



President's Report – Julie Walton

A warm welcome to the August 2009 'BMUS News' to all our members. Much as we all love the world of ultrasound, I hope that you are managing some quality respite from work during this so called 'BBQ summer'! My BBQ was used twice in June and has been subject to torrential rain ever since... It's certainly very clean!



Ah, British Summer!

In this edition I have managed to persuade a number of my colleagues to contribute to this edition of BMUS news. This includes Carmel Moran with her thoughts on the activities of the Scientific and Education Committee, and the man with the money.....Dr Paul Sidhu (Honorary Treasurer of BMUS and Chair of BMUS Publications) for an update of our finances and the activities of that committee.

Despite this being the summer we remain hugely active having run a series of very successful study days in June and July. These include repeat days on Contrast and Obstetrics, and a new very popular Carotid Artery day deftly organised by Stephen Wolstenhulme and Linda Arundale from St James's University Hospital, Leeds.

We were thrilled to return to the quaint setting of the York National Centre for Early Music for the BMUS Summer School.

I would like to sincerely thank Borsha Sarker (Sonographer, BMUS Council) for taking on this event at short notice and for delivering an excellent and thought provoking programme. She has kindly offered to act as the lead for BMUS Summer School 2010, so if you have

Dr Peter Twining

It is with great sadness we announce that a close friend and colleague, Dr Peter Twining, passed away on the 31st July 2009 following a short illness. Peter was a Consultant Radiologist at Queens Medical Centre, Nottingham.



He was an internationally acclaimed clinician with a particular interest in medical ultrasound. He is well known to many in the ultrasound community for his particular expertise in pre-natal diagnosis and general medical ultrasound.

Peter has a longstanding close affiliation with BMUS having been a member for many years. He was the Editor of the BMUS Bulletin during the 1990s and has been a regular contributor to the Annual Scientific meetings and study days. His contribution to the Society has been outstanding.

Very much admired by his colleagues and friends, he will be missed both professionally and personally by so many. He will be remembered as a very special person who gave so much for the benefit of others and in such an unassuming, genuine manner. His enthusiasm and willingness to help, teach and inspire others in the field of ultrasound creates a vacuum which will never be filled. He will be missed by so many, but not forgotten by any of us who had the privilege to be a part of his life.

We have sent condolences to his wife Beky, daughter Gabriella and the rest of his family, all of whom remain very much in our thoughts.

We have been overwhelmed already with kind messages which we are collating to pass onto Beky and Gabriella. For further tributes, colleagues and friends are most welcome to send messages to Bill Smith by email: b.smith@clinicaldiagnostics.co.uk and we will ensure that these are passed on.

Bill Smith, Director of Clinical Diagnostic Services, London

Julie Walton, President of BMUS

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any suggestions for content, then please contact Borsha directly by email to Borsha.Sarker@ghnt.nhs.uk

You will probably have seen in the media in May and June a lot of press relating to companies who are offering medical ultrasound 'screening' services, predominantly in abdominal and vascular applications. This generated a lot of discussion within BMUS and between BMUS and other professional organisations culminating in BMUS producing 2 screening statements. These can be found on our website at www.bmus.org/policies-guides/pg-pressitems.asp but just in case you haven't seen them, here they are punctuating my column in hard copy for your perusal!



Peter Twining at the BMUS ASM in Liverpool 2008, enjoying the welcome reception. Pictured with Tom Brown, Julie Walton and some of the BMUS support team.

In response to a number of enquiries and approaches from people asking for advice on various health screening issues involving the use of medical ultrasound, BMUS has issued two statements: -

The Use of Medical Ultrasound for Health Screening of Vascular Disease

Diagnostic medical ultrasound is an effective imaging modality in the investigation of a wide range of pathologies and areas of human anatomy. Its diagnostic efficacy in symptomatic patients has been demonstrated through many scientific studies.

However, there are few studies which show any benefit from the use of diagnostic ultrasound as a screening tool in the general adult population. The Department of Health has recognized that screening for abdominal aortic aneurysm (AAA) is effective in men over 65 and has started a programme to implement this: please click [here](#) to visit this NHS site.

