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**British Aphasiology Society
Therapy Symposium, 2008**

September 8th - 9th, 2008
University of East Anglia, Norwich

**Conference Announcement
& First 'Call for Papers'**

The Therapy Symposium concentrates on what we as therapists actually do in treatment. It is a unique opportunity to hear about therapy approaches in detail and to take part in lively debate.

For more information about submitting a paper or poster for presentation at the Symposium, please contact: Simon Horton, School of Allied Health Professions, Queen's Building, University of East Anglia, Norwich NR4 7TJ. Tel: 0044 (0)1603 593060 or email s.horton@uea.ac.uk

BAS Members Full Conference Fee: £115

Non BAS Members Full Conference Fee (inc. membership): £135

Students (BAS members) Full Conference Fee: £60
(Non BAS members) Full Conference Fee: £70

Day rates available on request

Accommodation: B&B in UEA ensuite rooms (on campus): **£40.85 per night** (single rooms) [see <http://comm.uea.ac.uk/press/release.asp?id=553>]

Getting there: UEA is easily accessible by road, rail (<http://www.onerailway.com/>) or by air, with flights to Norwich from Exeter, Dublin, Amsterdam and more (e.g. <http://www.flybe.com/>)

A Social Evening on 8th September will be announced shortly

Book on-line at www.ncore.org.uk; Telephone 01332 254679



Reflections on the British Aphasiology Society's Biennial International Conference, 10-12 September 2007, Edinburgh

Recipients of Conference Support Fund places reflect on September's International Conference:

The 2007 BAS conference once again offered the chance for aphasia researchers and clinicians to meet together and discuss what's new, this time with the added advantage of the wonderful city of Edinburgh. With Arthur's Seat as backdrop, the lovely (and let's face it, pretty posh) Our Dynamic Earth as our immediate environment, and the amazing Carol Brandreth as administrator, it would be difficult not to have a lively time. The programme offered a real breadth of topics, from a fascinating session on the place of language in neurodegenerative disease, to stimulating symposia on Quality of Life in Aphasia and Alternative Communication and Therapy. A particular highlight for me was the talk by Klaus Willmes on 'Functional imaging of language reorganization after stroke'. Rather than using functional imaging to study the language network in the chronic post-stroke phase, where the system may already have undergone a degree of reorganisation, Professor Willmes described studies that considered the damaged system longitudinally. These demonstrated very different patterns of brain activation at different time points post-injury, with strong positive correlations between initial language performance and higher levels of activation, as well as between early improvements in language and increase in levels of activation. Prof Willmes also pointed to the use of TMS as a means of more precisely identifying those areas that either are or are not implicated in the processing of language.

One session offered (for me, at any rate) an all-too-brief view into the world of verb therapy. Clare McCann first revisited Thompson's Argument Structure Complexity Hypothesis, arguing that this is relevant to the verb production difficulties of people with

fluent as well as non-fluent aphasia, though the question remains as to precisely how argument structure complexity is related to other factors such as conceptual complexity and sentence length. Janet Webster and Barbara Gordon then described a programme of therapy which exploited the associations between verbs and nouns to target an individual's verb and sentence difficulties. Interestingly, their second phase of therapy led to improvements in the client's sentence generation as well as in her production and comprehension of single verbs, despite the fact that it did not involve any explicit focus on her understanding of argument structure.

As is often the case at such events, it was a particular pleasure to find myself most stimulated by sessions outside my own 'comfort zone'. For instance, an especially lively and well-attended session on Living with Aphasia brought together excellent speakers from the USA, South Africa, Australia and the UK. Amongst other things, they challenged us to think harder about the specific cultural and linguistic context within which therapy takes place, and the views of family members in the goal-setting process. Tony O'Donnell, Carolyn Bruce and Maria Black gave a particularly interesting talk on the use of Bliss symbol strings, considering their potential both for the communication of ideas and as a means of 'holding onto' those ideas as they are being formed.

There was a general feeling that, for a number of reasons, this rich talk

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warranted more time and would perhaps have been more suited to the format of the BAS therapy symposium; I hope that it will get more detailed consideration in another such forum.

I am hugely grateful to the BAS committee for helping me to attend the 2007 Conference. With training budgets constrained as they are, I feel it is really important that BAS continues to support its members' attendance at conferences. It is a rare event at which you can find yourself stripping the willow opposite an eminent aphasia researcher; do consider the two BAS funds (for BAS-run and external events) when thinking about your training for next year.

Deborah Cairns

Are you thinking of attending a conference? Do you need financial support?

See page 15 for details on how to apply for funding from BAS

**Membership Rates
1st April 2007 – 31st March 2008**

Basic rate: Standing order £15
Cheque £20

Student rate: £10
People with aphasia: £10

For application and standing order forms please see the Membership section of the BAS website.

