



Dear Members,

I hope all of you enjoyed your summer holidays as much as I did. It was a treat to get on a “real” flight - one which had endless in-flight entertainment and proper meals - and travel beyond Australia’s borders. Granted, I had forgotten how uncomfortable intercontinental flights can be after nearly 3 years of nothing but this was, overall, a minor inconvenience relative to the joy I felt at seeing my family and friends in Singapore, London, Lisbon and Paris.

Speaking of Paris, for those of you who attended our FENS Mini-Conference, thank you so much for showing up. I vividly recall the hall being packed out and there was a queue out the door to get in! I’m delighted that so many were interested to hear the research presented by our speakers. Special shout out to Puja Parekh from Conor Liston’s lab who delivered an excellent presentation on the effects of chronic social defeat stress on reward circuitry. Two of my other favourite talks were by [Amelie Baud](#) who spoke about her lab’s work exploring the interactions between mouse strain genetics and the environment and [Rupert Overall](#) who presented his group’s approach to observing and quantifying behaviours of individual mice in colonies. This was my first go at organising an event involving different societies so I also want to take this opportunity to thank Igor Branchi (EBBS), Camron Bryant, Wim Crusio and Anna Delprato (IBANGS), Andre Fischer (EMCCS) as well as Christelle Baunez and Yavin Shaham (EBPS) for their endless support and advice.

EBPS had a stall at FENS that was manned by Marco Venniro, Amy Milton and I (photo, right). We were delighted to meet and interact with many EBPS members who came by our booth and meet other FENS delegates whom we hope to have convinced to sign up to our amazing society!

I’m excited about this issue for one reason. It has a two-page piece written by Ian Stolerman, retired Emeritus Professor of Behavioural Pharmacology, Kings College, and one of the founding father’s of EBPS. In his piece, Ian eloquently reflects on the origins of the society as well as various notable mo-

ments in the society’s history. He also talks about how the society has changed significantly for the better and his excitement about its future. A must-read for all members!

In addition to the this, this newsletter also features a piece by Marco Venniro on his most successful workshop in Rome! I have heard from many colleagues who attended that it was one of those, rare and special meetings which leave a lasting memory not just for the science but for the important connections made between people after such a long time apart.

Finally, if you haven’t heard already, the 2023 EBPS Biennial is going to be held in Mannheim, Germany from 22-25th of August. Rainer Spanagel is chairing the local organising committee. We are excited to announce that we have secured Pier Vincenzo Piazza (FRA), Tricia Janak (USA), Rohini Kuner (DEU) and Gavan McNally (AUS) as our plenary speakers. We have also officially opened our portal for the submission of symposium proposals (details below). Just prior to the meeting, there will also be a workshop in Heidelberg (20mins by public transport) and the focus will be on the use of ‘omics technologies in behavioural pharmacology research. More info to come on this so stay tuned.

As always, I hope you enjoy reading this issue and I’m happy for you to email me your thoughts on future issues and the society.

[Anand Gururajan](#)

EBPS Communications Officer



Origins and development of EBPS

Ian Stolerman, Kings College London (Ret'd)



There were many societies serving diverse branches of pharmacology and psychology by the 1980s, so why was there a need for another one? Here I tell how I came to take the first steps towards the formation of EBPS the need for which I had discussed with friends as a PhD student at University College London around 1965.

I and other students working in experimental psychopharmacology had a choice between presenting our work at well-established pharmacology or psychology societies. A typical meeting of the British Pharmacological Society embraced a few hundred short presentations, but it was rare for more than two or three of them to involve behavioural measurements. Only a handful of pharmacologists were really interested in the effects of drugs on behaviour or on psychological functions generally.

The reverse situation pertained at meetings of psychological societies; with rare exceptions nobody was interested in drugs or knew much about them. True, there was a large international society in the field, the Collegium Internationale Neuropsychopharmacologicum (CINP) but we found that it had a rather exclusive, elitist approach which became apparent when I applied for membership. My application was rejected because I was not well established

in the field with an adequate publication record, whereas I wanted support to get published. To say that this situation was disheartening was an understatement; soul-destroying would be a more apt description. I used to discuss the problem with other students in London around 1960s and we speculated on the need for a new society, but we felt too junior and unknown to undertake the task.

A few years later, I had started the European Study Group for Internal Stimulus Properties of Drugs (ES-ISC), in effect a forum for discussion of research on drug discrimination, that met annually as a satellite of the bigger meetings. Over dinner at a 1982 meeting of the European Neuroscience Association in Hamburg Dai Stephens suggested that the scope of the organisation should be broadened and that I was the best person to start a new society; being susceptible to flattery, I took the suggestion seriously and set down to work on it soon after returning to England.

