

The Molecular Graphics and Modelling Society

School of Oriental and African Studies

Thornhaugh Street, Russell Square, London, UK.

12pm, Thursday, April 26th, 2012.

31st Annual General Meeting

CHAIR'S REPORT

The Molecular Graphics and Modelling Society is a charitable society whose aim is to promote education and research into molecular graphics and modelling. One of the main ways this is achieved is through the organisation of meetings by its volunteers, such as this fifth Cutting Edge Approaches in Drug Design. Many thanks to Chris Richardson, Steve Maginn and Shozeb Haider for their hard work in putting the meeting together - the scientific programme is once again excellent.

This meeting marks the end of an active and full 12 months for the Society, which began with a well-received three-day meeting on membrane structure and function at the University of Oxford, drawing on a stimulating selection of speakers from industry and academia. Later in the year, we had a meeting at Cambridge University in honour of Dr Andy Vinter, currently Chairman of Cresset Biomolecular Discovery. Andy is a figure who is well known in the molecular modelling field and who has made many contributions in this area. Andy indeed was one of the founding members of the MGMS (the MGS at it was known initially) and fittingly, his contribution to the field and Society has been acknowledged in his receiving an honorary life membership of the MGMS.

A flagship meeting of the Society is its annual Young Modellers Forum, which links very closely with a core value of the Society, namely the encouragement of the next generation of computational chemists and biologists. The event continues to build ever greater momentum, being again well-organised, well-attended and well-sponsored; once again, it succeeded in showcasing talented postgraduate modellers, with stiff competition for the 12 poster and 12 oral presentation places.

As well as its involvement in these meetings and sponsorship of other modelling events over the last year, the Society also sponsored a lecture tour of Professor Tim Clark of Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg. Professor Clark was hosted at five UK venues, giving stimulating presentations on his work on protein-DNA interactions, micelles and developments in quantum chemical methodology. We also eagerly anticipate our MGMS Lecture Tour for this coming year, with the visit of Professor Modesto Orozco from IRB Barcelona. More details of this will follow in due course.

The Society's prestigious Silver Jubilee Prize is awarded each year to outstanding young researchers in the field. The 2011 prize once again attracted applications of exceptional quality. The worthy winner was Dr Andreas Bender of Cambridge University, recognising his many valuable research contributions to the fields of molecular modelling and chemoinformatics. We are pleased that Andreas will be one of the speakers at the forthcoming MGMS meeting on Computational Chemical Biology, to be held in Manchester in September this year.

It is clear that the Society has continued over this past year to be very active in serving the computational chemistry and biology community; and there is much that is in store for the year ahead, with a MGMS lecture tour and meetings in the pipeline at Manchester, London and Sheffield. But it is true to say that none of this would be possible without the commitment, enthusiasm and creativity of the local meeting organisers and MGMS committee members. To these volunteers, the Society and the field owe a great deal. At this meeting, Ian Gould has chosen to stand down as ordinary member of the committee and I would like to thank him for his contributions to the MGMS over these past years. We also express our gratitude to those companies and groups who generously and faithfully sponsor these events.

Finally, the Society also depends on your support. If you would like to find out more about the activities of the Society or make suggestions around meetings that you would like to see and get involved with, then please do contact myself or other committee members (www.mgms.org).