



Society news

New President and Vice-Chairman for the Biochemical Society

The Biochemical Society has announced that Sir Philip Cohen, FRS, FRSE, from the University of Dundee will become its next President in January 2006. Sir Philip, Royal Society Research Professor, is Director of the MRC (Medical Research Council) Protein Phosphorylation Unit and Director of Research at the University's School of Life Sciences.

Commenting on the appointment of the new President, Professor Peter Downes, Chairman of the Society, said, "Sir Philip is arguably the UK's leading biochemist and an iconic figure in UK science. His contribution to our understanding of the roles of protein phosphorylation in cell signalling is legendary. It is a privilege to have him as our president."

Philip Cohen obtained a BSc in Biochemistry with First Class Honours in 1966 and a PhD in Biochemistry in 1969 under the supervision of Michael Rosemeyer, and has been awarded honorary DSc degrees from the universities of Abertay (1998), Strathclyde (1999), Linköping, Sweden (2004) and Debrecen, Hungary (2004). From 1969 to 1971 he was a NATO/SRC Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Washington, Seattle, WA, USA with Edmond Fischer, the 1992 Nobel Laureate for Medicine. He was appointed to a Lectureship in Biochemistry

at the University of Dundee in October 1971, promoted to Reader in 1977 and to Professor in 1981. From 1975 to 1978 he held a Wellcome Trust Research Fellowship and from 1979 to 1984 his salary was paid by the UK MRC. In 1984, he became a Royal Society Research Professor, the position that he holds today.

In 1977, he received an Anniversary Prize of the Federation of European Biochemical Societies (FEBS), and in the same year was awarded the Colworth Medal of the Biochemical Society. He was elected a member of the European Molecular Biology Organization in 1982, to the Fellowships of the Royal Society of London and of Edinburgh in 1984, and to membership of Academia Europea in 1990, and was a Founding Fellow of the Academy of Medical Sciences in 1998. In 1991, he received the CIBA Medal of the Biochemical Society, which is awarded annually to a UK scientist for outstanding contributions to the development of a branch of biochemistry. This was followed by the Prix Van Gysel of the Belgian Royal Academies of Medicine (awarded biannually to an EEC-based Scientist under 55). The Royal Society of Edinburgh awarded him their Bruce Preller Prize in 1993 and, in the same year, he received the Dundee Rosebowl,



Sir Philip Cohen, FRS, FRSE

which is awarded annually to the citizen deemed to have done most to enhance the National and International prestige of the city. Previous winners include Liz McColgan, the former world 10000 metre champion and the Dundee United Football Team. He received the Special Achievement Award at the Miami Biotechnology Winter Symposium in 1996, the Swiss Louis Jeantet Prize for Medicine in 1997 (awarded annually to three Scientists working in Europe), the 1999 Pfizer Award for Innovative Science in Europe, the 2001 Sir Hans Krebs Medal of FEBS and the 2002 Bristol-Myers Squibb Distinguished Achievement Award in Metabolic Research. He also delivered the 1998 Croonian Prize Lecture (the Royal Society's premier lecture in the



biological sciences). He has been made a Fellow of University College London (1993), an Honorary Fellow of the Royal College of Pathologists (1998) and an honorary member of the Biochemical Society (2003) and was knighted in 1998.

According to ISI, Philip Cohen was the third most cited scientist in the UK of the 1990s and the world's second most cited scientist in the fields of biochemistry and biology from 1992–2002.

The Society has also announced that Professor Martin Humphries is to become its Vice-Chairman in January 2005. Martin Humphries is currently Professor of Biochemistry and Wellcome Trust Principal Research Fellow in the School of Biological Sciences at the University of Manchester. His major research interests centre on a molecular dissection of cell–matrix interactions, in particular structure–function studies on adhesion molecules and integrin receptors. Publications from his laboratory have described the identification of sites within fibronectin and immunoglobulins that determine integrin recognition, the use of synthetic peptides and their derivatives

as probes of biological and biomedical function, the development of these agents as anti-inflammatory therapeutics, and the definition of integrins as conformationally mobile, allosterically regulated receptors. Current interests include determining the structural basis of integrin activation and elucidating how integrins act as sensors of the cell microenvironment.

Professor Humphries received his PhD in Biochemistry from the University of Manchester in 1983. From 1983 to 1988, he carried out postdoctoral research in the laboratories of Ken Olden at the Howard University Cancer Center, Washington, DC, and USA Ken Yamada at the National Cancer Institute, National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, MD. In 1988, he was awarded a Wellcome Trust Senior Research Fellowship to return to Manchester. In 1995, he progressed to a Principal Research Fellowship and was a co-founder of the Wellcome Trust Centre for Cell–Matrix Research, which he now directs.

