

## Notes from Duncan Farrant, NMRDG Chairman 2003 – 2006

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I took over as NMRDG Chairman from David Neuhaus after the NMRDG's International NMR meeting held in the University of Cambridge in July 2003. Owing to the anticipated transition of merging our international meetings with the AMPERE Congress and European Experimental NMR Conference (EENC), I was asked to serve for three years as Chairman, rather than the usual two years.

Several high quality meetings were organised, starting with the Christmas 2003 meeting organised by Olivia Corcoran and David Davies at the then newly opened Franklin-Wilkins building of Kings College, London. Richard Lewis, Martin Sandvoss and Adrian Davis volunteered to organise the 2004 spring meeting. It was held at AstraZeneca's Charnwood site in Loughborough and focussed on 'Advances in NMR on small amounts of material'. The 2004 autumn meeting was a joint affair with the German Chemical Society (GDCh) and was held in Aachen, Germany from 28<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> September 2004. Bernhard Blümich hosted the conference and a combined Anglo-German team organised the programme to cover ESR as well as NMR. The Christmas 2004 meeting held at the Institute of Child Health, was organised by Paul Jonsen and Harry Parkes and its theme was Imaging, but with a balanced series of talks involving spectroscopy.

The Spring 2005 meeting, held at GSK's, Medicines Research Centre in Stevenage, concentrated on software to assist in the analysis and interpretation of NMR data. It was generously sponsored by the software vendors themselves and therefore was free to the attendees, enabling many students to attend. The last EENC meeting and precursor to the new EUROMAR conferences was held in July 2005 at Veldhoven, in the Netherlands and organised by Rien de Bie and his team from the Dutch NMR Discussion Group. The Christmas 2005 meeting was organised by Stephen Byard and Peter Meadows at Birkbeck College, London. It was a very successful meeting covering a broad series of topics in Magnetic Resonance and included the Harrison Memorial lecture, given by Sharon Ashbrook.

The Spring 2006 meeting had been planned as a joint BMSS and NMRDG meeting on HPLC-NMR and HPLC-MS. It had the same theme and unfortunately clashed with a meeting held in Tübingen, Germany to bid farewell to Klaus Albert.

The decision to cancel the Spring 2006 meeting and support the Tübingen meeting was taken.

The first EUROMAR conference, 16<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> July 2006, was held at the University of York, hosted by Simon Duckett and his team and covered all topics of Magnetic Resonance. This pretty well coincided with the 60th anniversary of NMR and so I composed a song to celebrate this. It was printed in the back of the program book of the conference and was sung at the conference dinner in the York Railway Museum and at the close of the conference. It is possible to view the latter occasion on YouTube (if you are interested) as someone in the audience recorded it on their mobile phone and published it:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=omRfCzLS1Ns>.

This conference established a new European based annual international conference for Magnetic Resonance, combining the UK NMRDG's biannual international meetings, the AMPERE Congress and EENC biannual conferences. The purpose was to provide a series of conferences hosted in Europe to complement the Experimental NMR Conferences held in the USA. The first EUROMAR was well supported both by delegates from 28 countries and generous sponsorship from vendors, pharmaceutical companies and publishing groups. The sponsorship provided bursaries enabling students from any country to attend the conference. I handed responsibility as chairman of the NMRDG over to Tim Claridge at the close of the EUROMAR conference.

I am very grateful to the NMRDG committee members and other willing volunteers who worked well as a team, to organise all the events.