



Ruth Bancewicz, Development Officer, 127 Catharine Street, Cambridge CB1 3AP. Tel: 0781 687 3515 ruthb@cis.org.uk
Caroline Berry, Secretary, 4 Sackville Close, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 3QD. Tel: 01732 451 907 cberry@pncl.co.uk

CIS STUDENT AND
POSTGRADUATE CONFERENCE
LONDON INSTITUTE FOR
CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIANITY
SATURDAY 3RD NOVEMBER 2007

CiS's first ever Student and Postgraduate Conference took place on Saturday 3rd November at The London Institute for Contemporary Christianity. 25 students, post-grads and post-docs from universities across the UK and from a wide variety of research backgrounds met for talks and discussion about 'Serving God in Science'. The day provided a chance to meet and get to know other students in similar situations, as well as to be encouraged and inspired by talks about the challenges of being a Christian in Science.

After the all important morning tea and coffee and an introduction from the chair, Dr Jo Knight of the Social, Genetic and Developmental Psychiatry Centre at the Institute of Psychiatry, the conference began with a talk on 'The Scientist as Tentmaker' by Dr Richardson. A biologist who has spent time teaching in the Far East, Dr Richardson set out the needs that there are to reach the unreached people of the world with the gospel and showed how we as scientists can make the best use of our opportunities to tell others about Jesus. Her key question was 'What is it that I can do as the person I am, with the gifts that I've got, that can bring most glory to God?'



The majority of people groups who have never heard the gospel are in the '10-40 window', between 10 and 40 degrees latitude. Most countries within this area are called 'creative access' countries, where entry as a straightforward missionary is forbidden. However, a 'tentmaker', someone who works at a 'secular' job in order to witness to others would be able to work in those places. By thinking about the origin of the phrase in Acts 18, Dr Richardson encouraged us to think about the many different ways in which scientists, or anyone who works in a 'secular' job, can glorify God through their work. The international nature of science means that scientists have unique opportunities to work in otherwise hard to reach places, but also brings people from all over the world to the lab bench next door.

Dr Richardson spoke about her own experiences teaching Biology and English in the Far East. She was able to build relationships with students and saw some of her students become Christians while she was there. She said that many of her students saw Christianity as part of Western culture which was both a source of curiosity and a barrier to acceptance. For many students the fact that a trained scientist also believed in God was a challenge in itself, in a culture where science is seen as having disproved God.

Going overseas as a scientist presents both challenges and opportunities. There are many specific opportunities to go, for instance, becoming a visiting lecturer at a university in another country, setting up international collaborations, or training scientists to write research papers in English. Dr Richardson encouraged us to find the things that we were passionate about and that we could most glorify God in doing.

CIS-ST JOHN'S COLLEGE DURHAM:
JOINT NORTHERN CONFERENCE 2008

Can a Scientist Believe in Miracles?

Saturday 8th March 2008, 10:00 am– 5:00 pm
St. John's College, Durham

Speakers include: Revd. John Polkinghorne, Prof John Bryant, Revd. Dr. David Wilkinson

(Booking form enclosed)

After a picnic lunch and lots of chatting, Dr Ruth Bancewicz, CiS Development Officer and a Research Associate at the Faraday Institute for Science and Religion spoke about 'Being a Christian in Science'. She looked at the experience of working scientists who are also Christians and at how they proclaim God by their work

A historically stable 40% of scientists [in the US] believe in a personal God who answers prayer. Belief in God seems to be strongly linked with the 'hardness' of the science; for instance there are more believing scientists in Maths and Physics than in Anthropology. Ruth asked various Christians working in science about their experiences. Many of them became Christians early in their student career, becoming immersed in the world of science and discovering Christianity simultaneously.

Christians in science work in a wide variety of different careers in science and related fields. Their reasons for doing so are equally varied, from a general love of knowledge, the inspiration of something they care about, or a specific desire to bring science and faith together. A feel-

ing shared by many is that the opportunity to investigate God's world is both inspiring and humbling.

Many scientists spoke about their appreciation of the close-knit nature of the lab and the feeling of a community of people united in their search for knowledge. The lab community is also a place to be self-sacrificing and humble in helping others and sustaining relationships. Ruth ended with an encouragement that 'Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord' (Colossian 2:23).

