**Editor’s Notes**

This is my first contribution as ‘guest editor’ of the Newsletter and also the beginning of my Presidency of the IBBS. The editor of each newsletter will be rotated to share the load with our Treasurer, Jeremy Webb taking over on the next edition. 2012 saw the Autumn meeting of the Society on “Novel Antimicrobial Strategies for Biofilm Control” which was held at Winchester and was a resounding success—details of the meeting can be found in this issue of the newsletter.

There have also been some changes to Council this year, with Katja Sterfinger being elected as a full member of Council and Paul Airey stepping down after many years sterling service to the society and a big thanks from all of us for redesigning and relaunching the society’s website [www.ibbsonline.org](http://www.ibbsonline.org).

If you have any news, meetings etc you would like us to publicise, please contact us at secretary@ibbsonline.org.

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**Hotel Continental, Porto Alegre, Brazil. April 7th to 10th, 2013.**

LABS 8 will be held in the southern Brazilian city of Porto Alegre, Brazil's leading commercial centre south of Sao Paulo. The program is almost complete with topics including biodeterioration of liquid fuels, plastics, buildings and heritage materials and monuments, and control of biodeterioration using silver nanotechnologies. For further information and booking details, please visit the website at [www.8labs.com.br](http://www.8labs.com.br/)

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**Educational resources—update**

January 2013 will see the publication of the final 4 education fliers – this time focusing on lichen, insects, detection of growth on buildings, and disinfection. This brings the grand total to 33, giving IBBS a fantastic collection of overviews of key topics of concern to the Society, assembled over the past 2-3 years.

First of all, I would like to thank all those who have spent their time and expertise on the project. But secondly, I am delighted to announce that Council has decided that the fliers will be collated into a publication – working title ‘an Atlas of Biodeterioration’ (but any other suggestions are welcome). We are hoping that the publication will be completed in time for launch at the FEMS Congress in July. We are still deciding on publishing strategy – budgetary concerns! – but please watch this space (and the website!) for any updates.

It is likely that we will contact all contributors to ensure that they are happy for their work to be part of the publication. We will also ask you for any minor amendments/updates (eg reference alterations), and probably for a 50 word cameo describing yourself – with a photograph. Deadlines will be tight, so please look out for the email!

We intend that the publication will provide a fascinating and useful snapshot of current research in biodegradation, and the importance of our research to the world at large.

Thanks again, and best wishes,

Jo Verran

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**Sponsor the IBBS Website?**

Would your organisation be interested in sponsoring the IBBS website [www.ibbsonline.org](http://www.ibbsonline.org) as our friends at Dekonta have for the last two years? We can give you full “traffic” details and further information on request. Just contact the IBBS Hon. Secretary: [secretary@ibbsonline.org](mailto:secretary@ibbsonline.org).
Our IBBS autumn meeting in 2012 concerned a topic that affects almost all aspects of biodeterioration and biodegradation—Biofilms. The meeting was designed to encourage scientific interactions and discussion about novel ways to control and remove biofilms in a variety of settings. Over 80 participants from the UK and internationally attended the meeting in Winchester for an enjoyable meeting of research talks, posters and discussions.

This IBBS meeting was dedicated to the memory of Bill Costerton, latterly Director of the Centre for Biofilm Engineering at Montana State University, a towering figure in the field of biofilms. Bill is of the world’s top 100 most-cited authors in microbiology, having published more than 600 papers in refereed journals. His tireless schedule of more than 50 speaking engagements per year for more than 20 years (including with the IBBS) established biofilm microbiology as a legitimate discipline within microbiology.

Our tried and trusted formula for this IBBS meeting consisted of one-and-a-half days of scientific sessions with ample time for questions and informal conversation. Several of the students attending commented on how they appreciated the friendly and informal environment - a hallmark of the IBBS! The framework for the meeting was provided by two excellent plenary presentations. The first was from Professor Hilary Lappin-Scott (University of Swansea), who provided an inspiring and memorable tribute to Bill Costerton. Phil Stewart (Director of the Centre for Biofilm Engineering, Montana State University) then spoke about the underlying mechanisms contributing to antimicrobial tolerance in biofilms, in particular the importance of anaerobic physiology within biofilm communities.

