Professor Philip Calder, Time flies…

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www.nutritionsociety.org
In July 1941, the following invitation was sent out:

Just before the outbreak of war a suggestion was made by several people interested in research on nutrition that a Nutrition Society should be formed. Owing to the outbreak of war the idea was abandoned. The question has, however, again been raised and there are a considerable number of research workers and others in favour of holding meetings to discuss nutritional problems. Such meetings would serve a useful purpose, especially in enabling workers studying different aspects of the same problem in agricultural and medical institutions to meet each other with information and constructive criticism.

If there is a sufficient number of workers who wish to hold meetings for discussion of nutritional problems, the best procedure would be to form a society on the lines of the Physiological and the Biochemical Societies although there would be no question of publishing a journal in the meantime.

In view of the difficulty of travelling, it might be convenient to form separate English and Scottish branches which could meet independently but which might maintain contact during the war by exchanging short notes on the papers and discussions at meetings.

In accordance with this invitation a meeting of workers interested in nutritional problems was held in London at the Royal Institution on July 23, 1941 and The Nutrition Society was founded.

**Foundation of The Nutrition Society**

The Nutrition Society is a Registered Charity whose aim is to advance the study of nutrition and its application to the maintenance of human and animal health. The Nutrition Society is a Registered Charity no: 272077. This programme has been funded by Guernsey, registered in Cardiff, no 1274635.
Moments that mattered: stumbling towards nutritional science

Mark L Wahlqvist AO BMEdSc, MB, BS, MD(Adelaide), MD(Uppsala) FRACP, FAHPHM, FAIFST, FAON, FTSE

Food Groups’ which I perceived as serving sectoral commodity interests, were somewhat incoherent, and I argued with my teachers about it. Within this framework, Australian children were given milk each school day in the conjoint interests of the diary industry and child health. This coloured my thinking for years to come. My best friend in primary school was a Ukrainian refugee boy; we both felt different from others was imposed by our European names; we had no role models for it, but agreed we might aim to be doctors—and that we did.

At Adelaide University, I enrolled in medicine. With a mix of altruism and the grand maternal concern for my long-term security, I thought it offered a better chance to understand life, to care about others and a more borderless career than the alternatives. Research was not a formalised concept in my head, but this soon changed. The first year exposed me to a newly introduced subject about the history of medicine, discovery and the origin of ideas. Although culturally skewed, it was inspiring. In the second year and, notwithstanding the persistent White Australia Policy, I met my future wife, a fellow medical student, Chinese and secretary-to-be of the Malaysian students’ association, of which Singapore was still a part. My orientation to Asia, which began with a Korean friend in childhood, developed further. Insights into food systems and culture came through eating and cooking with my Asian university friends, from nutritional biochemistry and with the integrative concepts of physiology.

What began to bother me was the practice among some peers of perfunctory and dubious laboratory work. I became curious about the science we were taught. I took time out to do a Medical Science degree and to learn how a medical science department operated. I chose physiology and studies of pathophysiology. This was a reassuring experience. I found sound leadership, mentorship, mutual respect and robust, innovative debate in the corridors and tea-room (opportunities and space for creativity which I have consequently defended in many administrative roles). I became involved in various projects, enjoying discovery. Inspired by the visits, writings and advice of an Adelaide medical graduate, and co-discoverer of penicillin, Howard Florey, particularly his ‘inflammatory basis of disease’ concept, I worked in this field through my undergraduate days and into my first doctorate. I submitted this as an MD back to Adelaide University from Melbourne University as had Florey with his Adelaide MD from abroad. They were the days when polyunsaturated margarine was being promoted and vied for market share with butter, on rather controversial grounds about the role of diet in cardiovascular disease. Against this background, I published my first scientific paper on macrophage lipid metabolism and its potential role in atherogenesis in 1964 and then through the later sixties. The science, agricultural, industrial, medical, food cultural, public health and clinical and political dimensions of this work were both surprising and instructive. The passage of time taught me more and more about the socio-political intrigues of science and academia.

Today, a dichotomy to reiterate, but teachers often have profound and lasting influences. For me, the most positive were from my clinical teachers who were both humanists and scientists. One was the first clinical professor at Adelaide University, Hugh Norrie Robson, a general physician and haematologist, who had an exemplary bedside manner, diagnostic clarity, a grasp of everything interesting to be related and remember, good judgement while devoid of judgementalism, and a measure of cynicism for the parochial. For years after I had graduated and he had become Vice-Chancellor of Sheffield and then the Rector of Edinburgh University, he would write to enquire about my welfare. It is said that, to build a career, one needs a helping ‘leg-up’ at least thrice. Norrie Robson was one of those for me. By contrast, and about the same time, I had one who ’named me that, because of my inter-racial partnership, which he regarded as immoral, I would never get on in Medicine. I have thought a lot about these encounters in my ultimate role as a teacher too. One of the greatest rewards possible in life is to have taught, in so-doing to learn, and to achieve change-for-the-better through one’s former students. By good fortune, about the time I moved to Melbourne University, Bazi Hetzel, a major figure in the field of iodine deficiency disorders, who had been one of my two professors of medicine in Adelaide, also moved to Melbourne, to become the Foundation Professor of Social and Preventive Medicine at Monash University. This kept me interested in metabolic medicine and population health. It also gave me the opportunity to encourage my fellow Adelaide University medical graduate Tony McMichael, then-President of the National Union of Australian Students (NUAUS), to explore the possibility of graduate studies with Basil Tony and I worked part-time in family medicine in the socio-economically disadvantaged district of Brunswick to the north of Melbourne, and, both newly married, shared an apartment. This was a period of intense socio-medical interaction and re-orientation. The world was awash with student activism and a struggle against the war in Vietnam. These phenomena were the substrate and stimulus for much of our later life disposition and advocacy, as it turned out, for food, health and the planet.

