

CIS STUDENTS & GRADUATES CONFERENCE 2007

'Serving God in Science'

A meeting for all CiS's students, graduates, postdocs, and anyone else who feels 'young'!

Saturday 3rd November, 12.30- 4.30pm (optional morning trip, and evening social - times to be confirmed).

LiCC, London, Cost - £5

Research Ethics, Prof Keith Fox

Being a Christian in Science, Dr Ruth Bancewicz

The scientist as a tent-maker, TBC

Go to the website or contact rmb67@cam.ac.uk to be added to the email list for more details when they are available.

CAMBRIDGE: CIS-FARADAY LECTURES

George F. R. Ellis, University of Cape Town.

The Multiverse, Ultimate Causation and God

5.30pm Tuesday 6th November 2007

Queen's Building Lecture Theatre, Emmanuel College

Followed by refreshments with a bookstall available. All welcome. Details of this and future lectures from 01223 741 283, or go to: www.st-edmunds.cam.ac.uk/faraday/Lectures.php

CENTRAL SOUTH

At our next meeting Dr Peter May, a GP from Southampton, and Dr Seyi Hotonu, Obstetrician and Gynaecologist from Newcastle, will debate from a Christian point of view the changing understanding of the science of contraception and the ethical dilemmas it poses. 8.00pm Wed 17th Oct, in Highfield Church Centre, Southampton, SO17 1RL

Global Warming - Sir John Houghton FRS, Thurs 29th Nov, Central Hall, Southampton at 7.30pm. A meeting to discuss a Christian approach to climate change and environmental issues. Jointly organised with the Southampton Christian Network.

More details on www.cis.org.uk/centralsouth/.

DURHAM

During the next academic year we plan to hold weekly discussion groups and put on two or three large scale events. We also hope to co-host a debate with the Philosophical Society in early December, on the nature of faith in a world of science.

For more details email cis.society@dur.ac.uk or write to: Durham University Christians in Science, Durham Students' Union, Dunelm House, New Elvet, Durham, DH1 3AN

GLASGOW

A group has been meeting every month for fellowship - and hope to organise further events in the Autumn. Contact Ari Sadanandom at a.sadanandom@bio.gla.ac.uk, tel. 0141 330 8639 for details.

HARROW

The next meeting will be on 25 October 2007 with Revd Dr John Polkinghorne, KBE, FRS speaking on "God's action in the World". More details to follow. Contact Rev Lyndon North, tel. 07747 638 783 for details.

NOTTINGHAM

As part of recent outreach events at a local church, I gave a talk and led a discussion on Richard Dawkins book, 'The God Delusion'. Approximately 70 people came, with about a third not being connected with a church. In the talk of about 45 minutes (longer than I intended), I tried to suggest alternative interpretations of the arguments Dawkins put forward. This was followed by discussion in small groups and then a question time. I concluded the meeting by showing a video clip of Francis Collins giving his testimony. After the conclusion, some groups continued discussing for a further hour.

The evening brought committed atheists, agnostics, people with questions, waverers and committed Christians together to hear a positive rebuttal of some of the arguments Dawkins raises and also to show that the Christian faith is not without evidence but is based on the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. It also showed that it is possible to discuss these issues in a non-confrontational atmosphere.

The fact that 20-30 people who were not Christians were willing to come shows that Richard Dawkins has touched on issues important to many and that we have an opportunity to present Christian truths which we shouldn't ignore.

The CiS group in Nottingham meets every two months to discuss various aspects of the science/religion debate. Contact: Geoff Bagley, 58 Meadow Road, Beeston, Nottingham, NG9 1JT. Tel: 0115 9258801 email: gbagley@ntlworld.com

OXFORD

Our autumn meeting will be on Monday, 15th October, 2007. Revd Dr Rodney Holder of the Faraday Institute, Cambridge, will speak on Multiverses. Rodney trained and worked in astrophysics before ordination, and in 2004 published "God, the Multiverse and Everything".

We meet once a term at St Andrew's Church, North Oxford, beginning with coffee and refreshments at 7.30 pm. Contact Diana Briggs (diana.briggs@gmail.com) for further information.

Change of address? Graduated?

If any of your details have changed, please contact the CiS membership secretary, Tom Moffat at:

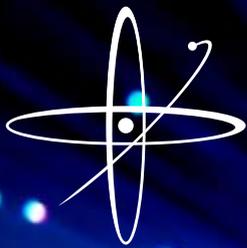
The Manse, Culross, Dunfermline, Fife, KY12 8JD. Tel. 01383 880 231. E-mail: subscriptions@cis.org.uk

EMAIL UPDATE

We are now sending a monthly email update to all our members. If you have not received this and would like to, please let Tom Moffat know your up to date email address

CIS DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

Ruth Bancewicz will have been part-time development officer for three years this autumn, and feels it is time to devote more time to her Faraday Institute work. The position will be advertised once the details of the new post have been worked out, but if you know of anyone who could fill this exciting, demanding and crucial role please contact Ruth or Caroline Berry. We would be especially keen to find someone who has just finished a PhD or has several years experience since graduation from a first degree.