The plenary presentations were followed by three scientific sessions spread across the meeting. These covered biofilms in industrial and medical settings, (including talks from food, water and health protection sectors), antimicrobial surface technologies, and new and emerging strategies to control biofilms. All of the sessions were interspersed with many interesting discussions between the presentations. Our hosts at the University of Winchester provided an excellent evening meal, during which we were treated to an unforgettable rendition of ‘Fiddler on the roof’ by our very own member of the biofilm ‘cognoscenti’ Prof Glynn Morton – not to mention a few other anecdotes besides! Malcolm Greenhalgh, one of the founding members of the IBBS was also awarded an Honorary Fellowship for his many contributions to the society over the years – Congratulations Malcolm. All in all this was a very enjoyable and friendly meeting and we would like to thank all those who helped in organising and hosting the meeting and making the event a success.

JS Webb
Student bursary award

I was delighted to hear that I had been successful in my application for the summer studentship award from IBBS. The award, £250, provided a valuable contribution towards a project that was intended to benefit not only the student concerned, but also Norton Priory, a medieval heritage site in the North West of England, that was keen to develop its educational resources, particularly with regard to microbiology (and microscopy).

Rather than one Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU) student being supported, three have been involved in the project to date: Katie Carolan, undergraduate microbiology student; Van Le, graduate chemistry student and public engagement intern, and Jo Keogh, Interactive Arts graduate. The mix of disciplines suits biodegradation-type projects perfectly, and we were able to develop a useful suite of preliminary projects for the education team at Norton Priory.

First of all, the MMU team visited the Priory and carried out a microbiology audit, photographing and recording areas where microorganisms or microbial activity was apparent. The eventual aim of this exercise is to develop a biofilm hunt programme for family visitors to the Priory. Of course, evidence of microbiology was everywhere, from biofilms on sculptures and in the medieval monastery, to algae in the ponds, fungi in the woodlands and lichen on trees, to diseased or composting plant material in the walled garden. Always heartening to see how ubiquitous they are! We didn’t even need to use a microscope. That angle was covered by the Society for General Microbiology (SGM), who had developed an exhibition for the Chelsea Flower show that focused on the importance of microorganisms in soil, including nitrogen fixation. SGM kindly donated their exhibit panels to the Priory after the exhibition, providing a perfect and informative backdrop for family-focused activities in their activity space.

Jo Keogh has a fascination for lichen (www.lovelichen.org is her own website), and for her degree show, she developed an interactive map where the public could log their lichen findings. She was also interested in the relationship between lichen colony size and pollution levels, and wanted to get more public participation in her project. So she joined the science faculty for our Manchester Science Festival family fun day in October 2012, and hosted the activity ‘A Longer Look at Lichen’, sponsored by the IBBS award. Visitors looked at lichen under a microscope, drew what they saw using some lovely printing techniques, and were given a lichen detection kit to assist in their future lichen hunting. The aim was for them to feed their observations back to Jo’s website. It was a really successful activity, and we are going to develop it further for Norton Priory. Jo would also be delighted to hear from any lichenologists from IBBS!

The original medieval monks at the Priory were adept beekeepers, and the education team were keen to show that bees were still very much a part of the location. They asked if we could obtain some images of pollen from different plants, to show how beautiful they look, and to give some indication of the diversity of pollen morphology. Van worked with the scanning electron microscopist at MMU and produced some exquisite colour-enhanced images that the Priory immediately put on their website.

So, the IBBS award was used in a slightly different way from the usual support of a laboratory-based project, but I think that the field work, translation from science to public engagement, and support for a local heritage site really complemented the aims of our Society, and promoted it to new audiences. Many thanks for the support that enabled these achievements.

Joanna Verran
Heritage Biocare

IBBS President Christine Gaylarde and Honorary Fellow Dennis Allsopp have made their "Heritage Biocare" training course. This comprehensive package of 26 presentations has been completely updated and re-formatted. With modules on:

- Introduction to Heritage Biocare (7)
- Wood (3)
- Materials (6)
- Buildings (2)
- Detection and Testing (3)
- Control (2)
- Education (3)

It represents the most complete training course on the topic and is a MUST for all involved in the field. On sale now to members for only £20.

