

## From the Chairman

March 2008

Dear SCATA member

I am taking this opportunity to bring you up to date with what is happening in SCATA and to tell you what is planned for the next 12 months or so.

At the AGM last November I took over as Chairman from Ranjit Verma after two terms of office as Honorary Treasurer and Membership Secretary, during which time I will have had contact with many of you. I have invited Chris Barham, a former Chairman, to be the President during my term. I am sure you would all wish to join me in thanking Ranjit and Richard Dunnill, who served as President for Ranjit, for their leadership during the past 3 years.

2007 was the year when SCATA celebrated its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. To celebrate this milestone the November meeting was held at the Royal College of Anaesthetists' magnificent new building, and was officially a joint meeting with the European Society for Computing and Technology in Anaesthesia and Intensive Care ([www.esctaic.org](http://www.esctaic.org)). La Société Francophone d'Informatique et Monitoring en Anesthésie Réanimation (<http://sfimar.asso-morpheus.org>), and American colleagues, also organised scientific sessions which occupied two full days. Details of the scientific programme and many of the PowerPoint presentations are in the archive on SCATA's web site.

For those of you who missed it, I am sorry to have to tell you that you missed a very good meeting. "I felt it was the best SCATA conference ever and a tribute to all those who put so much effort into making it a success" was just one of the compliments emailed to me after the meeting. For my part, I would like to take this opportunity, once again, to thank all those who helped me with the organisation of the meeting. Ranjit took on the burden of co-ordinating the scientific programme. David Jones made the arrangements for the Wednesday evening social event – a boat trip on the River Thames from the City up to Westminster and then down to Greenwich. Juliette McCormack provided administrative support with her customary efficiency, while staff at the College and the Hotel Russell, where we held the anniversary dinner, all helped in their own ways. Alastair Lack, one of SCATA's founders, gave a presentation at the dinner recounting SCATA's history. A paper based on that presentation will be made available on the web site in due course.

Hopefully we will be able to repeat the success of our last meeting when we meet in Bath in November 2008. Provisional plans are for an Information Technology Life Support (ITLS) course and Working Group meetings on the 19<sup>th</sup> November with scientific sessions on the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> – book your study leave now!

We are also planning our usual spring meeting this year for SCATA's Working Groups, in London on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> May at the Association of Anaesthetists' building in Portland Place. This will be very much a working meeting for those who attend so there will be no registration fee and some financial support for travel may be available. An ITLS course will be held the next day, 20<sup>th</sup> May, at the Royal College of Anaesthetists. Further details of these meetings will be placed on the web site.

If you are feeling a bit out of touch and want to find out what else SCATA has been doing recently then the web site is the place to go. Among other things there you will find the annual reports to the AAGBI's specialist societies' meeting, minutes of the AGMs, and the accounts of the society. There is also a forum and a Wiki. Do please log on to the site and contribute to these activities.

One of SCATA's charitable aims is to support research. While SCATA does not have the financial resources of many larger organisations we do like to support small projects. A grant application form and relevant guidance is available for downloading. Education is another of SCATA's aims. The ITLS course mentioned above has now been held on 5 or 6 occasions and demand is rising. This course is designed to provide trainees with the knowledge they need to meet the requirements for informatics training as set out in the College's new training manual Part 1: General Principles. Participants receive a certificate of attendance approved for 5 CPD points by the RCoA, and all attendees who pass the final MCQ receive a Certificate of Competence which can be used as supporting evidence at RITA or appraisal. Interestingly, a number of consultants have also attended this course and found it useful. Plans are being put together to hold ITLS courses on several occasions in different venues across the country during the coming year. Any member who is interested in joining the teaching faculty for this course should contact me.

My predecessor as Chairman has written to all specialist anaesthetic societies offering to make some of SCATA's expertise and services available to them. We can provide lecturers on informatics topics, for instance the National Programme for IT, or SNOMED terminology; run an ITLS course; hold a workshop on the use and abuse of PowerPoint along the lines of workshops previously held in conjunction with AAGBI meetings; or set up a cybercafé to provide attendees with internet access (we have the equipment). If you belong to another specialist society and think that some of this sort of 'cross-over' activity would be of interest then please get in touch.

SCATA is a registered charity. The provisions of the Charities Act 2006 are currently being phased in. It is not yet clear how the implementation this Act will impact the way SCATA functions but if changes become necessary they will be publicised via the web site and by email.

Finally, I am keenly aware of the fact that SCATA does not have a current email address for many of its members. Email is a very efficient way for those of us responsible for the running of the Society to communicate with members. The marginal costs of email are virtually zero, whereas a letter clearly involves paper, envelopes, secretarial, and postal costs – probably amounting to around 50p per letter, or £200 for a direct mailing to every member. As a member you can log in to the members only section of the web site and update you own personal details. Please ensure that this includes an email address. If you have any difficulty please email the webmaster ([webmaster@scata.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@scata.org.uk)) or the membership secretary ([treasurer@scata.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@scata.org.uk)).

I look forward to seeing you at one of SCATA's events this year. If there is anything you think SCATA should be doing that it is not doing, or you would like to help in some way with the activities of the Society, please let me know.



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