This year's BAS conference was an inspiring and challenging event. There were many excellent presentations but some stood out as highlights for me. Sue Franklin reviewed research from the past 21 years into levels of breakdown in auditory comprehension. She stated that few studies have looked at rehabilitation of auditory comprehension and argued that pre-lexical auditory analysis can be divided into speech-specific and non-speech processing components.

Clare McCann described a group study looking at verb production in fluent aphasia. She found that verbs with a more complex argument structure were more difficult to produce, i.e. the same pattern was seen in fluent aphasia as has been found in non-fluent aphasia. Phoneme length was also found to influence verb production, whereas word frequency did not. Therefore we were reminded to consider carefully when selecting verbs to use in therapy.

The final day included two excellent talks on evidence based practice. Pam Enderby argued that small scale studies with more clients excluded than included are not the best way to inform clinical practice, proposing that data should be gathered from large numbers of patients across different geographical areas. David Howard then suggested that Randomised Controlled Trials are not the gold standard for aphasia research, and discussed recent publications stating that n=1 controlled single case studies are the strongest form of evidence that a treatment works for an individual. A case series design can then be used. Although the results of these studies only apply to one individual, a case series can be used to examine whether the same therapy has similar effects for other patients.

I would like to thank the BAS committee for the grant which allowed me to attend this conference.

Heather Waldron City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Trust

Edinburgh hosted the BAS International Conference this year in the fantastic modern building of Our Dynamic Earth. This museum-cum-conference centre sits at the base of Arthur's Seat (which I've always thought looks more like an elephant than a lion) near the even more architecturally challenging building, the Scottish Parliament. The BAS team, together with Carol Brandreth and Dynamic Earth, put on a really well-organised and slick event with an exciting and varied programme. It felt truly international with several delegates from Europe, America, Australia and New Zealand. It is difficult to encapsulate the range of papers and posters presented so I have picked out some highlights from my perspective.

Argye Hillis and Klaus Willmes gave keynote speeches focusing on acute brain damage following stroke. Hillis discussed the effects of reperfusion on the brain tissue and how this may reflect early recovery rather than actual reorganisation, whilst Willmes talked about the enhanced role of the right hemisphere in the hyperacute phase until the left hemisphere recovers.

Martin Pickering gave a paper on the theory of dialogue arguing that formal linguistic models are based on monologues and not dialogue. He talked about the Interactive-Alignment model which postulates that dialogue exploits a primitive priming mechanism. For example if one speaker uses a particular word or phrase during an exchange the next speaker will mimic this to align with the first speaker. Although he did not extrapolate this to aphasia one can speculate how aphasic talk leads to misalignment but conversely how the communication partner could use alignment to enable the person with aphasia to save face (one of the principles of supported conversation).

Sentence processing cropped up several times. Clare McCann discussed a study that looked at verb production in fluent aphasia. The complexity of argument structure influenced verb production but of all the psycholinguistic variables studied, length and noun-relatedness were the only things to have an effect.

Janet Webster described a single case study where the participant did not benefit from complex explanations about mapping and thematic roles but did improve once the jargon was abandoned and she just had to do the tasks!

One of the parallel sessions was on quality of life issues where Madeline Cruice discussed a study comparing older people's quality of life with that of older people with aphasia. 'Activities' was found to be a core concept for both groups implying that rehabilitation needs to operate at a 'life level' not just a 'communication level'. Gill Pearl talked about a project involving people with aphasia who had taken up activities helping others. She fed back how this had affected them in both positive and negative ways, such as an increase in self-esteem versus the fatigue factor.

Roberto Cubelli gave a fascinating talk about peripheral dysgraphias highlighting that errors such as using a mix of upper and lower case letters within a word is not necessarily indicative of brain damage. He cited Marc Chagall's signature as a case in point. Look it up!

Rosemary Cunningham

Please receive the BAS newsletter by e-mail!

Recent increase in postal costs for A4 size envelopes has increased the cost of sending out the newsletter. To reduce costs, everyone who has an e-mail address will now receive the newsletter via e-mail, unless a hard copy is specifically requested.

If you currently receive the newsletter by post but have an e-mail address, please help to reduce costs by contacting Annette Cameron, BAS Membership Secretary with your e-mail address at membership-secretary@bas.org.uk.