Now a word about how I kept my employer, the British Medical Research Council (MRC), informed about what I was doing. In short, I didn't. I was based in a university but my contract of employment specified that I was to spend only a limited number of hours on university teaching or other non-MRC work and there was no way that I could compress EBPS-activities into the notional time limit. What I did was to set aside one afternoon a week for writing letters and telephoning in relation to the nascent EBPS, it being prior to the development of email that would have done so much to facilitate communication.

I organised a steering committee of about 15 members after consultation with helpful colleagues such as Francis Colpaert and Trevor Robbins, that met for the first time in London in 1984. Francis offered to host the inaugural meeting in Antwerp with major support from Janssen Pharmaceutica that we supplemented by means of donations from many other firms. Francis and I conceived of the society functioning as academic-industry collaboration in which industry scientists could play a full role and even assume the Presidency. Today suspicion about the industry, for example to the selective reporting of clinical trials, has grown to such an extent that such a concept would be laughed out of court. Nevertheless, it worked very well for EBPS for many years and without the concept EBPS might never have been born.

The inaugural meeting in Belgium took place in 1986 and it was a great success. About 150 people attended and interestingly, the number of Americans was second only to that Britons. The atmosphere was wonderfully positive, with one participant summing it up by commenting that at last, behavioural pharmacology had a home in Europe. The EBPS was declared to have been inaugurated, officers were elected by a show of hands, and an expanded steering committee took on the task of setting up a stable organisation. I thought we did a good job but the need for some substantial revisions to the constitution during the next ten years brought out its limitations. However, the society's scientific scope and aims remained unaltered and it has hosted many meetings of the highest scientific quality. A fuller account of the early days of the society can be found in an editorial linked [here](#) by Francis and myself.

So many people have put much time and effort into aiding the development of the society that it is not possible to mention all of them here. Aldo Badiani, Martine Cador, Gaetano di Chiara, Alexander (Lex) Cools, Barry Everitt, Yavin Shaham, Dai Stephens, Paul Willner and Louk Vanderschuren are notable among them. Werner Schmidt was a much-loved President prior to his premature death. Trevor Archer was assiduous in securing donations during the early days of the society. The enthusiastic contributions of numerous scientists made up many high points in the history of EBPS. Trevor Robbins did much to facilitate the joint meeting with the British Association for Psychopharmacology in 1992. The lowest point was reached during the biennial meeting in Marseille.

On the morning of Tuesday September 11th 2001 I chaired a session on attention but when I returned to the meeting room after lunch the world had changed. Instead of scientific findings the screen was devoted to a relay of a television broadcast showing the devastating attacks on the World Trade Centre in New York and other American sites. What had happened was almost unbelievable, but it got worse when the twin towers collapsed. Although a commendable attempt to continue the scientific programme was made, it proved virtually impossible. My recollection is that meeting participants spent the afternoon and much of the next day wandering listlessly around the foyers trying to absorb and understand the tragic events. When the meeting ended many people had difficulty getting home and this was especially the case for the Americans who attended the meeting because

several airports were closed for days afterwards, and numerous flights were cancelled or delayed.

There have been many changes in the society during the three decades since it was formed. Programmes nowadays include fewer presentations with drugs with selective actions used primarily to elucidate CNS functions, a change in emphasis that may be in part due to developments of imaging and molecular genetic technologies that were not available at the time of its formation.

One aspect that is particularly pleasing has been the successful maintenance of the international scope of EBPS, giving rise to occasional notions about changing its name to International Behavioural Pharmacology Society in order to reflect reality more precisely. Although the society was named EBPS from the outset, its constitution has never included any restrictions on the geographical location of its members, officers, or meeting venues. Consequentially, the biennial meetings and the intervening workshops have taken place in more than 15 countries, including Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Israel, Ireland, Italy, Malta, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain, United Kingdom and USA. People have sometimes regarded it as anomalous that a supposedly European organisation could have, at times, an American as President or in other official roles, a development that the founders had certainly not anticipated. However, members from outside Europe have the same rights in EBPS as Europeans and that includes the right to serve on committees and as officers. Anomalous that practice may be, but it works, and I would not like to see it changed.

Giving birth to EBPS was a source of enormous satisfaction for me and for many years I regarded it as my third child. I look forward to observing its continuing growth and recognition among psychopharmacologists. It has been said that the British chain stores called Marks & Spencer have done more for humanity than Marx & Lenin and my view of EBPS parallels that; the formation of EBPS has done more for behavioural pharmacology than my purely scientific contributions in papers and books.

Biennial Workshop, Rome

We would like to express our heartfelt thanks to each of you who participated in the EBPS Biennial Workshop “Spanning the spectrum of social behavior towards more translationally relevant animal models” in Rome, Italy, last 24th-26th of June. Over 170 people gave their time and resources to attend and to contribute. You made the workshop a success and it was a great pleasure to see so many young scientists there! Hopefully you enjoyed both the scientific part and the social programme and that you used the opportunity to extend your existing networks. We would like to give special thanks to all the Speakers, presenters of the conference, the EBPS Executive Committee and our Sponsors for fully supporting us, and furthermore to the effective team who did outstanding work in organizing the event.

