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British
Psychological
Society

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The Society has offices in Belfast, Cardiff, Glasgow and London, as well as the main office in Leicester. All enquiries should be addressed to the Leicester office (see inside front cover for address).

The British Psychological Society

was founded in 1901, and incorporated by Royal Charter in 1965. Its object is 'to promote the advancement and diffusion of a knowledge of psychology pure and applied and especially to promote the efficiency and usefulness of Members of the Society by setting up a high standard of professional education and knowledge'.
Extract from The Charter



President's column

Pam Maras

Contact Pam Maras via the Society's Leicester office, or e-mail: president@bps.org.uk

Celebrations on 31 December and 1 January reflect the start of the Western, or Gregorian, calendar year. But many other dates start new periods in different traditions. For example, the 4706th Chinese New Year (or Spring Festival) begins on 7 February 2008. In terms of how the Society itself takes account of the past and moves towards the future, we could do worse than take note of two Chinese proverbs: 'To know the road ahead, ask those coming back' and 'Do not be afraid of growing slowly, be afraid only of standing still'.

During the coming period, developing our services for members and the public and adapting to a changing world are priorities, as is considerable investment in the IT infrastructure to support them. One highly visible change is the redesigned *Psychologist*, now incorporating *Psychologist Appointments*. We hope you find it attractive and user-friendly, and representative of the professional and academic values of our Society.

In one of the new formats in this redesigned *Psychologist*, Elizabeth Valentine (p.86) writes about Nellie Carey, one of very few women members of the Society in the early 1900s. Here is something else that has changed; Virginia Woolf's comment that 'for most of history, Anonymous was a woman' is becoming increasingly less true of the BPS. Today over 75 per cent of the members of the Society are women.

Also in this issue (p.10) Christian Jarrett provides a thought-provoking article about when therapy goes wrong, referring to the need for an evidence base for all that psychology does. The dissemination of psychological evidence is another priority for us. In line with this, the Professional Practice Board recently held a one-day conference on social inclusion covering important areas such as prisoners, children and return to work – a web forum and electronic network for Society members working in social inclusion has been set up as a consequence of this (www.bps.org.uk/socialinclusion).

The Society has published a number of guidelines for members in the past year including for psychologists working as expert witnesses, and we will publish guidelines on the new roles under the mental health legislation of

Responsible Clinician and Approved Mental Health Practitioner in the near future. New additional funding will be given to the Professional Practice Board towards running seminars on the implications of the New Ways of Working for Applied Psychologists project.

Providing support for members working in different contexts is another important objective. An electronic forum for members who are independent practitioners has been set up, and plans are in hand to introduce training events for them. Our Psychological Testing Centre website (www.psychtesting.org.uk) has also been redesigned and contains many more

features for users, including a blog. Other things in the pipeline include a significant revamp of the Society's careers information – including the website and support materials for universities and schools, making a contribution to the Science Council's 'Careers from Science'

project, and a review of the Society's careers literature. The Society is also supporting improvements in the effectiveness of Student Members Group, whose conference was held in parallel with the Society's Annual Conference in York in 2007.

Dissemination takes many different forms, including plans this year to set up a Clinical Research Digest – a fortnightly e-mail digest containing synopses of peer-reviewed psychology journal papers aimed at clinical psychologists, those in training, other allied psychologists and the media.

Dissemination to government, NGOs and policy makers in the devolved parliament in Scotland and assemblies in Northern Ireland and Wales is also well developed. Following the success of the existing joint Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology (POST) internship

"developing our services and adapting to a changing world are priorities"

EVENTS DIARY

For a database of forthcoming events organised by the Society and other organisations, see www.bps.org.uk/diary.

To advertise your event, contact psyadvert@bps.org.uk or +44 116 252 9552.

scheme, two further internships per year for postgraduates to undertake a three-month secondment with the Society's Parliamentary Office will be funded to work in drafting and producing timely and objective, evidence-based briefing material for policy audiences.

We will continue to provide expert advice to government. This year the Policy Support Unit has completed 112 consultation responses on topics from Tackling Health Inequalities, Science & Innovation Strategy for Scotland and the Peer Review Process for Research Councils UK (www.bps.org.uk/consult). And, of course, a significant contribution was made to shaping the Mental Health Act, which was enacted last year. Moves towards statutory regulation continue to rumble on. One of my own personal priorities during my term as President has been that communications should be open, current and accessible to members. To this end, and so you can have the most up-to-date information as soon as possible, my briefings on the website are updated at least twice a week (see www.bps.org.uk/SRupdate).

So progress and change will march on in the new year, and we can look forward to facing the challenges of the future with confidence. But whichever calendar you use, I hope that the coming year will be healthy, happy and peaceful.

Award for Distinguished Contributions to Professional Psychology 2007

Dr Tommy MacKay

There can be few psychologists who have had their achievements highlighted in a book written by a Prime Minister – indeed Tommy MacKay is probably the only one.

So striking have been his contributions to eradicating illiteracy in Scotland that Gordon Brown recently wrote of him in the following terms: 'Tommy MacKay has achieved something quite remarkable. The learning from this visionary project will be shared and replicated across the country, ensuring that hundreds of young lives will not be constrained by poor literacy, but that all the riches of learning are opened up for them.'

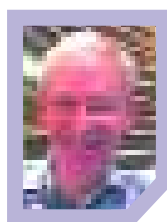
Tommy MacKay's work in West Dunbartonshire began in 1997 when 20 per cent of school leavers were functionally illiterate. The latest figures for June 2007 totalled just 3 per cent, with the Council also reaping other benefits such as lower school disruption, raised self-esteem among the children and a more skilled workforce.

