A new Charter, a new CEO

Our new CEO, Dr Anya Hunt took up office in May and already she has made a significant impact, so I thought it appropriate to tell you a little about her and then hand over to her to write about her ideas for taking the Society forward.

Let me first explain what is expected of someone in her position. The CEO is answerable to the Trustees (Council) and reports to the President. She is the most senior person on the admin side of the business and is responsible for the smooth running of the office and its staff. Key to the role is familiarity with the management and control of budgets and an ability to prioritise expenditure to meet strategic priorities. Working within the Charity Commission regulations, understanding the needs of the Criminal Justice System and knowledge of marketing and fund raising are all important aspects of the role.

Council members are all elected (or occasionally co-opted), unpaid and usually have full time day jobs. The CEO position is a full time day job. So whilst Council are responsible for the governance and direction of the Society, the CEO has the responsibility of making sure that Council’s initiatives are taken forward in a manner that is compatible with the Society’s resources.

Having now been granted the Royal Charter our demands of the new CEO have changed. We needed a person with an appreciation of the needs of the practitioners, therefore someone who had themselves been a court going scientist, someone with sales and marketing experience and an in depth knowledge of what makes the Society work.

Anya read Chemistry and Maths at the University of Sheffield. She was introduced to Forensic Science in 1991 when she was awarded a scholarship by the then DERA Forensic Explosives laboratory. This award first took her to the University of Strathclyde to complete a Masters in Forensic Science. On completing this in 1992 she returned to FEL as a trainee working primarily in the Trace Explosives facility.

Early in 1994 she went to undertake a PhD at UMIST after which she spent a year at the West Midlands Regional Toxicology Laboratory as a clinical associate in Forensic Toxicology. In 1997 she returned to Strathclyde for 3 years where she worked as a lecturer delivering commercial training.

In January 2001 Anya joined the Tayside Police Forensic Science Laboratory, Dundee as a Reporting Officer in Forensic Chemistry and eventually became a Senior Reporting Officer.
Anya's huge experience in a variety of relevant areas coupled with her enormous enthusiasm give me complete confidence in her ability to carry out the role as CEO.

I now hand over to her to tell us about her ideas for taking forward our initiatives. Dr Ann Priston, President

When the position of CEO was advertised earlier this year I knew instantly that I would apply. Since getting involved with Council in 2004 I have felt passionately that it had a huge role to play throughout the entire Forensic Science arena. The greatest challenge faced by Council members, that I know all too well, is the difficulty of balancing the work of the Society with the rigours of a hectic day job.

Anya joined the Society in 1991 and came on to Council in 2004. As a member of Council she was responsible for the development and implementation of University Forensic Accreditation scheme, casework interpretation workshops, recruitment & management of suitable experts. She is a past Chair of Standards and until this year was the Treasurer of the Society.

Anya's huge experience in a variety of relevant areas coupled with her enormous enthusiasm give me complete confidence in her ability to carry out the role as CEO.

The Interdisciplinary Training and Research Programme for Innovative Doctorates in Forensic Science - INTREPID - is a 2.9 million, multidisciplinary project funded by the People Programme of the European Union’s Seventh Framework Programme and provides opportunities for 10 early stage researchers to pursue innovative research degrees focusing on areas applicable to the forensic sciences.

The research projects will all be based at the University of Leicester and are co-supervised by academics in a wide range of disciplines including Genetics, Criminology, Chemistry, Psychology, Engineering, Mathematics, Physics, Pathology, and Immunity, Infection and Inflammation. Each of the researchers will be supervised by experts in these fields during their research, and they will also complete a unique core forensic skills training programme designed and delivered by academics and industry partners. The training programme will develop skills in areas such as ethics in the forensic sciences, forensic science theory and practice, laws of evidence and forensic science in the criminal courts and working with industry to commercialise forensic science innovation.

In addition, each researcher will complete a research secondment at various associate partner institutions throughout Europe. These secondments will provide the researchers with a great opportunity to work with leading experts from throughout Europe, as well as learning first-hand how forensic science and criminal justice systems differ across various countries. This element of the research projects will give the students an international perspective on forensic science and related issues, which will help them to appreciate different methods and applications of forensic disciplines in a range of different contexts.

In addition to disseminating their research findings at conferences and in academic journals, the researchers are also required to engage with the public during their research. This will involve contributing to researcher blogs and social media activities with an aim to generating public interest in forensic science research as well as to inspire the next generation of research students.

