



THE NUTRITION SOCIETY GAZETTE

Winter 2021



Professor Julie Lovegrove: President's Update

- 75th Anniversary of *the British Journal of Nutrition*
- What does success look like?
- New Special Interest Groups (SIGs) Announced

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Colour Key

UPDATES **SECTIONS**
EVENTS **MEMBERSHIP**
HISTORY

Front cover image: L-R Lord Boyd Orr's Great Grandson, Jeremy Orr Barton, Andy Salter, MP, Lord Boyd Orr's Granddaughter, Anne Patricia Lubboch Gooch, Professor Julie Lovegrove



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Editorial

Dr Carrie Ruxton, Honorary Strategic Communications Officer

Another bumper issue, showing that The Nutrition Society Members have much to say and are involved in a wide variety of activities.

We hear from our President, Trustees and CEO, with exciting plans for the future. As our new five-year strategy unfolds, we see more opportunities to learn, engage and network. Theme Leaders are developing their plans for 2022, especially ideas for Special Interest Groups, so check these out (pages 19-21). Your Chairs for Ireland, Scotland and the Student Sections have also provided reports on this year's meetings, and there is an opportunity to join the Scottish Section committee.



I am always fascinated to read about the work of individual members, such as new Honorary Fellow Professor Geraldine McNeill (page 7), Nigerian member, Chiaka Charles Nkwoala (page 14-15) and animal nutritionist, Kerensa Hawkey (page 22). If you would like to contribute an article about your job, do drop me an email via office@nutritionssociety.org. This is also the time of year we offer our congratulations to winners of the Silver Medal and Julie Wallace awards (page 10).

With so much focus on nutrition policy in the media, it is great to receive an article on the National Food Strategy from Professor David Gally, Chief Scientific Advisor for Foods Standards Scotland (page 25), and to get an update on folic acid fortification from Council member, Dr Adrienne Cullum (page 24).

I hope to see you at the Winter meeting in London but, if our paths do not cross, do have a wonderful Christmas. ■

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President's Report

Professor Julie Lovegrove, President



The first conference of the Society was held on 23 July 1941 at the Royal Institute in London. It was chaired by the eminent Lord Boyd Orr, the first Society President, and recorded an attendance of the full membership of 28. Exactly 80 years on to the day, we were delighted to honour Lord Boyd Orr by giving his name to our newly refurbished headquarters in London. At a ceremony held at our offices, we were very pleased to welcome Lord Boyd Orr's Granddaughter, Ann Patricia Lubboch Gooch, and Great Grandson, Jeremy Orr Barton and the Local MP for Hammersmith, Mr Andy Slaughter. The event was also live streamed to give our members the opportunity to be part of this very memorable occasion. We are fortunate to reflect on how the Society's membership has grown over this time, from 28 to over 3000, with an impressive international reach of members in 85 countries around the world. You can find out more about the opening of Boyd Orr House on page 11.

In June, I was privileged to be invited to an event held in honour of another nutrition giant, Dr Elsie Widdowson, in her hometown of Barrington, Cambridge. Dr Margaret Ashwell OBE unveiled a Blue Plaque to celebrate Elsie's substantive contribution to nutrition science, which included determination of the nutritional content of foods, that are still used to this day. Elsie was the second female President of the Society (1977-1980) and a personal hero of mine. It was a true honour to be able to be there to commemorate her life, and you can take a look at the highlights on page 13.

The Society continues to deliver a full calendar of events including the successful Summer Conference "Nutrition

in the changing world", delivered online in July, and hosted by the University of Southampton with 406 attendees from 23 countries. Particular thanks are owed to Drs Caroline Childs, Christina Vogel and Ilse Bloom for a great conference. In the Autumn, 'Nutrition Futures 2021', provided the first opportunity for a hybrid meeting, hosted by Imperial College London. Special thanks to everyone involved for the smooth and efficient delivery of the impressive presentations, especially from our excellent student members.

I am looking forward to the Winter Conference on "Obesity and the Brain" at the Royal Society, London, another hybrid event organised by Dr Wendy Hall, our Theme Lead for 'Nutrition and Optimum Life Course'. 2022 will also be a busy year of activity; reuniting us in face-to-face events, with the added bonus of live streaming for the benefit of those who cannot attend or are overseas, and culminating in the IUNS Congress in Tokyo in December.

In October, the Council held a strategy meeting in Manchester to discuss new and transparent ways to conduct meetings and enhance the role of Council within the Society. We were delighted that our new Trustees: Professor John Brameld (Honorary Science Officer) and Dr Anastasia Kalea (Honorary Officer without Portfolio) and new Council Members: Dr Charlotte Evans (Public Health) and Louise Durrant (Industry) could join us for these discussions. It was a very successful day and I thoroughly enjoyed meeting in person after being locked to my computer screen for so long.

Progress for The Association for Nutrition (AfN) Undergraduate Curriculum in Nutrition for Medical Doctors has been ongoing since May 2018 and was launched in September this year. The Society are proud to be a key contributor to this important initiative, with special thanks to Dr Bernadette Moore, Dr Dean Sewell and Professor Bernard Corfe. There is a call on all medical schools to now incorporate this into their training programme for future doctors, to facilitate the ultimate ambition of improving the nutrition of our population.

STEM for Britain is an annual event held in Houses of Parliament to support and promote Britain's early-career research scientists and engineers. I am delighted to announce that Amber Bozard, from the University of Birmingham, won The Nutrition Society Award 2021. It was a great pleasure to present Amber with her prize at the Award Ceremony held in The Attlee Suite, Portcullis House. This is an excellent opportunity to showcase the exciting research of our membership to our STEM colleagues and MPs, and I would encourage all early career researchers to consider taking part.

Despite the major upheaval of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Society has emerged in good health as an organisation, and we are looking for new opportunities to invest and support Member-led initiatives in 2022. We look forward to receiving any ideas you may have in this regard.

I wish you a happy, enjoyable, and restful festive break. ■

75th Anniversary of *The British Journal of Nutrition* (BJN)

Professor John Mathers, Editor in Chief of the *BJN*,
Newcastle University

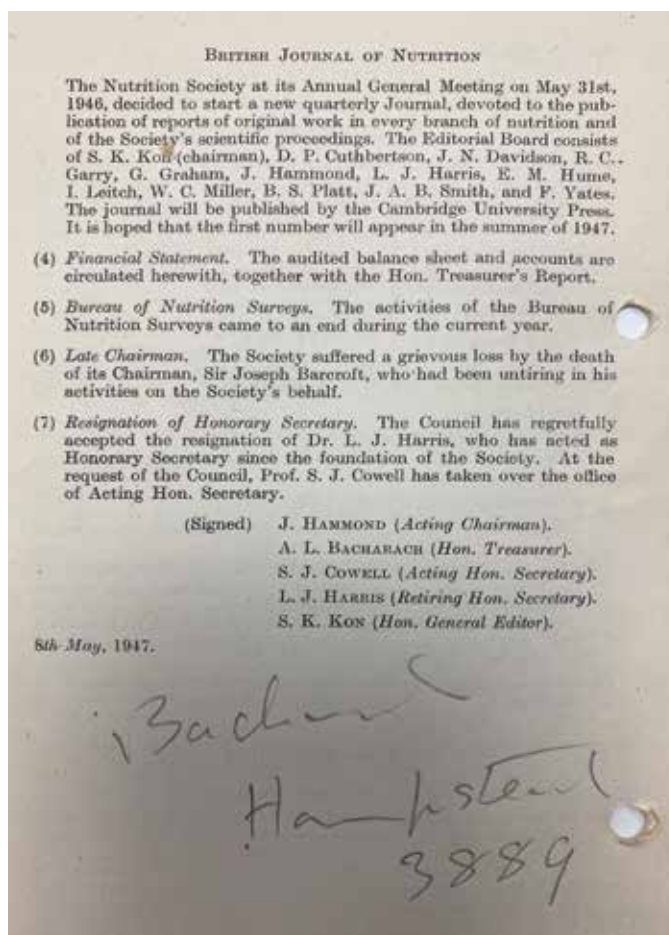
Next year (2022), we will celebrate the 75th Anniversary of the *British Journal of Nutrition* (BJN). This is an opportunity to look back to the earlier days of the journal and to have a glimpse of what comes next.

How it all began

In 1942, Heffers of Cambridge printed a small 20-page document entitled ‘*Proceedings of The Nutrition Society No. 1. (1942)*’ that contained a summary of contributions to the Inaugural Scientific Meeting of The Nutrition Society held on 18 October 1941. Throughout WW2, despite great shortage of paper, the Society continued to publish reports of its scientific meetings in the *Proceedings*. However, in 1944, the editors of the *Lancet* and the *British Medical Journal*, amongst others, suggested that the Society should consider publishing its own journal containing original papers in nutrition research. This led to the decision by Council, on 31 May 1946, to launch the *BJN* (Figure 1). Subscription to the journal would cost

10 – 15 shillings (50 – 75p) per year for members and £2.50 for non-members. Publishing a journal was, and remains, a financially risky business and the then Honorary Treasurer (A. L. Bacharach) concluded that it should be possible “just to scrape through without a deficit during the first year” after which a profit would be expected. This uncertainty may be one of the reasons that the subscription price for non-members was set, eventually, at £3 annually.

In those early days, our publishing partners were Cambridge University Press (CUP) who, among other things, helped with drafting Directions to Contributors, Editorial Report forms and a Guide to Style. We have continued that close and productive relationship with CUP for most of the last 75 years. The only break was between 1997 and 2006 when the *BJN* was published by CABI Publishing. As the Society’s Honorary Secretary at the time, I was involved with the decision to move to CABI – a decision taken on financial grounds.



Editors-in-Chief

Our first Editor-in-Chief (then styled Chairman of the Editorial Board) was the remarkable Professor Stanislas K Kon who held the post from 1947 to 1965 when he retired as Deputy Director of the National Institute for Research in Dairying (at Reading) and was appointed as President of The Nutrition Society. His obituary, published in the *BJN* in 1987, noted that “The Nutrition Society owes much to S. K. Kon.... His passionate demand for accuracy and his insistence on clarity of expression may have offended some of his authors, but many of us have cause to be grateful for the – sometimes harsh – lessons he taught us about the proper presentation of our results. His editorship set the pattern for the high standards the Journal maintains today.” The *BJN* continues to enjoy a high reputation for the rigour and fairness of our review process. Each of the Editors-in-Chief who succeeded Kon (Table 1) stood on the shoulders of a giant. Each made important contributions to the growth and development of our journal. I am delighted to celebrate their achievements and to record my thanks for the excellent work done by all Editorial Board Members, and by the anonymous peer reviewers, across the years.

