



British & Irish Region Newsletter — July 2008



South County, Dublin. Kevin McGarry, used with permission (www.flickr.com/photos/mcgarry)

IBC Dublin is here!

With around 800 participants from all over the world coming to savour the delights of Dublin, including many from special circumstance countries, this promises to be a truly international meeting. The excellent programme represents well the broad scope of biometry today.

Thanks in particular to those BIR members who have worked hard to make the meeting a success. On the local organising committee, John Hinde (chair), Andrew Mead, Gabrielle Kelly, Adele Marshall, Patrick Murphy, John Whittaker and Angela Wood. On the scientific committee, David Balding and Andrew Mead.

It's particularly appropriate that in Andrew we have a BIR international president, and we look forward to Andrew's presidential address.

British and Irish Region in Dublin

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On Monday 14th July David Balding is inviting all BIR members and friends to a half-hour meeting at 6.30pm on the UCD campus, moving on to a pub later in the evening.

David will talk briefly about some future plans, and is keen to hear from members about what they would like the BIR to be doing.

For details of times and places,

drop by the BIR/IBS stand on Monday morning/lunchtime.

This stand will be staffed at break and lunchtimes throughout the conference. A big thanks to those who have volunteered to staff this. Please drop by and say hello, and encourage potential new members to do the same.

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President's corner



meetings, please also get in touch.

As well as the IBC in Dublin, we have several other scientific meetings this year that promise to be excellent: see elsewhere in this Newsletter. I am currently planning to bow out as President at a meeting to be held jointly with South of England Genetic Epidemiology Group in November (see page 3); full details of the programme to be confirmed soon.

In the internet age the case for joining learned societies is harder to make, yet the work of the IBS and similar societies remains important in enriching our scientific lives. Please do what you can to make sure this work is sustained by encouraging your colleagues to join, at least as associate members if not full members. If you feel able to volunteer to serve on committees or help organise

I look forward to seeing many of you in Dublin and at the scientific meetings in October and November.

Newsletter — Help needed!

James Carpenter

You'll see that most of the items in this newsletter are written by me — which makes for a rather boring newsletter! I would like to have a group of 4–5 people working on the newsletter: the commitment need not be arduous, just producing 1–2 items for each issue. This would make for a

more interesting and varied newsletter — and also reduce my workload. If you are interested in discussing this further, please e-mail me: James.Carpenter@lshtm.ac.uk. ■

June meeting

James Carpenter

Thanks to Steve Gilmour for organising an interesting meeting on dosing and formulation studies at Queen Mary (London University) on 3rd June pm, joint with the RSS General Applications Section.

Around 25 people were present. Tim Friede (Warwick University) spoke about flexible designs for late phase clinical trials, followed by Steve Gilmour (Queen Mary) who presented some recent work on optimising formulations

of weaning maize porridges. After tea, Mark Whitlock (Pfizer Global Research & Development) gave a presentation about the use of mixture designs in pharmaceutical product development. The afternoon concluded with a discussion. For further details about the meeting, please e-mail Steve (s.g.gilmour@qmul.ac.uk).

The meeting made a small surplus of £85, which will be used to support future meetings. ■

MEETING: TUES 7 OCTOBER, 1.30PM, ROYAL STATISTICAL SOCIETY, LONDON

Issues & Models for Competing Risks Studies

James Carpenter

Thanks very much to Bianca DeStavola for putting together a most interesting programme for this meeting on Tues 7 October, 1.30–5pm at the Royal Statistical Society. This will focus on the issues that arise in the design and analysis of time-to-event studies when there are competing outcomes. Five speakers will review the theoretical and practical issues and illustrate alternative approaches with applications taken from clinical trials and observational studies.

Programme

- 1.30–2.20pm, Per Kragh Andersen (Department of Biostatistics, University of Copenhagen)
Overview of issues arising in the presence of competing events
- 2.20–3.00pm, Hein Putter (Department of Medical Statistics, Leiden University Medical Centre)
Competing risks, time-dependent effects, and vertical modeling

TEA/COFFEE BREAK

- 3.20–4.00pm, Abdel Babiker (HIV and Infectious Group, MRC Clinical Trials Unit, London)
An application of Cox proportional hazards models for competing risks to fertility and contraception studies
- 4.00–4.40pm, Ronald Geskus (Department of Clinical Epidemiology, Biostatistics and Bioinformatics, Academic Medical Center, Amsterdam)
The Fine & Gray model for competing risks with left truncated data or time-dependent covariates
- 4.40–5.20pm, Ruwanthi Kolamunnage-Dona (Centre for Medical Statistics and Health Evaluation, University of Liverpool)
Competing risks in anti-epileptic drug trials

Full details and a registration form available from the regional web site. ■

SEMINAR: MON 8TH SEPTEMBER, 1PM, LONDON SCHOOL OF HYGIENE & TROPICAL MEDICINE

First regional seminar: Ingram Olkin

David Balding

The committee would like to support 4-5 regional seminars a year, and are keen to receive proposals. The speaker should be suitably distinguished (i.e. not just a regular academic department seminar) and the seminar at a time/place that a good number of IBS/BIR members are likely to attend (not just those in the host organisation). Normally we'd expect the host organisation to make a contribution as well, but we would contribute by advertising the event and perhaps hosting some networking event like paying for the teas/coffees or subsidising a lunch for members, or making a contribution to speakers expenses. There will be an upper limit of £100 for any one seminar.