Prof. Keith Fox, CiS Chairman and Professor of Biochemistry at Southampton University led discussions on research ethics, asking us to consider the ethical issues researchers face in the lab on a day-to-day basis. He began looking at scientists who have been found to commit fraud, such as Korean stem cell researcher Hwang Woo-Suk, and electronics researcher Jan Hendrick Schön. Keith pointed out that scientists do not begin with large frauds, but by committing small frauds, which go undetected and so build confidence in the fraudster's ability to cover their tracks.

There have been various studies and suggestions for ethical codes within science such as Kenneth Pimple's 'The ten most important things to know about research ethics'. (Linked from <http://mypage.iu.edu/~pimple/>). Science is generally self-regulating, providing ethical training for researchers. However, undergoing ethical training does not guarantee ethical behaviour. The temptations to behave unethically may come from pressure for funding, or from the nature of the funding application process



which encourages less than honest practice by asking for preliminary results, or from the desire to hype up a new discovery. Keith led us in discussion of case studies based on real life situations. In each case, there was often no clear cut right answer, but there were ways in which trying to act ethically could have made a difference in resolving the situation or preventing it from happening. Christians have a valuable perspective on ethics and ethical standards.

The conference epilogue was given by the chair, Dr Jo Knight. Reflecting on her own experience as a Christian and as a research scientist, she pointed out that the position of a scientist provides the opportunity and the skills to speak about topics of science and faith with authority and experience. Scientists can engage our brains in the interaction between science and faith, not only in our areas of expertise, but in areas of concern to others. She encouraged us to develop our brains and use them, in science and beyond it.

The day provided lots of food for thought and helped build connections between student members of CiS. One delegate said 'It was really stimulating and motivational. It was also good to meet other CiS folk.' Delegates also took home food for reading, with almost £200 worth of books sold on a range of science-faith topics. Many thanks to Jo Knight and Ruth Bancewicz for their organisational skills, to all the speakers for an inspiring day, and John Bausor for the book stall.

Bekki Pearce, assistant editor, CiS online student magazine

AN INTERVIEW WITH ALISTER McGRATH

Professor Alister McGrath is Professor of Historical Theology at Oxford University. He will be well known to many CiS members for his talks at numerous CiS local group events, and his books, especially his latest response to Richard Dawkins in 'The Dawkins Delusion?' (SPCK, 2007).

Tell us what you've been doing until now.

My undergraduate studies were in Chemistry at Oxford University. I carried out a research project in the lab of Prof Sir George Radda, and won a scholarship so that I could work towards a DPhil (Oxford's term for a PhD) in the same lab. During this time I also studied for a degree in theology. After I completed my DPhil,



I went to Cambridge to continue my studies in theology and train for ordination in the Church of England. From Cambridge I went to Nottinghamshire for three years of parish ministry before returning to Oxford to join Wycliffe Hall as a lecturer in Christian doctrine and ethics, and a member of the Oxford University Faculty of Theology. In 1999 I was awarded a personal chair in Historical Theology at Oxford University, and in 2004 I was involved in establishing

the Oxford Centre for Christian Apologetics, of which I was director for two years. Currently I hold a Research Fellowship at Harris Manchester College Oxford, and am working on natural theology, trying to develop new intellectual pathways from nature to God. I am arranging a major conference on natural theology coming up in 2008 (see page 4 for details).

What do you do for fun?

I enjoy reading detective novels, such as Inspector Morse and Perry Mason, and trying to make sense of what is happening - rather like science! I also enjoy hill walking, partly because it's good for me, and partly because it's a good way to enjoy nature.

Who have been the most important role models in your life?

On the scientific side, two people had a very big influence on me. One was Jeremy Knowles, one of my tutors in chemistry at Oxford, who went on to become Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science at Harvard. The other was R J P Williams, an expert in bio-inorganic chemistry, who interviewed me for a place at Oxford back in 1970. I've kept in touch with both, and they continue to be very significant dialogue partners for me. On the Christian side, the person who probably had the most influence was Michael Green. I benefited both from his infectious enthusiasm for his faith, and also his emphasis on scholarship in the service of the church.

What challenges have you come across as a Christian and a scientist?

