

ALT Committee Report 2003-2004

President

We were delighted to hear that our President Sir Robin Jacob has been promoted to the Court of Appeal. Even though his new duties prevented his attendance at the York conference we look forward to his continuing enthusiasm and support for the work of the ALT.

Upjohn Lecture

The 2003 Annual Lord Upjohn Lecture took place on 6 June 2003 at the Inns of Court School of Law, and was delivered by Professor John Gardner. Prof Gardner follows HLA Hart and Ronald Dworkin as Chair of Jurisprudence at the University of Oxford. His paper on 'What is tort law for?' was well attended and well received by an audience from the judiciary, the professions, law teachers and students.

Membership

Work on the database continued. Due to the sterling efforts of the membership secretary and treasurer we now have a clear picture of the range and profile of membership. The new directory of members has now been published and delivered and you will have seen a huge improvement in the presentation of membership information. We hope that, together with UKCLE's new external examiners database, it will be a useful resource for colleagues looking for suitable nominations for external examiner posts, validation panels and other events requiring the sort of expertise that ALT members possess in abundance.

The increase in membership subscriptions, the first in 12 years, was passed at the last AGM and the treasurer and membership secretary have worked on making sure that members' bank details are updated. The modest increase will ensure the continued financial stability of the Association and reflects the inflationary increase in costs such as postage and travel over the last 12 years.

Conferences

The 2004 Annual Conference was held at the University of York, April 4-6 2004, with over 120 delegates. 35 papers were delivered and both speakers and delegates commended the high quality scholarship and the practicality of the academic programme. The event as usual was marked by a real sense of fun, friendship and comradeship from delegates from around the world, some of whom were attending an ALT conference for the first time.

RARE workshop

This conference held on St Patrick's Day (17 March) looked at the impact of government higher education policy on law schools and the possible strategies that could be developed to in response to the environment of higher education. It was a very successful workshop and it is intended to follow it up in 2005.

Attendance at other events

Committee members have attended a number of events in a representative capacity. In particular the chair of the ALT policy group, John Hodgson, attended the consultation meeting held by the Law Commission in November 2003. The Standing Conference on Legal Education hosted by Department of Constitutional Affairs was also held in November and attended by the Honorary Secretary, Alison Bone.

Publications and communications

The ALT continues to publish *The Law Teacher*, the *International Journal of Legal Education*, which rightly continues to be regarded as the pre-eminent publication in its field. The journal is a real strength of the ALT and thanks go to the contributors, the editorial board and in particular to the Editor, Nigel Duncan.

The *Bulletin ALT* continues as a vital conduit for informing members of developments in the Association and in legal education more generally. Its informative and entertaining character are down to its editor, Mike Cuthbert.

The ALT's website has been continually developed over the last two years. We were very pleased with the re-launch and redesign of site that went live in mid March. I'm sure you'll see when you visit that it is an attractive, well organised and useful site. Special thank are due to Ann Priestley of UKCLE for actively supporting and managing this development.

Our e-mail distribution list continues to send out information on forthcoming events to members' inboxes. We have aimed to send out a mailing approximately once a month, to balance the need for timely information on events with the potential annoyance of persistent mailings.

Law Teacher of the year

Law Teacher of the Year is a major development in the ALT's activities. All credit goes to Alison Bone as the innovator and driving force behind the award. It is a concrete achievement in the ALT's mission of promoting recognition of and support for excellence in law teaching.

And in conclusion

We also have a large vote of thanks to give to Alison Bone, who is standing down after many years as Honorary Secretary. She has kept us organised and represented the ALT so effectively in that role. We are pleased that Alison is staying involved in the committee, with particular responsibility for the Law Teacher of the Year awards.

I would like to wish my successor, Michael Jefferson, best wishes for a successful year as ALT Chair. It has been a great honour and a great pleasure to be the Association's Chair in 2003-04 and I would like to thank the members and the Committee for all their support.

Michael Doherty
ALT Chair, 2003-04