

## Organic Division: Carbohydrate Group Newsletter January 2011

Web Site: <http://www.rsc.org/Membership/Networking/InterestGroups/Carbohydrate/index.asp>

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*Committee:* Dr. Tony Corfield (Treasurer), Dr. Chris Lawson, Dr. Barrie Kellam, Prof. Steve Harding, Prof. Stefan Oscarson, Dr. Graeme Horne, Dr. Max Crispin, Dr. M. Carmen Galan.

### Group News

A Happy New Year to you all, and we can promise three first-rate group meetings in 2011 to banish any January blues: see below. We are most grateful that Rob Field has accepted the group chair, for a second time, and we warmly thank Tony Merry for his excellent services over the past five years. We also thank Ed Yates for his valuable contributions to the committee.

### Comments from the Chair

It is an exciting time to be taking the group forwards, given the dynamic nature of contemporary carbohydrate research and the wealth of excellent young researchers coming into the field. It is important that we collectively do all that we can to support the development of individuals and the field as a whole. A key point that needs addressing is what the membership wants and needs from the Group: this is where we need your input. What type of group meetings are required, addressing what topics and in which venues? We are conscious of the endless number of carbohydrate meetings worldwide, so it is important that we find a niche for our meetings. We are keen to increase participation in group meetings and in future will be making every effort to maximise the number of oral presentations selected from abstracts submitted by students, postdocs and younger project leaders.

Are there other ways in which the Group should be supporting carbohydrate chemistry? Group membership numbers have drifted downwards of late – something that we are anxious to address asap. How best to attract new members? Are we doing enough to provide support/training for graduate students and postdocs? Your thoughts and ideas would be most welcome.

We look forward to meeting many of you at forthcoming group meetings. In the meantime, do feel free to contact us if there are issues that you feel the group should be addressing or opportunities that are being missed. Our next AGM will be held at King's London in April (details below), which provides a further opportunity for your input.

**Committee membership:** In order to maximise community engagement with the group, the committee needs adequately to reflect the views and requirements of the community, which of course are constantly changing. With this in mind, we are keen to see representation from all quarters on the committee. Rather than operate with an unduly large committee, we will be looking to sustain regular turnover of committee membership such that, with the likely exception of the Secretary and Treasurer for practical reasons, committee members generally serve for two years and then rotate off the committee. Members will be welcome to return to the committee at a later date. In terms of committee Chairmanship, an individual will be elected as vice-Chair and hold that position for a year, step up to Chair for two years, step down to vice Chair for a year and then rotate off the committee. With these arrangements in mind, we will be looking for several new committee members in the next couple of years. Please feel free to contact us if you would like to help take the Group forward though serving as a committee member – don't be shy!

**Newsletters:** We are continuing with all-electronic newsletters, but we are concerned that not all group members have access to these. We shall try to address this issue with help from central RSC so that paper copies can still be issued to those without e-access. In future we anticipate

sending out newsletters in January and August. If you have material (e.g. relevant meeting announcements; links to URLs for available PhD studentships) for inclusion in Group newsletters please let us know.

**General information on Awards:** A general reminder about the two awards for research excellence that are associated with the Group. Please note: these awards are now administered by the group directly, and not by the RSC centrally.

RSC Carbohydrate Award, sponsored by Dextra. This award is given biennially for meritorious work, conducted mainly in the UK, typically by an individual under 40 years of age. The recipient, who receives £500 and a silver medal, is invited to give an award lecture at one of the Group's meetings. Next deadline for nominations: **31 January 2011**.

RSC Haworth Medal. This award is given biennially (out of sync with the Carbohydrate Award) for sustained leading contributions to carbohydrate science. There are no age or geographical restrictions for the Haworth award. The recipient, who receives £500 and a silver medal, is invited to give an award lecture at one of the Group's meetings. Next deadline for nominations: **31 January 2012**.

Full details of previous recipients of both of these awards can be found on the RSC web site (<http://www.rsc.org/ScienceAndTechnology/Awards/Archive/>).

The Group, through our UK representative on the International Carbohydrate Organisation (currently Rob Field), are also able to submit nominations for the Whistler award (<http://www.internationalcarbohydrateorganisation.org/content/roy-l-whistler-international-award-carbohydrate-chemistry>). The next deadline for nominations is approaching shortly, so please let us have your suggestions by 31 January 2011.

### **Report on Autumn Meeting, Dundee, August 2010**

The autumn meeting, on the theme of 'Chemical Glycobiology', was held at the Dalhousie Building, University of Dundee on Aug. 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup>, 2010 and was attended by 43 delegates. The presentations were of a very high standard and amply rewarded those who made the journey. Talks were given by Rob Field (JIC, Norwich), Jim Naismith (St. Andrews), Milton Kiefel (Griffith Univ., Aus.), Giulia Bandini (Dundee), Sabine Flitsch (Manchester), Herman Overkleef (Leiden), Andrew Stachulski (Oxford), Bruno Linclau (Southampton), Anne Dell (Imperial College), Robert Woods (Galway), Alan Black (Dundee), Mike Ferguson (Dundee), Carman Galan (Bristol), Christian Ruzanski (John Innes) and Marianne Schimpl (Dundee). Our warm thanks go to Michael Urbaniak, Daan van Aalten and colleagues for the very warm welcome to Dundee and for much excellent science.

