



# **SOCIETY of ACADEMIC & RESEARCH SURGERY**

**Newsletter**

**Issue 1 - JULY 2003**

## President's Welcome and Report

It is now six months since I took over as President of SARS from David Bouchier-Hayes. Much has happened since our successful meeting in Leeds and the purpose of this newsletter is to keep you abreast of our plans and achievements. The global coronavirus (SARS) epidemic that shares our acronym provoked some discussion about a name change for the organisation, but this has been resisted by your Council. A recent trip to South Africa has re-assured me that several other organisations share this problem and have taken a similar stance at no detriment.

There have been several changes on the administrative front. Our offices are now in the Research Department of the Royal College of Surgeons of England where Sophie Mitchell provides administrative support for all SARS activities. Mike Wyatt has taken over as Honorary Secretary and Philip Drew as Honorary Treasurer. They succeed John Monson and John Baxter respectively who along with David Bouchier-Hayes steered the new society through its difficult transition. These individuals deserve our thanks for all the time and effort they have contributed to our activities in the past. We hope they will continue to support us in the future. I know the "new team" are equally committed as their predecessors and I look forward to working with them over the next 18 months.

What is planned for 2003-2005? The next Annual Meeting will be in Belfast, 14-16 January 2004. John Primrose and his committee are developing an exciting scientific and educational programme along with Declan Carey and the local programme committee. Before then, we are committed to a major contribution to the RCS England programme in London on 18 November 2003 to celebrate 10 successful years of the Surgical Research Fellowship Scheme. The programme will be available shortly and should appeal to those surgeons-in-training currently in research posts or aspiring to obtain one. The 2005 SARS meeting will be held in Newcastle in January 2005 with Mike Wyatt as local liaison committee chairman.

Elsewhere in this newsletter you will find details of the activities of our committees. Each has set itself an agenda that will enable SARS to make important contributions to academic surgery. The philosophy of the organisation is to underpin all surgical activity with academic endeavours whether they be research, education, training, administration, management or clinical innovation. "University" and "academic" are not synonymous. SARS will encourage an ethos of academic activity throughout the NHS irrespective of who pays your salary or provides the infrastructure for your academic activities. SARS has already had fruitful discussions with the Executive of ASGBI about future co-operation and mutual support while maintaining our independence and unique goals. I hope similar discussions will take place shortly with the specialist societies in surgery. On a wider front we will look to the ESSR to extend our influence in Europe and the SUS to facilitate Trans Atlantic liaisons.

Academic medicine has gone through tough times over the past 5 years and these are likely to continue. The problems are obvious. SARS is committed to finding solutions. We value your views and opinions on major issues that face academic surgery today and would encourage you to communicate your concerns to the Council. Together we need to ensure the academic infrastructure for surgical education, research and clinical practice is maintained for the future generations and for our patients.

I look forward to your support for our activities in the future.

Professor Brian J Rowlands

## Summary of Business Meeting Minutes 9th Jan 2003

The Business meeting of the Society of Academic and Research Surgery was held on Thursday 9th January 2003 in the Royal Armouries Leeds. At this meeting Professor Irving Taylor was elected as the SARS representative to the Clinical and Academic Committee of the Association of Surgeons of Great Britain and Ireland. The Treasurer reported that the Society was in a stable situation and had not suffered too badly as a result of the fall in the stock market. As of yet, there were no plans to raise subscription rates.

It was reported that there had been two successful applicants for the joint SARS/RCS England Fellowship both lasting 1 year. They were Mr John Conti with his project 'Do hepatic stellate cells regulate the growth of colorectal cancer metastases' and Mr Antony Goldstone with his project 'Improved diagnosis of colorectal cancer by analysis of cell cycle state and phase'. There were also said to be two joint SARS/RCSI Fellowships in the pipeline and discussions about a joint fellowship with the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh were continuing.

A joint meeting with the RCS of England was announced to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the RCS Research Fellowship Scheme. Professor Rowlands reported details of correspondence with Professor Kitchener of the Federation of Academic Clinical Professors (FACP) and Professor Sir Peter Morris with respect to challenges facing academic surgery. These discussions were ongoing. Two resignations were noted and three new members approved.

## Transfer of Secretary

The Society of Academic and Research Surgery would like to inform you that Mike Wyatt has been appointed as Honorary Secretary in succession to John Monson.