In 1983, when I first joined the Editorial Board, Roy Smith was Chairman. The three things that I remember about the annual Editorial Board meetings were: i) the very large ornate chair in which Roy sat (which added to the air of authority), ii) the detailed discussion about the standards that we expected during peer review and iii) the extensive lunches that we enjoyed between the morning and

afternoon sessions of the Board. Over the past two years, our Board meetings have taken place virtually via Microsoft Teams so, whilst we could only dream of delicious lunches, we were able to focus on continuing improvements to the author journey and to the peer review process.

Looking to the future.

Next year we will have a number of events at the Society, and other conferences to mark the *BJN*'s 75th Anniversary and I look forward to seeing you at those events. In the journal, we will be celebrating some of our most highly-cited papers that have been influential in the development of nutrition science. In addition, we will continue to introduce improvements to how the *BJN* does its work in serving the nutrition community as we strive towards our goal of making the *BJN* the go to journal for the best nutrition research. ■

Name	Term of Office
Stanislas K Kon *	1947 – 1965
Clive C Balch *	1966 – 1969
T Geoffrey Taylor *	1970 – 1975
George AJ Pitt *	1976 – 1981
Roy H Smith *	1982 – 1987
Mike I Gurr *	1989 – 1990
David AT Southgate *	1991 – 1995
Keith N Frayn *#	1996 – 1998
Paul Trayhurn #	1999 – 2005
Philip C Calder #	2006 – 2012
Graham C Burdge #	2013 – 2019
John C Mathers #	2019 -

Table 1: Editors-in-Chief of the *British Journal of Nutrition*

* Chairman of the Editorial Board,

Editor-in-Chief

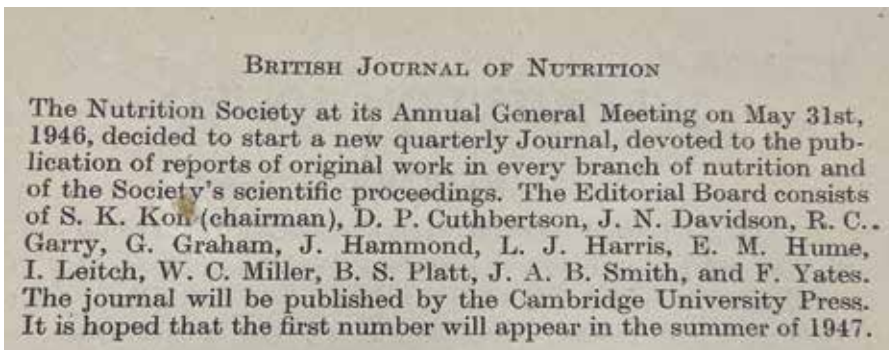


Figure 1: Council's decision to launch the *British Journal of Nutrition*

PUBLIC HEALTH NUTRITION WILL BE A FULLY OPEN ACCESS JOURNAL FROM JANUARY 2022 ONWARDS, MAKING IT PERMANENTLY AND FREELY AVAILABLE TO READ, DOWNLOAD AND SHARE AROUND THE WORLD.

To help share the latest nutrition-related public health research developments around the world and drive impact, public health nutrition research needs to be freely accessible to all.

The Nutrition Society and Cambridge University Press recognise that an open scholarly ecosystem will accelerate the ability of research to solve problems, which is of the highest importance to our authors and readers, and to society in general.

Converting *Public Health Nutrition* to Open Access will ensure greater visibility and impact for the high-quality research that the journal publishes, strengthening its contribution to nutrition science for the benefit of all.

What does success look like?

Mark Hollingsworth, CEO



We launched the Society's new five-year Strategic Plan in July 2021 and, as part of its wider distribution, I sent a copy of the Plan to the Society's Honorary Fellows. One of the Fellows replied and noted the Plan did not contain any specific targets or deliverables. The Fellow felt without these it was not clear how the Society would be able to assess its success or determine the extent to which it had made suitable progress towards its stated ambitions. This is an important question, and has led me to consider from an organisational perspective 'what does success look like?'

The strategic planning process we followed had demonstrated most of those who engaged in it are effective at developing strategies and objective/goal-setting. But, the follow on would be to consider what it would take for us to feel successful in the long term beyond just achieving goals or objectives?

I suggest one key component that we have in the past neglected to take into consideration is our values, those attitudes and beliefs that not only define what we and the Society stand for, but which also serve as an ethical compass to determine in our decision-making processes how to achieve our goals with transparency and integrity. To achieve sustainable long-term success requires a mindset; an all-prevailing attitude that in seeking to achieve the strategic objectives we do not conflict with the

values of the Society. To do otherwise will potentially impact the level of engagement the members, stakeholders and staff commit to this effort. It can also adversely impact the level of trust they have in the leaderships' direction and vision. With this in mind, for the first time we have embedded the Society's Ethical Behaviour and Standards of Conduct, Scientific Conduct and Research, and Environmental and Sustainability policies in the Strategic Plan.

In addition to values, another element that could define what success looks like is how the Society connects with its charitable objects and the mission.

When it comes to day-to-day success, it is often easy to focus on obvious measures such as profitability, how many members have joined, how many textbooks have we sold, how many delegates attend a conference. While these are important numbers, it is wise to consider these are just the desired outcomes from our efforts. I suggest what is also required is the context of how gaining these numbers helps the Society to move one step closer to achieving its charitable objects and mission – the impact. Framing these outcomes within the context of the objects and mission is also critical to fostering both a sense of ownership in the membership, stakeholders and staff for their collective efforts as well as accountability for the outcomes from their contributions. Moving one step closer to the objects and mission in understanding

the impact becomes a success that everyone can understand, enjoy and appreciate.

So, if we relate success to alignment with our values and achieving the impact of our objects and mission, my last thought is why will this success matter? After the congratulations, praise, attention and perhaps awards are achieved, why will this success matter to the members, stakeholders and staff? For success to matter, it needs to go beyond the pragmatic measures I mentioned earlier to connect to what matters to the members, stakeholders and staff. What we define as success in the Society should not only be specific and tangible, but intensely personal, in a way that members, stakeholders and staff see it as their success, and not just by association, as much as the Society's.

Measuring success in this way should also be something that is not temporary, as is the case with most number-based metrics. Instead, success could serve to also empower, inspire and sustain those engaged in the work of the Society in believing in the objects and mission. It could even develop a belief in their collective abilities to do and be better.

I am grateful to our Honorary Fellow for asking this question. Peter Drucker stated, 'Remember, that to be effective as a leader doesn't mean you need to have all the answers. Rather, it means having the ability to ask the big questions.' ■

Professor Geraldine McNeill

University of Edinburgh



What first attracted you to work in human nutrition?

As an undergraduate medical student in Cambridge, I was able to take a year studying a new subject; I chose physical anthropology. This opened my eyes to the wider context of human health; development and the importance of health promotion and disease prevention, with my thesis on diet and child growth in Nigeria supervised by Dr Celia Greenberg at the MRC Dunn Nutrition Unit. I then spent a year as a volunteer for *Save the Children Fund* in Burkina Faso, West Africa, where I was involved in growth monitoring of children under five years in the semi-nomadic population. After completing my medical training, I returned to complete MSc and then PhD in nutrition at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine which provided a strong foundation for my subsequent career.

How did your early career develop?

I spent five years in post-doctoral position at the Rowett Research Institute in Aberdeen. My prime responsibility was setting up a residential human nutrition unit and two whole body indirect calorimetry chambers which needed 24 hr supervision during measurement of our volunteers. We also developed methods for measuring body composition and carried out detailed studies of the influence of the macronutrient composition of the diet on energy expenditure and faecal and urinary energy losses. To accommodate family commitments I then moved to the University Medical School in Aberdeen where I was coordinator of the MSc Human Nutrition and Metabolism programme for nine years.

Was there a project that you worked on that became a defining moment in your career?

At the University of Aberdeen I led the development of a food frequency

questionnaire for assessing diet in large-scale population studies. While this approach was not original and had some very vocal critics, our tool was rigorously developed to allow flexibility in data used in calculations and inclusion of novel foods and nutrients. During this time longitudinal studies of diet and health were expanding and our diet questionnaire led to collaborations with some outstanding epidemiologists in case-control and cohort studies on a variety of health outcomes, including colorectal cancer, cognitive decline, and childhood asthma, on which many of my most highly cited publications are based.

What has been the most rewarding, or challenging, part of your work?

Leading a public health nutrition research group of around 20 post-docs and PhD students was a privilege. I enjoyed identifying and supporting the development of the particular skills and interests of each member of the team. It was however very challenging to keep my own research interests alive and to maintain sufficient external funding for a team with very diverse research interests. I now enjoy hearing of the career success stories of past staff and students.

In your opinion, how has the field of human nutrition changed?

I completed my PhD just as the obesity epidemic in the UK was starting and the relationship between diet and non-communicable diseases was just coming to public attention; raising the challenge of how to improve diet for better health among affluent populations. On top of the unresolved challenges of under- and over-nutrition and improving diet quality we now understand the need to ensure that food production does not harm the environment and contribute to global heating. There has never been a greater need for human nutritionists who can engage with scientists and practitioners in agriculture, food processing and

marketing, and provide evidence-based consumer advice.

In your opinion, how has the public perception of nutrition changed?

When I started my career, nutrition was only recognised by few medical and laboratory scientists and was not something the public were particularly interested in. The pendulum has now swung to the opposite position in which nutrition information is everywhere and the challenge is to ensure the reliability of the explosion of books, online information and advice of 'diet gurus'. The Association for Nutrition, which promotes high standards of training and practice among nutrition professionals, has a vital role to play in ensuring that the public can trust information and advice on nutrition..

What are your hopes for the continuing development of human nutrition?

If I had a magic wand, I would wish for a new non-intrusive method of gathering high-quality information on diet and quicker, cheaper methods of analysing multiple nutrients in the huge range of foods now available to consumers. These two things would transform our ability to understand health effects of complex diets and to provide useful advice.

How has being a member of the Society impacted your career?

I have benefited from the opportunity to present work in person at Society meetings as knowing that there may be challenging questions leads to more rigorous analysis of your own work. As a Council member and Public Health Theme Lead I built connections with senior nutrition scientists and practitioners, which have contributed to my professional development at all stages of my career. ■

Professor Jack. C. Drummond

Founding Member of The Nutrition Society

Born in Leicester on 12 January 1891, Sir Jack Cecil Drummond was a distinguished biochemist whose research touched on almost all subjects where nutrition principles could be applied. He had a huge influence on advancing the study and application of nutritional science to human health.