The benefits of diagnostic ultrasound in symptomatic patients are only achieved by those who have undergone extensive training in the correct operation of the equipment and relevant diagnostic procedures and in the interpretation of ultrasound images. For assessment of the vascular system, e.g. the carotid arteries, it is important that investigations are carried out and interpreted in accordance with nationally agreed protocols.

All diagnostic ultrasound investigations should be carried out only by those who are suitably trained and appropriately qualified and registered as such with a recognized suitable regulatory body who will ensure fitness to practice. All ultrasound equipment and services should be subject to regular quality assurance assessments and audit to ensure compliance with nationally recognized standards of practice. All examinations should be properly reported and there must be a method in place for appropriate dissemination of results and for ensuring that prompt action is taken on the rare occasion where a serious condition maybe detected.

As there is no perceived clinical benefit from non-diagnostic scanning applications, the equipment should be operated at a reduced output level as specified in the BMUS safety guidelines (please click [here](#) to view these). The discovery of non symptomatic vascular disease may lead to unnecessary anxiety in some individuals, where the realises to have a risks to their health from such disease are small.

Anyone who w n ultrasound screening scan carried out at a private clinic should ensure that the above recommendations are met. Clients should ensure that the clinic has procedures in place to deal with any findings in a sensitive and professional manner.

BMUS, June 2009

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BMUS, June 2009

President's Report contd.

I have now been President for almost 8 months and it has been somewhat of a whirl wind, but hugely enjoyable. At the outset, I presented a list of my aspirations for the Society which I would be particularly keen to pursue during my Presidential tenure. So here is this quarter's update on progress:

Financial status of BMUS

The middle of July saw the invasion of the BMUS office in Portland Place by our auditors and accountants, Baker Tilly to review our financial status in readiness for the production of the annual accounts which will be received at the AGM in December 2009. Early indications are favourable, which is a relief to those who have been aware of the recent period of financial difficulty. Sincere thanks for this must go predominantly to Ann Taylor, BMUS General Secretary, supported by Dr Paul Sidhu (BMUS Treasurer) for steering the society into a much more secure financial position. That does not mean we will be complacent, but rather build on this more solid footing to afford long term financial security.

The new face of the website

We have been inundated with positive feedback about the new style website, which is updated almost daily with new and revised content. We will be continuing to use this as our flag ship medium for prompt dissemination of BMUS notices, events, guidelines etc. And so please visit the website regularly to ensure that you are up to date with the world of ultrasound. Thanks as always to Alice Hepworth in the BMUS office as she had led on this development, ably supported by Dr Roger Moshy (BMUS Honorary Secretary). Please keep any comments/suggestions in respect of the website coming in, addressed to Alice

Alice@BMUS.org

Euroson, Edinburgh 6 - 8 December 2009

This meeting is always the flagship event in the BMUS events calendar. Things are well underway for the final planning for this Meeting to be held at Edinburgh International Conference Centre. The programme looks fantastic and the latest update can be found at www.euroson2009.org. Thanks to Dr David Pilling (Chair) and the scientific organising committee for putting together an excellent programme with a wealth of speakers from all over the world. Why not take advantage of our

early bird registration scheme and in these times of the 'credit crunch' save your self or your hospital some money. Early bird registration closes on **1st October 2009**. An event of this magnitude takes a huge amount of planning to ensure its success and given that this is a European meeting, the planning is great than ever. Deadline for abstract submission is Friday 21st August, so please give consideration to submitting and encourage your colleagues to do so. We are keen to show just how good we are at ultrasound in the UK to our overseas visitors. The abstract committee will meet early September so you will hear mid-end September whether your work has been accepted. Alice and I are off to Edinburgh International Conference Centre (EICC) early August for a final site visit to ensure that all our needs are set in stone in readiness to meet and greet you and provide a fabulous and memorable scientific and social event! Don't forget, that you still have 3 months to practise your dancing for the Céilidh. We hope to see everyone on their feet in true BMUS style- no excuses and no wall flowers please!

You will now be aware that National Point of Care Ultrasound (NPoCUS) group will be holding the 2nd NPoCUS conference in the EICC on the Saturday preceding the start of the Euroson meeting under the directorship of Bob Jarman, Consultant in Emergency Medicine, Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Gateshead. The content of this programme can be found at www.npocus2009.co.uk. Why not treat your self to an extra day in Edinburgh and attend NPoCUS too!

