

INDUSTRIAL GROUP OF THE BRITISH CRYSTALLOGRAPHIC ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the 18th Annual General Meeting, held at Reading University on Tuesday 10th April 2001.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Prof C S Frampton.

2. MINUTES OF THE 17th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The minutes of the 17th AGM, held at Heriot Watt University, Edinburgh on Tuesday 4th April 2000 were circulated at the meeting, approved (proposed by Jo Jutson and seconded by Dr J K Cockcroft) and signed by the chairman.

3. MATTERS ARISING.

There were no matters arising.

4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

This is the third and last report of my three-year occupation of the Industrial Group chair. I won't pretend that it has been an easy term - the thing that makes it all worthwhile is working with an excellent group of people on the committee and knowing that our efforts are appreciated.

2000 saw IG return to a more conventional programme after the peculiarities of the IUCr congress and the IG Forum in 1999. The sessions at the Heriot-Watt meeting incorporated the pharmaceuticals special interest area (organised by Philip Lake) and controlled environment xrd (organised by Dave Taylor). That was followed up by a workshop on non-ambient diffraction run by Dave and Jeremy Cockcroft at Birkbeck College. At the end of the summer, Judith and Phil put together a residual stress workshop at UMIST and then Chris Frampton hosted our Autumn Meeting at Roche Discovery. It was a great pleasure to present one of our former chairmen, David Dyson, with an Industrial Group Award at that meeting. There is much that could be said in praise of the contributions made to these events, but I don't want to single-out individuals. They all deserve our warmest thanks.

However, I should mention that we have had three events at Birkbeck in the course of a year. That has been a very useful *pied-a-terre* for us in London and we are very grateful to Jeremy for making it possible.

One of those meetings was our main annual committee meeting that we combined with a discussion of European Standards for XRPD. That was very helpful to me in representing UK and BCA on the European Working Group putting the documents together. That work is continuing and it should not be too long now before the first two standard documents appear.

The Group newsletter continues to prosper. Our total circulation is around 400. That can make it a bit expensive, so some of the circulation now is electronic. Colin Small has put in two years as editor and has really helped to make it less of a list of things past present and future. The web site also gets better every year. It has been particularly useful lately to have the best information on meeting programmes appearing there so quickly. I am sure that

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some speakers names have been on the web within an hour or two of agreeing to give a talk.

We have made an excellent start to 2001 with the excellent presentations already made here. There have been a number of powder diffraction workshops with different emphases over the years. This one gave a very balanced account of basic crystallography, powder diffraction instrumentation and phase identification. We have also had some fascinating accounts of the ways in which our techniques are being used by different industries and some powder diffraction developments to look forward to over the next few years. Thanks go to all those who gave up their weekend and particularly those who put together such excellent presentations.

Later this year, we are to have a one-day pharmaceuticals meeting in June at GlaxoSmithKline, Harlow. Pilkingtons at Ormskirk have agreed to host our Autumn meeting (1st November). Judith Shackleton is putting together a programme for that, so look out! We also expect to be making another Industrial Group Award at that meeting. Next year, there is the possibility of another Industrial Crystallography Forum.

It has become apparent over these last three years that crystallographers working in industry are becoming an endangered species, at least in some sectors. Many of the survivors are really tightly constrained by short-sighted management who are reluctant to let them participate in BCA and the like. These meetings, where we can learn or share our science with our peers, help many people to keep going as scientists (I won't claim that it helps them keep them sane - pleasantly eccentric is a bit more like it!). This raises important questions for the future of IG. It has been getting much more difficult to find real industrial speakers and even people to come to meetings. The need to have practitioners trained and informed has not disappeared. Indeed, there seems to be a much higher turnover of people working in powder diffraction, too many of them relying on "black-box" answers because it is too time-consuming and expensive to get properly trained. I am personally convinced of the value of IG to British industry, but it will be difficult to maintain it because of the pressures on individuals, especially committee members. I would ask you all to give your committee every help and encouragement to keep it going.

A consequence of the changing industrial world is that we have had a high turnover of committee members and officers over the last three years. We have had three vice-chairmen in three years. Others disappeared before we got around to asking them if they would do it! I have been asking myself what my responsibility has been for this. After all, to lose one vice-chairman might be considered unfortunate; to lose two might be considered careless; to lose three seems downright negligent. Realistically, this is the kind of situation that might be expected for the future. The new committee may have to consider a more practical way forward than assuming that committee members will be around for three years or that future chairmen will have served three years on the committee and another three as vice-chair.

Finally, it just remains to say a very real thank-you to so many that have served on the committee. Colin Small is leaving us this year and Philip Lake has kindly stayed with us for an extra year as a co-opted member. We do thank them both for going more than the extra mile with us and for all the hard work they have put in over several years. To all of the committee who have served this year and over the previous two, I would again say a heart-felt thank-you. It is you guys that turn something worthy into something worthwhile and very enjoyable.

5. TREASURER'S REPORT

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Copies of the Statement of Accounts for the year to 31 December 2000 were distributed. The deficit for the year was £1699.30, and the balance in hand was £6453.15. The Statement of Accounts were then approved (proposed by Dr J K Cockcroft and seconded by Prof P Fewster). The accounts have been submitted to the BCA for examination. Part of the loss was due to the decision to invite an overseas speaker to the spring meeting in 2000 at a cost of £1234.16. Given the current surplus, this policy will continue.

6. ELECTIONS TO COMMITTEE

Having been duly nominated, the following were declared elected: Prof C S Frampton as Chairman, Dr J K Cockcroft as Vice Chairman and, as Committee Members, Dr B Cooper and Dr N feeder.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business. The Vice-Chairman, Dr J K Cockcroft, closed the meeting at 12:48pm.