Life in Melbourne was also marked by the formation of the Asia-Australian Family Association in 1968, a support organisation, of which I became the first president. Our first child, Ingrid Wei Tzu, born in 1969, and others like him, gave it impetus. So did the fact that the White Australia policy was not fully disbarred until 1975, after our second child, Kerstin Yh Fen, was born in 1974. After Melbourne, Sweden was an attractive destination for family, professional and ideological reasons. I worked between the Karolinska Institute and Hospital with its King Gustaf Vth Institute in Stockholm and the Genentic Medicine Institute at Uppsala University. This gave me the chance to conceptualise whole body and life-course regulatory metabolism and physiology with both public health and clinical relevance and a publication spurt! I defended an Uppsala University doctorate in medicine about the nutritional and endocrine regulation of human cardiac metabolism.

The prospect of more progressive politics in Australia in 1972 clinched a move to the Department of Clinical Science at the John Curtin School of Medical Research of the Australian National University (ANU) in Canberra. Here several events mattered. Professionally, as an endocrinologist-diabetologist (FRACP), I became involved in developing these services in the ACT (Australian Capital Territory). Medico-politically, I was involved in a working group with the Minister of Health, Bill Hayden, to introduce National Health Insurance in Australia, an initiative formulated by Scotton and Deebie. I served as a...
physician to the Swedish embassy. My research interests became more clinical.

From the ANU, I moved to the Department of Medicine at Monash University, located at Prince Henry’s Hospital in Melbourne and to appointments in General Medicine, Endocrinology and Diabetes. Founded in 1965, the Centre for Clinical Nutrition and Metabolism Unit (CNMU) with responsibilities for inpatient nutrition services and for ambulatory care in nutritionally related disorder and disease (NRDD), and developed a body composition laboratory. When fully equipped with whole body counting for potassium and in vivo neutron activation analysis for nitrogen, DEVA (Dial Energy X-ray Absorptiometry), the second unit in Australia, and Dr Else Widholm from Cambridge was our guest and formally opened the facility. These developments facilitated the engagement of clinical nutrition in medical education and clinical practice.

The Australian Nutrition Foundation (later ‘Nutrition Australia’) during my tenure as Chair of Deakin University, its first electronic publication, was still available on-line (http://apjcn.nhri.gov.au). The principal publication of Nutrition Australia, ‘Nutrition Australia’ (http://nutritionaustralia.org.au), published jointly with the United Nations IUNS, its early days. Evaluation of the nutritional impact of managed migration from Java to Sumatra, the transmigranti mission, especially in the late 1970s and early 1980s, was a sobering exercise. The deliberations on food and nutrition policy in China in the 1980s were prescient for today’s successes in hunger alleviation and food security and of the risks of diets favouring animal over plant foods.

The discovery of the phyto-estrogenic properties of soy in post-menopausal women at Monash University transformed our understanding of food-health relationships. In the context of NCDs, the human nutrition outreach extended further internationally in the Asia Pacific through the development of the Asia Pacific Clinical Nutrition Society and its publication of the Asia Pacific Journal of Clinical Nutrition (APJCN). APJCN first appeared in 1992 co-edited by myself, Vicha Tananchai (Thailand) and another staff member. The journal was set up together in Heidelberg in 1991 at the 4th meeting of the International Symposium on Nutrition, held in Germany, and IUNS journal and, initially, a Monash electronic journal, an early venture into this publishing realm. Then, too, it published jointly with the United Nations University, its first electronic publication, the report of the IUNS ‘FHL’ project.

One of the most important and consistent themes in my work has been the health value of food variety and its dependency on biodiversity ecosystems (Wahlqvist ML, Spect RL... Food variety and biodiversity: Ecosystem Nutrition. Asia Pacific Journal of Clinical Nutrition, 2012; 21:4-9). This is of course the first of any dietary guideline recommendations, other than breast-feeding. But it assumes importance as a measure of food security and an indicator of our ecological requirements. We are, in this final year of an extended period, I was active in Food Regulation and Safety with Directorship of an FAO Centre of Excellence in Food Safety. The Food Safety Research Committee (1999) and as Foundation Chair of the Food Safety Council of Victoria (1997-2003). Other rewarding activities have included my membership of the WHO Expert Advisory Panel on Nutrition (1988-2010).

In active retirement, at the National Health Research Institutes in Taiwan, I have become involved in studies of food, metabolic disorder and the brain, particularly dementia, Parkinson’s disease and affective disorders (depression). Disordered energy regulation with inflammatory consequences as in obesity and diabetes seems relevant. Protective approaches might include dietary biodiversity such that it includes culinary herbs. But much remains unanswered. It has been a privilege to have been involved in recent years in the development of a Chinese Nutrition Society leadership program and another in training at Zhejiang University in Hangzhou to identify and foster the careers of exceptional young people in China in food, nutrition and health science.

But my greatest passion now is to mitigate the climate change now underway. This threatens our food, water and energy security and to displace billions of us from our homes and communities (Wahlqvist ML, McKay J, Chang YC, Chu YW. Rethinking the food security debate in Asia: some missing ecological and health dimensions and solutions. Food Security, 2012; 4:457-67). Things have improved. The IUNS Congress was held for the first time in Africa in 2005 in Durban. IUNS adhering bodies have Africa have grown substantially and joined ranks through the Federation of African Nutrition Societies (FANUS). There is an African food and nutrition journal (AFJND) edited by Professor Ruth Onwong (https://www.afjnd.net/). IUNS now has an African president in Dr Anna Larkey from Ghana.

