air Monitors, Scielutions, Enviro Technology, TSI, Filter Integrity and Swisens for supporting this event. Feedback from this edition, our second year at the new venue, was largely positive and we will take on board suggestions where possible when we are able to return to the venue in person.

### **Fundamentals of Aerosol Science**

The Fundamentals of Aerosol Science day was run prior to AASC 2019 at the University of Birmingham on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2019. Attendance at this event was comparable to previous years, with 41 attendees compared with 43 in 2018. However, most pleasing was the greatly increased uptake of our '2-day ticket' offer to students attending both the FAS and AASC, which went up from 5 in 2018 to 26 in 2019. Many of these attendees were from the first cohort of Aerosol Science CDT students. We hope the experience of both the lecture-based learning overviews provided by FAS and the more general research talks of the following day was valuable to all who attended both days. This event will move online in 2020 and we already have over 100 registrations for the FAS day.

### **Grants and Awards**

During 2019 we continued our review of the Society's awards and grants, in order to enhance our support for students and early career researchers in aerosol science. We continue to award the *Doctoral Thesis Prize*, a *Photography Competition* prize, *Early Career Scientist Travel Awards* and *Undergraduate Research Bursary*, and have updated some of the terms and conditions of our other awards. In 2019, we took the decision to rename the CN Davies Award as the *Aerosol Society Doctoral Student Award*, and the Small Research Grant has become the *Career Development Grant*. Both have marginally different eligibility criteria, reflecting the career stages and development outcomes we are focusing on for each award. We have also updated the deadlines for some of these awards, so please visit the website for details of when and how to apply: <https://aerosol-soc.com/grants-and-awards/>

### **Committee News**

At the previous AGM a number of existing and/or co-opted committee members were elected for 2-year terms (Adam Boies, Amanda Lea-Langton, James McGrath, Paul Williams, Dave Worton, Gary Pitcairn, Dan McCluskey and Rachael Miles) while Omar Usmani stepped down from the committee. Long-standing members (with more than 10 years service) Simon Parker and Ian Colbeck were elected separately for further 2-year terms. We are always looking for new committee members, so if you have an interest in shaping how the Society is run and would like to contribute to the work of the committee, or just want to find out more, please contact the Society Administrator Diane Foster at [admin@aerosol-soc.com](mailto:admin@aerosol-soc.com) or get in touch any of the current committee.

### **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

We are continuing to inform our policy on *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion*, seeking advice from colleagues and organisations with an outstanding track record in this important area. Our ED&I policy should ensure we perform our work in a way that enables individuals, the Society and the aerosol science community to flourish regardless of our individual backgrounds and experiences. Amanda Lea-Langton and James McGrath are responsible for developing a Society policy and we are looking to implement a support

fund for carers to enable them to attend our events. Our website now states our Society values as:

*The Aerosol Society recognises the importance of our diverse community and believe that to produce the best quality science we must encourage a proactive and inclusive approach to equality. This can be achieved by developing and retaining a diverse range of talented people to achieve their full potential free from discrimination. We acknowledge our role in engaging with the wider aerosol science community to develop a fair and friendly environment by promoting equality, diversity and inclusion for all, recognising that we come from varying backgrounds and experiences.*

### **The EPSRC Centre for Doctoral Training in Aerosol Science**

The second cohort of twenty students have now joined the Engineering and Physical Science Research Council (EPSRC) for a *Centre for Doctoral Training (CDT) in Aerosol Science*, hosted at the University of Bristol. The first cohort of 14 students have now entered the research phase of their PhDs, moving to their home institutions. Activity in the first year centred on creating a comprehensive training portal for future aerosol scientists, drawing together expertise across a wide range of disciplines. Materials are now available online across 16 core topics in aerosol science. Student members of the Society can register to access these training materials for free and can attend the training events, currently virtual. Approaching 200 aligned students and professionals are currently registered for access to the training portal from across the UK and Ireland, and with some registrations from wider afield. The Society will host the training portal as a legacy at the end of the CDT, making it widely available for student training and continuing professional development. Over the last 6 months, the CDT has promoted the weekly research webinars to Society members and many have benefited from this access. Typical attendance at these webinars is between 50 and 80, with speakers from around the globe.

### **Society membership update**

Our current membership stands at 841 members, compared with 605 in October 2018 and 853 in October 2019. For ordinary membership, very pleasingly, we are seeing sustained membership numbers across the board, with 423 student members, 151 academic members, and 241 industry members. We now have 23 retired members and we hope these members are able to take advantage of reduced rates for our events. We are also grateful for the continued support of our Corporate members, many of whom also provide valued support for our events through sponsorship. As ever, we are very grateful for the support of our members, without whom we would not be able to do the work that we do. As we continue to grow as a Society, we would be very grateful for feedback on what we are doing well, and where we can improve. If you have any comments or suggestions, we would be delighted to hear them. Please get in touch with Diane at [admin@aersol-soc.com](mailto:admin@aersol-soc.com) or speak to a committee member.

### **Website and communications**

We continue to send out monthly Newsletters via email. This remains an important vehicle for communicating our activities, reaching a growing audience of Society members. Although we maintain regular content and features curated by the Committee and our Administrator, we would be delighted to include contributions, large or small, from members and strongly encourage you to consider submitting an article. If you have any comments on items in the Newsletter or on the Website, or would like to contribute a topical news article, showcase your group's research, or advertise a job, PhD vacancy or upcoming event, please submit these contributions to Diane Foster ([admin@aersol-soc.com](mailto:admin@aersol-soc.com)).

### **European Aerosol Assembly News**

The *European Aerosol Conference 2020*, hosted by GaeF (Association for Aerosol Research) and originally planned to be held in Aachen, Germany, was moved online due to the pandemic. Despite the inherent difficulties with organising an international

conference online at very short notice, the meeting was largely successful with over 600 delegates presenting over 500 talks and 'posters' in parallel discussion sessions as well as the usual 5 well-attended plenary lectures, supported by 19 sponsors. There was also an in-person, socially distanced, panel discussion on Aerosols and COVID-19 held in Aachen City Hall. At the end of EAC2020, the Aerosol Society took over as Officers of the EAA for a 2-year term, presently Jonathan Reid, the Society President, and Matthew Wright, the General Secretary, until those positions change within the Aerosol Society at this year's AGM.

### **European Aerosol Conference 2021**

As reported at the close of EAC2020, the Organising Committee for EAC2021 have regretfully been forced to make the early decision to move the conference online. This is a great shame for those who had already invested considerable time and energy in organising what would have been a great celebration of aerosol science in Birmingham. However, the early move to an online conference mitigates further financial risk to the Society and provides an opportunity to reach out to aerosol scientists worldwide who may not have been able to attend in person. The organisers are working closely with the team who delivered the successful EAC2020 online and others to ensure the conference experience for delegates and sponsors is as smooth, engaging and productive as possible, while the scientific programme is also being developed and will as usual reflect the state-of-the-art in global aerosol science and technology.

### **Change in Officer Roles and Comments from the President**

At the annual meeting this year, I will step down from my roles as President and member of the Society committee. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time on the committee (exactly 10 years!) and it's been exciting to see the aerosol science community in the UK and Ireland grow in number and significance over these years. As Matt moves on to act as Treasurer, Jacqui as Vice-president and Ben as President (expecting that they are all approved!), I wish them well and look forward to continuing to engage with such a vibrant, multidisciplinary and friendly community.

**Jonathan Reid (President)**

**Matthew Wright (General Secretary)**