The BAS International Conference made an excellent start with varied and thought-provoking talks by Argie Hillis, Sue Franklin and Ray Wilkinson amongst others. Argie Hillis spoke on the topic of 'Mechanisms of Aphasia Recovery after Stroke' which was noteworthy for its comprehensive coverage of various levels of change and adaptation after stroke, from the neural level, to reorganisation of structure and function and compensatory strategies. Sue Franklin gave us an overview of auditory comprehension disorders over the last 21 years, reminding us that these are amongst the debilitating symptoms of aphasia which continue to be under-researched in terms of diagnostic criteria and therapy approaches. Ray Wilkinson delivered an excellent presentation on changes in word finding behaviours and repair strategies in one man with aphasia which charted these and noted subtle but clinically and communicatively important changes over months and years post stroke. The afternoon sessions offered delegates a choice of theme, and I opted for a session on language and dementia which reflected growing awareness and understanding of linguistic changes in these conditions and possible SLT clinical contribution. My own research department (NARU, University of Manchester) was well-represented by Karen Sage and Diana Caine, who both presented on semantic dementia. Their findings gave a convincing account of how semantic deficits can impact on purportedly 'non-semantic' tasks such as choice of grammatical gender (in Spanish), oral reading and spelling. Most notably, a pattern of surface dysgraphia was explained with reference to the central semantic impairment and its interaction with other primary systems such as phonology and orthography supporting speech, reading and writing. Karen Sage's second talk focused on generalisation across exemplars from items named after therapy in semantic dementia, and provided a fascinating insight to the rigidity which characterised these patients' grasp of meaning in therapy when the semantic system becomes so centrally degraded. Thomas Bak concluded the afternoon with a highly informative and well-delivered account of a suggested link between neurological deficit for movement, and a linguistic deficit in processing verbs with, for

example, relatively depleted verb naming in motor neuron disease.

Day 2 saw a focus on therapy and living with aphasia which commenced with a session of verb and verb therapy. Clare McCann gave an excellent talk on the factors which influence verb production in fluent aphasia which concluded that the effects of psycholinguistic variables such as frequency and imageability were weaker than anticipated. Rather, number of noun arguments exerted a stronger influence on the ease with which verbs were retrieved; i.e. the greater the number of arguments, the more difficult retrieval became. Janet Webster presented a therapy study with important clinical implications for verb and sentence production therapies. The single case study featured verb-noun association therapy in which practise in selecting between picture choices of nouns semantically related to target verbs produced improved verb comprehension and production together with better sentence production with treated verbs, representing greater understanding and use of argument structure.

Other conference highlights for me included Clare Penn's description of group identity in aphasia, which detailed aspects of her group work in the multilingual and multi-ethnic contexts of South Africa and the remaining importance of culturally significant honorific markers indicating societal role and respect which arguably become more important in the context of aphasia. Also, Simon Horton's account of conversation partners schemes and their role in student learning about aphasia gave a very convincing argument that the way to help students see the people with aphasia before the symptoms of aphasia, is to introduce them to the lived experience of aphasia in real social contexts at an earlier stage in their curriculum than teaching about the neurology and symptomatology of aphasia. Lastly, Marjorie Lorch delivered a historically comprehensive account of neurolinguistic issues in second language

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acquisition which considered the methodological and philosophical limitations of attempts by researchers to progress our understanding of topics such as bilingual aphasia. She seemed to be suggesting that the brain may not treat different languages as such distinct entities as we view them practically and socially, so recovery of languages after stroke may be much more inter-related than dissociative views of multilingualism might suggest.

In conclusion, the social highlight of the conference was the formal meal at a plush city centre hotel with views of the castle. For those who contend that aphasiologists can't dance, there were various sets of data on display supporting or rejecting this view, as an excellent ceilidh band guided hesitant delegates away from each others' toes. The evening also featured speeches and stories acknowledging Chris Code's (semi-) retirement and his huge and varied contributions to the field. Overall, a very memorable and stimulating conference which took place in a fantastic city.

Paul Conroy

The 2007 Biennial Conference combined presentations from academics and clinicians from a wide range of fields and specialities.

Themes of the conference included: Mechanisms of Recovery in Aphasia; Language in Neurodegenerative Disease; Verbs and Verb Therapy; Alternative Communication and Therapy; and Evidence Based Therapy.

Argye Hillis presented neuroimaging data which illustrated three phases of language recovery following CVA in the acute stage, intermediate stage, and late stage. The presentation clearly demonstrated the importance of reperfusion in aphasia recovery.

Robert Cubellis gave an excellent presentation on handwriting and peripheral dysgraphia. Peripheral dysgraphic errors such as case errors, visual, misalignment and spatial errors were discussed in detail.

The conference gave an important platform for the more recent interest in language breakdown in degenerative disorders such as Motor Neurone disease. Sharon Abrahams reviewed recent studies which have looked at the interaction between cognitive and linguistic aspects word retrieval deficits in MND. 25% - 50% of patients with classical MND are known to have cognitive deficits. Verbal (letter) fluency has been found to be sensitive in detecting this impairment. The interplay between executive function and language disorder was discussed in explaining this observation.

