

Committee Member Spotlight

'Gentle' persuasion from Frank Pullen encouraged me to stand for the BMSS committee when a post became available last year. 'We need more folk from industry' he said. I was pleasantly surprised to be voted onto the committee which was announced at the AGM in Eastbourne. I hope to contribute to the committee activities by taking over from Pat Wright as Publicity Secretary.

Born and raised in Cumbria, my interest in chemistry developed throughout my school years, ultimately taking me to study Chemistry at Brunel University in West London (which sadly no longer does chemistry). There I enjoyed a contrasting lifestyle to the Cumbrian way of life.

My specialist role in mass spectrometry began when I was a student doing a placement at the Royal Arsenal East, using GC/MS to look at fuels. After graduating in 1989, I got a job at the Wellcome Research Laboratories doing patent protection work; this quickly took me into the world of LC/MS, although this was before the introduction of electrospray and so I started on thermospray on a Trio 1 single quadrupole. When I joined we also had an old sector (which I think was a VG 7070?) and an MS50 sector. While I was at Wellcome, I started a part-time PhD at the University of Kent at Canterbury with Prof John Todd, initially looking at thermospray and subsequently, electrospray behaviour of acyclovir esters. During this time I also set up the site's first open access system, initially in APCI before moving to electrospray.

In 1994, Glaxo took over Wellcome and I was fortunately offered a job at their site in Stevenage as a mass spectrometry specialist providing support to chemists and analysts working in development. My PhD continued but I now started looking at accurate mass measurement on the back of a great paper by Brian Green showing that this could be done on a quadrupole. I did successfully manage to obtain accurate mass measurement on a triple quadrupole system (a Quattro 1 upgraded to electrospray), however the introduction of ToFs somewhat superseded my work. In 1996/7 we were excited to get our first Micromass QToF, which revolutionised our structural elucidation capabilities. Around this time, Potential Genotoxic Impurities became a hot topic within the pharma industry and the group started to look at quantitative methods of analysis.

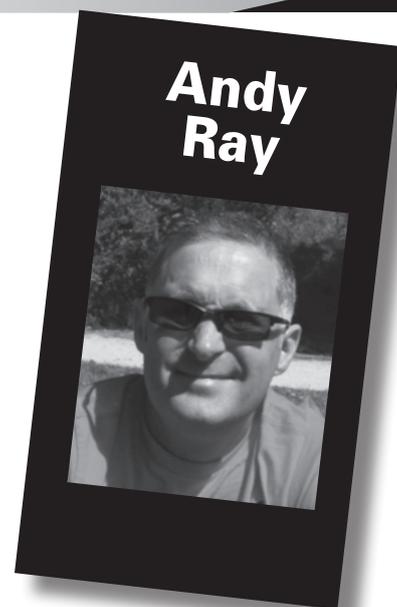
In 2001, I finally finished my PhD and had the joy of receiving my award in the wonderful setting of Canterbury Cathedral. In 2004, I left for pastures new by taking a job at AstraZeneca at the Charnwood site in Loughborough as a mass spectrometry specialist but now supporting drug product rather than drug substance. In the next couple of years life moved on apace as I met and

married Sonia and had a son, Sam.

In 2010, AstraZeneca shut the Charnwood site and I continued my move back up the country by relocating up to Macclesfield. My current role supports both drug substance and drug product so has a fairly broad remit!

In 2009 I was becoming very interested in direct analysis/ambient ionisation techniques; so with Dan Weston & Tony Bristow we organised the Direct Analysis Symposium. This was a great success, despite an erupting Icelandic volcano leaving me with three speakers unable to fly in three days before the meeting! As this was an area that clearly other people were interested in too, at BMSS Annual Meeting in Cardiff in 2011 I set up the Ambient Ionisation SIG. This has gone from strength to strength; we're on our second round robin and planning for our 4th meeting. With the advent of small footprint mass spectrometers I've become really interested in taking the mass spectrometer to the sample. This has led to a big interest in on-line reaction monitoring and also monitoring dissolution by mass spectrometry. As the pharma industry is changing and we move away from just small molecules, I now find I'm challenged to enter the high molecular weight world and all the challenges that brings: using average masses and trying to optimise MALDI conditions!

Coming from the Lake District, hill-walking has always been a great passion. My walking has stretched beyond the lakes and I have climbed



Mt. Kilimanjaro, Mt Toubkal and the Inca Trail, but mainly these days just walk and run locally with our dog Mango! For many years I played badminton in local leagues, but now spend my time teaching Sam how to play or acting as a bowling machine for his cricket practice. In the last few years I've taken up the guitar and like to think I'm slowly getting better...

