

## **Annual General Meeting Chair's Report**

**Wednesday 2nd April 2008, Institute of Physics, London, UK**

### **Past Meetings**

Last year's AGM was held during the International Conference on Solid Dielectrics at Winchester. We co-sponsored this conference and the Workshop on Dielectric Ageing that preceded it. These were highly successful and have been reported in the newsletter that we published last December. Since then, we have organised two further meetings:

**Electro-active Materials, 20 September 2007, Cranfield.** Principal organisers: Ron Pethig and Alun Vaughan. This was held in honour of Prof. Harry Block, FRS, who was well known at Dielectrics Society meetings for his demonstrations of electro-rheology involving Dulux paint and lots of volts! This meeting explored all types of electro-active materials and their applications. The programme started with presentation by two knights and all the presentations were of the highest standard and extremely interesting:

- *Welcoming Address*, by Vice Chancellor Professor Sir John O'Reilly
- *Polymer electronics*, by Professor Sir Richard Friend
- *Ferroelectrics, piezoelectrics, pyroelectrics- phenomena, measurement and applications*, by Dr Markys Cain
- *Tribute to Professor Harry Block*, by Professor George Tsangaris
- *Process monitoring in manufacture of polymer composites*, by Professor Ivana K Partridge
- *Dynamics of organic molecules in electric and mechanical fields*, by Professor Jovan Mijovic
- *Electrorheology and molecular electronics*, by Professor John Lewis
- *Common aspects of electrorheology and dielectrophoresis*, by Professor Ronald Pethig
- There was also a poster session during lunch.

### **Charge Transport in Non-Metallic Solids, 2 April 2008, IoP**

**London.** Principal organisers: Ian Youngs and Daryl Almond. This AGM is taking place immediately after this meeting and so a full report will be presented in the next Dielectrics Newsletter. The meeting aims to bring together workers engaged in a wide range of investigations of charge transport in non-metallic solids. Topics include: both ionic and electronic conduction; investigations of the fundamental mechanisms of charge transport; percolation; modelling the conduction process in both natural and man-made composite electrical and electromagnetic materials; the

design and development of solids with specified conduction properties and the ac characteristics of non-metallic solids.

## **Proposed Meetings**

**The Postgraduate Meeting** initially planned for 19th December 2007 is now being organised to take place at the end of the summer term if possible. The meeting will encourage postgraduates working in the area of dielectrics to present their work to postgraduates. It is hoped that there will be an industry-sponsored bursary/prize.

**Autrans 2, 25-27 June 2008.** Principal organiser: Steve Rowe. This is a follow up to the workshop meeting held at Autrans, France, in 2005 to discuss electrical ageing. On this occasion, participants have already been given a detailed presentation including 50 questions to consider. The workshop will use presentations from experts and group discussions to explore ageing caused by microscopic voids in polymer insulation.

**2009 40th Anniversary Conference.** The date and venue have not yet been finalised by the IoP but it is anticipated that this will take place around Easter 2009 in the UK. The committee has suggested that we should brand future conference (multi-day) meetings in the style of "Review of Dielectrics Research featuring ....". and to move to holding the group's annual conference on a two-yearly cycle. It is proposed that there are sessions at this 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary (i.e. including the Dielectrics Society meetings) on a range of areas of dielectrics possibly including: bio-dielectrics, high-frequency dielectrics, meta-materials and insulation with a cross-cutting theme of measurement.

**1-day meetings.** We are also considering various 1-day meetings (including "Terahertz Spectroscopy" and tutorial meetings on various subjects to be hosted by different institutions.) We would welcome suggestions for others.

## **Membership**

We have approximately 85 members. Many of the original Dielectrics Society members are no longer members of the group. There were 114 in 2006. Changes may be partly due to members being signed up at meetings for one year in order to get a discount. We will need to find ways of encouraging new and retaining existing members and giving

## **Proposal for a Change of Name of the Group**

There have been discussions for many years that the name "Dielectrics", whilst accurate, does not really reflect all the main activities of the group. The committee suggests that we consider changing the name of the group to the "Electro-responsive Materials and Dielectrics Group"

## **Thanks**

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our members and speakers for their contributions over the last year, to thank the IoP staff for their assistance with organisation and to the members of the committee for organising and attending meetings. I would particularly like to thank Ian Youngs who is stepping down as secretary having done a sterling and unstinting job as both treasurer (2001 to 2005) and secretary (2005 to present).