Please contact secretary@ibbsonline.org

The 5th Congress of European Microbiologists (FEMS 2013), July 21-25, Leipzig, Germany

The 5th Congress of European Microbiologists (FEMS 2013) is an exciting forum that will address the many challenges facing key areas in microbiology. Topical coverage of medical microbiology including molecular approaches, as well as biodiversity, bioremediation, eukaryotic microbes, virology and other key disciplines will provide you with a comprehensive overview as to the current state of the field. Symposia and workshops lead by prominent scientists are part of a scientific program that will focus on a rich and diverse array of pertinent topics. For further details please visit www2.kenes.com/fems2013/pages/home.aspx

Your 2013 IBBS Membership

We hope you have seen the 2013 membership renewal email from the IBBS Membership Secretary, Lawrence Staniforth. Please complete the form which you were sent and which is also available via www.ibbsonline.org/membership as soon as possible and return it to Lawrence by email or by post to the IBBS Secretary, John Gillatt (details on the form).

If you attended the IBBS Biofilms Conference in Winchester this September and were not previously a Society member

Your registration fee included membership of the Society until December 2013 and you therefore don’t have to renew until then.

IBBS membership categories

There are a number of Society membership categories so please make sure that you select the right one!

- **IBB Editorial Board members**: join as an “Ordinary” member and, via the IBB Journal Editor-in-Chief receive the journal free of charge
- **Student**: must be in full time education at a recognised educational establishment
- **Honorary**: have contributed to the IBBS over many years and now have retired – by invitation only
- **Retired**: a new category for 2013

Several years ago the Society’s Annual General Meeting decided that we would have a special reduced rate for people who had been members of the Society but had retired from full time work. However, it is only now that we have actually implemented this membership category. The subscription is £10 per year, or the Euro equivalent, the same as the student rate and entitles the retired member to the full benefits of the Society (reduced rate at conferences, special rate for the journal, continual updates and information, etc.). If you have not renewed your Society membership for some time because you are no longer in full time employment please consider signing up for this category.
This conference explores the application of emerging microbial and molecular biology tools to a wide range of hydrocarbon resource environments.

Topics will include:
- Application of Molecular Microbiological Methods for Oil Field Systems
- Diagnosing Microbial Influenced Corrosion (MIC) and Reservoir Sourcing
- Control and Prevention of MIC and Reservoir Sourcing
- Biodegradation of Hydrocarbons in Oil Production
- Biotechnology for Enhanced Oil Recovery (EOR)
- Biofuels and Downstream Petroleum Microbiology
- Microbiological Challenges in Biofuels
- Unlocking New Fuel Resources
- Metagenomics and Next Generation Sequencing
- Deep Oilfield Microbiology

Please see www.ismos-4.org/ for more details

FEMS council representation—update
I represent IBBS on the Council of FEMS (Federation of European Microbiology Societies). FEMS encompasses representation of microbiology societies across Europe, publishes very well respected journals, awards a range of valuable grants, and delivers a large Congress every other year. All member societies benefit from membership, particularly in terms of being eligible to apply for grants, and IBBS has been successful on several occasions in gaining support for our triennial meetings, which enable young scientists from other countries to attend.

FEMS Council meets once a year. I was honoured in 2012 when I was invited to become officer-at-large on the Executive for 12 months, with a remit to look at how FEMS could develop a coherent microbiology education strategy. Clearly all member societies are keenly interested in undergraduate and postgraduate education, and in school outreach and public engagement, but FEMS has yet to consider how it might assist in this work. I am assembling a group of interested individuals from member societies, so that we can begin to identify areas of interest for future development. We will also host an education symposium at the FEMS Congress in 2013, in Leipzig (providing a useful deadline for the launch and promotion of our IBBS education publication).

If any member of IBBS is interested in this activity, please let me know.
J.verran@mmu.ac.uk

ADVANCED NOTICE
Decontamination of Hospitals and Healthcare
September 2013
Chancellors, University of Manchester
Details to follow!!