

17<sup>th</sup> February 2007



**Neonatal Society Spring Newsletter 2007**

To all Neonatal Society Members,

Welcome to the 2007 Spring Newsletter which contains important dates for our society's deadlines and meetings in the coming 2 years. In addition we have details about 2 new prizes!

**PAST MEETINGS**

2006 was a very successful year for the society, with 3 excellent, well attended meetings. The Winter Meeting was unique as you can see below.

**Winter meeting 11<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> December 2006, Churchill College, Cambridge.**

This was a joint conference with the Nutrition Society to celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Elsie Widdowson. The local hosts were MRC Human Nutrition Research in Cambridge. There were 250 participants from UK, Ireland, USA, Canada, Holland, Germany, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Hungary and Spain.

The Neonatal Society Widdowson Lecture was given by Dr Olav Oftedal, head of nutrition research at the National Zoo, Washington DC. He spoke on "The evolution and adaptation of lactation". We were fascinated to learn that 300 million years ago, before mammalian times, moisture-bearing skin secretions were applied to eggs which could absorb secretions. He progressed through marsupial milks to then compare the diversity of mammalian milks. He had just flown to UK from Antarctica where he had been studying Weddel seals who have milk containing 50% fat. Some mammals have evolved to permit long fasting periods between suckling, some to support deposition of lean tissues and others to support a thick layer of insulating blubber.

Professor Lars Hanson (University of Gothenburg, Sweden) brought us up to date on breastfeeding and immune function dwelling on the anti-inflammatory properties of lactoferrin and the ability of oligosaccharides to block microbial attachment to mucosa. Professor Sheila Innis (University of British Columbia, Canada) summarised the evidence on long chain unsaturated fatty acids and neurological development. Professor Kathryn Dewey reviewed iron status in breastfed infants. A number of other excellent review lectures were interspersed with short communications of which 5 were Neonatal Society platform presentations and 7 were Neonatal Society poster (and oral) presentations.

There was a video presentation on Elsie Widdowson's life and contribution to science and the relevance of her work and methods to today's questions was emphasised.

## FUTURE MEETINGS

Please see the flyer detailing the deadlines, meetings in 2007 and 2008 and invited lectures scheduled for each meeting. It would be great if you could put this up on a noticeboard that can be seen by students and trainees.

The dates for your diaries at a glance are as follows:

	Meeting	Venue	Date
2007	Spring Meeting	Jarvis Hall, RIBA, 66 Portland Place, London	Thursday 15 <sup>th</sup> March
	Summer Meeting	The Historic Dockyard, Portsmouth	Thursday 28 <sup>th</sup> and Friday 29 <sup>th</sup> June
	Autumn Meeting (AGM)	Royal Society of Medicine, Wimpole Street, London	Thursday 22 <sup>nd</sup> November
2008	Spring Meeting	Kennedy Lecture Theatre, Institute of Child Health, London	Thursday 20 <sup>th</sup> March
	Summer Meeting – Joint meeting with BAPM, NNS, BMFMS, NNA	Harrogate Conference Centre – provisional	Provisional dates: June 2-5 <sup>th</sup>
	Autumn Meeting	Kennedy Lecture Theatre, Institute of Child Health, London	Thursday 20 <sup>th</sup> November

Our next meeting in 2007 is on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> March in the Jarvis Hall, Royal Institute for British Architects, 66 Portland Place, London. It promises to be an excellent meeting – the McCance lecture will be given by Professor Anthony Costello from ICH: **The evidence base for saving newborn lives in the developing world.**

## NEW MEMBERS

The following have been elected to the society:

### Honorary members

Professor Paul Johnson

### New members

Dr Lawrence Armstrong

## ABSTRACT BOOKLET

As you know SMA has been extremely generous in their support of the Neonatal Society for many years in producing and sending out the abstract booklets. Unfortunately, they are unable to continue to support us, and for the first time for the Spring Meeting 2007 an abstract booklet will not be sent to members. The abstracts will, however, be available much earlier on the website [www.neonatalsociety.org](http://www.neonatalsociety.org) and we recommend that you print out the abstracts from here.

## PRIZES

The Neonatal Society Committee decided at the recent committee meeting in October 2006 to introduce 2 new prizes to encourage the participation of students and trainee doctors and to encourage the best research to be presented at the society. A flyer advertising the Student Bursary is attached and we would be very grateful if you could post onto noticeboards in your department and pass on to students who might be interested to apply.

The 2 prize details are as follows:

**1. A competitive Bursary to support a student (either junior scientist who can be doing a PhD or medical student) to visit a laboratory (which can be the usual place of work) or a hospital on an elective.** The prize is for up to £500. There will be 2 awards made each year - the deadline for submissions will be the last day of January and July each year. The student would be required to present the data or elective experience (after returning from the visit) either as a poster or oral presentation at one of the NNS meetings when the prize winner would be presented with a certificate. Applicants need to submit the following to the general secretary by the respective deadlines:

- (i) 1 A4 page outlining the proposal (e.g. what the student's objectives are for the visit. This may include observing or learning a technique)
- (ii) Summary of the Budget
- (iii) A short CV (one page)

**2. Best presentation from a trainee or junior scientist**

The best presentation will be awarded with a certificate and £50 at the NNS meeting after all the free papers and before the final invited talk at the end of the meeting.

These prizes will start from 2007.

**PUBLICATION OF ABSTRACTS IN EARLY HUMAN DEVELOPMENT**

The citation of abstracts from 2005 meetings are below:

Spring 2005: *Early Hum Dev* 2005;81:711-720

Summer 2005: *Early Hum Dev* 2006;82(9):609-622

Autumn 2005: *Early Hum Dev* 2006;82(9)623-636

We are awaiting the citations for the Spring, Summer and Winter 2006 meetings.

We look forward to seeing you at the Spring meeting next month.

*Nikki Robertson*  
*General Secretary, Neonatal Society*