Closer collaboration with other learned societies

My main activity has been to work with Dr Stuart Green and the staff of the British Institute of Radiology to plan a celebratory event- 'Ultrasound- Transforming Lives' - to be held 28 June - 2 July 2010. The event is to celebrate ultrasound and its achievements. As it is the centenary of the birth of Professor Ian Donald in 2010, we thought it appropriate to use this as a focal point. Professor Donald's first significant paper was published in The Lancet in 1958 and this will form the starting point from which to celebrate 50 years of ultrasound and how it has changed peoples' lives in this time. Over the course of the week long event, we will showcase historic and modern equipment and run a series of interactive activities. We are currently draw-

ing up a programme which we hope will appeal to those already involved in ultrasound, and those who know very little about it.



Professor Ian Donald

The media will be invited on the opening day, and an event for Members/Retired Members will be hosted with a social event in the evening. On the second day a full Scientific Meeting will be hosted. The programme will consist of a brief history of ultrasound followed by the latest developments in the field. On Wednesday the event will be open to the public with a trainee evening and on Thursday and Friday schools will be invited to visit and attend a demonstration. The B.I.R. recently ran an Art of Medicine exhibition in March, which was very well attended by schools, and encouraged the children to get excited about science and to understand how it relates to them. We are playing around with themes such as sports injuries and the lure of the 'Golden Balls' celebrity football phenomenon, as well as the impact ultrasound has on women's health throughout their lives. With an interactive slant, this event aims to pique the interest of many.

BMUS Annual Scientific Meeting, Brighton 2010

Plans for this are well under way and I am delighted to report that our scientific organising committee chair - Dr Tom Marshall has already established his Faculty for the SOC for this event and ideas are already flying around the email circuit with suggestions for content. Please remember that this will see a move to hosting this event in September for the first time.



The dates for Brighton 2010 are 28-30 September. If you have any suggestions for content then Tom would be delighted to hear your suggestions and so please email any suggestions to Rachel Meir in the BMUS office (Rachel@BMUS.org) and she will forward them on. I'm conducting the second site visit to Brighton Conference Centre on 10th August 2009 with Tom and Alice, so despite the fact that we haven't had our 2009 Euroson yet, things are well underway for 2010!

BMUS Annual Scientific meetings 2011, 2012

In early September, Ann Tailor and myself are revisiting the Liverpool Arena and conference centre to see whether we can 'strike a good deal!' for having 2 consecutive years in Liverpool. The feedback we had from Liverpool 2008 from delegates and manufacturers was hugely positive and Council has agreed that we should consider this option. We will have to secure our venues for these 2 years ASAP (believe it or not!) as they get booked up very early.

Suggestions from members

BMUS is here predominantly to serve its membership and we are all keen to do just that and I am still keen that you tell us what you need. I have not received anything of late, so perhaps we are doing OK!

But in all seriousness, we are now looking into setting up a discussion board through our new website where you would be able to liaise with BMUS and the wider ultrasound community. Do you think this would be a good idea? There are some concerns about policing such a message board but it would help to inform our decision if we were advised by members as to whether you would find this useful. You can email Alice at Alice@BMUS.org with your yes/no on this issue.

BMUS office issues

The loss of our Guardian Angel!

It is with great regret that I have to advise you personally that our fantastic General Secretary, Ann Tailor, handed in her notice in June 2009. Ann now lives in Hamburg with her husband Raj and that is her reason for leaving us. We have put together a more extensive farewell to Ann later in the Newsletter, but as the President I would like to say a huge thank you to Ann for her tireless work for BMUS over the past 4 years. Ann is very modest about her achievements since she arrived at BMUS of which there are many. Probably the one which has made the greatest impact is her incredible ability to handle the BMUS monies and that coupled with excellent negotiating skills has turned the Society's finances around leaving us in a very

much more secure position. We often refer to her as our Guardian Angel as she walked into the office in January 2006 and helped to place BMUS at the forefront of ultrasound activity both here and worldwide. Thank you, thank you, thank you!