Similarly language breakdown in dementia was given an important forum within the conference proceedings. A number of presentations discussed the effectiveness of interventions in semantic dementia. The variability of the structure of impairment based intervention programmes was highlighted, as was the general observation that the evidence for generalisation and maintenance of gains made in therapy remain limited. Relearning appears possible but retention is limited. Indeed the overuse of learned items used in therapy tasks was identified as a new consideration for semantic based interventions. In contrast to the impairment based therapy interventions Karen Croot reviewed the participation interventions and their impact on everyday communication.

Clare McCann investigated the variables affecting the production of verbs by fluent dysphasics. She found that argument structure complexity did affect production of verbs but that other familiar psycholinguistic variables such as frequency, imageability or word length showed no effect. The importance of the argument structure of verbs was similarly demonstrated by Janet Webster who presented a case study on verb and noun association therapy. The client showed improvement not only in single verb comprehension and production but in the generation of sentences around target

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verbs suggesting the improvement of argument structure of the verbs.

Talking Mats were introduced as a simple yet structured and effective means of assessing clients' quality of life and setting goals by assisting patients to regain control of their communicative environment. Monica Hough presented data on three patients with chronic severe aphasia who following a training programme on an AAC device showed improvement in overall communication during and outside treatment.

The 2007 BAS conference brought together and shared the knowledge of clinicians and academics with an interest in dysphasia. Delegates were given an overview of current research, questions for future research and service implications. Clinicians were able to choose from an extensive programme of presentations. I would encourage clinicians to attend future conferences as opportunities to attend events with such a range of perspectives on aphasia are rare.

I gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the British Aphasiology Society and the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists in assisting me to attend this event.

Claire Johnston

Proceedings for 2007 BAS Conference Online

You can view the full programme and abstracts for all presentations and posters on the BAS website at **www.bas.org.uk**.

Go to the Activities and Events page and click on the Proceedings link.

The 2007 British Aphasiology Society Conference provided three packed days of presentations on a number of themes related to aphasia including the following:

- i) Cognitive models and aphasia therapy,
- ii) Functional neuro-imaging of recovery and therapy,
- iii) Acquired deficits in: reading, writing, sentence processing, discourse,
- iv) Language in neurodegenerative conditions, and
- v) Social aspects of aphasia.

Some key lectures were presented to all the delegates, whilst other presentations ran in parallel sessions. On some days it was difficult to choose which of these sessions would be the most interesting. How do you choose between a session on the 'Quality of life in aphasia' and session on the 'Language in neuro-degenerative disease'? Fortunately, it was possible to share information with other people attending the conference during the lunch and coffee breaks. This report provides only a snap shot of some of the presentations I attended.

The conference opened on a positive note with a lecture from Argye Hillis on the mechanisms of recovery in aphasia. Her work investigating the effects of reperfusion in the damaged area of the brain supported the general findings that a rapid response to brain injury is likely to result in a better outcome. More intriguing were the case studies she described where intervention to improve blood flow either before stroke and or after the acute phase also had a positive outcome. It raised the possibility that in future it might be feasible to identify people that were at risk and to initiate appropriate treatment. Furthermore, the findings suggest the timescale for medical intervention might be longer. This lecture was followed by Sue Franklin's review of the different stages of lexical processing; in particular those associated with comprehension. Sue focused on auditory input processing and

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reported the findings of recent statistical analyses that had been carried on data she had previously published.

Thomas Bak's account of language in neuro-degenerative disease and Roberto Cubelli's review of models of writing were particularly entertaining and informative. In the latter, Cubelli outlined the different stages in the handwriting process and described the different types of dysgraphia that might arise if the system was damaged, including apraxic, spatial and neglect dysgraphia. Patient data provided clear examples of what the clinician should look for when making a differential diagnosis.

Marjorie Lorch provided an interesting account of the history of bilingual aphasia as reported in the clinical literature. She considered whether these writings helped to illuminate our ideas about the organization of language in the brain and suggested that we might need to look to the past for answers to where research should go in the future.

It was not possible to attend as many of the presentations at the conference as I had hoped, as some of my time was taken up with preparing for a joint presentation I was doing with Tony O'Donnell, a man with aphasia, on the transparency of Bliss symbols. The research idea for our project had originated from Tony, who had found Bliss a useful means of conveying meaning when he was unable to understand spoken and written English following his stroke. Tony was concerned that the audience might not appreciate that his adapted version of Bliss had a grammar although not an English grammar. This meant that we had to revise slides and rehearse the content of the talk more than expected. We were one of four talks in a session called 'living with aphasia', which turned out to be a truly multinational experience. The presenters reported on research conducted in America, South Africa and Australia, as well as the UK. The content of these talks were varied and ranged from using alternative communication systems with people with aphasia, to the complexity of running groups in a multi-lingual country such as South Africa, and to improving quality of

life by recognising the needs of carers of people with stroke.