To chair the National Nutrition Committee of the Australian Academy of Science from 2002-2005 was an honour and opportunity to link the various science-based food and nutrition research groups including what was referred to as FANO, the Federation of Australian Nutrition Organisations. The role involved collaboration of Australian nutrition research in Australia, the Australian Society of Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition, the Australian Institute of Food Science and Technology, and the Nutrition section of the Public Health Association of Australia. It was supported by the board of the Australia and New Zealand Food Authority of which I was a member (1996-2002). For an extended period, I was active in Food Regulation and Safety with Directorship of an FAO Centre of Excellence in Food Safety. The Food Safety Research Committee (1999) and as Foundation Chair of the Food Safety Council of Victoria (1997-2003). Other rewarding activities have included involvement with microplastics, food waste prevention and nutritional ethics and equity. A new food and nutrition workforce, collaborative and crossing disciplinary boundaries, skilled in the optimisation of personal and community health, and in disaster nutrition, renewable energy and food. In the meantime, we can embrace the guiding principle that we should use and eat as little as we need and not as much as we can get.
Archives – a space where data is sought and inspiration found
Sheila Mercieca, Archives, Library and Records Management

Shielded and cushioned beneath glass, sixty-eight items selected from the Nutrition Society’s archive collection created a narrative for seven decades of its history at the 75th celebration reception, on 5 December 2016. Continuous care of the Society’s records and corporate memory has produced an archive of information assets that evidence collaborations between nutritional scientists over 75 years. Salient archival documents of biographical and historical importance capture many political and social drivers behind the development of nutritional science. Reading the records of their lives on paper, one feels the virtue of patience, the persistence and determination, conspicuous by the competencies of each of the Society’s Presidents, 1942-2017.

Mitigating risks associated with exhibiting archival documents, and maintaining a balance between preservation and access, was thoughtfully addressed at a Collections Handling workshop at Cambridge Court. The asset rich collections are a significant resource to all departments at the Society, where the mantra that preservation of archival material is the responsibility of everyone in an organisation, was sympathetically applied.

The scope of the Society’s hybrid collection contains carriers of various formats that reflect changes over time of information creation and capture; paper, photographic image, floppy disc, CD, VHS, cassette tape, and newborn digital material. Released from the silence of the archives, activities, spaces and human voices came to life to speak for themselves about the contributions made by many individuals on a journey to advance nutritional science. Moments of collaboration find expression in documents of varying significance. Signatures capturing traces of members who autographed the record of attendance at the Society’s 100th meeting (1956), are inscribed on parchment. Of no less importance is a penciled mind map on note paper for the eNutrition Academy (2014), both documents possessing the characteristics of a good record: authenticity, reliability and integrity.

Now officially registered with, and having received a unique Archon code from the National Archives, the on-going design of the Society’s archives catalogue will incorporate the whole of its collections. This catalogue will be worked on over time to reflect continual development in the Society’s collections policy, with an aim to ultimately be deliverable online. The objective in professionally managing the Society’s archives is to provide access to useable records that can be located, retrieved, presented and interpreted. A framework of policies, plans and procedures are being designed to ensure that benchmarks to achieve best practice in archives and records management will move the Society’s archives towards the National Archives accreditation.

The Nutrition Society’s commitment to the long-term preservation of its physical and digital assets is being delivered with appropriate conservation and preservation management. This preparation will lead in time to future users being able to make appointments to consult the Society’s collections. Recurring themes of interest, including malnutrition and obesity, have been discussed, debated and minuted in archival documents of nutritional science for many decades. The Society’s archives are relevant to its members, researchers, food anthropologists, nutritional science historians, social historians, educationalists, policy makers, lobbyists, undergraduate and postgraduate students. Archives are a space in which data is sought and inspiration found.

Evaluation of the 75th anniversary exhibition signposts a renewed estimation for the legal, fiscal and historical value of the Society’s archives collections. Exhibitions have the power to reinvigorate a collection and inspire new audiences. Moving forward the Society hopes to network with archives of other learned and scientific societies as part of its commitment to future outreach activities and exhibitions programming. ■
**Reflections on nutrition and the Nutrition Society**

Valmai M Hedley (Griffith) M.HSc (NZ) FRSFH

In 1941 when the Nutrition Society was formed, I was 15 years old and had already decided that I wanted to study Nutrition. The ideas then were based on the notion that the nutrition I was taught in the science classes of the two secondary schools in New Zealand which I attended, where in one, the textbook was “Everyday Nutrition” by E Nege Toshcutter, who had gained her PhD under Professor HC Sherman, Columbia University, and in the other, the textbook was “Good Nutrition” by Professor E Gregory and Muriel Bell, both of whom had gained their doctorates under Professor Jack Drummond, University of London.

In both of these textbooks, I noted that the first half was devoted to the principles and science of nutrition, and the other half to the practical aspects such as menu planning and the provision of nutritionally balanced daily meals for families at reasonable cost. It gave me an overall view of the complexity of the wide ranging field of nutrition, and the understanding that good health may depend on the amount and type of food that is eaten over a lifetime.

In my first degree at the University of Otago, New Zealand, I was given a sound knowledge of both the science and the practical side of nutrition. In our practical nutrition classes we used McCance and Widdowson “Chemical Composition of Foods,” and “Nutrivel Value of Wartime Foods.” I still have my, somewhat worn, copies.

I was well aware of the Nutrition Society and the Proceedings, where in 1951 I was influenced by the nutrition I taught in the science classes of the two secondary schools in New Zealand, many of whom had lived into their 80s and 90s, and I am well aware of the Nutrition Society who were early settlers to New Zealand. I was influenced by McCance and Widdowson “Chemical Composition of Foods,” and “Nutrivel Value of Wartime Foods” (I still have my, somewhat worn, copies).

I was investigating the story of my direct line antecedents who were early settlers to New Zealand, many of whom had lived into their 80s and 90s, and I am well interested in Nutritional Genomics and Epigenetics.

Of course, I have been a member of the Nutrition Society over the years. It has been a great support and asset, especially when one has retired and has no academic base. It has meant that in the last thirty years, I have been able to meet with past colleagues, keep up with the latest research and also sample the enthusiasm of the younger generation whom the Society encourages.

In 2009 when the Nutrition Society held their 50th anniversary in Cambridge and the 70th in Reading, where I joined in with the enthusiasm generated by the formation of the professional body, Association for Nutrition (AfN), which regulates the registration of nutritionists who are qualified to give advice founded on evidence-based science.

Being a member of the Nutrition Society over the years has been a great support and asset, especially when one has retired and has no academic base. It has meant that in the last thirty years, I have been able to meet with past colleagues, keep up with the latest research and also sample the enthusiasm of the younger generation whom the Society encourages.