After graduating with first-class honours in Chemistry in 1912 from East London College (Now Queen Mary University of London), Drummond worked as a research assistant under Dr Otto Rosenheim at King's College London. Quickly promoted, Drummond moved to the Royal Cancer Hospital Research Institute where he worked under the Director of Biochemical Research, Dr Casimir Funk, and subsequently published his well-known paper on accessory food factors (*Biochemical Journal*. 1920, 14,660).

At the same time, Funk was investigating, alongside Elmer Verner McCollum, the role that these substances, which he originally termed 'vitamines', played in protection against Beriberi and Scurvy; following Sir Fredrick Gowland Hopkins experimental feeding paper which had illustrated the importance of these 'accessory factors' in the diet (*J. Physiol.* 1912, 44, 425).

Through his new and significant discoveries, Drummond built a close network of valuable contacts. His fascination for nutrition science grew as he began putting findings into practice when the country was forced to prioritise the nutritional needs of the population during the outbreak of WW1. Whilst his health restricted his desire to serve in the armed forces during WW1, Drummond instead focused his energy towards solving the country's national nutrition issues.

The experience gained in experimental feeding at the Royal Cancer Hospital Research Institute led to his collaboration with William Dobinson Halliburton MD in 1917. Together they studied the nutritive value of margarines and butter substitutes. This, in combination with his previous work with Funk led to fat soluble vitamins being one of his major fields of interest.

It was 1920 when Drummond proposed that the 'vital substances' discovered by Funk and McCollum, should be termed vitamins A and B. He suggested the 'e' of vitamines should be dropped in recognition that not all vitamins contain an amine group. Over the next 20 years, Drummond published over 150 original papers including a valuable series of fundamental studies on the function of vitamin A. His work also alluded to the identification of vitamin E and he turned his attention to the significance of vitamin D when, at the age of 31, Drummond became the first Chair of Biochemistry. He was Dean of the Faculty of Medical Sciences from 1929 – 1932 where he succeeded to isolate vitamin A after a decade of unsuccessful attempts. Drummond grew the department to be the most important biochemical teaching and research centre in the country.

As interest in the links between nutrition and human health grew, a committee was appointed to advise the Health Minister on the importance and practical application of new evidence. These developments fuelled Drummond's personal interest and led him to study



SIR JACK CECIL DRUMMOND,
D.Sc., F.R.I.C., F.R.S.

(Photograph by Wykeham Studios, London)

historical English dietary habits resulting in a book, co-authored with his future second wife Anne Wilbraham, called *The Englishman's Food: A History of Five Centuries of English Diet*.

Sir John Boyd Orr's 1936 report on *Food health and income* (*Nature*, 1936, 137) inspired Drummond to study global diets and, once his interests became known to the Rockefeller Foundation, he was awarded a special fellowship to survey population diets in 12 European countries.

Following the outbreak of WW2, Drummond was consulted on the gas contamination of food before being appointed 'Chief Advisor on Food Contamination' to the Ministry of Food

Honorary Officer without Portfolio

Dr Anastasia Kalea, University College London

in 1939. He became Scientific Advisor to the Ministry in 1940 and produced a plan for food distribution. Recognising that rationing was the perfect opportunity to attack what he called “dietetic ignorance”, Drummond’s advice meant that more protein and vitamins were incorporated into the diet of those with the lowest incomes, while those of higher economic status reduced their consumption of meat, fats, sugar, and eggs. Follow-up studies revealed the population’s overall health had improved, despite rationing and the stresses of the war.

Drummond’s work expanded internationally when he was tasked in 1942 by the Secretary of State for the Colonies to review Malta’s food rationing and distribution systems. He also developed plans for reducing malnutrition and starvation in Europe, and was involved in the formation of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations.

He was knighted and elected Fellow of The Royal Society in 1944. Following the liberation of Europe, the Netherlands Government showed their appreciation for his services by appointing him a Commander of the Order of Orange Nassau. The United States also awarded him the Medal of Freedom, with Silver Palms and he was granted the honorary degree of Docteur by the Sorbonne in 1948.

As a scientist, his influence on significant events was remarkably wide. His ability to appreciate both the importance of fundamental nutritional studies and the need for securing their practical application in the light of human needs was one of the outstanding characteristics of Drummond’s work. ■

My journey in Nutrition has recently had a new milestone as I take up the role of Trustee without Portfolio for The Nutrition Society, a role which gives me the opportunity to participate in a range of meetings as an ex-officio member on the Society’s committees, and contribute to the new Strategic Plan.

I first got involved with nutritional sciences as a young student trying to fulfil my curiosity for the links between food, health and disease. I studied Nutrition and Dietetics at Harokopio University (Greece), where I qualified as a Dietitian and learned to appreciate the translational aspects of molecular nutrition research. This was the trigger for me to cross the pond and spend a decade in the USA conducting research first as a PhD student at the University of Maine and then as a JDRF fellow at Columbia University in New York and Northwestern University in Chicago. I focused on functional studies on micronutrient deficiencies and on immuno-metabolic biomarkers in diabetes complications exploring the role of the receptor for advanced glycation end-products. My life journey brought me to London to join as a BHF scholar the Cardiovascular Genetics group at the University College London (UCL) Institute of Cardiovascular Sciences. I investigated epigenetic signatures in patients with obesity and periodontal disease, studied ways to combine -omics data to predict disease risk and explored the ingredients of effective personalised treatments. The last few years, I collaborated on a range of interdisciplinary projects outside and within UCL, exploring the links between diet, inflammation, malnutrition and cardiometabolic disease.

I am currently an Associate Professor at UCL with a teaching portfolio in Nutrition Education. Research and teaching are connected in the curricula to focus on evidence-based practice. I, personally, embrace the challenge of teaching, mentoring, and supervising in research a large number of undergraduate, postgraduate and medical students and healthcare professionals from around the world; developing new programmes that respond to the modern needs in our field to solve problems differently. I strive to work with colleagues from around the country and the world to support research excellence in Nutrition and bring the knowledge diversity to students and to the nutritional sciences.

The Nutrition Society and its supporting network has been a “home” for me since my first days in the United Kingdom. As a Trustee, I will embrace and support the Society’s activities, and form and participate in Task Forces to help towards their strategic objectives. Via its strong diverse professional network, I envision a continuous positive collaborative environment to bring people and knowledge together to achieve the strategic goals; while encouraging professional standards and ethics, transparency, inclusivity, and fairness.



Julie Wallace Award Winner

Dr Elaine McCarthy,
University College Cork

I am honoured to have been awarded the 2021 Nutrition Society Julie Wallace Award. At the beginning of my nutrition research career, I distinctly remember attending the inaugural Julie Wallace Award Lecture delivered by Dr Kirsty Pourshahidi at the University of Ulster, in memory of their friend, mentor and colleague Professor Julie Wallace. I certainly did not think that a few years later I would be delivering my own award lecture entitled 'Iron deficiency in the first 1,000 days: are we doing enough to protect the developing brain?' at the Irish Section's online conference organised by the University of Limerick. This is perhaps the greatest gift that a career in nutrition research offers you – it really can take you anywhere!



Following my degree in nutritional sciences in University College Cork (UCC), I moved straight into a PhD under the wonderful supervision of Professor Mairead Kiely, Head of the School of Food and Nutritional Sciences and Professor Deirdre Murray, Consultant Paediatrician and Head of the Department of Paediatrics and Child Health in UCC. Our early work focused on iron and its associations with health outcomes in toddlers in the Cork BASELINE Birth Cohort, one of Ireland's first maternal-infant birth cohorts. Initial findings showed that iron deficiency remained an issue for young children, even in our apparently healthy, well-nourished cohort in Ireland.

The multidisciplinary nature of our research team has allowed us to focus on clinically validated health outcomes, most notably in the area of neurological development. We have observed poorer cognitive outcomes in children with suboptimal iron status, who do not qualify as having iron deficiency according to current thresholds and definitions. While more recently, we reported long-lasting behavioural consequences of iron deficiency at birth, particularly in those at high-risk of deficiency, secondary to maternal obesity and associated early-life events.

Given iron deficiency and its neurological consequences remain a serious public health issue, we urgently need strategies to tackle the issue. My research is now directed towards the development of screening strategies to help identify the pregnant women, infants and children at highest risk of deficiency so that we can protect the developing brain. As I progress into this next phase of research, the Julie Wallace Award has already provided me with new avenues and opportunities to explore, for which I'm very grateful to The Nutrition Society.

Nutrition Society Silver Medal

Associate Professor Mario Siervo,
Nottingham University

Hello readers of The Nutrition Society Gazette! I am the fortunate recipient of the 2021 Nutrition Society Silver Medal and I welcome this opportunity to share with you some meaningful steps in my academic career which have contributed to obtaining this prestigious award.



I am originally from a small village in South of Italy called Teggiano, not far from where the famous physiologist Ancel Keys, one of the first promoters of the Mediterranean diet, used to spend his holidays. I studied Medicine and completed my specialty training in Clinical Nutrition and Metabolic Medicine at the University Federico II in Naples. In 2002, I moved to the UK to attend the MSc in *Public Health Nutrition* at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

From 2004 to 2011 I was a research scientist at the MRC Human Nutrition Research Centre in Cambridge. In 2006, I started a part-time PhD focussed on the application of stable isotopes for the measurement of nitric oxide in humans before moving to the National Institutes of Health in Washington DC to work in the mathematical modelling and metabolic physiology group. In 2012 I returned to the UK to take my first tenured post as Lecturer in Nutrition and Ageing at Newcastle University.

The time in Newcastle was very productive. I was promoted to Senior Lecturer, published over 100 papers and was recipient of the British Nutrition Foundation Drummond Pump Priming Award in 2013 and Nutrition Society Julie Wallace award in 2017. In 2019, I joined the University of Nottingham as an Associate Professor in Integrative Physiology and Experimental Medicine and developed new research ideas around the adoption of deep-phenotyping approaches using stable isotopic and imaging methods to investigate the physiological roles of tissue nitrate stores and effects on dietary nitrate on brain function.

I always looked with admiration at the Society's awards and the list of renowned winners; imagining a day when I could compete for such prestigious awards. That aspiration has been instrumental throughout my career to drive my research ideas and efforts and I am incredibly honoured to have won the 2021 Nutrition Society Silver Medal.