Our talk was third and did not go according to plan, as we only managed to give an outline of the research and explain how Tony had adapted Bliss so that he could understand and use it more easily. Despite this I think the audience understood how and why Tony had adapted Bliss and perhaps how it might help others with severe aphasia. More importantly Tony was pleased with how he had conveyed his ideas and that he had been able to stay on topic. To put it mildly he was 'cock-a-hoop' and for that alone I am grateful that the BAS conference committee accepted our proposal. I realise now that a person with aphasia and with a complex story to tell needs more time than 15 minutes. To cut Tony off early so we could stick to the time limits would have been disappointing for him and for the audience who were interested in what he had to say.

The conference was interesting as it provided keynote speakers who talked with authority about important topics in aphasia research. These talks increased our understanding of key issues in the field. However, I felt that few of the presentations provided the clinician with ideas that could be directly translated into clinical use. Perhaps members who are looking for this level of knowledge need to attend the therapy symposium in Norwich next year.

Carolyn Bruce, Ph.D



Continued...

Thanks to the support of the BAS conference fund, I was able to attend two full days of the BAS International Conference held in September 2007.

It is, of course, impossible to summarise two very full days of speakers in one short report. As a result, I have chosen to outline the 'best bits' for me, and influences I feel the conference has had on my practice.

The theme of living with aphasia and communication and therapy highlighted the importance of identifying the individual needs and preferences of individuals with aphasia. Claire Penn gave an insight into group identity in her aphasia group, discussing the challenges of working in a multi-cultural, multi-lingual society. Her positive attitude on how diversity can foster growth and education, and how barriers can be turned into facilitators, was fascinating for anyone thinking of running a group. Although cultural and linguistic diversity may not be quite so marked in the North East of England, where I am based, her talk made me see the benefits of celebrating and embracing differences.

Goals of family members of people with aphasia was also discussed, as Bronwyn Davison spoke about her three year research project into the rehabilitation goals of family members and people with aphasia. In the current environment of the NHS, the opinions of service users are paramount to effective provision of therapy services. The findings of such an extensive study could have great value to the planning and provision of rehabilitation services.

Another subject I felt very pertinent to current practice, was Joan Murphy's feasibility study on the use of Talking Mats to enable people with aphasia to discuss their quality of life. The passing of the Mental Capacity Act this year makes this information of great value in helping people with aphasia to communicate their wishes with support. Talking Mats were shown to be a highly effective tool in this area.

As a therapist who regularly supervises students, I was interested to hear Simon Horton discuss the 1st year conversation

partners programme which they have run at the School of Allied Health Professionals, at the University of East Anglia. This programme seems to have been very successful, and I feel is an excellent learning tool for students, as well as a valuable resource for people with aphasia.

The conference presented us with some very memorable speakers, the kind that make you stop and listen with fascination at their enthusiasm and knowledge of their subject. Highlights for me were Marjorie Lorch's keynote address on second language acquisition, which provided a fascinating historical perspective on linguistic research into bilingualism. Roberto Cubelli taught me more about peripheral dysgraphia in one hour than I felt I had learned in ten years, and Tony O'Donnell, a speaker with aphasia on his use of Bliss symbol strings, was inspirational in his determination and enthusiasm to move forward.

The search for a solid evidence base for aphasia therapy continues, and the conference had this as its theme for the final session. H. McGrane provided us with an update on the progress towards the eagerly awaited results of the Cochrane Review on SLT for Stroke.

Pam Enderby provided an inspirational session entitled 'Evidence of What?', where she outlined her view on the current situation, and on future directions. David Howard spoke of the importance of single case studies, providing inspiration for therapists working within the NHS to publish studies and contribute to the evidence base. One such study presented at conference was that of Janet Webster and Barbara Gordon which demonstrated to me that it is possible to contribute valuable and replicable research in the form of a single case study, and I will be encouraged to do so in future.

At the end of two very demanding but worthwhile days I boarded the train

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home feeling a little overwhelmed but a lot inspired. I learned a great deal, met clinicians and academics from all over the world, and even managed a tour of the Scottish Parliament in the lunch break!