On a personal note, when you do a job like this you rely hugely on the staff in the London office for support. Ann and I have worked closely together since she arrived, but mostly over the past 8 months as President and then the 2 years prior to that as President Elect. She has not only been an incredible colleague to work with but has become a sincere friend. I will always be so grateful to Ann for making my life so much easier in this role. I will miss her hugely and thank her for her constant support.

Recruitment of a new BMUS Chief Executive Officer

Clearly with Euroson rapidly approaching, we have had to act quickly in going to advert for Ann's position. Officers have had a proposal approved by Council to change the existing General Secretary position to that of CEO, which is now much more common in similar charities. We went to advert in July and we have now shortlisted and will interview 7 candidates on 7th August 2009. So, I hope that I will be able to introduce our new CEO in the November BMUS News, but keep an eye on the website as soon as we confirm an appointment I shall make an announcement through that medium.

Summary

I hope you enjoy reading issue 3 of BMUS News. Let's hope that the weather improves and, just in case it continues to rain incessantly, here's a cartoon of the sun it might be the closest we get!



Well back to planning for the new intake of ultrasound students here in Liverpool and so until next time, here is my email address just in case you feel the urge to contact me (please do!). julie.walton@liverpool.ac.uk.

Happy summer!

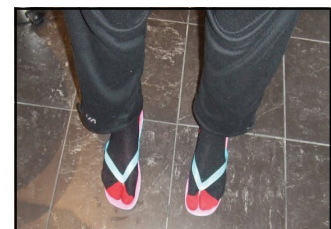
Julie Walton **Julie Walton
BMUS President**

When the rain comes out to play, so do the summer Fashion Police.... Contd over the page

Flip flops with socks- the ultimate horror



High tide heels



If you must, flip flop socks are now available at a store near you



Publications Committee Report – Paul Sidhu, Chair

The main task facing the Publications committee over the last few months has been the renewal of the publisher's licence for our journal *Ultrasound*. Our current publishers, Maney, have been publishing the journal for the last 6-years, and have taken the journal from a 'newsy' society bulletin to a respected scientific journal, aided and abetted by the Editors. However, one of the aims of the Society, to achieve Medline status, has not been achieved. In the present financial climate and the obligation to secure the most cost effective deal for the Society, we put the contract out to tender.



A day long process of interactive interviews with the three short-listed publishers (including Maney, rebidding for the contract) took place, a gruelling process for all involved. At the end of the day, after some excellent presentations, polished and professional, detailing all the improvements that we could expect, we were unable to make a final decision. After deliberation for a few days and with approval of Officers, we have offered the contract to the Royal Society of Medicine Publishers. They are a large organization with 22,000 medical members and good library penetration on a global scale. Importantly they have a large office with a dedicated team, close to the current BMUS office. The strategy of the RSM team for Medline citation is plausible and the future for the continued growth of our journal would appear to be in competent hands.

Nevertheless, the Editors still require members to dig deep and continue to submit articles. The article flow at present is good, with many unsolicited articles being submitted. Hopefully with Medline citation secured over the next few years, our 'bulletin' will become a bona fide journal of ultrasound for both our British members and to the world wide ultrasound community.

Case of the Month – Call for cases

BMUS is planning to introduce this feature on our website. We hope to initiate a forum for visitors to share views, comments and opinion on a variety of cases, covering a range of specialties.

If you think you have a suitable case, please send it to us with the following information:

- § Short clinical history
- § JPEG image(s) showing salient information
- § Your conclusion
- § Final diagnosis (including treatment, if appropriate)

Anyone can submit a case, including non-members, and they can be on any subject and in any specialty. Please send your cases to Alice Hepworth, using the above address, or to office@bmus.org

We will look forward to receiving your weird and wonderful cases!

Wish You Here? UK Summer Fashion - "Staycation" style



Hands free umbrella
If you pedal really fast nobody will recognise you.



Attack of the ponchos.
Sold in a variety of colours to match your mood and Outfit.



Selk bag– essential for camping in summer.



Another sunny day in July.



Festival season wouldn't be the same without a little mud.

A romantic beach walk on a pleasant summer Evening.



Kevin Martin Cuts and Runs!

'Sailing - The fine art of getting wet and becoming ill, while going nowhere slowly at great expense.'



