

**British Geophysical Association
Annual General Meeting
12.15 pm, Friday 11th February 2011
Geological Society Lecture Theatre, Burlington House, London**

Present: Prof. J.-M. Kendall, president, in the chair, and 16 members

Apologies: Mimi Hill, Ian Stimpson, Tony Morris (treasurer), Christine Peirce, Gillian Foulger, Ian Crawford, George Tuckwell

1. Minutes of 2010 AGM

These were passed as a true record.

2. President's report

Mike Kendall described the role of the BGA, highlighting its power to nominate members of Research Excellence Framework committees and its submissions to the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee's enquiry into scientific evidence in emergencies and (to be sent) to NERC on its 2011-2015 Delivery Plan, specifically the cut to MSc funding. He commented that he welcomed NERC's commitment to maintain PhD support and responsive-mode grant funding. Tim Henstock pointed out that for MScs the question is now whether HEFCE will withdraw its support, forcing all MSc students to pay full-cost fees. Jenny Collier described Imperial College's receiving 20 industrially-funded studentships but that these were awarded by the companies, who were picky and chose only students who were strongly motivated to join the industry directly on graduating. IC uses its NERC studentships to attract good-quality students who want to "convert" to geophysics from e.g. physics first degrees but are not clear on a career and might be attracted to stay to do PhDs.

BGA intends to make a submission to the House of Commons Committee's new inquiry on the effect of the cuts, reporting the statements it has received from the environmental industry that it cannot make up for the lost NERC studentships, and expressing doubt that the geophysical contracting industry can do so.

Mike reported on meetings, that the BGA was considering a "cryo-geophysics" subject for next year's NAG meeting, and that the 2010 Bullerwell lecture had been given by David Dobson, at the EGU for the first time for some years, to a reasonable audience; and that this year's Bullerwell lecture will be given on Tuesday of EGU by Adrian Muxworthy and will be preceded by a reception. The 2010 Postgraduate Research in Progress meeting had taken place in September in Bristol and been attended by about 60 people and the prizes awarded to two Bristol students (by a non-Bristol adjudication panel). He encouraged PhD supervisors to send their students to the 2011 meeting in Oxford (8-9 September) which had been advertised widely at the NAG meeting and had attracted commercial sponsorship from BP.

The PESGB has renewed its funding for the PESGB/BGA Schools Seismology Outreach Programme, and universities were bidding for a share of the £20k to engage with school teachers.

Geophysicists Roger Searle had been awarded the RAS Price medal, James Wookey the Fowler medal and David Halliday the Keith Runcorn prize for his PhD thesis.

Mike described the history of geophysics as part of the RAS but becoming more geological/environmental, hence the involvement of the Geological Society. There is at present unfortunately a lack of solid-Earth geophysicists on the council of either society, or on NERC's council or Science and Innovation Strategy Board (SISB). He encouraged geophysicists to become engaged with NERC and other bodies and be more supportive of each other. The RAS is particularly keen to engage with geophysicists. It has awarded fellowships from its Fellowships Programme to solid-Earth geophysicists as well as to astronomers. It runs monthly "G" (geophysics) discussion meetings, for which it seeks organisers and will provide funds for two overseas speakers and free use of its facilities – Mike encouraged BGA members to offer to organise meetings. He also encouraged us to fill in the RAS online survey of astronomers and geophysicists active in research, which so far has not attracted many geophysics respondents (do not be put off by the question about which wavelength (of light!) your research is based in). Barry Parsons is running in the 2011 Council election - BGA RAS members are urged to vote for him.

NERC is also supportive of geophysics in that it is regarding numeracy of earth scientists as to be encouraged (through summer studentships).

John McCloskey spoke to emphasise Mike's point that we should act together and present a unified front to argue for geophysics getting its share of the diminishing funding. We are apparently perceived as being divided among ourselves.

3. Treasurer's report

A report from our treasurer has not yet been received, although as far as we know, the BGA's funds are healthy.

4. New member of Committee

Gillian Foulger was elected to join the BGA Committee, having been nominated by Sheila Peacock and Christine Peirce and supported from the floor by Jon Bull.

5. AOB - meetings outside London

Andrew Curtis had contacted the BGA Secretary with the suggestion that BGA meetings sometimes be held elsewhere than London. There was no clear view for or against this, although Richard Holme pointed out that London is the easiest place for everyone to travel to. The success of the Frontiers of Seismology meeting held two years ago in Edinburgh was acknowledged and the meeting agreed to encourage a further Frontiers of Seismology conference to take place.

The meeting closed at 1.00 pm.