John has been responsible for the smooth running of the Surgical Research Society for many years and has been instrumental in steering the recent merger between the Surgical Research Society and the Society of Academic Surgeons. He masterminded the inaugural meeting of the new society at Imperial College, London, which was a resounding success. He presided over the 2003 meeting in Leeds and he now leaves a Society which is able to provide an exciting scientific and social occasion to all surgeons and scientists involved in both laboratory and clinical research. We would like to thank him for all the hard work he has put into both the SRS and SARS and hope that he will continue to support and help develop the Society for many years to come.

## Yearbook Announcement

It is with considerable pleasure that we are able to inform you that the first Society of Academic and Research Surgery Yearbook will be published to accompany the January 2004 meeting in Belfast. This will contain all the relevant information concerning the development of this new Society. In addition it will inform you of future events and the state of development of mutual relationships with our sister societies. The yearbook will contain all the details of the Belfast meeting, including a full programme and full text published abstracts. We hope this will be a welcome addition to the Winter meeting and that it will assist in keeping you fully informed as to the achievements of the Society.

## Future Meetings:

### **14th –16th January 2004 - Belfast**

For the first time in many years the academic and research surgical body will meet in Belfast in January 2004. This will be the third annual meeting of the Society of Academic and Research Surgery. This Society is the premiere academic and surgical forum for the United Kingdom and Ireland and was formed following the merger of the Surgical Research Society (SRS) and the Society of Academic Surgeons (SAS). As chairman of the local organising committee it gives me great pleasure to invite the members of the society and numerous visiting international academic surgeons to Belfast.

I am honoured to host this meeting on behalf of the two universities in Northern Ireland and the Belfast teaching hospitals. The meeting will be held in the Belfast Waterfront Hall. The venue has been carefully chosen in the heart of the city of Belfast, the Waterfront Hall being a venue which has been designed as a multi-purpose venue with ultra-modern facilities and ranked second only to the Vancouver Convention Centre, in 2002, as an international conference venue.

Our meeting in January 2004 will be held over 3 days commencing at lunchtime on Wednesday 14th January and winding up at lunchtime on Friday 16th. For the first time the meeting spans 3 days and we in Belfast are honoured to be hosting our colleagues in academic and research surgery. The gala dinner will take place on the Thursday night in the City Hall in Belfast and we are currently planning some entertainment on the Wednesday night with a distinctive local flavour. The packed programme will feature a number of symposia and will kick off on the Wednesday afternoon with a joint symposium between the Society of Academic and Research Surgery and the Royal Academy of Medicine in Ireland. This symposium will feature the best of recent innovations in Irish surgery. This part of the programme will be supported by keynote lectures and I would urge you all to make the commitment and get to Belfast for the Wednesday afternoon. The subsequent days will be packed with the plenary and open paper sessions and an innovative, restructured poster session with prize. The Patey Prize and the President's (Poster) Prize will be presented at the gala dinner on the Thursday evening. Further symposia will include one designed by our President, Professor Brian Rowlands, and will explore all that is new and innovative in surgical sepsis. A further symposium will explore aspects of funding for surgical research and will be of interest to both our senior academics and all level of trainees with an interest in, or dedicated to, academic surgery. As in the recent Leeds meeting the John Farndon lecture will feature prominently on the programme as will a keynote lecture delivered by Professor Paddy Johnson, Professor of Medical Oncology, Queen's University Belfast.

I would urge you to commit these dates to your diary. If you have recently attended a meeting in Belfast we would love to welcome you back. For those who are new to Belfast, I can assure you of a stimulating experience. In particular please bring these dates and the meeting to the attention of your trainees and to your scientific staff.

The deadline for abstract submission is 30th September 2003.

**Declan Carey, Local Organiser, Belfast 2004**

### **5th –7th January 2005 - Newcastle**

The 2005 winter meeting of the Society of Academic and Research Surgery will be held on 5th-7th January at the Hilton Hotel, Newcastle/Gateshead. This is a new 4+ star hotel with excellent conference facilities, comfortable rooms and an impressive leisure facility including a gym and a pool. The hotel is situated right next to the Tyne Bridge and is part of the exciting Quayside development of Newcastle/Gateshead. It is close to the newly opened Opera House, the Baltic arts centre and the Gateshead Millennium Bridge.

The hotel is surrounded by numerous hostelryes, restaurants and clubs and promises to provide an excellent location for the January 2005 meeting. The Society has been able to agree an extremely competitive conference rate to include registration, lunch, dinner, bed and breakfast for delegates staying at the hotel during the meeting. Importantly there will be no single room supplement for lone travellers. Please put these dates in your diary and we look forward to welcoming you to Newcastle in 2005.