Professor Pierre Margot at the University of Lusanne, which is one of the project’s European associate partners, said: “I see this collaborative training and research project as a positive step toward creating substantial and rapid improvements in forensic science as a discipline, because the INTREPID Forensics programme is forensic science education built on a forensic science culture.”

The recruitment process is currently underway, and the available posts attracted nearly 300 applications, from prospective students based in 58 countries. The successful researchers will join the university in October 2014, and the project will be officially launched at The Chartered Society of Forensic Science annual conference in November which is being held at the University of Leicester.

If you would like to learn more about the INTREPID Forensics programme, you can visit the project website at www.intrepid-forensics.eu or you can contact the Project Coordinator (Dr Lisa Smith) on lisa.smith@intrepid-forensics.eu.
In respect of academic programs, teaching forensic science, this seems to be most applicable in respect of two particular issues. The first of these involves the period of discontinuity and flux within forensic science delivery which we have seen over the past few years; hence the need to focus upon providing good quality employable graduates. In addition, as forensic science programs are sometimes composed and structured on a firm basis of science, I’m constantly reminded of the need to get the balance right and ensure that (A) forensic science remains at the core of (B) forensic science programs. I’ve come to appreciate just how difficult it can be to balance this tangram and ensure that we provide graduates with a wider range of scientific skills in order to fulfill their learning experience in what I have come to realise is a rather brief chapter in their development. Certainly, in the two academic institutions I’m most familiar with the initiative has been remarkably beneficial. Student engagement in conferences is up significantly which of course does so much to enrich their learning experience as well as getting students involved with their professional body throughout their period of study (and hopefully beyond). Most importantly, of course, is enabling students to collect valuable CPD credits which are associated with conference and seminar attendance. Having graduates who have not only achieved well academically but also have gathered together evidence of their continuing professional development must surely set them apart in terms of their employability. The enthusiasm and engagement generated by our membership and conference attendance has been very encouraging and again plays some part in reinforcing the forensic characteristics of their degree program.

In addition, having the opportunity to engage with the professional body brings to the development of forensic science education. In reality, the level of investment represents only about 0.2% of the annual student tuition fees. The level of investment is generally confined to what I will discuss further along. More broadly though, and based upon the period 2010/11 to 2013/14 we have seen over a six fold increase in the number of students who are engaged with their professional body due to a combination of activities and encouragement by the professional body and universities alike. Surely – this must be for the good of the profession, universities and students alike.

Student Engagement: a benefit for all

One of the recurring themes within many academic institutions is the constant desire to develop and engage students’ interest, engagement and active participation. As a relative newcomer to academic life, it seemed to me that the need to engage students with the professional body begins at the commencement of their studies and not, as sometimes is the case, toward the end when one is seeking employment.

Having graduates who haven’t not only achieved well academically but have also gathered together evidence of their continuing professional development must surely set them apart in terms of their employability.

Education and Forensic Science

I never teach my pupils; I only attempt to provide the conditions in which they can learn.

Albert Einstein

Forensic science is a complex area. This complexity arises from two distinct sources. Firstly the application of scientific techniques to the disorganised nature of crime is complex. Secondly, the requirement for scientific results to be communicated within the legal domain that has complex rules and protocols proves challenging.

Forensic scientists are trained to uncover and analyse physical trace evidence for both criminal and occasionally civil cases. They play a vital role in the criminal justice system and provide crucial information about the evidence being presented. The forensic science practitioners role is generally confined to comparatively restricted and enclosed environments; the crime scene, the laboratory and then subsequently presenting their evidence in front of a jury in court. Therefore their educational background in their forensic science discipline needs to be strong, up to date and accurate at all times. Forensic scientists are a group of professionals who are educated to at least Honours degree level. For the large part, and especially prior to recruitment forensic science providers rely on universities and institutions to provide formal education covering theory, practical training, and a range of developmental activities.

The interest in forensic science reached an all time high in the public domain and rose to its international peak in 2000. This was largely due to the CSI effect, forcing universities and
collaboration, which houses the National Firearms Reference Collection along with the Firearms Laboratory of the forensic service provider LGC Forensics. Most recently cycling enthusiasts worldwide saw Leeds host the Grand Départ of the Tour de France.