The Opening of Boyd Orr House

In celebration of The Nutrition Society's 80th Anniversary, the Society's headquarters was formally opened on 23 July 2021 by its President, Professor Julie Lovegrove. Originally due to be held in March 2021, the delay in the opening meant Boyd Orr House was officially opened exactly 80 years after the Society was founded.

Andy Slaughter, local MP for Hammersmith, unveiled the building sign. The Headquarters were named in honour of the Society's first President, Sir John Boyd Orr, later Lord Boyd Orr.

The first meeting of the Society was held in London at the Royal Institution on 23 July 1941. A total of 28 people who represented different disciplines in nutrition attended, with Sir John Boyd Orr as Chair.



80 years on, the Society has grown to a membership of over 3,000, from across 85 countries around the world. The Society continues its mission to 'advance the study of nutrition and its application to human and animal health', an ambition which has not changed for 80 years.

Boyd Orr House

Originally purchased in 1990, and expanded in 2009, Boyd Orr House now boasts a state-of-the-art video conferencing suite, a library and meeting room which contains all the Society's journal publications over the past 80

years, a smaller meeting room on the top floor, and enhanced and comfortable office space for the staff. The four main rooms have been named after eminent nutritional scientists, selected by the Society's Honorary Fellows. These are *Dr Elsie Widdowson*; *Dame Harriette Chick*; *Professor John Waterlow*; and *Professor Robert McCance*.

It was a privilege to have Lord Boyd Orr's granddaughter and great grandson join to celebrate both the building opening and the Society's 80th Anniversary. Professor Julie Lovegrove's full speech can be viewed on the Society's website. ■



Professor Julie Lovegrove cutting the cake in celebration of the Society's 80th Anniversary



L-R Professor D Joe Millward, Professor Phillip Calder and Dr Margaret Ashwell

Face to Face Workshops: Going Full Circle

Penny Hunking, Honorary Training Academy Officer



In 2018 the Nutrition Society Training Academy (NSTA) transitioned 95% of its training opportunities online to ensure that the NSTA was readily accessible to all members, irrespective of time of day, financial constraints or global location. This change in delivery model has enabled the NSTA to provide even more content, focussing on wider areas of interest, including niche topics that rarely get covered. Of course, a couple of stand-alone workshops remained, including topics such as *Statistics for Nutrition Research*, providing that extra level of guidance through in-person tuition. It is, however, increasingly clear that the online accessibility of a webinar became far more appealing to you, the membership.

Nobody could have foreseen the importance of the decision to take the NSTA online and how vital the new experience of delivering webinars would be, as face to face workshops became temporarily redundant throughout lockdowns owing to COVID-19. It was a time when the whole world had to operate entirely online with no option but to engage with training, work and social events in a virtual world. It was clear to see the popularity of the various new offerings of online learning, and engagement soared. We received a great deal of praise about the opportunities available, and the obvious bonus of reduced financial and time burdens which could be achieved by accessing content online. At that time

this was considered the ‘new normal’ and there were many discussions as to whether face to face meetings, training and conferences would be welcomed back.

How often though have we heard of a trend returning? Of things going ‘full circle’? Interestingly, but probably of no surprise to the membership, we are now seeing a resurgence of interest for the return of face-to-face workshops with rising numbers expressing an eagerness to return. The benefit is that such events allow for networking that clearly no online platform can fully replicate. It also enables one-to-one tuition on those sticky subjects you just cannot fathom on a webinar and, importantly, an opportunity to ignore emails and to immerse yourself entirely into the workshop in which you are participating.

The NSTA is currently working out the logistics of reintroducing face-to-face workshops. What will remain, is that the NSTA will continue to be your trusted source for research and evidence based nutritional science for your Continued Professional Development (CPD), irrespective of the delivery model. For those of you still enjoying online learning or are perhaps geographically restricted, the NSTA will continue to deliver online although is also investigating new ways of engaging remote members with face-to-face workshops. In the meantime, you can still sign up for the current online workshop titles available, such

as *‘Statistics for Nutrition Research’, ‘Systematic Reviews: how to perform and interpret’, and ‘How to Get Published’.*

There is plenty more to come from the NSTA face-to-face workshop programme, so look out for titles on the key principles of statistics for the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), advanced statistics for SPSS, dietary assessment methods and much, much more. For now, take the opportunity to engage with the NSTA’s on-demand webinar catalogue, which will always be there when you need a quick hour of CPD! The on-demand catalogue has had an overhaul, now making it easier than ever before for you to find a webinar to meet your CPD needs, be that scientific- or skills-based. ■

If you would like to see a particular workshop feature in the NSTA programme, let us know at training@nutritionandsociety.org

Scan this QR code to view live and on-demand webinars



COOKING WITH HEROES

The Society was delighted that Penny Hunking (Honorary Training Academy Officer) and Dr Carrie Ruxton (Honorary Strategic Communications Officer) were able to contribute to the article ‘Nutritious Knowledge’, showcased in the Royal British Legion’s centenary cookbook.

The Royal British Legion Centenary Cookbook was officially launched on 15 October 2021. Written by volunteers, the book will raise money for military veterans, and provides authentic recipe from 100 regions around the world in which the Legion has operated. The book is available to purchase via the poppyshop.org.uk



Membership Matters

Professor Eileen Gibney, Honorary Membership Officer



It is with great pleasure that I take on the role as Honorary Membership Officer and, in doing so, would like to record my thanks to my predecessor Dr Dean Sewell. During his time as Honorary Membership Officer, Dean placed the members at the core of the Society and its activities, a sentiment which will remain with me as I carry on his work.

So what does it mean to be a member of the Society – and why do we have a Trustee with Membership as a core function of their role? I have been a member of the Society since my undergraduate years, and remained an active and involved member since then. I have held several roles within the Society, including Editor of the Gazette and Secretary of the Irish Section, so I come to this role with an understanding of how important the Society is to your professional development at all stages of your career.

To me, the relevance of, and manner in which I engaged with the Society changed throughout my time as a member. Core activities such as attending and presenting at meetings, and networking remain constant, but other benefits such as travel grants, journals and textbooks, training and chairing at conferences varied depending on my career stage, my geographical location and professional development. I am sure this is much the same for most of you. This dynamic interaction of our members within the Society is why the role of Honorary Membership Officer was developed. It is imperative, that as the Society develops and grows that we meet the needs of all our members, throughout their time with the Society.

Launched this year, our new Strategic Plan places the memberships needs at the front and centre of its key objectives. Over the coming months, myself and the Membership Committee will develop our plans and activities to support the Trustees and core Nutrition Society team in delivering on these objectives. In doing so, we want to amplify your voice, and will be reaching out to you for your input. We want to see more Member-led events, more grants and supports, and innovative ways to support you and your career development. Your voice is key, and I am always more than happy to hear from you – so please do contact me (Eileen.gibney@ucd.ie) with any ideas, thoughts or comments. ■

A BLUE PLAQUE TO HONOUR DR ELSIE WIDDOWSON

Dr Elsie Widdowson BSc, PhD, CH, CBE, FRS was a former president of The Nutrition Society (1977-1980), Head of Infant Nutrition Research at the Dunn Nutrition laboratory (1906 -2000) and a past British Nutrition Foundation president (1986 to 1996). She was a pioneer and inspirational force in the field of nutrition and had a huge impact on nutritional research.

The blue plaque, pictured below, was unveiled on 27 June 2021. Financed by the Society, the British Dietetic Association, the British Nutrition Foundation and the Royal Society, the plaque is placed on the former bakery in Barrington, Cambridge, that made the bread for Dr Widdowson's studies.



L-R: Professor Anne Prentice, Professor Catherine Geissler, Professor Julie Lovegrove and Dr Margaret Ashwell



L-R: Richard Lister, Dr David Lister (who used to work with McCance and Widdowson), Dr Margaret Ashwell

Nigeria: my journey to nutrition education

Chiaka Charles Nkwoala
Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Nigeria.



From an early stage in life, I learned that food is the first basic need of man. This piqued my interest to study any course that could address this basic need and led to my studying Food Science and Technology as a first-degree course.

My journey to nutrition education started during my one-year mandatory National Youth Service Corps assignment. I did this at the School of Health Technology which shares a boundary with a general hospital in Niger, a state in the northern part of Nigeria. Within one year, I noticed the high prevalence of anaemia amongst hospital patients. This cut across age groups and sex; parents and relatives could not donate blood to their children because they did not have enough. Interestingly, despite this community being a major producer of cereals, legumes, spices, fruits and vegetables, such as watermelon and cabbage, for the entire country, they did not consume much of what they produced.

I spent much time in the school library reviewing and reflecting on the fact that producing tasty, appetising, long lasting nutritious foods, which I was trained to do as a Food Scientist, may not necessarily improve the health and wellbeing of the community. In fact, the production of so many fancy ready to eat or fast foods that are nutritionally poor, and their influx in the market may be associated with the increased cases of non-communicable diseases.

Informal interactions with members of the community and my students in the School of Health and Technology, who were being trained as community health workers, revealed a high level of ignorance on the link between food, nutrition, health, and productivity. It also showed the negative attitudes towards consumption of locally produced foods among members of the community and



the students. Finally, nutrition education was not adequately captured in the school curriculum.

So, nutrition education seemed to be the missing link between the production of diverse and nutritious foods, and the health outcomes of consuming these. The community may not have been empowered with the right knowledge, attitudes and skills to improve their eating habits, especially with the locally produced foods. Also, there was no conscious effort to build capacity of health workers to effectively help people improve their eating habits.

Considering my inherent passion for teaching, being resourceful, interacting with people, and working in the community, I decided to enrol in post graduate studies in community nutrition immediately after my national youth service. I was employed as an assistant lecturer, after my MSc programme, in the Department of Human Nutrition and Dietetics at Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike Abia State, Nigeria.

As a community nutritionist and lecturer, I was involved in several nutrition education programmes in Abia, a state in the southeast part of Nigeria. I always wondered why the messages were not effective in achieving behaviour change towards healthy eating. At the end of each session, I realised that some participants go home happy, not because they have evaluated their behaviour and decided to change, but because they have learnt more about their eating habits, while others go home indifferent. I felt that some participants were not willing to change, but preferred to blame their situation on external factors.

I will never forget an experience I had in one of the University extension programmes at a host community. We introduced ourselves before getting straight into teaching the community about several nutritional problems and how they could eat better. After a two-hour talk, the participants were given opportunity to ask questions. To my greatest surprise, and dismay, none of



the questions they asked were based on our nutrition talk. They thanked us but then asked us to tell the University to employ them as staff. Others were concerned that their children in the University seem not to learn good morals. This experience made me start to re-appraise our approach in nutrition education and behavioural theories, and marked my second journey in nutrition education.