Kevin at the helm

Kevin was with the Medical Physics Department at Leicester Royal Infirmary for 18 years serving as Head of Instrumentation. Prior to that he had been working in ultrasound in his home town of Newcastle for 13 years. So, it's fair to say he toed the line and certainly knew the ropes after all those years

Kevin continues to be very involved in ultrasound, and as Past President of BMUS, he oversees any European matters. This mean we still hound him regularly about our forthcoming Euroson meeting.



We are reliably informed that Kevin had a great leaving do in Leicester back in May. Apparently one of these eight Kevins (pic top right) put in an appearance. The other seven were given a wide berth.

Kevin is a keen sailor (which explains some of the lingo above) and has lots of sailing trips on the horizon, as well as indulging in his love of long distance walks and travel. I hear he has just have 70 miles of Hadrian's Wall to go now. Incidentally, Elaine Brown, our former General Secretary has 56 miles of 'The Wall' left now...

All of us at BMUS would like to wish Kevin a very happy action packed retirement.

Rachel Meir



Looking to new horizons

Auf Wiedersehen, Pet

I was under instruction from Ann to not put anything in this newsletter about her departure. But, such an omission would be weird and just didn't seem right. I've refrained from any Photo-shopping with German traditional costumes, but wanted to include a short thank you and fond farewell.



Ann has always confronted taboo topics. In her previous position as Director of the *Sexual Dysfunction* Association, she confronted impotence head on. For BMUS, it was another quintessentially British hush hush topic - money. Again, she tackled this with a no nonsense attitude, and as Julie mentioned earlier, the emerging figures speak for themselves.

We will certainly miss seeing the remnants of your previous job around the Office - Viagra calculator, Viagra pens, Viagra post it notes, Viagra tissues... We will also miss all the daily care and support you have shown us regarding anything and everything work and non-work related. Thank you thank you thank you.

You'll be happy to know that there is, on average, an ultrasound event in Hamburg every 3 weeks, should you feel a sense of longing and nostalgia.



Hamburg- home of Ann

We look forward to hearing tales of salty sailing escapades and conquering Hadrian's Wall. And dancing. We know how you love dancing. All these Hamburger tales must be recounted in fluent German of course.

Rachel Meir

NOTICE

The ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

of

THE BRITISH MEDICAL ULTRASOUND]SOCIETY

will be held during EUROSON

on

SUNDAY 6th DECEMBER 2009 at 12.45pm

The Sidlaw Suite International Conference Centre, Edinburgh



Scientific & Education Committee Report – Carmel Moran, Chair

My name is Carmel Moran and I am currently the chair of the Scientific and Education (S&E) Committee of BMUS having taken up the post in January of this year. I am a Medical Physicist based at the University of Edinburgh.



The S&E committee meets 3 times a year, usually in January, May and September in London and is composed of sonographers, medical physicists and clinicians - a mix which reflects the wide professional membership base of BMUS. There is a maximum of 12 members who sit on the committee and members of BMUS who would like to sit on the committee are welcome to contact BMUS directly.

The aim of the Scientific and Education committee is to advise council on matters relating to the development, practice, teaching and monitoring of ultrasound techniques where ultrasound is used for clinical or research purposes. As part of this remit we organise study days throughout the year and throughout the country. Members are encouraged to suggest topics for study days that they would find useful and informative (either by emailing me directly carmel.moran@ed.ac.uk or by contacting the BMUS office). In general each committee member organises 2 study days each year with the help and organisational skills of the BMUS office. In the run-up to summer we have held some very successful study days with an ultrasound contrast day (London), a 3-Day ultrasound summer school (York), an ultrasound obstetrics day (Nottingham) and a carotid day in Leeds.

We are looking forward to the following study days over the coming months.

- **The Life Cycle of an ultrasound system** : 18th Sept, Edinburgh
- **BMUS and The Renal Association for Nephrologists Study Day** : 29th Sept, London
- **Everything you need to know about aortic disease, aortic stent grafts and AAA surgery** : 15th Oct, Gateshead.
- **Everything you need to know about TIA Pathway– Symptoms to Treatment** : 16th Oct, Gateshead

Details of all these courses and those scheduled for 2010 can be viewed on our website or alternatively by contacting our BMUS Events Manager (Rachel) directly Rachel@bmus.org

In addition if you are keen to run a study day / short course in a specific ultrasound area, this can be done either in collaboration with BMUS or if run an event independently then BMUS can endorse the event if appropriate. Details of how to get your event endorsed by BMUS can be found at www.bmus.org/conference-events/CourseEndorsementRequirements.pdf

And, please don't forget.... any suggestions for study days, guidelines etc. Or if you wish to be considered for membership to this committee when there is a vacancy then please email me on.

