

Minutes of the BCS Fortran Specialist Group AGM
Held at BCS London Office, First Floor, The Davidson Building,
5 Southampton Street, London.

The 2017 Annual General Meeting of the British Computer Society Fortran Specialist Group was held at 11.00 am on Thursday 28th September 2017.

Present:

David Barrett	AWE
Andrew Calvis	
Ian Chivers	Rhymney Consulting
Peter Crouch	Fortran Specialist Group
Sam Ellis	Defence Equipment & Support, MoD
Salvatore Filippone	Cranfield University
Thomas Lake	Interglossa Ltd
Nick Macey	AWE
David Muxworthy	
Clive Page	University of Leicester
John Pelan	Sainsbury Wellcome Centre (UCL)
John Reid	JKR Associates
Harvey Richardson	Cray UK Ltd
Anton Shterenlikht	The University of Bristol
Nathan Sircombe	Arm
Jane Sleightholme	Fortranplus

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming everyone.

(i) Apologies for absence:

Apologies for absence were received from Cliff Cheesman (AWE) and John Young (International Seismological Centre).

(ii) Minutes of previous AGM:

The minutes were accepted as a correct record and were approved unanimously (Proposed by John Pelan, Seconded by Ian Chivers).

(iii) Matters Arising:

There were no matters arising that were not on the current agenda.

(iv) Chair's Report:

The Chair, Peter Crouch, started his fifteenth and final report by stating that he would definitely not be standing for re-election at this year's AGM.

As Chair of the Group he had attended the Role Based Member Groups Convention in November 2016. He was unable to attend the March 2017 Convention so David Muxworthy and Sam Ellis attended on behalf of the Group.

The BCS has continued to provide funding for the Group to represent the UK at the ISO WG5 meetings.

As Chair of the Group he attended a luncheon to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the BCS. At this event he met a member of the Open Source Specialist Group committee and a joint meeting on open source Fortran compilers was discussed. He also had discussions with members of the Advanced Programming Specialist Group about holding a joint meeting with them.

After being reminded that 2017, in addition to marking the 60th anniversary of the formation of the BCS, also marked both the 60th anniversary of the launch of the first Fortran compiler by IBM he had raised the matter of a meeting to celebrate this with the Committee. A meeting in the UK could not be arranged but Harvey Richardson contacted colleagues in the USA and a Birds of a Feather session, entitled “Fortran is 60 Years Old – Has It Changed for the Better?”, will be held at the Supercomputing 17 in Denver, Colorado in November.

He took the final opportunity to thank all members of the Committee especially John Reid and John Pelan for their assistance in the smooth running of the Group during the past 15 years.

He also thanked Judith Taylor and her Member Groups team, especially Mandy Bauer, at BCS HQ and the BCS staff in the London office for their willing support over the years.

John Reid offered thanks to Peter for leading the Group, longer than any other Chair, and said that he had been solicitous in care of the Group. John Pelan said that the Group would have diminished without Peter’s care. Jane Sleightholme offered thanks for Peter’s help arranging the WG5 meetings.

Peter responded by recalling how he had attended the 2002 AGM as Web Editor with the intention of not getting elected for anything. Chris Lazou was standing down as the Chairman and Peter was the only person present who had not chaired the Group. As lunchtime approached he volunteered so that everyone could go for lunch.

The report was approved unanimously (Proposed by David Muxworthy, Seconded by Clive Page).

(v) Treasurer’s Report and SG Development Fund Report:

The Treasurer, John Reid, presented his report. At the start of the year the Group had been allocated £550 for running costs. Applications for supplementary funding to cover attendance at the IST/5, SC22 and WG5 meetings were submitted and granted.

The total budget for the year and the spending were presented. The Institute of Physics Computational Physics Group had paid half of the cost of the afternoon meeting after the 2016 AGM and the cost of the WG5 meeting in Garching had been lower than expected as Nick Maclaren had been unable to attend.

The Group's bid for 2017/18 to cover running costs and special projects had been prepared and submitted. The running and IST/5 costs had been allocated but a supplementary funding request for WG5 would have to be submitted.

This report was approved unanimously (Proposed by Ian Chivers, Seconded by Clive Page).

David Muxworthy, in his role as BSI Fortran Convenor, presented a report on the use of the SG support of Fortran Standards.

The draft standard went forward for balloting in March 2017 and had been approved 10 votes to none with 10 abstentions. The resulting editorial and technical comments, including 25 from the UK, were addressed at the WG5 meeting and the revised document was issued for a second ballot. Although this version was approved by 11 votes to none with 9 abstentions it generated another 77 editorial and technical comments, of which 15 were from the UK. The comments would be addressed at the upcoming meeting of the US Fortran committee with the standard expected to be published in August 2018.

Fortran users were being asked about features they considered to be missing from Fortran. The features for development were expected to be selected in 2018 and the technical content for these would be developed over the following two years, with a view to publishing a new standard in 2022 or 2023.

He concluded that the UK continues to play a major role in the development of the Fortran language. At the most recent WG5 meeting 5 of the 18 participants were from the UK with two of these partially supported by BCS. The Group was extremely grateful for this continuing BCS contribution.

This report was approved unanimously (Proposed by Ian Chivers, Seconded by Clive Page).

(vi) Membership Secretary's Report:

The Membership Secretary, Ian Chivers, presented a detailed membership report, which provided breakdowns of the membership by country, county, town, and membership grade. He also provided a list of job titles and employers, the number of members with Engineering Council registrations, and breakdowns of the Group's members by grade and sex. This year there had been 35 members removed from the membership list with 27 of these leaving BCS altogether. There had been only 14 new members of which three were new members of BCS.

He had also produced some diagrams showing the locations of the members of the Group in Britain. These showed that the largest concentration of members was around London, with other concentrations around cities across England, and a few members near Glasgow and Edinburgh in Scotland.