Interestingly, at the same time I was stuck with the nutrition education puzzle, a team at the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) were trying to understand why nutrition education interventions were not as effective as expected. I worked with the FAO for four years to develop and pilot a module on Education for Effective Nutrition in Action (ENACT) I spent another year supporting lecturers on how to use the module, and training students to deliver effective nutrition education.

During the workshops that led to the development of the ENACT module, I

learned where we were going wrong. The participants were giving us valuable and accurate feedback that we needed to take on board. At the time, we did not conduct any formative research to understand their nutrition situation and needs, and so therefore we did not understand the attitude, perception, practice, and factors influencing their nutrition related decisions before engaging in the programme.

My journey from nutrition education to effective nutrition education has been quite interesting. I have spent time carrying out situation analyses with the participants and the programme providers to ensure there is agreement on what nutrition problem to focus on. Hence, ensuring everyone is on the same page before the nutrition education programme even begins. Ensuring the participants understand the extent to which their actions contribute to the identified problem is as important as the nutrition message. Understanding and appreciating the external factors influencing the participants is also a big part of the solution.

In most communities, good eating habits and a healthy lifestyle are components of their culture, but external factors such as poverty, unemployment, climate change and land takeover by government without commensurate and sustainable compensation affect these cultural practices. These issues should not be ignored and need to form part of the advocacy.

At the end of this journey, I decided to focus my professional career on nutrition education for the community and for health professionals. Facilitating voluntary adoption of healthy eating behaviours and lifestyles at the individual and community level, whilst building the capacity of health professionals to apply, analyse and utilise formative research data in the design and implementation of multisectoral nutrition education programmes.

I am glad to go through this professional career with The Nutrition Society ■

Life after the Daphne Jackson Trust Fellowship

Dr Lisa Mohebati, University of Surrey



It was time for a new adventure. I had my Nutrition Society funded Daphne Jackson Fellowship and a publication under my belt and was ready for the next step in my return to science after a career break. I was avidly exploring grant and job opportunities, and to my sons' delight there was a position advertised for a nutritionist at a Premier League football club. I am open-minded and up for challenges, but at this stage I thought someone else might be better suited to travelling with the team.

In terms of options, nutrition is an amazing field. It offers such a variety of avenues of work and is of interest not only to athletes, researchers, scientists, health professionals, policy makers and many others but also to regular people on the street. Mostly everyone is happy to talk about food because everyone can relate to it. It is a vital issue, part of our day-to-day lives, our social interactions, our culture, our health and well-being; it goes beyond ourselves, our families and friends, affecting many others and their livelihoods in different communities and countries, as well as the Earth itself.

So, where next? I had really enjoyed the encouraging, supportive environment

of the Food, Consumer Behaviour and Health Research Centre (FCBH) and the Nutrition Department at the University of Surrey where I was situated during my Fellowship, even though my research seemed very different to that of my colleagues. When a position with the European Union funded COMFOCUS project with FCBH was advertised I applied. I was eager to expand my horizons but wondered how previous experience in public health and expertise in maternal-infant feeding interactions could effectively contribute to advance the cohesion of the European food consumer science community? Fortunately, I was given the opportunity to find out.

Food consumer science looks at what drives food choices and how these can be influenced to promote increased well-being. It draws on psychology, marketing, sciences related to food and food systems as well as nutrition. My research skills and thirst for knowledge have been serving me well in my new position and I have enjoyed learning more about how food choice, so critical to nutrition outcomes, affects and is affected by such a wide variety of factors. The opportunity to collaborate

with a large consortium of researchers from a variety of disciplines, backgrounds and nationalities is also proving to be an enriching experience.

I have also been fortunate to continue pursuing my research interest in infant feeding, by developing a grant with parents, researchers and practitioners to co-design and pilot test a nutritional component for an existing evidence-based parenting programme. Should the grant and project be successful, I am hopeful it will have a positive impact on the lives of many parents and infants.

None of this would have been possible if organisations, such as the Daphne Jackson Trust, The Nutrition Society and the University of Surrey, alongside supportive mentors I have encountered during my journey, had not believed in the potential of people like me to return to science after a career break. There are many more out there whom I sincerely hope will come across a valuable opportunity like this and seize it with determination. ■

OBITUARY

Miss Jean Marr OBE

It is with deep sadness that we announce the recent, and unexpected death of Miss Jean Marr OBE. Miss Marr was a past president of the Committee of Associations of Dietitians in the European Community (CADEC) from 1978 until 1982, Honorary Chairman of the British Dietetic Association (1966-7) and was also elected a fellow of the BDA (1979). As a stalwart Member of The Nutrition Society since the 1950's, Miss Marr was informed earlier this year of her nomination to receive a Special 80th Anniversary Award for her significant contributions to the Society.

Update from the Irish Section

Dr Anne Nugent, Secretary



We were pleased to host our annual Irish Section and the Postgraduate Conferences in a virtual event organised by the University of Limerick. Feedback highlighted the high quality science, particularly the postgraduate competition. I would like to thank Dr Eibhlís O'Connor and team for all their work in ensuring the event was successful.

In September, Professor Jayne Woodside and Professor Lorraine Brennan convened a successful virtual Member-led conference to discuss plant rich diets and health, with 388 registrants. Members interested in hosting future short meetings can complete a proforma on the Society's website.

At the Annual Society Meeting, Members agreed to revert to the usual sequence and flow of the Irish Section and Postgraduate conferences. Ulster University has volunteered to host the 2022 Postgraduate Conference from 9-11 February at the Magherabuoy House Hotel. This will include a traditional informal networking event followed by student presentations and career talks with a gala dinner. Local organisers are Lauren Devine, Eamon Kearney, Erika Rosbotham and Shane Gordon. The 2022 Irish Section Conference will take place from 15-17 June 2022. Hosted by University College Cork and organised by Dr. Alice Lucey and team, with a focus on the 'Impact of Nutrition Science on Human Health: Past Perspectives and Future Directions'.

I would like to congratulate Professor Barbara Livingstone and Professor Albert Flynn on their appointments as Honorary Fellows of the Society, Professor Alison Gallagher who has been appointed as Editor in Chief at the Proceedings of the Nutrition Society, and Dr. Kate Younger on her receipt of a special 80th Anniversary Award, in recognition of her significant contribution to the Society. The Irish Section also successfully nominated Dr. Gail Goldberg for one such special award (posthumously).

Finally, I would like to welcome new members to the Irish Section Committee, Dr. Caomhan Logue and Dr. Trish Heavey as Ordinary Members and Lisa Kelliher as student representative. Other changes to the committee structure with Dr. Kirsty Pourshahidi now acting as Treasurer and Dr. Marianne Walsh as Membership Secretary. I look forward to working with them over the coming years. Sincere thanks to all the members of the Irish Section committee, past and present, for their continued hard work and to Irish Section Members for their continued support and engagement.

Update from the Scottish Section

Dr Derek Ball, Secretary



The Scottish Section committee has been working hard to ensure that the Spring conference planned for 4-5 April 2022 will go ahead as a hybrid event that offers delegates the opportunity attend either on a face-to-face basis or as an online virtual participant. The topic of the meeting, "Nutrition, immune

function and infectious disease", addresses the current health pandemic related to infectious disease and the health and nutritional factors that might contribute to disease risk.

The conference organisers (myself and Dr Alex Mavoeredi) have drawn together an international panel of speakers. The conference is divided into three areas designed to address nutritional status and infectious disease propensity; nutrition, physical activity and immune function; dietary supplements and their efficacy in reducing infectious disease risk and concluding with aspects related to the effects of nutritional interventions in acute infections or long-term conditions such as myalgic encephalomyelitis. The program includes the opportunity for original communications as either an oral or poster format. The organisers are planning to have a breakfast symposium on day two that is supported by industry. Finally, our student committee members are preparing for a student led event on day one of the conference.

As previously communicated through the Society's Gazette the members of the Scottish Section Committee continue to change. We have two members that are coming to the end of their tenure in early 2022 and consequently we are looking to our colleagues in Scotland to consider volunteering to serve on the committee. At the same time, we welcome Professor Alex Johnstone (Rowett Institute, Aberdeen) who has been co-opted onto the committee. Our two new student members of the committee, Mr Matevz Arcon (Aberdeen University) and Catriona Thomson (Glasgow University) have made a busy start to their time on the committee by organising an online webinar "Sport Nutrition – a focus on the female athlete" that discussed a career in nutrition involving working with professional female athletes and provided some insight into the latest research exploring the sex differences in sports nutrition. ■

Student Section Update

Kiu Sum, Student Section Chair



Since my last Gazette report, there has been a lot of new excitement in the Student Section.

We managed to successfully host Nutrition Futures 2021, the Society's first hybrid conference in early September at Cavendish Conference Centre, London; something we never thought could happen during this pandemic.

It was an exciting two-day meeting, with over 170 delegates across 14 countries attending, either in-person or online. It was incredible to see how technology can facilitate engagement, no matter where you are in the world. Check out #NutritionFutures21 on Twitter where you can still continue to engage in discussion, or read the full overview of the conference on the Society Website, written by Rachel Moon, the Nutrition Futures Representative.

Despite the challenges faced along the way, on behalf of the Student Section, I would like to thank Mark Hollingsworth and his team at the Society for their support in making the meeting a success. Thank you also to Imperial College London for collaborating with us, to the Society's Science Committee, and to all the speakers for their support and contributions in making our conference a success.

As another academic year passes by and a new one begins, I wish to congratulate those who graduated during this challenging time. It was sad to see those of you leaving the Student Section so I want to take this opportunity to thank Jordan Andrew (Activities and Resource Representative), Yu Qiong Chin (International Student Representative) and Kabale Oke (UK and Ireland Student Representative) for all your hard work on the Section this past year. A special thanks to Rachel Moon (Nutrition Futures Representative) for being one of the

longest standing representatives of the Section. I wish you all the very best as you move onto new and exciting green pastures!

It has been fantastic to have so many new students express their interest and enthusiasm to support the Society through the Student Section. I want to welcome the following new Section Members: Raefella Masselli (Communication – Social Media Representative), Grace Rawlings (UK & Ireland Student Representative), Jack Windle (Activities & Resources Representative), Christina Choo (International Student Representative), and Elena Borisova (Nutrition Futures Representative). I look forward to working with you.