The Organizing Committee



EBPS Biennial 2023



We are delighted to announce that our 2023 Biennial will be held at [Mannheim Palace](#), Germany, from the 22-25th of August. Rainer Spanagel is the chair of the local organising committee and has already confirmed plenary talks by Pier Piazzzi (FRA), Tricia Janak (USA), Rohini Kuner (DEU) and Gavan McNally (AUS).

We are now accepting proposals for conference symposia via our submission [portal](#) which will cover diverse topics in pharmacology, psychology, psychiatry, and neuroscience on cellular, genetic, pharmacological, and circuit mechanisms of behaviour in both animal models and human subjects. We encourage sessions on timely and innovative topics.

Priority will be given to proposals that contribute to the mission of EBPS to enhance representation of scientists from minority, marginalized and underrepresented backgrounds. This includes, but is not limited to, consideration of ethnicity, geographic location, gender, and career status. We will also give priority to proposals covering novel topics that were not represented in previous EBPS meetings.

If you have suggestions to stimulate scientific discussions or those pertaining to other aspects of our society (e.g. our diversity, equity, and inclusion missions), we welcome you to propose other formats as well.

Just prior to the meeting, there will be a workshop in Heidelberg on the use of ‘omics technologies in behavioural pharmacology research. Information on the program and how to register will be forthcoming.

We hope to see you in Mannheim in 2023!

Job Alert

Funded postdoctoral positions are available in the lab of **Dr Catherine Peña's** [laboratory](#) in the Princeton Neuroscience Institute, NJ USA. Research in the Peña Lab explores how early life stress changes neurodevelopment and increases risk for mood and anxiety disorders. Current projects ask how reward regions develop normally and how early life stress may disrupt these trajectories, and how 3D chromatin structure facilitates future stress response. Wet lab techniques include single-nucleus RNA and AT-AC-sequencing, Hi-C, CRISPR-mediated epigenome editing in vitro and in vivo, and a variety of behavioral tasks in mice and **preference will be given to candidates with some sequencing or cell culture experience**. We are also seeking a **computational biologist postdoc** or **data scientist** to develop, refine, optimize, and apply analysis methods and/or software to a variety of datasets: expertise in R required, with preference for those with working knowledge of **Python/Shiny** and experience working with single-cell sequencing data and cluster computing. We value team science, open science, and strive to create a positive, engaging, diverse, ethical, supportive, and fun lab environment where lab members are challenged but equally rewarded. If interested, please send a CV and cover letter to [Dr. Cate Peña](#).

Psychopharmacology

Despite years of progress in our fundamental understanding of human biology, the translation of this knowledge into effective new treatments for neuropsychiatric disorders has been slow. We believe that this impasse is partly due to the omission of social factors, which play a major role in the etiology of human psychiatric disorders. Recently, these behaviors have increasingly been incorporated into preclinical models to study their effect on neuropsychiatric disorders. In this regard, we are excited to invite you to contribute to a special issue of **Psychopharmacology on Social Behaviors**. We welcome both review articles and empirical papers from all types of research including preclinical and clinical investigations. We hope to set the stage for future collaborative studies to utilize social behaviors to help bridge the translational gap, thereby improving strategies for identifying novel therapeutic targets for the successful treatment of neuropsychiatric disorders.

Deadline for submissions: **April 30th 2023**.
More info can be found [here](#).

FENS Calendar

Engrams & Neuronal Ensembles in Learning & Memory: From Molecules to Behaviour

12-13/9/2022, In person, Dublin, [Link](#)

Brainbox Initiative

22-23/9/2022, In person, London, [Link](#)

Sleep Europe 2022

27-30/9/2022, In person, Athens, [Link](#)

International Society for Molecular Neurodegeneration

10/10/2022-12/10/2022, Hybrid, Athens, [Link](#)

35th ECNP Congress

15/10/2022-18/10/2022, Hybrid, Vienna, [Link](#)

European Synapse Meeting

20/10/2022-21/10/2022, In person, Coimbra, [Link](#)

Is your membership current?

Just a reminder to check that your membership is current and if not, please renew [here](#). Full membership remains at €100 and the student fee at only €40. The benefits are numerous and include discounted registration for the 2023 meeting in Mannheim!

EBPS Committee

Executive Committee:

President - Yavin Shaham (US)

President Elect - Shelly Fligel (US)

Past President - Louk Vanderschuren (NL)

General Secretary - Amy Milton (UK)

Treasurer - Mohammed Shoaib (UK)

Meeting Secretary - Rainer Spanagel (DE)

Past Meeting Secretary - Rudy Schreiber (NL)

Ex-Officio:

Psychopharmacology Rep - Christelle Baunez (FR)

Full Committee:

Gavan McNally (AU)

Daniele Caprioli (IT)

Veronique Deroche (FR)

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