The first seminar will be at the London School of Hy-

giene & Tropical Medicine, on Monday 8 September at 1pm. Prof Ingram Olkin will speak about some of his recent work in meta-analysis. Ingram was Professor of Statistics and Professor of Education at Stanford until his retirement in 2007. In 1984, he was President of the Institute of Mathematical Statistics and served as Chair of the Committee of Presidents of Statistical Societies (COPSS). He has been honored by the American Statistical Association (ASA) with a Wilks Medal (1992) and a Founder's Award (1992). The American Psychological Association gave him a Lifetime Contribution Award (1997). He received the COPSS Elizabeth L. Scott Award in 1998 and delivered the R. A. Fisher Lecture in 2000. ■

Bursaries to attend IBC Dublin

David Balding

Thanks to a generous bursary from the Fisher Memorial Trust, and some money from our reserves, we were able to award bursaries to the following young biometricians attending the Dublin meeting: Fiona Boland,

Joanna Davies, Eleni Giannoulidou, Sara Geneletti, Katie Harris, Alixina Mason, Karen Palmer, Vincent Plagnol, David Prieto, Jason Wyse, and Christopher Yau. Congratulations to them! ■

Regional website: update

James Carpenter

We are very grateful to Rosemary Bailey, and latterly Peter Colman, for maintaining the regional website, and for Peter's work in transferring it to the IBS server. The committee is now looking to renew the website, adding

amongst other things a members area and improved facilities for on-line meeting registration. If you have any suggestions for the website, please e-mail them to me: James.Carpenter@lsthm.ac.uk ■

MEETING: WED 26TH NOVEMBER, 1.30PM, LONDON SCHOOL OF HYGIENE & TROPICAL MEDICINE

Annual General Meeting and Presidential Address

James Carpenter

I'm delighted that the Regional Presidential Address will form part of the November meeting of the Southern England Genetic Epidemiology Group (SEGEG) which will be held at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine on 26th November.

The afternoon will start with the AGM at 1.30pm, with the scientific meeting starting at 2pm. David Balding will

give the first presentation, followed by two or three other speakers, and then David Clayton will round off the afternoon.

Full details will be circulated soon, and placed on the regional website. Please book the date. If the committee are feeling generous, there may even be a sandwich lunch for members attending the AGM! ■

In Brief

Council election results

New members may not know that the IBS is a federal society, run by a Council. At the recent council elections, David Balding, Tim Cole and John Hinde were re-elected to the IBS council, and we send them our congratulations and best wishes. They will serve until Dec 2011.

Our other council members are Tim Cole, David Clayton and Chris Glasbey, who serve until Dec 2009.

IBC Dublin: meeting of regional representatives

David Balding will be representing the BIR at the meeting of regional representatives which takes place at the IBC in Dublin.

The agenda includes several important issues for the Region including (i) changes at Bostrom/IBO; (ii) IBS sponsored MSc programmes; (iii) membership classes (possibility of a subscription with online-only access to Biometrics). The next newsletter will report on this meeting.

BIR Committee vacancies

There will be two vacancies on the BIR committee this November, and in addition Suzanne Clark has decided to stand down as membership secretary.

If you are interested in any of these roles (or know someone who might be), please let James know. Suzanne is willing to 'shadow' her successor, and happy for anyone interested in the role to e-mail her for more information: suzanne.clark@bbsrc.ac.uk

Undelivered journals

A few members have e-mailed to say they haven't received recent issues of Biometrics. I'd be interested to hear if anyone else has had this problem.

Spring '09 meeting

Chris Glasbey is planning a meeting on 'Process and Systems Modelling' next February/March. Please e-mail Chris with any suggestions: chris@bioass.ac.uk

MSc 40th Party

2009 is the 40th anniversary of the MSc in medical statistics at the London School of Hygiene. A 2-day meeting is being planned on 16-17 April to mark this. More details from <http://www.lshtm.ac.uk/msu/anniversary.htm>

E-mail your photos

Please e-mail James photos of IBC Dublin — we may even be able to get them up on the regional website as the week progresses.

Send in your news, please

We want to keep members in touch — so please e-mail James with any news for the next issue.

Copy Deadline for next issue: September 20th