**Mike Wyatt, Local Organiser, Newcastle 2005**

## Council Constitution and Appointments

### Executive Committee

<b>President</b>	Professor B J Rowlands
<b>Past President</b>	Professor D Bouchier-Hayes
<b>Hon Secretary</b>	Mr M G Wyatt
<b>Hon Treasurer</b>	Mr P J Drew
<b>Editorial Secretary</b>	Professor N J Bundred

### Committees and Chairs

<b>Programme Committee Chair</b>	Professor J N Primrose
<b>Foundation Committee Chair</b>	Mr P McCulloch
<b>Membership Committee Chair</b>	Professor H P Redmond
<b>Education &amp; Professional Development Committee Chair</b>	Professor I Taylor
<b>External Relations Committee Chair</b>	Professor Sir A Darzi

### Council Members

<b>Surgeon in Training</b>	Mr I C Chetter
<b>Non-clinical Scientist</b>	Dr P Watkins
<b>NHS Surgeon</b>	Mr P D Carey
<b>Member at large</b>	Mr A D K Hill

## Reports from Committees

### Education and Professional Development Committee

The Education and Professional Development Committee, chaired by Professor Irving Taylor, has been extremely active in the last few months. Three separate issues have been discussed, and documents produced. The first relates to the important role of surgery in the undergraduate curriculum and how it can be incorporated in an integrated fashion. The paper was approved by SARS Council and has been distributed to all UK Medical School Deans.

A paper has been submitted to the SAC in General Surgery proposing a training programme for individuals wishing to pursue a full-time academic career. This will apply to relatively few individuals but nevertheless the programme is comprehensive and has been fully endorsed by the SAC Curriculum Committee. The outline programme will be included within the SAC Curriculum handbook.

Finally SARS has been asked to provide a curriculum for the incorporation of research activity into higher surgical training. A draft document has been written and is at present being reviewed by the SARS Committee. It identifies competencies which should be achieved at the end of a period of academic endeavour.

### **External Relations Committee**

The External Affairs Committee, chaired by Professor Sir Ara Darzi has been active in the following issues:

- Lobbying within the Department of Health on issues related to Academic Contact, representation of SARS on PMTBE board, and input from SARS into the national clinical science fellowships.
- The committee has also been in dialogue with specialities societies and associations on having SARS input into the annual scientific meeting.

### **Foundation Committee**

The Foundation Committee, chaired by Mr Peter McCulloch, has the dual role of raising funds for the Society and helping spend them, by developing the Society's support programme for surgical science. You have already received a questionnaire about the latter, asking you about the extent to which you would like to see the Society help develop research co-operation between members. There was a generally positive response to this suggestion, although only a minority of members replied. The Committee has proposed as a next step that the Society should draw up a database of current research expertise, interests and facilities amongst the membership, with the aim of fostering collaboration between members, and plans for this are being drawn up.

Other plans for activity, including ideas for active research co-operation, are predicated on developing an income to support them. We are currently negotiating with a potential single commercial sponsor as well as preparing a bid for Lottery money. In addition to this we are preparing internal and external appeal plans. We will shortly be asking members and ex-members to contribute to developing the research infrastructure of the new Society through Covenants and legacies, and we will be offering commercial organisations the opportunity to sign up to a 5 year sponsorship deal for our meetings, guaranteeing them access for this period.

### **Membership Committee**

The SARS Membership Committee is chaired by Professor Paul Redmond. Membership of the Society continues to flourish. However with the change in direction of the Society and its principles and objectives there is a clear need to bring to the attention of Surgical Trainees and Surgical Scientists the benefits of membership of our new society. To this end a membership drive has been initiated that will see the widespread distribution of flyers highlighting the benefits of membership. In particular the new membership drive will offer a two year free membership to basic and higher surgical trainees, and include a special offer for a BJS subscription. It is hoped that this should see a significant increase in new members over the next few years. This membership initiative will also be available on the SARS website ([www.surgicalresearch.org.uk](http://www.surgicalresearch.org.uk)) with membership application available online.