I am honoured to share that I have your support as your re-elected Chair of the Student Section for another term of office. Whether you are a student, graduate, an early career researcher, or a more established professional, I am sure you'll agree that the Society offers fantastic support, and opportunities at each stage of your career. In my re-elected role, I hope to continue to grow the student community and support you through the Society, whether delivering your first poster presentation at Nutrition Futures, having your getting your first paper published, or getting your first nutrition job. I hope that we can continue working together to support students throughout their studies and future career journeys. ■



If any student members would like to find out more about our upcoming activities or become a University Ambassador, please do visit the website and or contact us directly at studentsection@nutritionociety.org

NEW: Special Interest Groups Announced

The Theme Leads are delighted to announce the introduction of Special Interest Groups (SIGs). These SIGs will be Theme Lead-facilitated and Member-led, providing recognition and support for specific areas of interest.

This new initiative has been introduced to ensure that the needs of our growing membership and its varied research areas, are fully supported. Members can propose small to medium size niche interest

subgroups to network, share information and best practice, and to champion novel areas of nutrition research. The SIGs may also support collaboration with relevant external partners, stakeholders or could support regional activities.

Leading a SIG could involve hosting events of interest to your network, such as careers events or gatherings to build research capacity or convene new research groups, facilitating a discussion forum on Member-Connect.

SIGs are intended to be flexible and to support innovative activities that will achieve your SIG's objectives. These networks will be an excellent way to develop professional contacts and to share interests. Members may be involved with one or more SIGs.

Members can find out more, and propose a SIG via the Society's website ■

Novel Nutrition Research Methodologies and Technologies

Dr Ruan Elliott, University of Surrey

There are always promising new technological innovations that have the potential to enhance how we undertake nutrition research. Now, in particular, there seem to be so many opportunities that it can be a daunting task to try to keep up to pace. Examples include:

- A continuous stream of new laboratory analytical methods enabling us to take research to larger scale (e.g. high-throughput techniques and more comprehensive "omic" coverage) and smaller scale (e.g. single cell and subcellular analyses) than ever before
- Wearable technologies and apps for accurate activity and food intake capture as well as an ever-widening range of metabolic analytes that can be measured using continuous biomonitoring
- Emerging study formats (e.g. n-of-1, adaptive, platform and umbrella designs)

- New bioinformatic, computational and artificial intelligence applications

Perhaps the biggest challenge is understanding what possibilities these innovations create and how best to apply them. Adopting new techniques is often not easy; it may require significant investment and nearly always involves a steep learning curve as well as some trial and error. It is not risk-free either as not all promising new technologies ultimately prove useful.

With the establishment of the *Novel Nutrition Research Methodologies and Technologies* Theme, the Society aims to support early adoption and effective use of new techniques amongst the nutrition research community.

We will invite leaders in the application of new approaches to Society conferences, to showcase their work and facilitate discussions around the applications of innovative techniques through all forums available to us. In



this regard, the creation of Special Interest Groups (SIGs) could prove particularly useful.

This new theme is very broad and is likely to benefit from the development of a number of more focused activities through SIGs. If you are working in a specific scientific area that needs to adopt new techniques to address previously intractable research questions, or if you have particular interest and expertise in techniques that nutrition research would benefit from, why not consider setting up a SIG? The Society will be launching a call for SIGs soon, so now is the moment to think about the area you would like to champion. ■

Food Systems

Dr Christian Reynolds, University of London



Coming plans for the Food Systems theme

The theme of Food Systems is a very broad church, encompassing interests along the food supply chain including production, processing, reformulation, consumption and disposal. Likewise, the theme of Food Systems can relate to many processes and topics such as food safety and toxicity; functional foods and nutraceuticals; novel ingredients; and animal nutrition. The theme of Food Systems also gives space to the study of nutritional linkages to modes of production (such as organic or agro-ecology), hedonics and the physiology of eating, as well as examining how nutrition connects to sustainability, social, cultural, gastronomic, and political economy issues.

With such a wide range of interests to represent this theme is be quite an exciting place to be. I intend to bring my wide variety of interdisciplinary nutrition experience to work with the other theme leaders in promoting cross theme issues. For instance, how food systems and nutrition relate to apps and big data; or how nutrition across the life-course has food system implications.

I want to highlight to the membership how our community can have meaningful impact on food systems, and food

(sustainability) issues. I am particularly looking forward to the opportunity to organise a conferences and short meetings on Food System issues, and I strongly encourage the membership to submit proposals for Special Interest Groups related to food systems issues. I will be happy to support these member led activities.

One activity I hope to promote is the organisation of “data hack events” to explore, visualise, and link nutrition and food system data. I have previously hosted events across the UK in 2018-2019. In these previous events, nutritionists, food system professionals, and data scientists met and played with (“hacked”) the NDNS data matched to a greenhouse gas database (see <https://www.ggdot.org/>). These hack events held across the UK, led to new collaborations, new funding and publication opportunities for participants.

Now is the perfect time to start engaging in food systems and data exploration. We have a mandate from the National Food Strategy Part 2, to link data together to build a better food system. We also now have a critical mass of organisations with open nutrition and food systems data to link (such as the Quadram Institute, Defra, and the FSA etc.).

Please do get in touch via office@nutrition society.org if this is of interest to you. ■

Nutrition in the Treatment, Management and Prevention of Disease

Professor Ailsa Welch, University of East Anglia
Dr Oonagh Markey, Loughborough University



Professor Ailsa Welch and Dr Oonagh Markey

Recently I became the Theme Lead for Nutrition in the Treatment, Management and Prevention of Disease, following reorganisation of the scientific themes of the Society. I'd like to introduce the new Deputy Theme Lead Dr Oonagh Markey. This newly established theme is disease-facing (both communicable and non-communicable) and considers foods and nutrients as risk factors for diseases, nutritional strategies for disease prevention, as well as nutrition in the management and treatment of clinical conditions.

We anticipate this Theme will align with health professions and disciplines that face nutrition-related issues, including dentistry. Our knowledge of nutrition and mental well-being in adults is growing, but less is known about the effects of nutrition on childhood mental wellbeing. The COVID-19 Pandemic has caused issues for everyone, particularly on mental well-being of both adults and children. Recent reports have found the number of young people referred to mental health services has doubled compared with pre-pandemic levels. Given that half of all mental health conditions start by age 14, and

Nutrition and Optimum Life Course

Dr Wendy Hall, King's College London



The **Nutrition and Optimum Life Course** theme covers a wide-ranging collection of topics. Research interests that fall under this broad umbrella include:

- exercise and sports nutrition
- weight management
- diet and cognitive function
- nutrition and the menopause
- sleep and chrono-nutrition
- personalised/precision nutrition
- maternal, paternal and children's nutrition.

With such a variety of research areas there are many opportunities for special interest groups (SIGs) intersecting with this theme.

Are you interested in relationships between diet quality, work-related factors and health? If this is relevant to your job or research, why not join an Occupational Nutrition and Health SIG? This SIG has been proposed by Dr Rachel Gibson RD, a Lecturer in Nutrition & Dietetics at King's College London. Rachel already works with the British Dietetic Association Work Ready Group in developing the evidence base for workplace nutrition interventions. A Nutrition Society SIG would extend the opportunity for dissemination of scientific research on this topic. Workplace and occupational health research has evolved over recent decades, from work-place specific exposures with disease (e.g. asbestos to asbestosis), to understanding how our work environment can contribute to multi-factorial diseases.

how important and formative adolescence is in a person's life, finding ways of protecting or improving mental wellbeing in children and young people is vital.

So, we collaborated with Norfolk Partners to survey primary and secondary children across 50 schools in the region to understand how children's dietary choices linked to their mental wellbeing. The results of this research were published recently: [<https://nutrition.bmj.com/content/early/2021/10/28/bmjnph-2020-000205>].

With data from almost 9,000 children aged 8-18 years, we found links between eating more fruits and vegetables and better-quality diets and mental wellbeing. In secondary school children, higher fruit and vegetable consumption, of five or more portions a day, was associated with higher mental wellbeing scores of around 8%, compared with those who ate none. Mental wellbeing also varied depending on the type of breakfast or lunch the children ate. Secondary school children who ate a conventional breakfast (such as cereal or toast or a cooked breakfast, like eggs) had significantly higher mental wellbeing scores compared with those who ate none or who only consumed an energy drink for breakfast.

For example, long working hours, shift work, job strain and work stress have all been associated with increased risk of cardiometabolic diseases, as well as poorer dietary choices.

We are now spending a longer duration of our lifetime in employment. Understanding how our work environment impacts on health behaviours over three or more decades is essential to a life course approach in public health. As the state pensionable age rises, more of us are likely to be working with a chronic health condition. The workplace is increasingly being recognised as a key setting for public health interventions, including those focused on diet and nutrition.

This SIG would bring together researchers from nutritional, occupational health, and behavioural sciences to interpret the evidence and establish research priorities. ■

If you are interested in getting involved in a SIG on Occupational Nutrition and Health and/or attending a member-led short conference on this topic, then please do send me an email at wendy.hall@kcl.ac.uk or use the Member Connect forum: Nutrition and Optimum Life Course <https://membership.nutritionociety.org/forum/occupational-nutrition-and-health> to tell us about your role or research in this area.

The differences we found in mental wellbeing and diet may seem comparatively small but to put our findings into perspective, having no breakfast or lunch was associated with a similarly detrimental effect on mental wellbeing as children witnessing regular arguing or violence at home. Despite our study being observational and not able to prove causation, our findings are of great concern. Even more so since our survey was done before the COVID Pandemic.

Our study shows that good quality nutrition needs to be available to all children and young people to enable their mental wellbeing and full potential. We need to ensure that children can access breakfast clubs, and free school meals if eligible; that school meals are of good quality, including at least two portions of vegetables and fruits. These aims, and further approaches, need support from school policies and public health strategies.

So back to our theme. We aim to enable the growth of Special Interest Groups (SIGs) to support discussions and events in specific topic focused areas that are of interest to members. If there is a SIG that you would like to see established, or if you wish to become more involved in the theme, then please do get in touch with Oonagh and myself or register your interest on the Society's website. ■

An Animal Nutritionist

Dr Kerensa Hawkey, Trainee Farm Nutritionist and Technical Project Manager, Mole Valley Farmers



My route to my PhD was not a direct one and one I never thought I would take. I grew up on my family farm in Cornwall developing an understanding for many aspects of agriculture. Originally, I considered training to become a vet or studying biochemistry but ultimately choose to study animal science at the University of Nottingham's Sutton Bonington Campus, specialising in animal nutrition and production. After graduating with a first-class BSc (Hons) Animal Science degree, I was keen to enter industry and I went on to work for Mole Valley Feed Solutions as a Trainee Feed Formulator for mainly ruminant species.