I do think that Christians are often not particularly well served by their pastors, who very often don't know enough about the sciences to be able to make helpful correlations between their faith and the world of science. The result is that well-meaning

students who are just beginning the study of chemistry or physics or biology, and want to relate their faith and their science, find themselves a bit bereft. The only way we can help them is by finding older chemists, older physicists, older biologists who've already done this, and who can help them to think things through. There's a real need for mature and reflective Christians who are already in various scientific disciplines to mentor those who are rising up through the ranks, because I don't think anybody else is going to do it.

Another challenge that I found was the uses to which science is put; there's a real danger that the science we do for the sheer intellectual stimulus will be used by somebody else in a rather sinister way. So I think that one has to be deadly realistic about science, being aware that the discovery that can be used to great advantage in this area can also be used in a different way in a different area, and it really depends on who's doing the using. The real difficulty of this is if there is something intrinsically wrong with human nature, then scientific advance actually simply enables human beings to do nasty things more effectively. And that's a very disturbing thought. It haunts me that something that is good can be put to such evil ends.

How has your faith helped you as a scientist, or vice versa?

My initial instinct as a new Christian was probably to not think about the relationship between science and Christianity, but

obviously I realised very quickly that there had to be a significant relationship here that I had to explore. I was helped by the thought that if God made the world, then studying it will actually help you know more about God, or make you appreciate God more. Science is about an engagement with the works of God and it therefore enables you to appreciate God all the more. Faith allows you to have an enhanced understanding of the beauty of nature. I found that the natural sciences really resonated with my faith.

What science-faith book have you most enjoyed/found most helpful?

It's not exactly a science-faith book, but as a young theologian I found the writings of the Swiss Reformed theologian Karl Barth very helpful, especially his volume *Evangelical Theology*. When I started studying theology, I initially found a complete lack of interest in the precise scientific way of thinking. Around this time a friend recommended Barth to me, and in his writing I found the same concerns that I had were being addressed. Now, of course, if I'd read others, I'm sure I'd have found the same rigour, but just through historical accident, Barth actually made it possible for me to be a theologian. Nowadays, I recommend those who are just starting to think about science and faith to read John Polkinghorne. The two that I think are best for beginners are "One World" and "Science and Creation" (SPCK).

CiS LONDON CONFERENCE 2008

CELEBRATING DARWIN?

Creation, Evolution and Theological Challenges

Sat 1st November 2008: St Paul's Robert Adam Street

Speakers include

Rev Dr David Wilkinson, 'The Christian Doctrine of Creation'

Prof Darrell Falk, 'Human Evolution - Biological Facts and Theological Challenges'

DEVELOPMENT OFFICER—RUTH BANCEWICZ

Ruth has been working part-time for CiS as Development Officer for just over three years and has now decided that it is time to move on. She will be bowing out over the next few months and will work for CiS one day a week until the end of the year. Sadly, this will be her last edition of PreCiS! On behalf of everyone we thank Ruth for all that she has done.

A quick look at what has happened in this time shows the invaluable contribution that she has made. In these three years recruitment of subscribing members has increased more than six-fold and approximately 150 free student affiliates have joined each year. The number of local branches has grown from one to eleven and the use of the website has risen dramatically. Ruth has been especially valued by our student members and she has done much to encourage and equip them. Fortunately we will still be hearing lots from Ruth as she will be working on a project with the Faraday Institute, engaged in a programme to develop materials for churches on science and religion. We praise God for

Submissions for next PréCiS

We would love to receive your contributions - news of local group activities, events, new books and other activities.

Items for the next PréCiS should be submitted to:

Caroline Berry at cberry@pncl.co.uk or
4 Sackville Close, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 3QD

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

all that she has achieved and give a BIG thank you to Ruth and pray for her future.

With Ruth's move we will be looking for a new Development Officer. For the past two years Ruth's salary and expenses have been funded by a grant from the Sir Halley Stewart Trust, and this too has reached a successful completion. Ruth's work has demonstrated the need for CiS to have someone in this role who can travel, meet people, raise the profile of CiS and encourage those who are engaged in integrating their science and their faith. We will therefore need to find the means to continue to support such a salaried worker and we will be looking for new ways to fund a similar post and to expand the possibilities in 2008 and beyond; watch this space! To this end we will be asking our own members to provide extra financial support and we will be approaching you soon, now that our charitable status has been confirmed. Please pray for the resources to be able to continue this vital ministry.

