

British Computer Society – South West Branch

Annual General Meeting

**10th May 2005
Met Office, Exeter**

Chairman's Report

The South West Branch has again produced a successful and interesting programme of events for members in the region, with a range of topical presentations from both commercial and academic speakers. The presentations have covered a wide range of themes, including computer malware, digital forensics, virtual communities and regional broadband. I am very grateful to all of our presenters, who kindly gave their time and effort in support of our Branch.

I am pleased to report that attendance at the branch seminars has improved quite significantly during the last year, with audiences in excess of 40 people for several of the events. One likely reason for this is that our events this year have been promoted more effectively, with emails targeting the BCS member community, university staff and students, and the membership of Wired West. This will continue in the year ahead, in the hope of building upon this year's success.

Having taken the decision last year to move away from a printed branch journal, things have developed further this year with content being placed directly onto the branch website as it becomes available. This will allow faster dissemination of materials to branch members (i.e. without needing to wait for enough material to accumulate to fill an edition of a journal), and we would very much welcome submissions from members in the region. In addition to providing access to new articles, the website has been enhanced to include an archive of older materials that previously appeared in the printed versions of the journal.

Our efforts to improve the visibility of the Society amongst IT graduates in the region have continued, with the Student Project Evening event having been run twice since the last AGM (in June 2004 and April 2005). This provides an opportunity for final year project students to present details of their degree project work, and each event has resulted in six projects being selected for inclusion. In addition, we continue to award BCS-sponsored Student degree prizes for the two universities in our region, with first run prizes having been awarded to Plymouth-based students on the BCS-accredited *BSc (Hons) Computing Informatics* and *BSc (Hons) Computer Systems & Networks* programmes. This will continue for at least the next two years, with Exeter's *BSc (Hons) Computer Science* also being included (an appropriate winner not having been selected for the last academic year).

The members of our committee continue to devote a significant amount of their free time in order to make the Branch successful, and I would again like to record my thanks to them for their hard work and enthusiasm. Related to this, I am pleased to report that Bernard Apps, a previous long-standing member of our committee, was the recipient of a Branch Service Award from the Society, reflecting his dedicated and distinguished service to the BCS in the region for over 30 years.

In the year ahead the Branch will continue to maintain variety in the events programme, with presentations in a variety of regional locations and addressing a range of topical themes in the industry.

Dr Steven Furnell CEng FBCS CITP
May 2005