The last time the UK hosted an ENFSI Firearms and GSR Working Group meeting was in 1998 in London at the Forensic Science Service. Since then the UK forensic market has fragmented considerably. It would be difficult for any UK laboratory to host a meeting now, so this collaborative meeting will be an invaluable opportunity for UK forensic practitioners and those in allied fields such as academia and policing to meet with colleagues from the rest of Europe and beyond.

We look forward to welcoming members of the Society and ENFSI to Leeds and to a fruitful collaboration in September.

Chris Moyneh is a Senior Forensic Scientist at LGC, and has specialised in gunshot residue examination since he joined the Forensic Science Service firearms team where he started in 1999. She is the current Chairman of the ENFSI Firearms and GSR Working Group and a professional member of the CSFS. She has provided evidence in a number of high profile cases from the UK and several other countries.

Alice Walters is the Lead Scientist for Firearms in the Metropolitan Police Service Forensic Firearms Unit, having joined from the Forensic Science Service firearms team where she started in 1999. She is the current Project lead for the ENFSI Firearms and GSR working group’s sub committee Quality Assurance and Proficiency Testing, and a Professional Member of the CSFS and Ordinary Member of Council since 2013. In addition she has been the Diploma Manager for the Society’s Diploma in Forensic Science since 2007. Alice Walters was the first ever UK representative of the Firearm and GSR working Group and has extensive experience in Forensic Science.

Europe and is recognised by the European Union Police Co-operation Working Group as the source of advice on forensic science issues.

Similarly the Society’s vision is to become the lead organisation for practitioners of science within legal processes; to promote and develop regulation in forensic science and practice; to support and encourage research and development in forensic science and practice; and to provide education and development for forensic practitioners. The Society aims to provide opportunities for practitioners, academics and interested parties to congregate, communicate and collaborate and provide opportunities for professional development.

Following numerous challenges about the way evidence is presented and the scientific basis underpinning some of the forensic disciplines, we decided to make the theme of the meeting “Strengthening the Scientific Basis of Firearms and GSR”. There are themes to the sessions and workshops too, with presentations on the interpretation of evidence, case studies, novel developments and research alongside talks on training and competence and practitioner registration.

Leeds is a particularly suitable venue for this meeting, as it is home to the Royal Armouries, a museum which houses the National Firearms Reference Collection along with the Firearms Laboratory of the forensic service provider LGC Forensics. Most recently cycling enthusiasts worldwide saw Leeds host the Grand Départ of the Tour de France.

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I am delighted to have been awarded Fellowship of the Society, and it is definitely one of the highlights of my long career as a Forensic Scientist.

I joined the Metropolitan Police Forensic Science Laboratory in 1971, as a Scientific Assistant (SA) - before they became Assistant Scientific Officers having left school with 'A' levels and much longer hair than I have today. I joined the Chemistry Department and as a young assistant was put on the alcohol rota one month in three with the other two months going around the various departments, learning my trade. After a short time I found my niche as an assistant in the Drugs & Toxicology Section. I was also a member of the Laboratory football and cricket teams and was a member of the side that won the ‘C’ Department Cup (a knock out cricket competition that all members of ‘C’ Department of New Scotland Yard entered), in fact I was the leading run scorer on that day. Later I was also a member of the six a side cricket team that won the Ken Howarth trophy (named after the explosive officer who died in 1981 whilst trying to defuse a bomb in Torso in Thames).

As a young assistant I looked up to the Court Reporting Officers with their stories and tales of events following their appearances in court as an expert witness and that is where I first met on the 'Adam' enquiry (1979) I was involved with included the murders of Sarah Payne, Billie Jo Jenkins, the M25 rapes (Antoni Imelal), £12m Securitas robbery, the 2005 London Transport bombings (7/7 and 21/7), Operation Nistead as well as 'Adam' (Torsio in Thames).

Shortly before the MPFSL merged with the Forensic Science Service I became Head of the Toxicology Section whilst managing to retain my position that I can pass on my long experience as a forensic scientist to the students of today and potential forensic scientists of tomorrow.

Certainly all of these cases bring memories of the hard work that was carried out by the scientists involved and I wish to thank them for the dedication and commitment they showed during these enquiries. I will not name any of them personally for fear of missing any individual out, but they know who they are. The list includes scientists both from within the FSS and from outside universities and other key academic institutions.