Keith Fox, CiS chair



STUDENTS & GRADUATES: THE TRAVELLING SCIENTIST

I work as a statistical geneticist in the Social, Genetic and Developmental Psychiatry department at the Institute of Psychiatry in London. Recently I went to Iran with three other English academics to teach at a workshop. It was a fantastic experience. The first evening we were taken out for an incredible meal, dining out on terraces cut into the sides of a mountain. The workshop started the following day with an opening ceremony at which we were welcomed by the British Ambassador to Iran as well as a number of other university dignitaries. The course was an introduction to statistical genetics (the statistics involved in hunting for genes that influence complex traits such as heart disease and diabetes). We explained how to analyse case-control datasets as well as family datasets, and addressed the issue of using qualitative and quantitative data as well as discussing newer techniques such as genome-wide association studies. Our students were extremely polite and welcoming as well as very hard working. They had many specific questions relating to genetic projects they were working on demonstrating the high level of engagement with the course materials.



On the morning after the workshop we commenced a three-day tour of the country that had been arranged by our host. We saw many things including Persepolis, the ruins of the ancient ceremonial capital of the Persian empire. I am hoping to return at some point, and I have already arranged for a bursary to be provided for our host so that he could attend a summer-school run at my department. We are discussing a future collaboration in

which we will explore genetic diversity in the Iranian population. This will be a very interesting project given the rich history of the country.

I learnt that Iran is a very interesting country, full of incredible architecture, history, culture and wonderful people. The trip was funded by the British Council, and they hope that bringing academics together from different countries may reduce the risk of conflict. After my trip I certainly wouldn't let Britain go to war with Iran without registering protest!

Jo Knight

International Conference on Natural Theology

Beyond Paley: Renewing the vision for Natural Theology
23-25 June 2008, Museum of Natural History,
Oxford University

The conference will review every aspect of the question of whether the divine can be known through nature, aiming to stimulate discussion of the scientific, theological, historical, philosophical and broader cultural aspects of this important issue.

Confirmed speakers include:

Dr Justin Barrett, Prof Jeremy Begbie, Prof John Hedley Brooke, Prof Simon Conway Morris, Prof Hilary Fraser, Prof Peter Harrison, Prof John Haught, Prof Alister McGrath, Prof Richard Swinburne, Prof Keith Ward

Student bursaries available.

<http://www.naturaltheology.org/>

EDUCATION

The progressive movement from ignorance to wisdom could be stated as a subliminal or even a dogmatic assertion of science. Proponents of such assertions might include those with the view that the scientist has an exclusive perspective, in a seemingly unstoppable exploration of truth. This view might be further enhanced when the fabric of meta narrative appears greatly supported, for example, when theories with substantial coherence conjoin.

In 1979, Alun Guth is accredited as having linked the world of Particle Physics with that of Cosmology. The inflationary theory was born, linking the very small with the Big Bang theory.

But to what extent does this lead to a view of truth? And might experiments like the search of the Higgs Particle move humankind from a state of ignorance to one of wisdom? In the context of tremendous and courageous scientific endeavours, what do religious conceptions offer in the understanding of matter and humanity?

With the projected completion of building of the ATLAS detector at CERN next year, the scientific community may be entering a period of great discovery. The King's School, Canterbury is preparing a day conference for schools in March 2008 to support the exploration of these and related topics.

John Ling, Education Secretary

BOOKS AVAILABLE FROM CIS

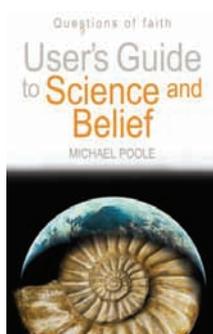
REPRINTED EDITIONS AT REDUCED PRICE

Beyond Belief – science, faith and ethical challenges, Denis Alexander & Bob White (Lion), £5 post free (list price £8.99).

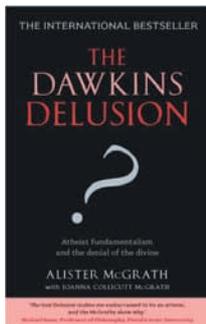
Can we believe Genesis today? – the Bible and questions of science, Ernest Lucas (IVP), £5 post free (list price £7.99).