The exercise of soft power

Mark Hollingsworth, Chief Executive Office

A one of the meetings I recall attending when I first joined the Society in 2014, a speaker asked the audience if they would like to see the Society raise its study Nutrition in public profile. A resounding ‘yes’ was the reply, but in the follow-up discussion it became evident no one really knew ‘how’ or ‘even why’ that should happen. After the meeting I met several of the audience individually to discuss this dichotomy and they all agreed the Society had a responsibility to have a strong public profile, but believed it could be the lack of a central strategic rationale for it which had been frustrating its efforts in achieving the profile. Again, no one had a single strong thought or opinion on what such a rationale should be. I suspect, looking back at my notes now, what people sensed the Society needed was to develop its ‘soft power’ potential.

Fast forward nearly three years since those conversations and, I suspect, the landscape now looks very different. The Society is in the second year of its five year Strategic Plan – a plan which places considerable emphasis on building, renewing, and maintaining sustainable relationships across the world. However, we should not think this has been a recent form of revelation in the Society’s thinking. It was in, 1941, the concept of bringing together scientists, academicians, and industry specialists and policy makers in the field of nutritional science to assist in the war effort which saw the founding of the Society. Later, it was many of these same eminent individuals who led the formation of the International Union of Nutrition Sciences (IUNS) in 1946-1948. Moreover, it was the Nutrition Society’s leaders who later led the formation of the Federation of European Nutrition Societies (FENS). What the current Strategic Plan seeks to do is build on these successes from the Society’s past and use such history, traditions and organizational success to develop contemporary solutions to today’s challenges and opportunities.

At the present time this work, being undertaken by many members of the Society, falls into three groupings: Relationships with fellow societies in the United Kingdom and Ireland and the Northern Ireland. International collaboration; UK Parliamentary activities.

**Relationships with fellow societies in the United Kingdom and Ireland**

The Society is currently planning or discussing joint meetings/collaborations with the Biochemical Society, the British Society of Animal Science, the British Society for Gastroenterology, the Royal Society of Medicine, the British Pharmacological Society, the British Nutrition Foundation, the Royal College of General Practitioners, the NIHR Cancer Collaboration. In addition, bilateral and round table meetings are held in other countries. When the Vaccines Unit of the Association for Nutrition (AFN), British Dietetics Association (BDA), Institute of Food Science and Technology (IFST) and British Nutrition Foundation (BNF), Finally, as a Strategic Partner of the Society of Biology, additional collaborative discussions are held for a year between the CEOs of nine biosciences’ societies.

**International collaboration.** In maintaining its long standing support for IUNS and FENS, the Society now manages the secretariat for the IUNS, and is also assisting and supporting some of the work of the President and Treasurer of FENS. In addition the Society will be hosting the 2019 FENS Conference. The Society has a long history of supporting the development of capacity within the nutritional science community in Africa. This work continues with the provision of grants to help students attend the African Nutrition Society (ANS) and Federation of African Nutrition Societies (FANS) conferences held in Africa, and where possible, providing no-fee workshops at the conferences. Across the Atlantic strong links continue between the Society and the American Society for Nutrition, and in Brazil the Society supports the annual Mega Event in Nutrition science conference in São Paulo. Further field there are developing relationships with South Korea, Iran and Dubai, to name but a few.

**UK Parliamentary Activities.** It is in this developing area I return to the original discussions from three years ago. Some members of that audience felt the Society should be more influential in the work of government. Clearly it would be wrong for the Society, as an independent scientific body, to be involved in any form of lobbying activity within government. The Society does though have a unique opportunity to present, where required, evidence-based nutritional science. To that end over the past year, partly in collaboration with the Royal Society of Biology, the Society has developed a growing and influential presence in Parliament forParental support to this year’s Parliamentary Links Day (Parliament’s largest scientific event of the year) saw the Society bring a number of influential guests to Parliament to promote discussion concerning the future of nutrition research and policy in The House of Commons and House of Lords. Earlier in the year, one of our student members represented the Society in a presentation to a group of M.P.s. Members of the House of Commons Select Committee for Science, the Government’s Chief Scientific Adviser and the Minister for Science. Moreover, in his introduction to this Gazette, our President details the honour bestowed upon the Society at the annual Parliamentary Science Reception through allowing the Society to be the primary host. Finally, work underway to build on this much raised profile for the Society through the creation of an All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Nutritional Science, which the Society will lead and manage. We will bring our venture with our colleagues from the BDA, BNF, FIST, and AN.

These many developments are indicative of the overall sense I now have of the Society’s emerging global leadership role in building and sustaining a nutritional science community. I began this article with the term soft power – soft power has been defined by J. Nye (‘Power, culture, and policies’, Journal of Political Power, 4 (1) April, p19) as ‘the ability to affect others to obtain preferred outcomes by the co-optive means of framing the agenda, persuasion and positive attraction’. The use of networks, of developing and communicating narratives, establishing international norms and building coalitions is the contemporary language of what the founding members of the Nutrition Society achieved in 1941 onwards.

Over the past three years I have witnessed, through the controlled use of social media, the Nutritional Society and the Naps of this is the ability to form and mobilise networks and will, I predict, be the ones driving change, leading and shaping key global outcomes in nutritional science.
Future of The Nutrition Society Summer Conference

Professor Andy Salter (Honorary Scientific Officer)
Professor Alison Gallagher (Honorary Programmes Officer)

Too many the Summer Scientific Conference is seen to be the highlight of the Society’s calendar. It is the largest of our scientific conferences and attracts delegates and speakers from around the world. The symposia offer the opportunity to hear from internationally recognised Nutritional Scientists, while the Original Communication sessions provide a valuable opportunity for researchers, in particular research students and early career scientists, to present their work to the Nutrition Community. It also represents the opportunity for Nutritionists from food industry, clinical and academic backgrounds to socialise and debate the current ‘hot topics’. The papers which are produced and published within Proceedings of the Nutrition Society represent some of the most cited work in the nutrition arena.

As you will be aware, organising such a conference presents an immense amount of work for the Honorary Officers, Theme Leaders, Nutrition Society staff and Local Organisers. We would normally start planning such a scientific conference at least two years in advance and, having settled on a venue, we work with the local organisers to develop a programme and identify potential speakers and sponsors. As the date approaches, calls for abstracts need to be issued, submissions reviewed and oral and poster sessions timetabled. On top of all of this the Society staff work with the chosen venue to ensure all housekeeping issues are under control. Those of us who have acted as local organisers will remember well the anxiety felt as the date approached and the relief when all (more or less) went to plan.

