

Chair of the Association

2002 – 2003

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Welcome to the start of the new academic year. It is a great privilege to be ASE Chair and I hope that during this year I will be able to meet as many members as possible at Area and Region events. I have benefited a great deal by my membership of ASE over the years and gained many good friends. After 19 years, I still enjoy teaching science. Why do I enjoy it? Well, there's never a dull moment and the growth of science knowledge must be off the scale so there is always something new to find out, some new twist in the tale. But a major influence in my continued enjoyment and involvement in teaching science must be ASE.

As a young teacher, my first head of science was keen on ASE and encouraged me to join. He used little practicals he found in *School Science Review* in his schemes of work. Following up the references got me into looking at *SSR*. I don't remember him going to a meeting and neither did I for a few years, I just read the journals, picking up hints and tips, good ideas and keeping informed. I would have found the ASE CPD Programme challenging and useful then.

As my jobs changed, so did my involvement in ASE. I started going to meetings. Remember problem solving and egg races, the introduction of GCSE? I used to come away with new ideas to revive and refresh my teaching. I also met other people in the same situation as me, we could talk and compare experiences – always one of the main benefits of meetings.

As a head of science and as an advisory teacher, I used ASE policy documents and advice to support my case, for example when arguing for an increase in time for science.

Eventually, the inevitable happened and I got roped in to join the local Section Committee. I made the transition from being one of the people attending an event, to being one of those organising the event. I had also really started thinking about science education as a whole and the changes – this was at the start of the National Curriculum. I look back and I think of all the light bulbs that we could have lit with all that energy!

I moved from Section Committee to Region Committee and, finally, on to Council. Along the way, I have had the pleasure of coming into contact with super people who manage to find times in their busy lives to work for ASE at a local and national levels, sharing ideas and good practice, moving science education forward.

Now, we are in the future, the 21st Century is now. When I was at school I remember seeing a slide of how the Y2000 would look – like *The Jetsons* cartoon – all running on nuclear power, flying cars travelling through the sky, tower blocks everywhere. Sometimes the outcomes are a bit different from what we predict, although change is certain.

September sees the launch of the new ASE website (www.ase.org.uk)

which, I hope, will provide an even better service to members and help to develop more

effective communications. I hope that we will continue to be able to exploit the opportunities that the Web provides and develop e-mail groups, so that if you cannot attend meetings you can still communicate electronically and make your views known. You will find e-mail addresses for your Council Representative, Region Secretary, Field Officer and Service Group Chairs in the Directory on page 34 of this *EiS*. My e-mail address is also given below. I know that over the years that I have been teaching it has become more difficult to attend Section meetings because of so many other commitments. Electronic communications give us a marvellous opportunity to work more closely together as an organisation, sharing advice and opinions, enabling participation and exchange of ideas. I hope that we will be able to develop this, and enable wider and faster response when the DfES and other agencies consult us.

So, here's to a good year ahead.

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