### **Spring Meeting 2011: Joint meeting, Carbohydrate and Bioorganic Groups**

The next group meeting has been jointly organised with the RSC Bioorganic Group; it will take place at **King's College, London on Tues. Apr. 5<sup>th</sup>, 2011**. The highlight will be the **Haworth Lecture**, delivered by **Professor Pierre Sinay** and there is a very strong line-up of supporting presentations from Prof. John Sutherland (LMB, Cambridge), Dr Derek Macmillan (UCL), Prof. Rob Field (JIC, Norwich), Prof. Peter Seeberger (MPI, Potsdam), Dr. Sukhi Bansal (KCL) and Dr Stuart Conway (Oxford). For further details of the KCL meeting, including registration, please contact **Dr. Gerd Wagner** on 0207-848-4747 or e-mail: **gerd.wagner@kcl.ac.uk**

**The registration site is now live:**

<http://www.rsc.org/ConferencesAndEvents/conference/alldetails.cfm?evid=107649>

**The programme for this meeting is attached at the end of this newsletter.**

### **One-day meeting: Royal Society of Chemistry Discussion Meeting: Monday 5th September, 2011**

#### ***Stability and Degradation of Complex Carbohydrate Structures: Mechanisms and Measurement***

Organized on behalf of the Carbohydrate and Biotechnology Groups.

We are most grateful to Steve Harding (Nottingham: [steve.harding@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:steve.harding@nottingham.ac.uk)) for arranging this joint one-day meeting with the BTG. It will take place at the RSC headquarters, Burlington House, London. For full details, please consult the webpage at:

[www.nottingham.ac.uk/ncmh/RSC\\_Sept2011.pdf](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/ncmh/RSC_Sept2011.pdf), where full contact details are given. In view of the very high current interest in polysaccharides for all manner of applications, this is a most timely meeting.

### **Autumn Meeting 2011: University of Liverpool, Sept. 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>.**

Plans are well advanced for an autumn meeting of the group at the University of Liverpool, which is being organized by Prof. Jerry Turnbull. The last group meeting at Liverpool in spring 2006 was very successful: as on that occasion, this meeting will take a two half-day format. This meeting will feature the presentation of the **RSC Carbohydrate Award** sponsored by Dextra, as well as lectures by Prof. Gideon Davies and Dr Max Crispin with other leading speakers to be confirmed. In addition, several oral presentations will be selected from abstracts. Further details will appear on the group web site in May 2011.

### **Spring Meeting 2012: Joint meeting with younger research leaders from Europe and North America.**

There will be no residential Group Spring meeting in 2012 as the group wish to encourage participation in the 26<sup>th</sup> International Carbohydrate Symposium in Madrid from 22-27 July 2012 (<http://www.ics2012madrid.com/>). Instead, the group are planning to host a small residential meeting for ca 25 younger project leaders from the UK, Europe and North America. Further details will be available at the AGM in April

### **Autumn Meeting 2012: Venue and theme to be confirmed**

We anticipate holding a 1-2 day meeting in autumn 2012, probably in mid-September. Suggestions are welcome for the theme and venue for this meeting.

### **Brainstorming/Networking workshops**

The group is interested to consider sponsoring a new series of smaller workshops aimed at bringing together key players in a defined area of carbohydrate chemistry and/or biochemistry to discuss challenges, opportunities and collaboration. The aim would be to limit numbers to perhaps 15, by invitation, to brainstorm/network around a given topics. For instance: What developments in chemical synthesis are needed to keep pace with glycobiology? What step-changes in carbohydrate analytical methods/structural characterization are needed to see glycobiology advance? What is the UK repertoire of sialic acid research? The group will consider providing some modest funding to support such 1-day meetings. Suggestions for topics, venues and hosts for consideration at the next committee meeting (April 2011) are welcome.

### **Next Committee Meeting**

The next committee meeting will be held during the KCL meeting on April 5<sup>th</sup> 2011. Minutes and an agenda will be circulated to committee members in advance. Items for the agenda may be submitted to the Group secretary.

### **Next AGM**

The Group AGM will be held during the KCL meeting on April 5<sup>th</sup> 2011. Minutes and agenda will be circulated at the AGM. Items for the agenda may be submitted to the Group secretary. All members are encouraged to attend.

### **RSC Travel Grants for Interest Groups**

We always try to encourage postgraduate attendance at our meetings, and the RSC maintain a central fund for this purpose. Please see:

<http://www.rsc.org/ScienceAndTechnology/Funding/TravelGrants/InterestGroups.asp>

The next deadline for applications under this scheme is Apr. 1<sup>st</sup>., 2011.

AVS 28/1/2011

**RSC Carbohydrate and Bioorganic Interest Groups Joint Meeting**  
**Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2011**  
**King's College London**  
**Franklin-Wilkins Building**

9:30-10:15 REGISTRATION & COFFEE

10:15-10:20 Welcome (Prof Roger Morris, Head School of Biomedical Sciences)

**Session 1** **Chair: Dr Gerd Wagner (King's College London)**

10:20-11:00 **Professor John Sutherland (MRC Cambridge)**  
*"RNA: Prebiotic Product, or Biotic Invention?"*

11:05-11:45 **Dr Derek Macmillan (University College London)**  
*title tbc*

11:50-12:30 **Professor Rob Field (John Innes Centre, Norwich)**  
*"Understanding parasite glycobiology through synthesis"*

12:30-14:00 BUFFET LUNCH & POSTER SESSION

**Session 2** **Chair: Prof Helen Hailes (University College London)**

14:00-14:40 **Professor Peter Seeberger (Max-Planck Institute Potsdam, GERMANY)**  
*"Automated Synthesis of Glycosaminoglycans"*

14:45-15:25 **Dr Sukhi Bansal (King's College London)**  
*"Hepcidin: a biomarker for iron status"*

15:30-16:10 **Dr Stuart Conway (University of Oxford)**  
*"Inositol-based probes for cellular signaling"*

16:15-16:45 TEA

**Session 3** **Chair: Dr Andrew Stachulski (Oxford)**

16:45-18:00 **Professor Pierre Sinay (Paris, FRANCE)**  
RSC Haworth Medal Lecture

**Wine Reception**