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Caroline Berry, Secretary, 4 Sackville Close, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 3QD. Tel: 01732 451 907 cberry@pncl.co.uk

JOINT CIS/ASA CONFERENCE EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY 2ND-5TH AUGUST

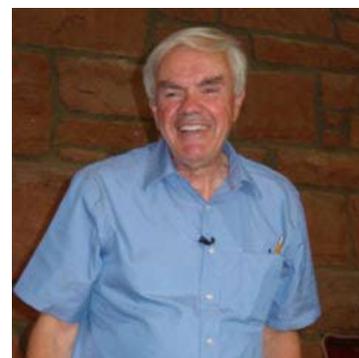
The fourth joint CiS/American Scientific Affiliation conference took place in Edinburgh this summer. About 140 CiS members and other UK delegates, and 179 ASA members gathered at Pollock Halls at Edinburgh University for a weekend of talks and social events aimed at forging new links and sharing knowledge from both sides of the Atlantic. The meeting began with choice of tours (on a wonderfully dry day!), including a boat trip to see the birds on Bass Rock out in the Firth of Forth, guided tours of the Royal Botanic Gardens and the National Museum of Scotland, a geology tour around Arthur's Seat, the hill behind Pollock Halls, led by a scientist from the British Geological Survey, and a boat trip on the Falkirk wheel, one of the few rotating canal boat lifts in the world. We gathered together at the end of the day for a drinks reception.



Friday morning started with a short worship time led by CiS chair Prof John Bryant, with Prof Wilson Poon of Edinburgh University sharing how scientists can be 'God-bearers' in the lab. The first plenary session was on 'New Frontiers in Planet Care', and Sir John Houghton opened with a talk on 'The Challenge of Global Warming'. He brought us up to speed with the latest science of climate change, and reminded us that the moral imperative is on our richer nations to lead the way in reducing emissions, and helping developing countries to develop sustainably. Prof Sir Ghilleen Prance spoke next on 'Why Should a Christian Care About Biodiversity', covering the relevant Biblical passages on this subject, not least the call to care for the poor. Prof Bob White's talk 'A Biblical Basis for care for the Environment' covered the theology behind our role as stewards in the world, and our future hope as Christians. Finally, Prof Calvin DeWitt spoke on 'Our Per-

sonal Response', beginning with tales of John Muir the famous Christian conservationist who grew up in Scotland, before moving to the USA. He finished by leading us in an *a capella* rendition of the doxology.

On Friday afternoon we were treated to a host of talks by ASA and CiS members in two batches of parallel sessions, 'Religion and the Rise of Modern Science', 'Bioethics', 'Theology and Modern Science' and 'Appropriate Technology', followed by 'Creation, Fall and Sabbath', 'Science and Religion in the Seventeenth Century', 'Environmental Stewardship' and 'Appropriate Technology'. I personally attended the first 'Appropriate Technology' session, which was an extremely encouraging demonstration of how engineers take their skills to developing countries, and 'Creation, Fall and Sabbath', which was an interesting look at some of the more difficult issues connected to creation and evolution. In the evening Prof Alister McGrath gave an excellent talk: 'New Frontiers in Science and Faith'. He covered six main areas, anthropic phenomena in physics and biology, the rise of scientific atheism, the cognitive science of religion, science as a dialogue partner for theology, the renewal of natural theology, and our future generation of researchers and supporters – something that is very close to many of our hearts and was much appreciated! The evening finished with a poster session and students/young scientists social.



Saturday began again with a short worship service led by the incoming CiS chair Prof Keith Fox, with ASA member George Murphy speaking on Revelation 21 – the new heavens and the new earth. The second plenary session was 'New Frontiers with Genes and Evolution'. Prof Simon Conway Morris opened the session with a talk 'Does Evolution Have a Deep Structure, and If So What are the Theological Implications?' where he covered the evidence for a direction in evolution. Prof Jeff Schloss spoke on 'Evolutionary Accounts of Religion and Altruism – Explaining vs Explaining Away', giving us a comprehensive survey of the field. Rev Dr Ernest Lucas followed with a talk on 'Interpreting Genesis 1-3', and Dr Denis Alexander closed the session with 'Darwinian Evolution; the Re-

ally Hard Questions' – taking all the questions that the other speakers kindly reserved for him, namely Adam and Eve, the fall and suffering!

The second plenary session on Saturday was 'New Frontiers in Neuroscience', and Prof Peter Clarke started with 'Free-Will and Determinism', a very thorough treatment of quantum theory and the soul. Prof Bill Newsome then spoke on 'Recent Developments in Brain and Mind', showing us how neuroscience often comes across questions of consciousness that resonate with our Christian worldview.