Fiona Menger

Specialist Speech and Language Therapist
North Tyneside PCT

Our Dynamic Earth, Edinburgh, Scotland: what a wonderful environment for a very dynamic conference! The 2007 biennial conference of the British Aphasiology society (BAS) was three days of focusing on clinical expertise and scholarship with the magnificent setting of Arthur's Seat as a backdrop. The international event unveiled a wide variety of presentations and discussion addressing all components of aphasia and related disorders. The conference included several tutorial keynote address presentations as well as numerous research platform and poster sessions on various therapeutic and experimental issues in aphasia, language, and communication. The conference began with a powerful keynote address from Dr. Argye Hillis on the mechanisms of aphasia recovery after stroke. This thought-provoking presentation included state-of-the-art information and cutting edge research techniques on stages of aphasia recovery that set the stage for the extensive and elucidating range of topics to follow. Recovery issues also were addressed in several poster and platform sessions. Other session topics included quality of life and living with aphasia, dialogue and conversation, alternative communication, deficit awareness, model building, and issues related to evidence-based treatment. Experimental presentations had clear clinical and therapeutic relevance which enhanced discussion in the question and answer timeframes.

Within the framework of the BAS conference, lunch breaks were accompanied by poster presentations which generated lively discussion and a sense of collegiality among conference participants. The scholarly

contributions from aphasiologists around the world were evident throughout all aspects of the programme. On a personal note, I had the wonderful fortune of presenting in a truly international session on living with aphasia, chaired by Dr. Madeline Cruice, which included presenters from four different continents. This was my first attendance at a BAS conference event and I was impressed with the strong commitment to quality of life and rehabilitation issues which appear to be a hallmark of this conference. Thus, I hope to have the opportunity to attend future biennial BAS events.

It is always enlightening to experience what aphasiologists in other areas of the world are investigating and how they are undertaking these endeavours. Furthermore, I had the opportunity to establish new professional and social relationships and foster old ones. I would like to acknowledge the support of BAS and thank them for their assistance in helping me attend the 2007 conference. It was a marvellous and enlightening experience that I will utilise to enhance future professional ventures.

Monica Strauss Hough, Ph.D.

Communication Sciences & Disorders
East Carolina University, Greenville, North
Carolina, USA

Join the BAS Discussion Group

BAS has a new online forum where any member of BAS - clinician, researcher, student, person with aphasia or carer - can view and contribute to online discussions about aphasia.

As it is based online you will need access to the internet to view and post messages and discussion threads. See the Membership Information section of the BAS website to join and for more details.

BAS Chair's Report 2007

BAS Chair Ruth Herbert presented her annual report at the BAS International Conference in Edinburgh in September:

Events

The Work in Progress days have been reformulated as Research in Progress days, which take place annually. The first event took place in Newcastle on 2nd November 2006. The second took place in Manchester in June 2007. We are looking for a host institution for the next meeting which will take place in Spring 2008. Please contact Lisa Perkins about this.

This year's biennial conference is the 10th BAS conference, in the 21st year of the Society's existence. The next conference will take place in Sheffield in September 2009. We would appreciate an offer for the conference in 2011.

The next Therapy Symposium takes place in Norwich at the University of East Anglia on the 8th and 9th September 2008.

The Society has been supported at numerous events, including this one, by our Conference Organiser, Carol Brandreth. We are extremely sorry to announce that Carol is ending her successful career with us, here at this event. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Carol for her amazing organisational and diplomatic skills, and her fantastic support for BAS over the years.

The Society is considering alternative arrangements and will announce these at the next AGM.

Liaison

BAS is a member of:

- The Aphasia Alliance: this is an umbrella organisation within which all voluntary organisations concerned with people with aphasia meet and share views. The focus of the group is to support initiatives in raising public awareness of aphasia. A full time publicity officer has been appointed and is now in post. Minutes from the meetings are available to BAS members via Ruth Herbert.
- The UK Stroke Forum: this is a coalition of around 20 organisations committed to stroke care and research. The second major multidisciplinary conference of the UK Stroke Forum is to be held in Harrogate in 4th to 6th December 2007. Special rates apply for BAS members. See (<http://www.ukstrokeforum.org/events/>). For more information contact Roz Rosenblatt or Ruth Herbert.

Strategy meeting

BAS holds a strategy meeting every other year. At the meeting on 1st February 2007 at City University the main topics for discussion were:

- the updating of the website to host all BAS activities including all events management;

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- streamlining of the membership payment system to allow for better financial management.

The new website is now operating and presents an easy to navigate site. Thanks to Catherine Hodgson at the University of Manchester for her work on this. All documentation relating to BAS will be archived in the site. We hope that all transactions relating to BAS will be carried out via the website including membership renewal, and event registration.