Have a fabulous rest of summer – I have spent mine mainly too hot or too wet!!! Finally, I look forward to seeing you all in Edinburgh from 6-8th December for the BMUS 2009 Annual Scientific Meeting and Exhibition (Euroson 2009). The program this year is an exciting one and I am sure you will enjoy Edinburgh!

BMUS Obstetric study day, June 26th 2009

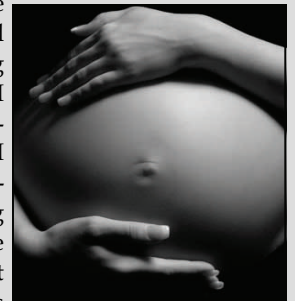
Janette Keit

I attended this study day as there were quite a few topics that I have a vested interest in. Spending the majority of my time scanning obstetric cases they all seemed likely to be relevant to my practice, and those who know me will be aware that I am nothing if not vocal on topics that interest me so I did think it would be quite an interesting day.

Unfortunately attendance was less than I would have expected for the range of topics covered although I am sure, as everyone knows, we are all affected by dwindling study leave budgets. There was so much information relevant to practice that I felt it might be useful to at least give an overview here.

After a welcome by Dr Pam Loughna the day was opened by Dr Trish Chudleigh talking about the FASP 18-20 week scan which I am sure she knows backwards and inside out by now.

I say this because I am aware she has done many road shows around the country to facilitate the rolling out of these new changes. What I am interested in is how many sonographers have heard this talk? I know that in my hospital our Associate Specialist and our Screening Midwife have attended many of the build up sessions hearing about what is now the final draft, but this is the first time I have had the opportunity to hear it myself. My concern is that many sonographers will be unaware of the reasoning behind the changes and how it is going to affect practice.



The FASP drive is to shift the scan at 18-20 weeks from detecting markers and an euploidy to ensuring that cases requiring referral and perinatal management are picked up. In fact one of the later talks in the day was entitled "Death of the Soft Marker".

Recommended scan times are 30 minutes for an anomaly scan, with 60 minutes being suggested for a twin pregnancy. Note the use of the word "suggested"!

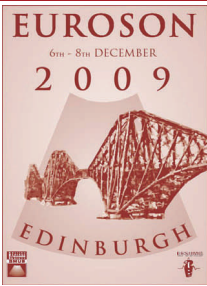
Eventually 6 images will be required for audit purposes and these will be downloaded to a central base rather like the NT set up. These have been selected to audit calliper accuracy, biometric section selection, image set-up and image quality. Some things will disappear off the checklist; some will need to be on. By April 2010 all this should be underway and incorporated into our daily practice.

My advice to sonographers is to find out who in your hospital has already been to these road shows, and to watch out for documentation being published in October/November of this year. The BMUS website should have a link but as many of you know not everyone is a member of BMUS or proactive in looking on the website.

Dr Tim Overton spoke twice during the day on issues to with NT in twins, raised NT and normal karyotype, dating and contingency screening. With particular reference to what type of screening is offered I can only say it is a minefield for the booking midwife. My experience in my hospital where we are NOT doing NT is some know about it, some have it, some are still anxious about it.

Contd on next page

REGISTER NOW FOR EUROSON and NPoCUS



**Reduced EARLYBIRD fees are available
until 1st OCTOBER**

www.euroson2009.org



**NHS FASP/CASE/University of Leeds
Meeting of NHS Fetal Anomaly
Screening Programme (FASP)
Ultrasound Educationalists
Tuesday 20 October 2009, 10.00 – 16.30**

Weetwood Hall Conference Centre & Hotel, Leeds

The day will provide university and clinical staff involved in obstetric ultrasound education with an update on national developments in NHS fetal anomaly screening (England) and the opportunity to share their views and comments.