### **Programme Committee**

The SARS Programme Committee is now established. The Committee consists of the Chair, Professor John Primrose, the SARS Executive, the Meetings Secretary, the Editorial Secretary and members who are non clinical and veterinary scientists. Based on experience at the St Mary's and Leeds meetings the committee is currently framing the programme for the Belfast and Newcastle meetings. The Belfast

meeting will extend over 3 days from Wednesday to Friday lunchtime. The programme will contain a mixture of plenary (Patey), other oral and poster presentations together with symposia and guest lectures. The poster session will be improved with poster discussion rounds and a poster presentation session similar in format to the first of these at the Leeds meeting. We also plan to experiment with informal breakfast sessions on various topics intended to allow younger attendees to have discussion with a small panel of experts in various areas. The social aspects of the meeting include a reception at Stormont Castle and the Conference Dinner at Belfast City Hall. We also anticipate that the meeting literature will be more professional and comparable with other major UK surgical meetings. We hope to continue innovation in future meetings with a view to increasing both their quality and popularity as a venue for all that is best in academic surgery in the UK and Ireland.

## Announcement for Distinction Awards

It is important that the SARS continues to represent the interests of members in support of higher awards (currently Distinction Awards). Many members may be unaware that they can request SARS support by submitting official DoH forms directly to the Society. Those members whose names are recommended will be contacted by the Secretariat and informed of the Society's support. Recommendations are put forward to the Association of Surgeons of Great Britain and Ireland Distinction Awards Committee for consideration, alongside recommendations from the other specialist associations. The ASGBI then sends final recommendations for Distinction awards to the Department of Health (DOH). Members are also able to forward their forms directly to the ASGBI and the DOH. Forms can be downloaded from the DOH website (<http://www.doh.gov.uk/acda/form1.doc> or in Scotland, [www.show.scot.nhs.uk/sacda](http://www.show.scot.nhs.uk/sacda)). The closing date for applications to the SARS is 30th September each year. We will keep you informed of any changes in this mechanism as and when any new higher awards schemes are announced.

## Outline and explanation of membership subscriptions and request for new members

### Free Membership

The Society of Academic and Research Surgery is able to offer FREE membership for all BST's and 1st/2nd year HST's, with an optional low rate for BJS subscription.

### Why join the Society?

The Society is concerned with the education of all surgeons and comments on the standards of education and research within the U.K and Ireland.

### What are the Objectives of the Society?

The Society provides for the interchange of information about research related to surgery and surgical disease. Its objectives are to:

- Maintain high standards of scientific evaluation and scientific presentation.
- Promote surgical research by providing travelling scholarships and/or research grants.
- Promote the interchange of information internationally through collaboration with other national surgical societies
- Maintain low subscriptions and registration fees to encourage membership by young research workers in surgery, and encouraging participation in the activities of the Society.

## What will I pay?

Basic and Higher Surgical Trainees	FREE for 2 years
Senior/Ordinary/Corresponding Members	£50.00 / £116.00 (+BJS)
Non Consultant	£50.00 / £83.00 (+BJS)
Honorary	FREE

## Website

The website for the Society of Academic and Research Surgery can be found at:

**[www.surgicalresearch.org.uk](http://www.surgicalresearch.org.uk)**

The site is currently being updated by Sophie Mitchell (SARS Secretariat), and will soon contain all you need to know about the Society, its officers, meetings, prizes, awards, membership and details/dates of abstract submission. We would like to thank Paul Ridgway, our previous webmaster, who has been instrumental in constructing and maintaining the present Society website.

## Travelling Fellow

Applications are invited for the Society of Academic and Research Surgery Travelling Fellowship. The award will be up to a maximum value £3,000. Applicants must be members of the Society of Academic and Research Surgery and under 35 years at the time of application. Priority will be given to proposals which will enable the individual to learn new research techniques or undertake a specific research project. Applications, which should be accompanied by curriculum vitae, should give full details of the activities to be undertaken during the fellowship with approximate costing of travel and subsistence. The successful applicant will be asked to present a report to the Society on return from the research project.

Applications should be sent to the Honorary Secretary of the Society by 31 December 2003 at:

Society of Academic and Research Surgery,  
The Royal College of Surgeons of England,  
35-43 Lincoln's Inn Fields,  
London WC2A 3PE

Direct Tel: 020 7869 6640

Fax: 020 7869 6644

Email: [smitchell@rcseng.ac.uk](mailto:smitchell@rcseng.ac.uk)

## And finally...

We hope that you have enjoyed reading this first SARS newsletter. Please feel free to feed back any ideas or comments or indeed any items you might wish to be considered for future editions. Please remember that the closing date for abstract submission for the January 2004 meeting in Belfast is **September 30th 2003. The enclosed notice contains details on how to submit your abstract.**

Mike Wyatt, Honorary Secretary.