After about a year in industry I was approached by my supervisors with a PhD project looking at alternative protein sources, specifically mealworms, for

sustainable animal feeds at the University of Nottingham. Through my role as a formulator and on farm experiences, I could see the need to develop alternative protein sources for the animal feed industry. Before I knew it, I was back at Sutton Bonington about to undertake a PhD. This linked my interests of sustainable agriculture and improving the environmental impact of agriculture through maximising and exploring new avenues of nutritional potential. Life as a PhD student was very varied in terms of the day to day but also very focussed at the same time, as I worked on the same topic for four years. One day I could be undertaking lab work with live mealworm trials, collecting data or carrying out enzyme assays, whereas the next I could be at my desk statistically analysing data, writing a presentation or literature review. Throughout my PhD I found it vital to unwind away from the

pressures, therefore I played horseball – a crazy mixture of rugby and basketball on horseback.

My PhD explored two main areas, firstly developing optimal production conditions for mealworms through manipulating temperature, feed sources and utilising already available technologies within the animal feed industry such as feed enzymes. One of the main findings from this area was that mealworms can be fed on non-competitive readily available by-products. For example, feeding a low quality by-product feed, such as wheat bran, did not alter the proximate composition of mealworms compared with a high quality feed, such as chick crumb. Additionally, it was found that treatment of the feed with phytase resulted in manipulation of the mineral content of the mealworms. The second area of my PhD utilised mealworms as an alternative for soybean meal in broiler feeds looking at growth, apparent digestibilities and the effect on the caecal microbiome. With the finding that replacing soybean meal with mealworms did not affect broiler growth, however, there may be some potential negative effects on the feed conversion ratio.

After handing in my PhD thesis, I wanted a role where I could use my academic knowledge and translate this at a practical commercial industry level. I have just started my new role with Mole Valley Feed Solutions, as Trainee Nutritionist and Technical Project Manager, where I will be working as an on-farm nutritionist, supporting product management and developing technical projects within the company. ■



Unwinding by playing horseball

Update from the President of FENS

Professor Philip C. Calder
President, Federation of European Nutrition Societies



In October 2015, prior to becoming President of The Nutrition Society, I led the Society's bid to host the Federation of European Nutrition Society's 13th European Nutrition Congress which was planned for October 2019. To our surprise, we won the bid against very strong and worthy competition, and I was asked to Chair the 2019 Congress in Dublin. At the Congress, the Presidency of FENS passed from Professor Heiner Boeing to me. My period as President of The Nutrition Society had ended only seven weeks previously, and this was followed by the frantic build-up to the FENS conference! FENS is an umbrella organisation whose members are the national nutrition societies from across Europe; currently there are 26 members. The overall aims of FENS are to promote the advancement of nutrition science, research and development through international cooperation; to encourage communication and collaboration among nutrition scientists as well as to disseminate information in nutritional sciences; and to organise a European Nutrition Congress every four years.

Very early in my Presidency I established a FENS activity around "improving standards in the science of nutrition". Within the activity there are three working groups which together include

61 individuals representing 20 member societies. Working group one is dealing with "concepts and methods", working group two with "organisation, capabilities and funding" and working group three with "communication and public trust". The working groups will produce statements and guidance related to the conduct of nutrition research and its funding and to the communication of the findings of research in nutrition science to different stakeholder groups. FENS will champion the implementation of its guidance throughout Europe and will act internationally in conjunction with other societies such as the American Society of Nutrition and The Nutrition Society of Australia which are already engaged in the activity. All working groups have begun their work and we held two workshops, one in March and one in July of this year. Significant progress has been made and some working groups are already planning published output. Furthermore, FENS will host a symposium at the 22nd IUNS International Congress on Nutrition (Tokyo, December 2022) that will act as a dissemination event for the working group activities. Speakers will be Hinke Haisma (University of Groningen, The Netherlands) who will speak on "Why ((concepts and methods) medical science) ≠ ((concepts and methods) nutrition science)", F.J. Armando

Perez-Cueto (University of Copenhagen, Denmark) who will speak on "How can the credibility of nutrition science be improved?" and Charlotte Debeugny RNutr (Nutrition in Paris, France) who will speak on "Building trust – tools to enhance nutrition science communication".

The FENS Board has begun preparations for the 14th European Nutrition Conference Currently scheduled for Belgrade, Serbia, in 2023. The format of the programme will broadly follow that of the previous conferences in Berlin and Dublin, but with an increased number of sessions for early career researchers. The programme will include opening, closing and FENS Award lectures; five plenary lectures; 40 scientific symposia; oral communication sessions; poster sessions; a debate; a number of sponsored symposia; three forums and workshops for early career researchers; as well as social and cultural events. The scientific symposia will be built around ten tracks that cover the breadth of nutrition and food science including behavioural, social, cultural and environmental aspects. Regular updates on preparations for FENS 2023 will be provided on the FENS website (<https://fensnutrition.org/>). ■

OPERATIONAL CHANGES FOR PUBLIC HEALTH ENGLAND

On 1 October 2021, the diet, obesity and physical activity team of Public Health England (PHE) moved to its new operational home and became formally known as the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID).

The new organisation places public health at the centre of government and using expert advice, data and evidence together with policy development and implementation, will tackle the top preventable risk factors for poor health, including obesity caused by unhealthy diets and lack of physical activity, smoking and alcohol consumption.

Under the professional leadership of the Chief Medical Officer, Professor Chris Whitty, the newly appointed Deputy Chief Medical Officer for England will co-lead The OHID alongside Director General, Jonathan Marron to drive forward action on health disparities; including improving access to health services across the country, coordinated with government departments and stakeholders to address the wider drivers of good health, from employment to housing, education and the environment.

Announcement on Folic Acid Fortification

Dr Adrienne Cullum, Council Member – Policy
Head of Nutrition Science, Diet, Obesity and Physical Activity
(DOPA), Office of Health Improvement and Disparities,
Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC)



On 20 September 2021, the Government announced that flour would be fortified with folic acid.

It is twenty-one years since the Committee on Medical Aspects of Food and Nutrition Policy (COMA) concluded that the folic acid fortification of flour would significantly reduce the number of conceptions and births complicated by neural tube defects (NTD; major birth defects of a baby's brain or spine).

Most nutritionists within government will have worked on folic acid at one point or another – given the multiple scientific reports, public consultations, ministerial submissions, parliamentary questions and debates.

In 2001, finishing my PhD and not sure what to do next, I accepted an offer of three months' work at Department of Health to support assessment of stakeholder responses to a consultation on COMA's recommendations. My post turned into three years as short-term contracts tend to do, and folic acid also rumbled on, ministers having agreed with the Food Standards Agency Board advice not to introduce mandatory fortification due to outstanding concerns.

The Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN) superseded COMA

in 2001 to advise government on nutrition related matters, with myself and some of the current Diet, Obesity and Physical Activity (DOPA) team part of the secretariat. In 2003, SACN agreed to consider new evidence on folic acid and advise on folic acid masking the diagnosis of vitamin B12-deficiency (pernicious anaemia). In its 2006 report, SACN recommended mandatory fortification of flour alongside restrictions on voluntary fortification to ensure no increase in the numbers of people with folic acid intakes above the tolerable upper limit (TUL). However, concerns remained and the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) subsequently asked SACN to consider evidence suggesting potential adverse effects of folic acid on colorectal cancer risk. Following consideration of potential risks SACN re-iterated its advice on fortification in a 2009 report.

For myself, I joined PHE in 2017 to lead the SACN secretariat, a few months ahead of SACN's 3rd report on folic acid which concluded that more recent evidence on potential adverse effects did not provide a substantial basis for changing their existing recommendation. The 2017 SACN report was accompanied by updated modelling undertaken by Food Standards Scotland which outlined the stark benefits of fortification to the population as a whole alongside options

to minimise numbers above the TUL. The Committee on the Toxicity (COT), which has been on a similarly long journey on this issue, re-assessed the TUL in 2019 and concluded that there is little evidence of pernicious anaemia masking below intakes of 1 mg per day. COT's reassessment was partly prompted by a 2018 article by Wald et al which highlighted that fortification had been "implemented in 81 countries without public objection or indication of harm" and that the TUL was flawed. Professor Wald was a member of the original COMA working group his own research was fundamental in confirming the relationship between folic acid and prevention of NTD.

Another consultation was then issued by DHSC in 2019. Finally, the stars aligned this year. This journey shows that the evidence alone is not enough – favourable public consultations; vocal scientists, tenacious members of parliament, and supportive ministers and CMOs have all been essential.

Those of us supporting this work are now based at Office of Health Improvement and Disparities at DHSC. We are currently considering next steps. Fingers crossed it is almost done – what a relief! ■

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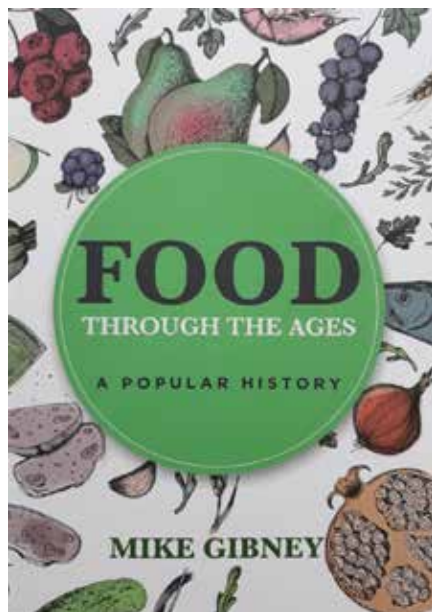
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“Food through the ages – a popular history”

Professor John Mathers Bsc, Editor in Chief of *BJN*, Newcastle University

Have you ever wondered why there are lots of holes in the Swiss cheese Emmental or how “hot dogs” got their name? Why does a fresh egg sink in salty water but an old egg float? Do you know how to prepare fugu from the poisonous puffer fish? We are now familiar with chillies, aubergines, radishes and okra but where did these vegetables originate? Why does it take a very special kind of wheat to make pasta and why are there so many different pasta shapes? How did the wafers used in the Christian sacrament of Holy Communion lead to the development of waffles? Why was the company that makes Jaffa Cakes taken to court by the Revenue Commissioners?