NEW TITLES

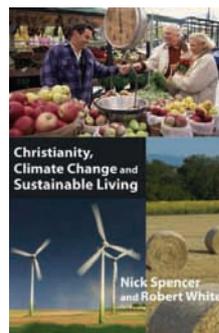
User's Guide to Science and Belief, MW Poole (Lion 2007), 127 pp, £6.99 pb. This is the long-awaited third edition of a very popular book which deals with all the basic issues in science and religion in an accessible yet authoritative way. There are numerous illustrations in full colour, making it very suitable for use with pupils and students as well as older people. If you want a very readable introduction, or something to give to a friend, this is the book for you. Highly recommended.



The Dawkins Delusion, Alister McGrath (SPCK 2007), 78 pp, £7.99 pb. Richard Dawkins' *The God Delusion* has received much media coverage, and in this book McGrath responds with a forthright criticism of "Dawkins' misrepresentations and overstatements", and a critique of his salient questions. He marshals very powerful and effective counter arguments to the viewpoints Dawkins puts forward.

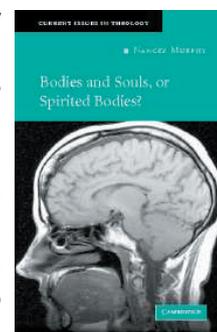


Christianity, climate change and sustainable living, Nick Spencer & Robert White (SPCK 2007), £9.99 pb. The



authors point out that current habits of consumption and production in the West cannot be continued. Sustainable consumption and production is addressed from a Christian perspective, with careful consideration of the scientific, sociological, economic and theological aspects. This is a challenge to all Christians to respond to the needs of God's world.

Bodies and Souls or Spirited Bodies? Nancey Murphy (Cambridge University Press 2006), 154 pp, £12.99 pb. The question of the soul has long exercised Christian thinkers. Is it something added to the physical body to make a human being? In this significant book Murphy argues for a 'physicalist' position in which a human being is a unity, but one which retains the traditional Christian position of humans as rational, moral and spiritual. Such qualities are seen as emerging from our neurobiological complexity and developing through relationships to others, to culture and to God.



HOW TO ORDER

10% discount to CiS members, and £2 off all books over £5 to CiS student members. Postage extra (apart from the reprinted editions at a special price). Details and order forms on the CiS website, or contact John Bausor, CiS publications secretary, 16 Walter Road, Wokingham RG41 3JA, tel. 0118 978 2902.

CiS Welcome Information

In this mailing we have included the CiS welcome letter because it contains some useful information that may have changed since you joined CiS.

James Gregory Public Lectures on Science and Religion

A series of 12 public lectures by eminent national and international speakers will be held at the **University of St Andrews** over a 4-year period on a wide range of contemporary issues in Science and Religion. The lectures are supported by a grant from the John Templeton Foundation to Eric Priest and Alan Torrance.

Bishop Tom Wright from Durham, a leading international New Testament theologian, will start the series at 5.15 on Thursday, December 20, 2007 in Physics A.

<http://www.jamesgregory.org/>

The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion, Cambridge

Short Courses in 2008

Introduction to Science and Religion
Jan 4-6

Ethics on the Frontiers of Science: Religion – Help or Hindrance?
April 11-13

Science, Religion and the Environment
June 27-29

Flyers & posters from Pauline Hall,
pah55@cam.ac.uk
Tel. 01223 741 283.
www.st-edmunds.cam.ac.uk/faraday

LOCAL GROUPS

EDINBURGH

After our first meeting the Edinburgh local group has decided to hold monthly meetings throughout the academic year on a range of topics and with a range of formats. We also plan to organise occasional public lectures or debates on topics of interest to the general public and scientists alike. Details for our next meeting are yet to be finalised but if you would like more information or would like to be included on our mailing list please contact me at christine.faulkner@ed.ac.uk.

OXFORD

Our next meeting will be on Friday 15th February, 2008, when Donald Hay will speak on 'Climate change: Christian reflections on the Stern Review'. Donald is an economist at Jesus College and former Head of the Division of Social Sciences at Oxford University.

We meet once a term at St Andrew's Church, Linton Road, Oxford, beginning with coffee at 7.30 pm. Please contact Diana Briggs diana.briggs@gmail.com for more information or to be added to the emailing list.