I also met a number of investigating officers/ scenes of crime personnel whose dedication made an impression upon me and I am fortunate enough to say that some have become personal friends.

Along the way I have been involved with an immense number of major and serious crimes. Since the Forensic Science Service closed, I have worked with Dr Stuart Black (who I first met when dealing with the 2005 London Transport Bombings) and Dr Nick Branch (a Pathologist I first met on the ‘Adam’ enquiry) as a Forensic Advisor to the University of Reading.

I am now in a position that I can pass on my long experience as a forensic scientist to the students of today and potential forensic scientists of tomorrow.

The work involves the use of enhanced analytical techniques, which most of the major forensic providers do not have, for the determination of stable, radioactive and radiogenic isotopes values and multi-element concentrations and their use in forensic science.

These methods may be used to determine:

- Post mortem interval using radiogenic isotopes (210Po/210Pb and 228Ra/228Rn), unlike other methods where environmental conditions have to be taken into account when interpretation is made.
- Geo-provenance of human, animal and inanimate objects using a combination of stable and radiogenic isotopes.
- Determination of nutritional status in cases where death may be due or partly due to starvation.

Comparison of trace/particulate evidence by the determination of isotope values and elemental composition. For example, recently made a study for the comparison lead bullets from different manufacturers/ types and batches. This comparison is carried out using a combination of lead isotope values (208Pb/206Pb versus 207Pb/206Pb) and elemental concentrations down to ppb level.

Both the University of Reading and I are very grateful to all the many forensic scientists whose dedication and effort have made an impression upon me and I am fortunate enough to say that some have become personal friends. The list includes scientists both from within the FSS and from outside universities and other key academic institutions. I also met a number of investigating officers/ scenes of crime personnel whose dedication made an impression upon me and I am fortunate enough to say that some have become personal friends.

I was fortunate enough to be involved with the Serious Crime Unit. The Unit was called upon to attend scenes and develop and recover latent marks, mainly finger/palm and footwear marks from a variety of surfaces. Despite having to work on Christmas Day and New Year’s Eve one year, the work was very rewarding and was certainly different from life in the laboratory. I even managed to receive a parking ticket from Westminster Council when the scene van was parked inside the outer corridor. After depositing the ticket with the Laboratory Liaison DI (Norman Quick) I became even more embarrassed when we received a summons to attend Westminster Magistrates Court for non-payment of fines – I had attended the court many times as an expert witness but never as a defendant. A few hurried calls to the relevant department at New Scotland Yard resolved the problem.

Shortly before the MPFSL merged with the Forensic Science Service I became Head of the Toxicology Section whilst managing to retain my position in that I can pass on my long experience as a forensic scientist to the students of today and potential forensic scientists of tomorrow.

Charity Cycle Ride

Dear colleagues, with the closure of the Forensic Science Service many of my old friends have carved new and exciting lives for themselves and their families. I have now embarked on a part time career in accreditation (don’t boo and hiss, I work mainly on the Continent, not in the UK) and charity work. This year I am organising a local quiz and also riding my pedal bike from Lands End (maybe Lambs end) to John O’Groats, Las Blosowar (in Huntingdon and Nottingham) will be supporting me.

This ride will be in aid of Prostate Cancer UK. This disease will affect one in eight men and every hour one man dies from it. With the right education, early diagnosis, support and treatment, the disease can be arrested and the person can lead a normal healthy life. All of this costs money that the Government do not contribute towards, that’s where we come in.

My ride will take the Eastern route which I hope to complete in 12 days, cycling 100 miles per day. I have been training since February and I now need to get as many people as possible to donate. If you can, please donate on my site: www.justgiving.com/Peter-Lamb. I already have over £1000 pledged by friends and colleagues.

All the money that you give will go directly to Prostate Cancer UK, I will not be using any of your hard earned cash to sleep in fancy hotels and eat at Michelin star restaurants.

Peter Lamb
Biennial Firearms Conference with ENFSI Firearms and GSR Working Group

STRENGTHENING THE SCIENTIFIC BASIS OF FIREARMS AND GSR

Date: 17-19 September 2014 Location: The Double Tree by Hilton, Leeds City Centre

Aim: To promote postgraduate student research in forensic science and provide a supportive forum for the exchange of knowledge and ideas.