The diverse nature of Nutrition means that inevitably some symposia are received more positively by some sections of the Society than others. However, we also often hear how members value the opportunity to catch up on topics they would normally regard as ‘outside their comfort zone’. In general, we do try to ensure that under the umbrella of a general topic, specific sessions address the major ‘themes’ of the Society: Cellular and Molecular Nutrition, Public Health Nutrition and Whole Body Metabolism. Overall our scientific conferences are reviewed very positively by attendees. However, we are anxious to hear the views of those who do not regularly attend these scientific conferences. Over the coming months we will be launching a survey of the membership’s views of the future format of our scientific conferences. We are keenly aware of all of the pressures on both your time and money and want to ensure that we are doing as much as possible to provide a product which satisfies as many members as possible.

Questions will include:

**TIMING of conferences**

The Society organises four main scientific conference per year: the Spring Conference (held in Scotland, usually in March), the Irish Section Conference (in June), the Summer Conference (in July, moving around the UK and Ireland) and the Winter Conference (held in London, in December). Is the timing and location of these conferences the most appropriate? Does attendance at one normally prejudice (on the basis of time or cost) attendance at others?

**LENGTH and Structure of conferences**

Summer conferences have traditionally lasted 3-4 days. In recent years we have trialled incorporating some parallel scientific sessions to increase the number of topics covered. However, we always avoid timetabling plenary and Original Communication (OC) sessions at the same time. Is this the best strategy? Researchers are invited to submit OCs for Oral or Poster presentation, and all accepted abstracts are published in Proceedings of the Nutrition Society. We are one of the few Societies that timetable specific poster presentations when the author gives a brief overview and answers questions; in delegate feedback from our conferences this has often been very positively evaluated. Do you feel this is still valuable? Should we try and move toward more use of electronic poster boards?

We firmly believe that it is vital to the Society that the Summer Conference is seen as a flagship event for Nutritionists around the world and that we continue to attract world class speakers, those just starting out in their career and an audience which is representative of the ‘broad church’ that is nutritional science. We very much hope that you will start to give these questions some thought and you will take a few minutes to engage with our survey when it is launched.
My interactions with the Proceedings of the Nutrition Society (PNS) have evolved over a number of years. Initially I accessed PNS as a resource, guaranteed to provide overviews of emerging topics and the latest advances in nutrition research presented at Nutrition Society conferences. This led to proactive participation, proposing and organising a seminar topic, prompted by emerging themes in my own research, authoring my own review paper for PNS and presenting at Nutrition Society conferences. I joined the PNS Editorial Board in 2009, was subsequently appointed to the role of Deputy Editor and then Editor-in-Chief (EiC) last year. This was not a conscientious long term strategic vision on my part. However, interactions with PNS throughout my career undoubtedly provided an excellent apprenticeship, developing my broad and diverse experience of PNS and its importance in publishing papers and abstracts presented by members and invited speakers at the Nutrition Society’s scientific conferences.

Working with our previous EiC, Professor Maria O’Sullivan, the Nutrition Society team at head office and Cambridge University Press, I developed an appreciation of factors involved in maintaining and developing the role of PNS as an accessible and informative publication on nutrition research. Close interaction of the EC with the Nutrition Society’s Science Committee and maintenance of an active, skilled and knowledgeable Editorial Board are essential. The increasingly diverse scope of nutrition research and introduction of novel technologies requires skilled editors with a conscientious, professional and rigorous approach in reviewing PNS content. This ensures maintenance of high standards for nutrition research and the continuing success of PNS. Additional Editorial Board members have been recruited and I continue to seek conscientious recruits appreciating the opportunity to join our team, including invited guest reviewers from the Science Committee. The Science Committee is instrumental in selecting emerging and specialist topics and expert speakers for Nutrition Society scientific conferences that generate the review papers sought by our readership. Future PNS conference issues will now feature an overview article from the local organising committee highlighting the significance of the meeting topic within the field of nutrition and the broader implications of the research.

Meeting topics are an important consideration of the Science Committee and subsequently the PNS issues that follow. Engagement with the Science Committee is therefore an important aspect of my role as PNS EiC. Consequently, I look forward to providing input on ideas for future scientific conferences. A pressing issue coming to the fore relates to research in recent decades challenging the direct translation of results obtained from males to females in the fields of nutrition, medicine and health. This prompted the first Public Health Service Office of Research on Women’s Health in 1990 and a 2020 vision for women’s health research. Despite the ensuing increase in research conducted on females over recent decades, sex/gender differences are still under reported. Studies are often not adequately designed to gather sex/gender differences, which are still under reported. Studies are often not adequately designed to gather sex/gender differences. Guidelines developed from studies predominantly conducted with male volunteers, or lack of data analysis of sex/gender differences within study cohorts, has consequently led to instances of misdiagnosis and inappropriate recommendations and intervention strategies for females. Sex/gender differences influence diseases preventable or modifiable by diet and lifestyle interventions, such as cardiovascular disease, cancers, diabetes, obesity, mental health and brain disorders and attract significant amounts of nutrition research funding. The way this research is conducted impacts on the training of researchers and direction of future nutrition research. The Nutrition Society conferences provide a forum for synthesis and presentation of output from this research. The consequences are that review content is largely based on research conducted on male volunteers, unless the research is specifically dealing with female specific nutrition, such as in pregnancy. Sex/gender differences are often not reported in published nutrition research and studies are often underpowered to do so. This introduces a potential bias in conclusions reported in literature review papers that is not widely acknowledged. I suspect a Nutrition Society scientific conference addressing nutrition and health from a sex/gender perspective would generate an extremely revealing and pertinent PNS issue, with potential to influence the way we conduct and report on human nutrition studies. Such a PNS issue would be one that I would very much like to envision during my term as EiC.

