

## TAYSIDE & FIFE BRANCH FREE PUBLIC LECTURE SERIES 2008 – 2009

The Tayside & Fife Branch of the British Association are most grateful to the  
University of Dundee and The University of Abertay Dundee for their contributions towards this lecture series.

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**Wednesday 22 October 2008**

### **THE POTATO: FOOD FOR THE PEOPLE?**

*by Dr Gavin Ramsay, SCRI ("Scottish Crop Research Institute"), Invergowrie, Dundee.*

What has been the role of the potato in the rise and fall of civilisations and societies? 2008 is 'The International Year of the Potato' and this talk will take the audience through 8000 years of potato growing, clarifying the story with the latest genetic data, and setting this journey in the context of the future needs of mankind.

**Tuesday 18 November 2008**

### **BIOFUEL – HYPE OR HOPE?**

*by Dr Martin Tangney, Director of the Biofuel Research Centre, Napier University, Edinburgh.*

*This lecture will be held in the Kydd Building, University of Abertay Dundee*

There is a global race to internationalise biofuels that are CO<sub>2</sub> neutral and do not contribute to global warming. With different biofuels under development, and some considerable debate over the ethics of exploiting arable land for fuel crops, the issue of biofuel is clouded with uncertainty and the question is posed; is biofuel – hype or hope?

**Tuesday 20 January 2009**

### **ARE YOU DYING FOR A SUNTAN?**

*by Professor Harry Moseley, The Photobiology Unit, Department of Dermatology, Ninewells Hospital and Medical School, Dundee.*

In ancient Egypt, Akhenaten was so impressed by Ra, the sun god, that he introduced a period of sun-worship. This sort of behaviour is still popular today as 40 million sun-worshippers flock to the Mediterranean beaches each summer. During this lecture, the healthy and unhealthy aspects of exposure to sunlight will be explored.

**Wednesday 11 February 2009**

### **WHY DO WE NEED A GRID?**

*by Dr. Malcolm Kennedy CBE, FEng, FRSE, Non-executive Director of the New and Renewable Energy Centre, Blyth.*

Electricity is seldom generated where it is consumed, and generating sources must be linked to provide security of supply, at minimum cost, hence the development of grids worldwide. The "mystery" of how grids work and why we need them will be described by Dr Kennedy, together with his thoughts of what the future may hold.

**Tuesday 24 February 2009**

### **HOW BACTERIA MAKE A COAT TO BAFFLE OUR IMMUNE SYSTEM**

*by Professor Jim Naismith FRSE, School of Chemistry, University of St. Andrews.*

*A LECTURE ARRANGED JOINTLY WITH THE TAYSIDE LOCAL SECTION OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF CHEMISTRY*

Bacteria have been fighting each other and living off other organisms since life began. Like all living things, bacteria use proteins to carry out tasks and they have evolved some fascinating systems including the ability to coat themselves with sugar. This lecture will discuss the structures of these proteins and how scientists can target the proteins in order to design new antibiotics.

**Wednesday 11 March 2009**

### **STORMS FROM THE SUN**

*by Dr Lyndsay Fletcher, Department of Physics and Astronomy, University of Glasgow.*

Our nearest star, the Sun, is vital to our life on Earth. In addition to providing our planet with heat and light however, it also bombards us with damaging radiation and electromagnetic fields. Where do they come from, what do they do, and how can we protect against them?

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**THE ABOVE LECTURES ARE FREE AND OPEN TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

Lectures start at 7.00 pm and will be held in the D'ARCY THOMPSON (TOWER) LECTURE THEATRE, University of Dundee,  
EXCEPT THE NOVEMBER LECTURE, which will be held in the KYDD BUILDING, University of Abertay Dundee

Further information on Tayside and Fife Branch of the British Association Web Site: [www.the-ba.dundee.ac.uk](http://www.the-ba.dundee.ac.uk)