Prizes

Student prizes awarded in 2004-05:

Eleni Peristeri (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece) was awarded the Student Project Prize for her project entitled:

Agrammatism in Greek: aspects of production and comprehension

She elected to attend this conference in order to receive the prize. We are delighted to finally meet Eleni and to award her the prize which is long overdue.

Student prizes for 2006-07 will be announced later this year and awarded at the Therapy Symposium in Norwich.

Changes to the Constitution

Proposed changes to the constitution are highlighted in the document on the website. These relate mainly to making processes more transparent and easy to achieve. The amendments will be considered in full at the next R in P meeting. Thanks to Emma Eaton for all her work on this.

Ruth Herbert

Aphasia Alliance Appointment

As a member of the Aphasia Alliance – a coalition of 12 organisations working to help people with aphasia, we are pleased to announce the recent appointment of Richard Mountford as the Alliance Media Officer.



Richard will be working to raise awareness of aphasia across the UK in order to achieve a greater understanding amongst healthcare professionals and members of the public alike. "The word aphasia is not only an uncommonly known term, but also quite a difficult concept to explain to people. Through the media, and in partnership with all Alliance members, we will be raising the overall profile of people who have aphasia and the day-to-day problems they encounter" says Richard, who joins the Aphasia Alliance having previously worked in the NHS for City and Hackney PCT where he was the Communications Lead. Prior to this he worked for almost 3 years for a specialist media training and corporate video makers in

Nottingham. Richard is an active member of the Motor Neurone Disease Association and therefore has some understanding of the frustrations and hardship that accompany communication disabilities. Should you have any questions, queries or contributions regarding aphasia and/or the Aphasia Alliance you can contact Richard on **0207 5661 534** or e-mail **rmountford@stroke.org.uk**



The Robin Tavistock Award 2007



The Trustees of the Tavistock Trust for Aphasia are pleased to announce that Professor Jane Marshall is the 2nd recipient of The Robin Tavistock Award.

This annual award, named after Robin Tavistock, the 14th Duke of Bedford who founded the TTA, is presented to a group or individual who it is felt, has made a significant contribution in the field of aphasia.

Professor Marshall has made a major contribution to the world of aphasia. Her work spans a wide range of aspects of aphasia and its impact on people's language and communicative abilities, and has had a major influence on therapy in day-to-day practice.

'Jane is a phenomenon. She has astonishing intellectual capacity and insight... and she has been a significant support and inspiration to many less experienced than herself in the field...': Dr Simon Horton, lecturer at the University of East Anglia.

'Jane's research is both creative and practical reflecting her curiosity about the nature of the language of people with aphasia and her concern to help them through therapy': Dr Tim Pring, colleague, Psychologist and Professor at City University London.

'Jane has been and continues to be an inspiration to aphasia therapists and researchers and a great support to those of us fortunate enough to collaborate with her': Katerina Hilari, editor IJLCD.

Jane Marshall's career began when she qualified as a speech and language therapist in 1987. Currently Professor Marshall is joint head of Language and Communication Science at City University London. Amongst other things, she has served as a committee member with both the British Aphasiology Society and Action for Dysphasic Adults.

She is also a member of the Editorial Board of the journal *Aphasiology*.

To celebrate this award, on 19th December 2007 Professor Marshall will give the 'Robin Tavistock Aphasia lecture' on 'Framing ideas in aphasia: the need for thinking therapy'. This will subsequently be published in the *International Journal of Language and Communication Disorders*.

Following the lecture, the award will be presented to Jane by Henrietta, Duchess of Bedford, chairman of the Tavistock Trust for Aphasia.

Dr Katerina Hilari and Dr Nicola Botting, Joint editors of IJLCD invite those with an interest in aphasia and those who want to celebrate with Jane to this event:

Robin Tavistock Aphasia Lecture 2007

Wednesday 19th December 2007, 4:00pm

Venue: Atrium, the Social Sciences Building,
City University, 32-35 Whiskin Street,
London, EC1R 0JD
City University

4:00 – 5:00 The Robin Tavistock Aphasia Lecture
on

'Framing ideas in aphasia: The need for thinking therapy'

Professor Jane Marshall

5:00 Presentation of the Robin Tavistock award
Henrietta, the Duchess of Bedford
Chairman of The Tavistock Trust for Aphasia

5:10 – 7:00 Cocktail and canapé reception
Sponsored by the *International Journal of Language and Communication Disorders*

If you would like to join us, RSVP to
Katerina Hilari on **k.hilari@city.ac.uk**

Research Round Up by Emma Eaton

Aphasia and the ICF

This article relates the World Health Organisation's International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) to aphasia in terms of levels of impairment, limitation to activities and restrictions on participation. This framework can be used for goal-setting in intervention, as illustrated in a case example.