Professor Humphries has served on the Molecular and Cell Panel of the Wellcome Trust (1994–1998) and was Vice-Chairman of the Wellcome Trust Basic Science Interest Group

(1998–2001). He is a member of the Editorial Boards of the *Journal of Biological Chemistry* (2000–), *Journal of Cell Biology* (2004–), *Journal of Cell Science* (1995–) and *Matrix Biology* (1999–), and has served as Treasurer (1990–1994) and Membership Secretary (1995–1997) of the British Society for Cell Biology. He was a founder member of the International Society for Matrix Biology and, in 1998, was elected to the ISMB Council.

“Martin Humphries is one of those rare people who combine scientific excellence with academic leadership. These are the qualities the Biochemical Society needs as we tackle ambitious programmes reflecting the changing attitudes towards scientific publishing and scientists’ responsibilities in the public domain,” said Professor Downes.



Professor Martin Humphries

Portland Press News

New *Biochemical Journal* Editors

Iain Morgan

Iain Morgan graduated from the University of Strathclyde in 1985 with a First in Biochemistry and Immunology. He then carried out a PhD from 1985 to 1989 at the Beatson Institute for Cancer Research in

Glasgow, under the supervision of Professor George Birnie.

During his PhD, an interest in the transcriptional control of oncogenes developed, and this continued during a post-doc with Professor Peter Vogt, firstly at the

University of Southern California in Los Angeles and then at the Scripps Research Institute in La Jolla, CA, where he studied the oncogenic transcription factor Jun. Upon returning to the UK in 1994, he worked for Celltech





Graham Pavitt

Therapeutics on signalling pathways as anti-cancer targets before returning to the Beatson Institute in 1995 to work with Professor Saveria Campo on the transcriptional control of papillomaviruses.

Iain Morgan was appointed to Faculty in the University of Glasgow Veterinary School in 2000, where he is currently a Senior Lecturer in The Institute of Comparative Medicine, Division of Pathological Sciences.

His current interests are in the area of understanding, and exploiting as a model system, the control of papillomavirus transcription and DNA replication.



Carol M. Troy

UK with an MRC Career Development Fellowship, initially to Dundee and then, in 2000, to UMIST in Manchester where he has continued as a Lecturer. Graham's research group continued to study eIF2B. The recent focus has been to unravel which domains and residues are critical for guanine-nucleotide exchange activity and to study the effects of eIF2B missense mutations that cause the fatal brain diseases known as CACH (childhood ataxia with central nervous system hypomyelination) and VWM (leukoencephalopathy with vanishing white matter).

Carol M. Troy

Carol M. Troy obtained her MD and PhD (under the supervision of Jose M. Musacchio in the Department of Pharmacology) in 1984, at New York University School of Medicine. After completing a residency in neurology at the Neurologic Institute of Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons, she joined Michael L. Shelanski's laboratory in the Department of Pathology at Columbia University, where she studied the cytoskeleton in neurodegenerative disease and began to employ antisense technology to determine the function of individual proteins.

In 1989, she was appointed Instructor in the Department of Pathology and is now Associate Professor in the Department of

Pathology and Neurology. The primary focus of research in her laboratory is the study of the molecular mechanisms of neuronal death, particularly the regulation of caspase activity.

Chiara Zurzolo

Chiara Zurzolo was born in Naples, Italy, on March 13 1960 and is Associate Professor of Cell Biology at Naples University Federico II.

She carried out her studies at Naples University Medical School where she graduated in medicine and then obtained a PhD in molecular and cellular biology. From 1991 to 1994, she was a post-doc in the laboratory of Enrique Rodriguez-Boulan at Cornell University Medical School in New York. She established the thyroid cell line, FRT, as a model cell-line for epithelial polarity and studied the mechanisms involved in protein sorting. She returned to Naples as Assistant Professor in 1995, where she continued this line of research on understanding the mechanism of GPI-anchored protein sorting, focusing on the role of membrane microdomains (rafts) and protein-lipid interactions in apical sorting.

In 2002, she initiated a new line of research at the Pasteur Institute in Paris on the role of intracellular trafficking of the prion protein during its transconformation into the infectious form.



Chiara Zurzolo

Graham Pavitt

Graham Pavitt obtained his degree in Microbiology and Virology from the University of Warwick and then received a DPhil in Biochemistry in 1992 from the University of Oxford, under the supervision of Professor Chris Higgins.

He joined Dr Alan Hinnebusch's research group at the National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, MD, with an EMBO Fellowship. Here he studied the translational control of GCN4 in *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*, focusing on the regulation of the multisubunit translation factor eIF2B by phosphorylation. This work established which eIF2B subunits contribute to the regulatory mechanism and which play roles in catalysing guanine-nucleotide exchange.

In 1998, Graham returned to the