During a recent round of reviewing abstracts for a forthcoming Nutrition Society conference we noticed an exceptionally high rejection rate compared to normal. Many of you may well be wondering how to get an abstract rejected, so I have set out some common strategies used:

**Data.** One way to guarantee your abstract will be rejected is by not including any data. Without data, it is impossible to answer most research questions. Datables abstracts appear opaque and possibly evasive about something you might have done, or you are writing in a vaguely tentative term something you are planning to do in the future. We do not accept abstracts on your plans for future research. In lieu of your data, the reviewer has little to review and the time spent preparing your abstract will have been in vain.

**Statistics.** Statistics are a great tool for testing whether your data are significant (though of course if you do not have data, you cannot have statistics). Unless you are deliberately designing a pilot or developing a method, a P value of <0.05 is the usual absolute cut off for considering a difference is “real”. (Fischer actually suggested the <0.05-0.01 region was only really worthy of further examination, rather than being true; furthermore much more stringent thresholds are needed for informatics data). If this is given a P >0.05 do not ignore the statistics and claim the effect is real, despite being not significant. It is an oxymoron that will guarantee rejection.

**Double Negative.** You should never underestimate the potential decreased lack of clarity that double negatives are possible. Confused? Clear, straightforward statements will explain your research to the reviewer; double negatives, however, will confuse reviewers and doom your manuscript to rejection.

**Integrity.** Your manuscript will get rejected if you do not consult with any of your co-authors or your supervisor about whether they agree to publication. Similarly, if you skip the evidence of any relevant ethical approvals for your study, treatment of your animals, binding of your analysis, your abstract will be rejected.

**Formatting.** There is no simpler way to showcase carelessness and a lack of effort than with poor formatting. Leaving in track changes, comments about your plans for future research. In lieu of your data, the reviewer has little to review and the time spent preparing your abstract will have been in vain.

Statistics. Statistics are a great tool for testing whether your data are significant (though of course if you do not have data, you cannot have statistics). Unless you are deliberately designing a pilot or developing a method, a P value of <0.05 is the usual absolute cut off for considering a difference is “real”. (Fischer actually suggested the <0.05-0.01 region was only really worthy of further examination, rather than being true; furthermore much more stringent thresholds are needed for informatics data). If this is given a P >0.05 do not ignore the statistics and claim the effect is real, despite being not significant. It is an oxymoron that will guarantee rejection.
Update from the Irish Section

Professor Lorraine Brennan, Secretary, Irish Section

Since the last edition of the Gazette the Irish Section has welcomed Associate Professor Clare Corish as Chair of the section. I very much look forward to working with Clare in the coming years. On behalf of the Irish Section I would like to thank Professor Jayne Woodside for all her work and dedication to the section in previous years. Jayne will remain as a member of the committee for the next two years.

The Irish Section started 2017 with a very successful 26th Annual Irish Section Postgraduate Meeting in February. The Meeting was hosted by Dublin Institute of Technology and had 62 delegates registered with oral presentations by 27 postgraduate students. The standard of the presentations was excellent and it was a pleasure to see so many questions for the speakers from fellow postgraduates. A further highlight of the meeting was the excellent presentations from the guest speakers who provided students with an insight to the opportunities after PhD life and a range of career and professional advice.

Over the recent months our Irish Section committee has held a number of Nutrition Society Undergraduate Events aimed at increasing awareness of the benefits of becoming a Nutrition Society member. These have been extremely successful and I would like to thank all those involved in hosting such events.

The Irish Section Summer Conference took place in June at Queens University Belfast. Dr Michelle McKinley and Professor Jayne Woodside did a great job in putting together a very exciting programme. I was delighted to attend and hear so many global experts discussing the very pertinent topic of ‘what governs what we eat’. My thanks go to all the organisers and local helpers for organising such a successful event.

Finally, we held our Annual Section Meeting during the Irish Section Conference on 22 June. Thank you for the members who attended. During the meeting, voting took place for the next Irish Section Student Representative. I am pleased to announce Aoife McNamara, PhD student, UCD Institute of Food and Health, as the new Student Representative. We are pleased to welcome Aoife and look forward to working with her.

Update from the Scottish Section

Dr Spiridoula Athanasiadou, Secretary, Scottish Section

The Scottish Committee have put together, organised and run the 2017 Spring Conference. The conference was on “Nutrition for Exercise and Health” and was held at the Stirling Court Hotel, University of Stirling, on the 28-29 March 2017. The conference was very well attended, with over 110 delegates from academia and industry deliberating on the links between nutrition and the metabolic response to exercise and how this might affect preparation, performance and recovery from exercise. The programme also explored the relationship between exercise, nutrition and the impact upon metabolic, neuromuscular and skeletal health within the contexts of gender and ageing. The feedback received was positive from all attendees and the standard of the scientific programme. Special thanks go to Dr Oliver Wiltard and Dr Derek Ball for their contribution to the programme development and to the speakers and the conference organisers for putting together a great conference! We have already started organising the 2018 Spring Conference, which will take place at Glasgow University, in March 2018. The topic is “Nutrient-nutrient interactions” and the Scottish Section is finalising the programme. Provisional programme of this conference will be made available soon on the website.

We are always looking to engage with our membership: if you are keen to join the committee or you have ideas for future symposia topics get in touch (www.nutritionsoociety.org/about/committees/scottish-section). I would like to take the opportunity to welcome to the Committee the newly elected members: Dr Jo Cecil, from the University of St Andrews, Dr Janice Drew from the Rowett Institute and Dr Stuart Gray from University of Glasgow. I am looking forward to working with you all. Last, but not least I want to thank the two committee members that completed their term at our last AGM: Professor Lynda Williams from the Rowett Institute and Dr Gordon McDougall from theJames Hutton Institute. Thank you both for your contribution and enthusiastic support over the years; it has been a privilege working with you.

Training & Education

Are you thinking about career development or wanting to find out about nutrition topics and are looking for science-based, endorsed training providers? Then the Nutrition Society Training & Education workshops are just for YOU.