The morning will focus on the role of ultrasound in 1st Trimester screening, to include; 'model of best practice', national NT training strategy and education resource development. The afternoon will focus on ultrasound in the 2nd trimester, to include; national standards, fetal cardiac screening and education resources.

If you would like to attend, please give your name and contact details to Elaine Green, PA to National Project Officers, NHS Fetal Anomaly Screening Programme. Email elaine.green@ansnsc.co.uk or direct tel: 0845 5277919.

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Down's despite opting for it, and some still think we can finally rule it out on the 20 week scan. Of course for those of us not doing NT there is still the prominent nuchal that you have to do something with...but it is a numbers game, and if you are really lucky the parents understand statistics.

"Death of the soft marker" ... there probably would have been a small cheer if we had had more obstetricians in the audience. My impression is that they have always hated us for introducing this into the arena. I know we weren't directly responsible, but...

As we all know there have been additions and removals to this list over the many years that we have been finding them. In fact I have even been to a study day where someone has shown how a marker being put on this list leads to a sudden surge in detection rate with a definite fall off over time, and I have to say that seemed to happen with choroid plexus cysts. Pam Loughna gave an overview of where we are now and also reported an interesting study in Wales where they stopped reporting single or multiple markers in 2004. Interestingly there was no change in undetected trisomy 21, no change in the percentage of trisomy 21 detected antenatally and no change in trisomy 18 detection. There was an increase in detection at 1st trimester and a slight decrease in 2nd trimester. There were no medico legal issues and happier patients and staff.

A standards and marker statement is to be finalised by October 2009 with dissemination to Trusts in January 2010. The independent sector needs to be included in this and hopefully there will be agreement to comply. This will mean that we will be unlikely to have litigation issues if we have universal practice.

I think we are all aware of the drive to improve detection rates of CHD, and Dr Helena Gardiner gave an interesting talk on what we should be aiming for. Her work with "Tiny Tickers" is an integral part of trying to educate sonographers and improve their confidence in examining the fetal heart. We all know how difficult and challenging it can be with less than brilliant equipment and ever increasing BMI, but we really need to look at our pick-up rates and see where the gaps in training are. Even that is a challenge ...to find out what we have missed and what we have picked up, and feed it back to the sonographers, then we can see how a big a challenge it is to improve our detection rates.

Following an excellent lunch, Dr Nick Dudley had the daunting task as always to whip up some enthusiasm for the physics side of things. I think we have to say Julie is in the minority in enjoying physics. However his talk was fascinating if not a bit worrying at our lack of knowledge of the parameters within which we do our day to day scanning. I hate questions like what does the MI and TI change to when you put the colour and the Doppler on. Do you know how to alter the presets to lower the power? Does higher power give a better image? Is there an optimum level? I think we are all a bit lazy if we are honest, but there was definitely food for thought.

It seemed like a natural progression then onto "Seeing through the fog", given by Kathy Ford, a shop floor sonographer, so well qualified to speak about it. Finally recommendations are beginning to filter through guidelines so that we have some back-up and advice for what to do with our ever increasing numbers of larger ladies.

Education of the midwives of the impact it

has on scanning, and information given to women when booking would go a long way in helping the situation. A suggestion was posters in the waiting area at least introducing the idea that the scan may need 2 visits to complete it, and that in some cases it may never be completed to the standard we would like. The new UKAS guidelines have included recommendations and also NICE has introduced the idea that there are limitations with increasing BMI. The reality is that scanning larger ladies is tiring and does impact on the ever present problem of RSI. At least guidance is filtering through at last.

And finally....souvenir scanning! I had to leave part way through this but it's obviously a hot potato. There are many clinics throughout the country. Baby Bond alone has 26 in England and Wales. Pam Loughna had trawled her way through some of the glowing marketing that accompanies this type of scanning. Unlike the NHS they are offering DVDs, weekend scanning, and the chance to see "breathtaking moving images which allow you, for the first time to really see the delightful reality of your unborn baby".

However both EFSUMB and BMUS do not endorse souvenir scanning. I am sorry I missed the ensuing debate that I am sure followed as I know there were sonographers in the audience who were partaking in providing this service. I am sure it will run and run. It certainly shows no sign of abating due to the demand for it to be available.

All in all it was a very informative and enjoyable meeting.