Simmons-Mackie, N. and Kagan, A. (2007). Application of the ICF in aphasia. Seminars in Speech and Language 28 (4), 244-53

Volunteer groups for people with communication difficulties after stroke

A qualitative analysis is used to explore the value of Volunteer Stroke Service (VSS) groups. Data from 7 focus groups comprised of people with aphasia and dysarthria identified themes of support, provision of opportunities to develop personal and interpersonal skills, to achieve goals, and to influence others. It is concluded that VSS groups can fulfill several purposes to meet their members' various needs.

Legg, I., Stott, D., Ellis, G. and Sellars, C. (2007). Volunteer Stroke Service (VSS) groups for people with communication difficulties after stroke: a qualitative analysis of the value of groups to their users. Clinical Rehabilitation 21 (9), 794-804

Historical ideas on language and memory

This article describes the history of research into bilingual aphasia and specifically, 19th century ideas that related this phenomenon to memory rather than language. This exploration sheds light on historical notions of the organisation of language in the brain.

Lorch, M. (2007). Bilingualism and memory: early 19th century ideas about the significance of polyglot aphasia. Cortex 43 (5) 658-688



Committee Changes

Following the September AGM, Publicity Officer Madeleine Cruice has stood down from the BAS committee and Newsletter Editor Janet Webster has now taken on the role of Treasurer. Newly elected on to the committee are Dee Webster, Newsletter Editor, Martyne Chaston, Publicity Officer, and Deborah Cairns, Conference Support Fund Co-ordinator.

We wish to thank Madeleine for all her hard work over the last few years and welcome new and returning committee members.

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Financial Support from BAS

Are you thinking of attending a conference? Do you need financial support?

If so, look no further. BAS has two funds:

- **BAS Events Grants** support people attending the BAS International Conference or Therapy Symposium. You may apply for up to £200.
- **The Support Fund for Conferences (non-BAS)** supports members attending other conferences. You may apply for up to £400. Overseas members may only apply to attend UK conferences.

NB This fund is only available to people who have been BAS members for at least a year.

Funding is available whether or not you are presenting work, but priority is given to presenters. Awards can cover registration, accommodation, travel expenses and other essentials. Applications are considered by the BAS Committee in June. You may submit a retrospective application for a conference you have already attended this year. BAS is particularly keen to support members who have limited access to funding from other sources.

NB: If you have previously received funding, you may not re-apply for at least 2 years.

For further information and an application form: Visit www.bas.org.uk or contact:

Deborah Cairns, BAS Conference Support Fund Organiser, 18 Muncastergate, York, YO31 9LA. Email: d.k.cairns@googlemail.com.

The deadline for applications is **Friday 30th May 2008**

British Aphasiology Society Student Essay and Project Prize Winners 2006/7

The British Aphasiology Society committee are very pleased to announce that the winners of the 2006/7 essay and project student prizes are:

Lauren Haugh from Strathclyde University for her essay 'Exploring the causal explanations of right hemisphere pragmatic language difficulties'.

Lisa Clarkson from City University for her project 'Developing a test of abstract word comprehension'

See the next newsletter for further information.



British Aphasiology Society

British Aphasiology Society Student Prizes 2007/8

The British Aphasiology Society invites entries for the Student Project Prize and Student Essay Prize.

The BAS Student Project Prize: £200 will be awarded for the best student project on any topic relating to acquired aphasia. The project or dissertation should have been submitted as part of the normal examination procedure in the final year of an undergraduate or postgraduate course (masters level). The prize will be divided equally between the winning student and his/her educational establishment.

The BAS Student Essay Prize: £100 will be awarded for the best essay on any topic relating to acquired aphasia. Entrants should be undergraduate or postgraduate students (masters level). The prize will be divided on the basis of £75 to the winning student and £25 to his/her educational establishment.

Closing date for both prizes: 04/07/08

Guidelines for the student prizes are available on, the BAS web page (www.bas.org.uk) , from claire.gatehouse@pcs-tr.swest.nhs.uk or contact:

Claire Gatehouse

Speech and Language Therapy Dept, Beauchamp Centre, Mount Gould Hospital, Plymouth, PL4 7QD. Tel 01752 272556

The British Aphasiology Society aims to promote and support the knowledge and study of aphasia. It produces a regular newsletter, holds biennial conferences, therapy symposia and study days. Membership gives priority booking and reduced rate for these events and members can subscribe to some journals at reduced rates.

Membership information available from:

Mrs Annette Cameron, Speech and Language Therapy, Aberdeen Royal Infirmary, Foresterhill, AB25 2ZN

Tel: 01224 552966 e-mail: annette.cameron@nhs.net