Bookings: Registration is still available through the website. To book visit www.charteredsocietyofforensicsciences.org

Conference Dinner: The conference dinner will take place on the evening of Wednesday 17th September at The Royal Armouries, Leeds. Dinner will be served at 8pm in the Wellington Suite, which is located on 1st floor of the museum. Price is £20. For further details and to book, please go to our website.

Workshops: Four workshops have been scheduled, which will run on Friday 19 September in two consecutive slots, so please note that you will only be able to attend one workshop from session 1 and one from session 2. It is also possible to book to only attend one workshop.

SESSION 1 (09:00)

PARTICLE POPULATION DESCRIPTION IN COMPARISONS WITH KNOWN SOURCES OF P-GSR

Presented by: Matteo Donghi, RIS Carabinieri, Parma, Italy

THE LIKELIHOOD RATIO APPROACH IN CARTRIDGE CASE AND BULLET COMPARISON

Presented by: Wim Kerkhoff and Rob Hensman, Netherlands Forensic Institute

SESSION 2 (11:30)

INTRODUCTION TO SMALL ARMS EXTERNAL BALLISTICS

Presented by: Andre Horne (LGC Forensics, UK)

HOW TO TACKLE SUBCLASS CHARACTERISTICS IN FIRED CARTRIDGE CASES

Presented by: Beta Tam, Fellow of the Chartered Society of Forensic Sciences and distinguished member of the Association of Firearms and Toolmark Examiners

Joint conference with BAFS

SCIENCE AND JUSTICE: IDENTITY, NATIONALITY, HEALTH AND THE LAW

Date: 27 September 2014 Location: Roben’s Suite, Guy’s Hospital, London

For further information, please visit http://www.bafs.org.uk/index.php/events/upcoming-events

The Chartered Society of Forensic Sciences

POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

Date: 7 November 2014 Location: University of Leicester

Aim: To promote postgraduate student research in forensic science and provide a supportive forum for the exchange of knowledge and ideas.

The Society email addresses have now changed. If you need to contact the office please use the emails below:

Info@csofs.org  Journal@csofs.org  CPD@csofs.org

Accreditation@csofs.org  Secretary@csofs.org  Diploma@csofs.org

Conference@csofs.org  Finance@csofs.org

The next big events...

The Chartered Society of Forensic Sciences

AUTUMN CONFERENCE & AGM

Title: The changing face and pace of trace evidence

Date: 7-8 November 2014 Location: University of Leicester

Aim: The conference aims to look at new technologies and research in the area as well as how it is seen in case work. It will be of interest to caseworker’s police and investigators and researchers alike.

Conference programme: A provisional conference programme is now available to view online on our website.

Bookings: Early bird registration is now available until 1st September 2014. To book visit the website.

Other events for your diary in 2014

Annual Student Conference

TITLE: HOW TO GET AHEAD IN FORENSIC SCIENCE - CAREER PATHWAYS IN FORENSIC SCIENCE

Date: 6 December 2014 Location: University of Huddersfield

Aim: to showcase some of the many different career pathways available to budding forensic scientists and to offer useful advice to enable students and graduates make informed decisions about their own careers, in the competitive discipline of forensic science, as well as providing the opportunity to network with experts and high-profile professionals.

Call for posters: Any research relating to any aspect of forensic science is welcome. Click on the link above to submit your poster abstract - closing date 5pm on 30th September 2014.

Education & Industry Forum

Date: 19 December 2014 Location: Home Office, London

For further information on any of the above conferences, please visit http://charteredsocietyofforensicsciences.org/Events/2014

Sponsorship - There are a range of opportunities for companies to sponsor Society events and we can assist you in product and services promotion. For further details of our competitively priced opportunities, please contact our Event Management Organiser, Keshia McGuire on Telephone: +44 (0) 1423 506068 or Email: conference@csofs.org

Members Meeting

Group Photo

Some of our members were interested in who was present at the members meeting and shown in the photo on the front cover of the last edition of Interfaces. Pictured from left to right Kneale Kimber, Sarah Peel, Robert Green, Shirley Marshall, Peter Ellis, Paul Milton, Roger Davis, Alice Walters, Tom Nelson, Callum Sutherland, Andrew Jackson, Barbara Daniel, Amy Prichard, Carol Osbalt, Marie Lee-Gorman, Anya Hunt, Leon Barrow, Brian Caddy, Brian Rankey (hand), Pete Merril.