Such is the high regard for his work that one letter in support of his nomination described him as follows: 'When any national initiative relating to educational psychology is considered in Scotland Tommy is always asked to play a leading role. This is much evident from his pivotal roles in the development of the National performance indicators, through the Currie Report and on into the evaluation of psychological services for 19- to 24-year-olds. However, it is not merely the inner circle in Scottish education and educational psychology who see Tommy in this light but all his colleagues.'

Dr MacKay grew up in Glasgow and attended Glasgow

University, where he began a classics course, Latin and Greek paleography, however he soon changed to psychology because he found it so interesting. In an interview for *The Psychologist* he described himself as having

been 'rather undisciplined' at university, using his time mainly to become more proficient at snooker. Despite this he went on to win first prize in his year.



After graduating in 1969 he moved into a career in educational psychology, going on to work variously in local authority education services, private practice and in teaching and research at Strathclyde, Glasgow and Birmingham Universities. He also holds positions with the National Centre for Autism Studies (which he co-founded) and the National Diagnosis and Assessment Service for ASD.

He won the Society's 1997 Award for Challenging Inequality of Opportunity, and in his award lecture argued for radical changes in the funding of the British educational system. In 2000 he became the Society's President at the Annual Conference, held at the Guildhall, Winchester. Just two of the honours extended to him in his active career.

The range of his expertise has been described as 'extraordinary', being not only a Chartered Educational Psychologist he also lays claim to being a Chartered Health Psychologist, a full member of the Division of Neuropsychology and Division of Teachers and Researchers in Psychology and Accredited Cognitive Behavioural Psychotherapist with the BABCP. Such is the regard in which he is held in autism circles that colleagues at first assumed the Prime Minister's reference to him must

have been about that field of his work rather than his educational activities.

Throughout his career he has been active in raising the profile of the discipline with parents, policy makers, the media and politicians, demonstrating to them how applied psychology can enhance quality of life affecting every part of the community.

To quote the Prime Minister again: 'Tommy is a visionary because he was able to revolutionise an education system to benefit thousands of people. But he is an inspiration because his achievements stand for something even bigger than this – the belief that, where we seek to do good, to restore justice, to create hope, nothing is impossible.'

CONSULTATIONS ON PUBLIC POLICY

The preparation and submission of the Society's responses to consultations on public policy is coordinated by the Policy Support Unit (PSU). All members are eligible to contribute to responses and all interest is warmly welcomed. Please contact the PSU for further information (psu@bps.org.uk; 0116 252 9926/9577). Details of active and completed consultations are available at: www.bps.org.uk/consult.

Brief details of consultations responded to during November are provided below. Most allowed very short periods in which to respond and we are particularly grateful to those members who gave up their time to do this.

Better Health, Better Care This Scottish government consultation was welcomed by members of the Scottish Division of Health Psychology and the Division of Neuropsychology, both for its strategic vision and for its identification of key requirements for the improvement of the health and well-being of the people of Scotland. An evidence-based case was presented that significant investment in applied psychology would greatly assist the Scottish government in achieving its important aims.

Carol Black's Review of the Health of Britain's Working Age Population (commissioned by the Department for Work and Pensions)

The response from members of the Divisions of Occupational, Health and Clinical Psychology and the DCP's Faculty for Addictions noted that:

- | psychosocial working conditions; organisational culture; management behaviour; approach and practices; and relationships/support in the workplace are all important determinants of health, including for those remaining in work despite ill health and those returning to work after illness; and
- | occupational health provision needs to be integrated with organisational practices and include psychological as well as medical services.

Sheffield University's 'Do Once and Share' Project on Pain Assessment

This initiative was welcomed by members of the Divisions of Health and Clinical Psychology for its potential to enhance communication and consistency between patients and professionals as well as between professionals. The need for clear identification of the evidence base, context, content and intended use of the measures was noted, and suggestions were put forward for further measures.

CAMHS Core Functions (Tiers 3, 4) A response to this Skills for Health consultation was prepared by the DCP's Faculty for Children and Young People, following revisions made to the core functions after an earlier (May 2007) consultation. The Society's response included emphasising that within Function 1, effective communication with children, families and carers involves working with multiple perspectives, and a suggestion that within Function 9, clearer articulation would be helpful in relation to supervision, consultation, training and clinical liaison.

Byron Review - Call for evidence (commissioned by the Department for Children, Schools and Families) This consultation concerned the risks to children's safety and well-being of exposure to potentially harmful or inappropriate material on the internet and in video games. The response, prepared by the Professional Practice Board's Child Protection Working Party, included suggestions for a more proactive and responsible stance from the video gaming and internet industries; the introduction of a kitemark for content, and the establishment of an agency where parents/carers can go for advice and to report suspicion of, or actual, misuse.

Society vacancies

Publications and Communications Board Chair

See advert on p.78.

Board of Assessors in Clinical Neuropsychology Registrar and Chief Supervisor

A Practitioner Full Member of BPS Division of Neuropsychology for at least five years with experience of clinical supervision in clinical neuropsychology and detailed knowledge and understanding of the process of examinations. Attracts payment with travel and subsistence.

Contact

Bethan Carley bethan.carley@bps.org.uk, 0116 252 9933.

Interested parties can contact Dr June Robson, current post-holder, on june.Robson@stockport.nhs.uk or Dr Jody Warner-Rogers Chair of the Board of Assessors jody@drsrogers.plus.com, for an informal discussion