Training and Education (T&E) offer training for postgraduates, professionals and those in healthcare services. Many of the workshops take place at our training facility in London which is ideal for small groups and enhances their learning experience. Offering nutrition practice with the latest research, our hand-picked speakers are specialists in their field and are committed to deliver interactive workshops with ample time for one to one sessions, group work and case study analysis. Time is also allocated for delegates and speakers to get together and network. A key part of the workshops is to inspire and get inspired!

Starting at £160 for a one-day workshop, you will have access to experts who will teach, research and guide you throughout the session. Not only will you come away with masses of current information, you’ll receive plenty of ideas that help you develop skill sets to improve, evolve and undertake a greater variety of work.

The development of T&E workshops is underpinned by the T&E Committee (the Committee). The Committee meet regularly to keep abreast of progress and discuss ideas about the development of new and exciting topics. In addition, the Committee approve, appraise and recommend workshops which are tailored to membership needs and interests. Committee members represent various nutrition sectors and interests including industry, academia, international nutrition and molecular nutrition.

The remit of T&E is to help develop new training workshops and webinars, host workshops in various countries across the world, develop the annual training and education programme and explore new training and learning opportunities via different media outputs and platforms. With the aim to help users save time and learn in the convenience of their own working environment, T&E currently offer a webinar on the topic of Nutritional Genomics. Delegates have the chance to ask questions and submit feedback about the content. Previous delegates have expressed great satisfaction telling us that ‘the detail and structure of content was very well organised’, it was ‘pitched at exactly right level’ and the ‘presentation was excellent’.

At T&E workshops are evaluated on case-by-case basis for delegate satisfaction and seek comment on their value for money, meeting of learning outcomes, applicability to nutrition, presentation style and length, appropriateness of scientific knowledge and the quality of practical sessions. Delegate comments are always reviewed and relevant amendments are made whilst also ensuring the upcoming content is always scientifically up to date. One of the core workshops offered by T&E and one that has run for some period of time has evolved in this manner and delegate responses remain first class. Attendees at the most recent Dietary Assessment Workshop held in Harrow Mills, London, commented they ‘liked the fact that the speakers provided top tips and practical examples for applying dietary assessment methods’ and that it was a ‘Great workshop, led very well by the keen and helpful speakers’.

Certified by the Association for Nutrition and the Royal Society of Biology, T&E strive to maintain the outstanding quality of the workshops offered. We do not stand still on the development of new workshops and recently launched the Introduction to Food Policy workshop specifically for nutritionists working with industry. It’s also ideal for those working in organisations wishing to understand how and when to develop policy for their business. Feedback was super and delegates ‘enjoyed the interactive discussions’, ‘enjoyed the interaction and sharing of knowledge’ and ‘....enjoyed the style of the presenters’.

T&E workshops are developed specifically for you. To find out more visit our website: www.nutritionsoociety.org/events/training or contact Hajnal Zdravics: E: training@nutritionsoociety.org T: +44(0)207 605 6565

Delegate feedback from Scientific Writing for Publication workshop, 2017

MSc student: ‘I learnt a lot about the publishing process, how to plan, research, write, present and submit. Very helpful, well explained!’

Healthcare professional: ‘Excellent day, excellent tutors and excellent organisation.’
In the UK, official advice to the Government on diet and health comes from the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN). The Committee, which is made up of independent experts, provides dietary advice to government agencies and departments, such as Public Health England, the Department of Health and their equivalents in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

I became Chair of SACN in 2010, having served as a member since 2001. During that time I have also been a member of the Sub-group on Maternal and Child Nutrition. The Scientific Advisory Working Groups established the evidence on specific topics.

The full Committee meets three times a year and meetings are attended by observers from departments with responsibility for nutrition policy in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Meetings are held in open session by default and members of the public are welcome to attend. If members of the Society would be interested in attending please email the SACN secretariat (SACN@phe.gov.uk); we would be pleased to see you there.

SACN members are appointed on the basis of their specific skills and knowledge. To ensure a broad range of expertise and experience, the Committee includes scientific experts as well as individuals, lay and consumer representatives. Members hold positions for a fixed term and are appointed following a standard recruitment process. The SACN website can be viewed if this is something in which you may be interested. Alternatively, you can contact me or the secretariat directly.

SACN’s advice is based on thorough reviews of the most up-to-date and best quality scientific evidence. When considering the available scientific evidence, the Committee follow SACN’s Framework for the Evaluation of Evidence to ensure a consistent approach is taken with all reviews.

SACN’s reviews are subject to public consultation, whereby members of the public and other interested parties can comment on a report. The comments arising from this process are considered by the Committee and where appropriate, amendments are made before the final report is published.

SACN’s advice is used to inform UK government policy and support official messaging on diet and health, such as Change4Life, and healthy eating advice available on the NHS (National Health Service) Choices website.

One of the Committee’s recent and most impactful reports was the Carbohydrates and Health report, which examines the latest evidence on the links between consumption of carbohydrates, sugars, starch and foods that contribute to health outcomes such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, bowel health and tooth decay.

To reduce the risk of heart disease and colorectal cancer, SACN recommended that the consumption of fibre should be increased to 30g per day for adults, with proportionately lower fibre recommendations for children.

SACN also concluded that increases in sugar consumption lead to increases in energy intake, and that consuming sugary drinks result in weight gain and increases in body mass index (BMI) in children and adolescents. The Committee recommended that the intake of free sugars should not exceed 5% of total dietary energy and that the consumption of sugars-sweetened drinks should be reduced in both children and adults.

SACN’s advice was accepted by UK government ministers on the day the report was published and immediately became government policy. This has led to a programme of work to reduce the amount of sugars-sweetened drinks in the UK population has enough vitamin D to protect musculoskeletal health, all year round, the Committee advised that everyone over the age of one year has a dietary intake of 10 micrograms per day of vitamin D. Again SACN’s advice was accepted by government ministers and immediately became government policy.

SACN is in the process of reviewing the most recent evidence on saturated fats and a range of health outcomes; and on complementary feeding in the first year of life. It is hoped that draft versions of these reports will be published for consultation in 2017. SACN is also in the process of developing position statements on alcohol and acetaminophen, on folate and acid and healthy potassium and health and diet, cognitive impairment and dementia. It is hoped these will also be published in 2017.