Finally, Ian noted that the potential changes in data protection may lead to some difficulty in obtaining this level of information in future years.

Peter Crouch commented on the lack of young members of the Group and said that this would be covered later.

The report was approved unanimously (Proposed by Clive Page, Seconded by Jane Sleightholme).

(vii) Web Editor's Report:

The Web Editor, Peter Crouch, presented a short report. He had been the Group's Web Editor for 20 years and he felt that it was time for him to step down and let someone else take on the role.

There had been comparatively little activity in the year, with the main activity being updates arising from the 2016 and 2017 AGMs. Some of the information on the site is a little out of date and could do to be replaced.

John Pelan thanked Peter for years of hard work in developing and populating the web site.

The report was approved unanimously (Proposed by Ian Chivers, Seconded by David Muxworthy).

(viii) Election of Officers

The nominations for the SG officers had been received by the Secretary according to the Constitution.

David Muxworthy took over as Chair for election of the Chair. John Reid had been nominated (Proposed by John Pelan, Seconded by David Muxworthy). Although he thought that the role should be carried out by someone younger he was willing to hold the role for a couple of years until the Vice-Chair John Pelan had time to take the role. John Reid was unanimously elected and took over as Chair for the rest of the meeting.

John Pelan had been nominated as Vice Chair (Proposed by Peter Crouch, seconded by Ian Chivers) and was unanimously elected.

Sam Ellis had been nominated as Secretary (Proposed by Jane Sleightholme, seconded by John Pelan) and was unanimously elected.

Peter Crouch had been proposed as Treasurer by John Reid, seconded by Ian Chivers, as he had so much knowledge of the way that the BCS finances worked. Peter was unanimously elected.

Anton Shterenlikht had been nominated as Standards Officer (Proposed by John Reid, seconded by Clive Page) and was unanimously elected.

Ian Chivers had been nominated as Membership Secretary (Proposed by Peter Crouch, seconded by Jane Sleightholme) and was unanimously elected.

David Muxworthy had been nominated as Archivist (Proposed by Jane Sleightholme, seconded by Ian Chivers) and was unanimously elected.

Harvey Richardson had been nominated as Web Editor (Proposed by Jane Sleightholme, Seconded by Ian Chivers) and was unanimously elected.

Cliff Cheesman, Nick Macey, Clive Page and Jane Sleightholme had been nominated as committee members (Proposed by Sam Ellis, seconded by John Reid) and were all unanimously elected.

The committee for the year 2017/2018 was therefore:

Chair	John Reid
Vice-Chair	John Pelan
Secretary	Sam Ellis
Treasurer	Peter Crouch
Standards Officer	Anton Shterenlikht
Membership Secretary	Ian Chivers
Archivist	David Muxworthy
Web Editor	Harvey Richardson
Committee Members	Cliff Cheesman Nick Macey Clive Page Jane Sleightholme

(ix) Future activities of the Group

Discussions took place about future activities and membership.

It was noted that John Pelan was stepping down as Chair of the Institute of Physics Computational Physics Group and would be replaced by Anton Shterenlikht. Everyone thought that the liaison between the two Groups was beneficial to both and should continue.

A discussion on following up Peter Crouch's discussion with the Open Source Specialist Group took place. It was suggested that it would be useful to know about the Open Source compiler GFortran, part of the GNU Compiler Collection. This could be raised after the presentation by Salvatore Fillipone in the afternoon meeting. Nathan Sircombe suggested that we may be able to have an evening meeting with the Open Source Specialist Group. Nobody in attendance knew much about this Group - Peter Crouch and Salvatore Fillipone would try to arrange a joint meeting. This could be a meeting 1830-1930 with a discussion and buffet afterwards or could be in the afternoon of the AGM in 2018.

Peter Crouch mentioned the BCS Future Computing Systems Group, which had suggested a joint meeting some years ago. Although this group could still be found on the BCS website there had been no activities since 2015 and therefore did not seem to offer any opportunities.

Broadening the remit of the Group was raised again. John Pelan suggested changing the name of the group to include "scientific computing". Although this could be useful it was felt that the name of the Group ought to still mention Fortran.

Anton Shterenlikht asked why people would join the Group as there did not seem to be any major benefit. Peter Crouch responded that joining the Group provided an easy way to know about group activities and other interesting Fortran-related developments. Harvey Richardson added that we did not know why current members

of the Group had joined and suggested that we ought to carry out the survey that had been discussed at previous AGMs.

John Reid drew the discussions to a close by suggesting that we should be communicating more and circulating good ideas.

(x) Any Other Business

There was no other business.

(xi) Date of next Annual General Meeting

The date of the next AGM was chosen as Thursday 27th September 2018.

The Chair closed the meeting. He thanked everyone for coming.

After a buffet lunch there was a joint meeting with Institute of Physics Computational Physics Group. In addition to those at the AGM a further 9 people attended. The topics and speakers were:

CoArrays in GNU Fortran by Salvatore Filippone from Cranfield University.

Verification of Fortran codes by Wadud Miah, Computational Scientist at the Numerical Algorithms Group.

Compiler conformance to the Fortran 2003, 2008 standards and TS29113 by Ian Chivers, Rhymney Consulting and Jane Sleightholme, Fortranplus.

The new features of Fortran 2015 by John Reid, past Convenor ISO WG5.

Choosing the technical content for Fortran 2020 by Anton Shterenlikht, from the Mech Eng Dept at the University of Bristol.

Exception handling by John Reid, past Convenor ISO WG5.

The Chair closed the meeting. He thanked everyone for coming, in particular the speakers. He hoped that the meeting had been useful and said that all the reports and slides from the presentations would be posted on the website, along with the minutes.