

No. 219 Winter '06 Contents

- 1 News - David McGrouther - appreciation
- 2 Biology - SAPS Photosynthesis Kit - use of algal balls to investigate photosynthesis
- 5 Prestige autoclaves - special offer
- 6 Chemistry - Equilibrium and Le Châtelier
- 7 Chemistry - Electric writing
- 8 CPD News - Update, ISE 5-14 through CPD draws to a close
- 10 Physics - Radiant heaters
- 11 CPD News - Scottish Technicians' Consultative Conference (2006)
- 12 ICT - Further experiments
- 12 Safety - Wiring plugs - banned or not?

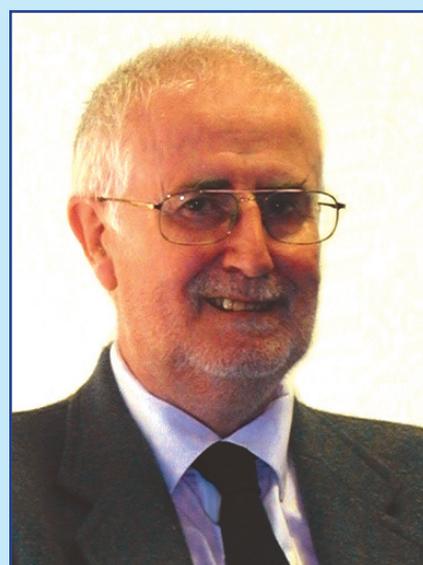
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Councillor David McGrouther BA JP - an appreciation

In September of this year, after well over twenty years in the Chair of SSERC, Councillor David L. McGrouther intimated his decision to resign from the Board of SSERC Limited. David is also stepping down next year from West Lothian Council and will not be standing for re-election. He has stayed in the chair at SSERC long enough to see the Centre settled in a new home in Fife before tendering his resignation.

This is typical of the man and perhaps that is how SSERC staff and his fellow Directors on the Board might best remember David – as a stayer and a finisher. He came to the chair of SSERC (when it had a Governing Body rather than a Board) almost by accident one might say. At the time of his first appointment as a Governor he was a senior Lothian Regional Councillor. On the occasion of his first scheduled meeting he had another prior and pressing engagement. Thus he found himself victim of that established tradition whereby all non-volunteers learn to step smartly backwards. He was duly elected to the chair in absentia.



Even though he was then vice-convenor of Lothian's Education Committee, and therefore always extremely busy, David never failed to find the time for SSERC business. This is all the more remarkable when one considers that his professional and academic background lies in the humanities and not the sciences. One of his greatest contributions, undoubtedly, was to stand by and actively campaign for SSERC at the time of local government disorganisation and the split into 32 councils from 12. For many local authority politicians, it might well have been more expedient simply to let SSERC slide into insolvency and go under. Instead, he took a deep breath, SSERC stopped trading for a while and thus remained solvent. With assistance from David and using his heavyweight political clout we got sorted out, re-jigged our finances and used that breathing space to recruit the new councils into membership.

David could have stepped down at that point and taken a lot of credit for SSERC's survival. That he went on and has stuck with the organisation, seen it grow and then re-locate to excellent premises on the other side of the Forth speaks volumes about the man and his unswerving commitment to science and technology education.

Not bad for a non-scientist!

We wish David and his wife Fiona all the very best for the future and for a long and happy retirement.