These examples of the Committee’s recent activities illustrate just how varied and influential the work of SACN can be. Our deliberations and recommendations are strictly evidence-based, and the work is necessarily painstaking, requiring much discussion and debate, and reports can take many months to complete. Nevertheless, because of the dedication of the expert committee members and excellent support from the SACN secretariat, I have always found my involvement with SACN to be hugely rewarding, both from a professional standpoint and on a personal level. Above all, it provides the best opportunity to see the fruits of nutritional research realised by providing balanced advice to policy makers and practitioners with the aim of improving the health of the population.

1 Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/ groups/scientific-advisory-committee-on-nutrition
3 Available at: http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/heart-health/
4 Available at: https://www.nhs.uk/change4life-beta/
5 Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/ publications/sacn-carbohydrates-and-health-report
6 Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/ publications/sacn-fasting-sweeteners-and-sugar
7 Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/ publications/sacn-vitamin-d-and-health-report

As a regulator and charity, our central purpose is to protect and benefit the public. Ensuring the public have access to qualified and competent nutrition professionals who can generate and provide safe, evidence-based scientific advice is key to achieving this public protection goal.

The Register
UKVRN Registration, and the professional titles ‘Registered Nutritionist’ or ‘Registered Associate Nutritionist’ indicates to the public, colleagues and employers an individual has met the high standards required to hold this quality mark. UKVRN Registrants are registered at least level 5 in nutrition science, adhere to a common code of ethics, conduct and performance, keep their knowledge up to date and are accountable for their professional standards through to fitness to practice procedures. Association for Nutrition (AfN) is the gatekeeper to UKVRN Registration, ensuring it is administered efficiently and to the highest standards; guaranteeing only those who meet and maintain the standards are admitted and retained on the UKVRN. This vital work protects the public by providing a publicly searchable register, and a professional title that is a quality mark for sound, safe and evidence-based nutrition advice.

Training
Nutrition is underpinned by a well-defined but continually advancing knowledge base. Central to AfN’s role is providing a benchmark against which high quality, evidence-based training can be identified. AfN Accredited Degree Programmes and the AfN Course Accreditation scheme successfully identify courses which meet the high standards required to hold this quality mark. Provision which meets our standards are awarded a uniquely numbered logo, an instantly recognisable quality mark, so that the public and potential students/attendees can be assured of the scientific integrity and reliability of the programmes offered.

To support the work of nutrition professionals, we also provide a quality assurance scheme for courses taught to the wider community – AfN Course Certification. This provides a quality mark for training aimed at those working in areas such pharmacy, community care, health promotion, catering and gyms. This enables individuals to acquire evidence-based knowledge of the basics of nutrition science and be aware of their scope of practice, to support and disseminate messages developed by qualified nutrition professionals.

A simple message
For reliable, evidence-based nutrition – look for a quality assurance mark!

• Ensure individuals are Registered Nutritionists, Registered Dietitians or Registered Associate Nutritionists.
• Look for an AfN quality assurance logo for education and training activities.
Winter Conference 2017

Diet, nutrition and the changing face of cancer survivorship

It is estimated that by 2020, half of people living in the UK will be diagnosed with cancer in their lifetime (MacMillan, 2014). However, survivor rates have doubled in the UK in the past 40 years meaning cancer is no longer a terminal diagnosis (CRUK, 2014). Increasing numbers of people are surviving, but with ever more chronic conditions, sound nutritional advice is necessary.

This improved prognosis brings new challenges and it is important to understand the interaction between diagnosis, treatment and survivorship, and nutrition. Whilst it is estimated that one third of common cancers are modifiable through improved lifestyle factors, further research is required to determine whether dietary recommendations for cancer prevention can be extended to cancer survival.

First and foremost, patients need to know how to manage their diet and optimise their lifestyle throughout multiple points in the cancer pathway. This may be due to the severe side-effects of chemotherapy, including problems swallowing or with appetite loss, or following successful treatment, how to change diet and lifestyle to reduce the chance of recurrence of tumours. Equally, it is vital that clinicians respond to the needs of patients providing support and guidance, and not just generic healthy living advice.

In order to maximise patient support, there is a growing need to recognise the role of nutrition in chemotherapy, understand the potentially distinct dietary strategies for prevention of cancer recurrence and develop the management of the co-morbidities associated with cancer survivorship.

Recognising the new challenges to patients, practitioners and researchers, Theme Leaders Professor Alisa Welch and Dr Bernard Corfe, have created a programme for the 2017 Winter Conference which focuses on the mechanistic, human and public health implications of survivorship. The conference is poised to draw together international expertise at a timely point in the evolution of cancer management and survivorship strategies.

Professor Alisa Welch, Public Health Nutrition Theme Leader, says ‘this conference comes at an important time. Evidence is building about how diet and lifestyle can help cancer survivors but we have much more to learn. I am very pleased that we are able to hold this conference on such an important topic’.

Save the Date: 10-12 July 2018

The Summer Conference in 2018 will be hosted by the University of Leeds. The focus of the conference will be ‘Getting the energy balance right’ with local organiser Dr Christine Bosch taking the lifecycle approach whilst discussing the environment, lifestyle factors, sustainability and disease risk. Symposia will cover:

- Whole body metabolism
- Molecular epidemiology
- Dietary factors in energy metabolism
- Molecular mechanisms contributing to energy regulations
- Public health considerations of maintaining energy balance

Further details will be available on the Society’s website soon.

Events Calendar 2017

7-8 September: Student Conference, University of Reading


26 September: Nutritional genomics: Essential basics for nutrition and health professionals (webinar)

All OC and early bird deadlines for conferences and workshops, plus details of how to apply for the Cuthbertson Award can be found on our website.

4 October: Dietary Assessment Methods Workshop, London

8 October: Cuthbertson Award application deadline. Find out more at www.nutritionsociety.org/grants-and-awards/cuthbertson-award

31 October: Introduction to Food Policy Workshop, London

5-6 December: Winter Conference: Diet, nutrition and the changing face of cancer survivorship, Royal Society of Medicine, London