Finally, Prof Nancey Murphy gave a talk on 'Cognitive Science and the Evolution of Religion. A Philosophical and Theological Appraisal.' The second part of the afternoon was given over to four more parallel sessions, 'Darwin, Evolution and God', 'Bioethics', 'Designer genes? Evolution, Genetics and Intelligent Design', and 'Appropriate Technology'. My own choice, 'Bioethics' was an interesting mixture of talks covering manipulation of behaviour with drugs, ES cells and the evolution of disgust and morality.

Saturday evening saw us dancing the night away at a ceilidh with the local band 'Sporrandipity'!

On Sunday we had a service led by Dr Paul Wraight, with two talented local musicians leading us in worship. Rev Colin Sinclair from Palmerston Place Church in Edinburgh preached a very timely sermon on Philippians 1:12-26, thinking about serving God in spite of difficulties, being gracious in rivalries, and trusting God for the future. The first plenary session of the day was 'New Frontiers in Cosmology'. Sir John Polkinghorne spoke on 'Space, Time and Eternity', focusing on the place of God in relation to time in the universe. Dr Joan Centrella followed with a very entertaining talk on the latest discoveries in research on gravitational waves, and reflecting on her life as a Christian in the field of Astrophysics. The second plenary session was 'New Frontiers in Bioethics', and was opened by Prof Nigel M de S Cameron who spoke on 'Emerging Technologies and Human Dignity'. In 'Designers of the Future' Prof Gareth Jones gave us an interesting angle on biological enhancement, looking at the effects of improved public health and vaccines in the 1800s. Prof Joe Perry closed the conference with a challenging talk on 'Biotech crops. Where are the Frontiers?' Those remaining on Sunday night gathered again to watch the film on William Wilberforce and the abolition of slavery, 'Amazing Grace'

It is very difficult to summarise four days of conference, after so much preparation, in a few paragraphs, and I recommend that you take advantage of the talks that should be available online by the time this newsletter arrives on your doorstep. Thanks must go to all those who helped prepare and run the conference, not least our friends in the ASA office, and Dave Fisher who supplied these photos. You can also go to www.asa3.org for another report and resources from the conference.

Ruth Bancewicz, CiS Development Officer

Forty Years On... (or more accurately 42 years)

The genesis of the Edinburgh Conference was an initiative in 1965 from a North American businessman unhappy about the level of much faith-religion dialogue in North America. He financed 36 invited participants to meet in Oxford for a week to discuss "science and Christian belief". Twelve of the 36 were from Britain, 13 from North America, and 11 from another seven countries around the world. The tangible outcome was a book by Malcolm Jeeves, *The Scientific Enterprise and Christian Faith* (Tyndale Press, 1969), sub-titled "main themes from a conference of the Research Scientists' Christian Fellowship". This was a significant publication for its time and became a course text for a number of college courses. The 2nd Oxford Conference in 1985 (which was the first formal CiS/ASA Conference) suggested that it ought to be reprinted, and Malcolm Jeeves and Sam Berry revised it in time for the second CiS/ASA meeting in Cambridge as *Science, Life, and Christian Belief* (Apollos, 1998).

Four of the original Oxford 36 were at the Edinburgh Conference: Elving Anderson, David Booth, John Houghton and John Polkinghorne (and Malcolm Jeeves was only prevented from coming at the last moment). Question – and challenge: how many of those present in Edinburgh 2007 will contribute as much as the Oxford 36, and how many will be meeting with the next generation(s) forty years from now?

Professor Sam Berry

CIS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM was held in Edinburgh during the conference. John Bryant thanked President Ghillean Prance for his ongoing support, then summarised recent developments noting that the Charity Commissioners report on our application was imminent. The secretary reported on current membership, 662 paying members with an encouraging number of students responding after their free year. Peter van der Burght spoke of the Irish group which has 17 members but with wide publicity recently had 250 people at their day conference. Hugh Reynolds gave a brief Treasurers report, the 2005 accounts were accepted, the 2006 ones await further dealings with journal publishers Paternoster.

Elections

Keith Fox was elected Chairman to take over from John Bryant who was thanked for all he had done during his tenure. To comply with charity law the current committee has to stand down but the following were nominated for re-election:

J. Bausor, J.Ling, A. Louis, P.Marston, T. Moffatt.

Two new members were nominated, Simon Kolstoe from Southampton and Clare Parkinson from Durham. All those nominated were elected unanimously.

Full minutes of this meeting will be available on the CiS website.

SPECIAL BOOK OFFER:

Christianity, Climate Change and Sustainable Living, by Nick Spencer and Bob White, Published by SPCK 23 August 2007, £9.99.

Special offer from the Faraday Institute: £8 inc P&P
Go to <http://www.st-edmunds.cam.ac.uk/faraday/Shop>