These and many other questions are answered in Mike Gibney’s latest book “Food through the ages – a popular history”. Although an academic nutritionist, not a food historian, Gibney



has written a highly readable and informative history of the best known, and some not so well-known, foods and dishes. Each of the 18 chapters takes us at a gallop through stories of the origins of foods that we now take for granted. We learn how food has shaped human society, how the demand for novelty, especially exotic flavours, drove exploration of the globe, the development of trade routes and alliances and of the now dominant globalised food industry. In the Columbian Exchange, Gibney writes about the foods, including tomatoes, potatoes and chillies, that were discovered in the New World and that have transformed cuisines in Europe and beyond. In return for that bounty, Christopher Columbus and his successors started sugar plantations in Central America that led to the devastation of the indigenous Taino people and to the horrendous trans-Atlantic slave trade.

Throughout the last hundred years or so, food has been a focus of legal battles. McVities, who make Jaffa Cakes, were taken to court by Her Majesty’s Customs and Excise in the UK to resolve the question of whether this delicious snack is a cake or a biscuit. This mattered because cakes and plain biscuits are deemed necessities and so zero-rated for tax whereas chocolate covered biscuits are luxuries and, therefore, taxable. After an appeal, the judge determined that Jaffa Cakes are cakes and not biscuits so we can continue to enjoy this product free of tax! Marks and Spencer had similar success in their court battle over the classification of Caramel Shortcake Slices. In 1893 in the USA, a vegetable importer called Hix took a case to the Supreme Court to argue that tomatoes were fruits and not vegetables. Although Hix was correct

botanically, the Court ruled against him stating that, under customs regulations, tomatoes are vegetables. This decision was based on the grounds that, like other vegetables, tomatoes are usually eaten at dinner with the soup, fish or meat and not with dessert, as is the case for fruits.

Along with these big themes there are also lots of interesting and amusing anecdotes. For example, how Jamie Oliver tried, and failed, to make one of the rarest pastas, Su Filindeu, from Nuoro in Sardinia. The real experts are a group of 5 – 6 women who make 50kg of this complex pasta lattice [“Veil of God” in the language of Sardinia] that is used to celebrate the feast of St Francis in May and October each year. We learn that mayonnaise was developed, in panic, by the chef of the Duke de Richelieu when he discovered that he had no cream with which to make a sauce and he had to come up with something using olive oil. The name mayonnaise comes from the location Port Mahon in Minorca where, in 1756, the French fleet defeated the British navy. Gibney also tells us that, for him, there are three foods that would be unthinkable without salt: fresh tomatoes, eggs and mushrooms. By the way, hot dogs were once known as dachshunds because the Frankfurter sausage that they contain was similar to that long breed of dog. In a section on *Chocolate: Sex and Drugs*, Gibney tells the story of a ball given by the Marquis de Sade that degenerated into a licentious orgy apparently because chocolate pastilles had been slipped into the desert.

“Food through the ages – a popular history” is aimed at the general public and is likely to have wide appeal – perhaps something for your Christmas list? As Gibney would say, *Bon Appétit!* ■

Commentary on the National Food Strategy (Part 2)

Professor David Gally, Chief Scientific Advisor for Foods Standards Scotland

The National Food Strategy-part 2 (NFS) was published this summer and has 14 recommendations that target our food system to improve human and planetary health (see insert box). The report is extensive but very approachable, combining detailed research with personal anecdotes in an engaging style. The strategy is holistic and timely putting food at the centre of the system and forcing us to consider the wider repercussions of the food choices we make both for our own health and the environment. A major part of the strategy is about land use and demonstrates how livestock farming uses ~50% of all habitable land for livestock and associated feed but generates only 18% of the calories we consume and 37% of the protein. It confronts the fact that we need to reduce this method of production and increase consumption of plant-based protein with one health and biodiversity benefits. The arguments are complex and the report works hard to cater for those that would otherwise dive into highly polarized camps on this topic. A model is proposed whereby a shift in land use in the UK combined with waste reduction and development of innovative intensive production systems can have significant economic, ecological and health benefits. The overarching objectives of the NFS are to: (1) Escape the junk food cycle to protect the NHS; (2) Reduce diet related inequality; (3) Make the best use of our land; (4) Make a long-term shift in our food culture.

Potentially the most contentious issue is the first recommendation which is to, 'Introduce a Sugar and Salt Reformulation Tax' with a levy of £3/kg tax for sugar and a £6/kg tax on salt for processed foods, restaurants and catering businesses; this would also apply to imported food. While primarily aimed at driving reformulation, the charges would also increase the production cost of goods that cannot be reformulated and contain significant

added sugar/salt. The evidence pack brings home the facts about the ever-increasing health and economic costs of diet-related diseases that have resulted in a reversal in life expectancy in the UK since 2014. A prediction of over four and a half million people living with type 2 diabetes in the UK by 2030 and 3.6 million living with cardiovascular disease by 2040. The costs are astronomical (~£50 billion per annum) for treatment and loss of productivity. Tackling the dramatic rise in the availability and consumption of highly processed food is an urgent priority defined in the report and they make the case for multiple interventions to shift diets to healthier and more sustainable ones allied to the fact that leaving this responsibility with the consumer has

failed and the idea that 'we just need to eat healthier food and do more exercise' is patently not working. They argue that food businesses need to change the affordability, availability and advertising of specific foods and some of this has to be driven by legislation. The majority (>70%) of the general public are in favour of this type of intervention.

So back to a sugar and salt tax, and while our Board at Food Standards Scotland consider this taxation a blunt instrument with possible unintended consequences, I think it would be a clear way for the UK government to signal that it is taking on this very challenging and vital issue. It would work alongside recommendation 2 to increase transparency around the

Recommendations:

- 1 Introduce a sugar and salt reformulation tax. Use some of the revenue to help get fresh fruit and vegetables to low-income families
- 2 Introduce mandatory reporting for large food companies
- 3 Launch a new "Eat and Learn" initiative for schools
- 4 Extend eligibility for free school meals
- 5 Fund the Holiday Activities and Food programme for the next three years
- 6 Expand the Healthy Start scheme.
- 7 Trial a "Community Eatwell" programme, supporting those on low incomes to improve their diets
- 8 Guarantee the budget for agricultural payments until at least 2029 to help farmers transition to more sustainable land use
- 9 Create a rural land use framework based on the Three Compartment Model
- 10 Define minimum standards for trade, and a mechanism for protecting them
- 11 Invest £1 billion in innovation to create a better food system
- 12 Create a National Food System Data programme
- 13 Strengthen government procurement rules to ensure that taxpayer money is spent on healthy and sustainable food
- 14 Set clear targets and bring in legislation for long-term change



overall nutritional content of food sold by larger companies (Inset) and other recommendations requiring significant financial investment that the tax could support, especially further advances in food education (recommendation 3, inset).

There is the argument that such a tax will penalise those from more deprived households that are more reliant on lower cost foods often with higher sugar and salt. However, they are also a key target group for improvements to dietary health and a 'sugar tax' would be less regressive around food costs than a general carbon-based food tax. Evidence from the soft drinks industry levy and similar taxes in other countries show that such measures do work and predictions made within a supplementary publication by authors from the Institute of Fiscal Studies are profound across a range of scenarios. For example, an intermediate level of success

would reduce sugar consumption by ~8 grams a day per person with ~£8 billion in savings in terms of NHS treatment and increased economic output.

I think the main fear for Henry Dimbleby and the team that have spent so long developing this comprehensive strategy is that it will not result in a strong enough reaction when bold changes are desperately required. The immediate response from Boris Johnson when cornered the day after the strategy's release was not a positive one for the sugar tax, but there is now a healthy debate in progress around the topic and Henry Dimbleby has discussed the main conclusions in front of a House of Lords committee and a white paper is due in the new year. The Covid pandemic should act as a further call to arms over this issue rather than an excuse to delay concerted action. ■



New Honorary Fellows Announced

The Nutrition Society periodically recognises individuals who have made significant and outstanding contributions globally to the advancement of the study of the science of nutrition. In such cases the highest honour the Society can bestow upon an individual is an Honorary Fellowship, which carries with it a life membership with the Society.

I am very pleased to be able to announce the names of four new Nutrition Society Honorary Fellows. They are **Professor Wim H.M. Saris**, **Professor Susan Fairweather-Tait**, **Professor John Edward Blundell** and **Professor Jeyakumar Henry**.

Congratulations to our new Honorary Fellows of 2021 who received their awards on 6 December 2021 at the Society's Annual reception.

Thank you to outgoing Trustee and Council Members

The Society would like to thank the following Trustee and Council Members for their hard work and dedication in supporting the Society in their roles:

Dr Frank Thies as outgoing **Honorary Science Officer**

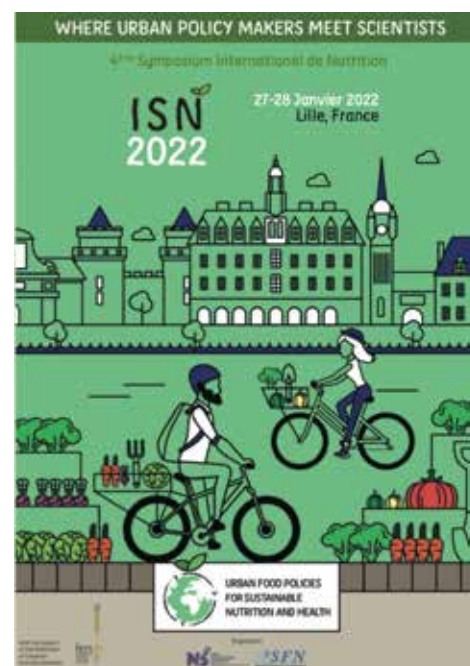
Dr Dean Sewell as outgoing **Honorary Officer for Membership**

Kate Halliwell as outgoing **Council Member for Industry**

Professor Julie Lovegrove



Events calendar



Events Calendar

Irish Postgraduate Conference 2022

Hybrid event **9-11 February 2022**

Spring Conference: Nutrition, immune function and infectious disease

Hybrid event **4-5 April 2022**

Irish Section Conference: Impact of Nutrition Science to Human Health: past perspectives and future directions

Hybrid event **15-17 June 2022**

Summer Conference: Food and Nutrition: pathways to a sustainable future

Hybrid event **12-15 July 2022**

22nd IUNS-ICN 2022

Tokyo, Japan **6-11 December 2022**

Further details will be available on the conference section of the website. Registration and abstract submission will open shortly.



Plus: regular webinars through The Nutrition Society Training Academy (NSTA):

www.nutritionssociety.org/training-academy



All registration fees and abstract deadlines can be found by scanning the QR code