NOTTINGHAM

The group in Nottingham meets every two months to discuss various aspects of the science/religion debate. The next meeting will be Tuesday Dec 4th at 8pm discussing cloning.

For more information, contact Geoff Bagley, 58 Meadow Road, Beeston, Nottingham, NG9 1JT., Tel: 0115 9258801, email: gbagley@ntlworld.com.

DURHAM

DUCiS has had an excellent start to the academic year, with many new people joining us and a vastly expanded mailing list. Our lecture by Rodney Holder on 'Science and Faith - Friends and Foes?' was very well received and gave us a good grounding in the dialogue between science and faith.

This term we have started a weekly discussion group, tackling a different topic each week such as 'Should we be surprised that we're here?'. It has been very successful and has attracted many enthusiastic students and non-students. We meet Wednesday evenings, 8.30-10pm, in the Function Room upstairs in the Big Jug Pub on Claypath. To find out more, please email cis.society@dur.ac.uk

CAMBRIDGE

CiS-Faraday Lectures

"What is a Person?: Matters of life and death", with Prof John Wyatt (UCL), Thursday 21 Feb 2008 at 5.30pm. 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

IRELAND

Christians in Science Ireland is organising a conference entitled "Ireland and Global Warming", which will be held on Saturday 16th February 2008 in the Spires Conference Centre in Belfast. Further information about the conference and about registration can be found at <http://www.cis.org.uk/ireland/>.

We want to look holistically at the global issues raised by global warming, at the impact on Ireland, and at what we can do as individuals to make a difference. Confirmed speakers include

Prof. Sir John Houghton FRS, Dr. John Sweeney, Prof. Bob White FRS.

SOUTH CENTRAL

On October 17th the CiS central south group along with the Southampton branch of CMF hosted a debate entitled "Contraception and the start of life". Two excellent presentations by Dr Peter May (retired GP and member of the general synod) and Dr Seyi Hotonu (SpR in Genito-Urinary medicine and author of "Contraception: a Pro-Life Guide") were followed by a time of stimulating questions from the floor. The evening provided an example of how disagreement within the community can be a positive force for helping Christians examine their thinking on scientific, ethical and theological questions.

Our next event will be on a public lecture by Sir John Houghton FRS entitled "Global Warming - a global challenge" followed by a response from Alan Whitehead MP. The event will be co-hosted by "Southampton Christian Network" and will coincide with the publication of a statement of intent regarding environmental stewardship from the local Christian community. The lecture will be held on Thursday 29th November at 7:30pm in Central Hall Southampton. More details can be found on www.cis-centralsouth.org.uk

SOUTHWEST

CIS SW have continued to be active locally: Matt Frost spoke on 'Christianity and Science - are they compatible?' as part of an open lecture series and John Spicer ran a workshop with 200 participants at Mutley Baptist Church entitled 'Can a Christian be an evolutionist?' Tony Watkins organised a meeting in Exeter with the Catholic Diocese of Plymouth in association with The Faraday Institute, University of Cambridge entitled "Can we Live a Life of Faith in a World of Science?" which was well received. Also, on the 18th October there was the first meeting of the new student branch of CIS SW. Please contact KT van Santen (student group coordinator) at katherine.vansanten@students.plymouth.ac.uk for further information.

In the future, University of Plymouth Chaplaincy and CIS Southwest will present an open lecture series titled 'Faith Thinking in a world of Science'. On the 18th January 7.30pm, Professor Sam Berry will give a talk 'Stewards or Stupid - do we have a role? (Creation and the church's responsibility of care)'; on the 1st February 7.30pm Professor John Bryant will talk on "Finding our way through some of biology's moral mazes", and on the 22nd February Professor Bob White will talk on "Climate change - a Christian response". Location TBC - email to chaplaincy@plymouth.ac.uk or matfr@mba.ac.uk.

Finally, CIS SW wishes to remember Linda Ramsay who sadly passed away in October, aged 47 and survived by her husband Graham and two children, James and Clementine. Linda was an exceptionally bright physicist, who was secretary for the CIS SW group until her illness meant she was unable to continue. She will be remembered with much affection by those of us who had the privilege of knowing her.

