



## Chair's Annual Report 2018

# Edinburgh Branch

## Overview

Over the course of the past year we:

- Held 11 evening events at the School of Informatics including a joint event with BCS Women in Scotland.
- Held a BCS Voices event on the topic of personal data.
- Supported the BCS-in-Scotland whose purpose is to improve the BCS presence and visibility in Scotland.
- Sponsored second prize in The Young Software Engineer of the Year Awards which was won by Radostin Stoyanov from Aberdeen University for his work on the live migration of Linux containers.
- Sponsored the Michaelson Lecture “Are Friends Electric? Our Future Lives with Robots” presented by Prof Tony Prescott of Sheffield Robotics at the Edinburgh International Science Festival.
- Sponsored the Public Health Product Forge hackathon.
- Consumed almost 1000 canapés and countless cups of tea and coffee.

My thanks go to the committee who donate their time and energy to organise these events and the work that goes on in the background. Without them we would not have a BCS Edinburgh Branch or a programme of events.

If you have any suggestions for events, speakers or sponsorship please let us know. We are **your** branch.



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### Programme

#### What We Did Last Year

4 <sup>th</sup> October 2017	AGM followed by Is a Darknet business really a business? Angus Bancroft
1 <sup>st</sup> November 2017	BCS Voices: Building a New World Prof Bill Buchanan OBE
6 <sup>th</sup> December 2017	Embedded Systems Development: The Same, Only Different Mike Ritchie
7 <sup>th</sup> February 2018	The Wild West: Current attack trends and how to mitigate them David Stublely
7 <sup>th</sup> March 2018	The Internet of Things and Cyber Security Roger Whiteley
31 <sup>st</sup> March 2018	<i>Michaelson Lecture at the Edinburgh International Science Festival</i> Are Friends Electric? Our Future Lives with Robots Prof Tony Prescott
4 <sup>th</sup> April 2018	Satellites, Big Data and Intelligence - Bird.i: a case study Brendan Austin
2 <sup>nd</sup> May 2018	The Ethics of IT and AI: When we can do it, should we do it? Chris Rees, BCS President
6 <sup>th</sup> June 2018	<i>Joint meeting with BCSWomen Scotland</i> Growing Your Luck Dr Sara Shinton
1 <sup>st</sup> August 2018	Systems performance engineering Colin Butcher
5 <sup>th</sup> September 2018	Bots, burnout and blame: How to use IT to build better organisations Matthew Bellringer

Links to recordings of many of these are available from the branch website.

### Making IT Good for Society

#### How We are Making IT Good for Society as a Member Group

This year has seen growth in our activities outside of Wednesday evening talks.

Next year we plan to continue with these and reach out to other allied groups to see where synergies may lie.

### Community

#### Who We Serve and How We Engage with Our Community

We operate to serve members and non-members within the wider Edinburgh area. We make no distinction between membership grades and do our best to keep our events free to attend to ensure there is no financial barrier to attend.



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We will continue to raise our profile via our email lists for members and non-members, the Edinburgh International Science Festival, sponsoring Product Forge to record IT events around the city and any opportunities that present themselves.

### **Leadership**

#### **How we provide Leadership to Our Community**

As a branch we echo the interests of the community by providing events suggested by them.

### **Excellence**

#### **How We Excel**

The Edinburgh branch is the most active in Scotland and one of the most active nationally. Our committee has almost 150 years of combined BCS experience including serving on the Communities Board and as Trustees. Passionate about having a national view, the branch also sponsors BCS in Scotland, an umbrella group comprising of representatives from all of the Scottish branches and other influential figures.

### **Objectives for Next Year**

#### **Our Plan**

We hope to hold 11 evening events, sponsor the Product Forge event recording programme, present the Michaelson Lecture and the Edinburgh International Science Festival, and sponsor second place for the Young Software Engineer of the Year Awards.

### **Achievements**

#### **Our Successes**

Once more we have sponsored the Michaelson Lecture at the Edinburgh International Science Festival. This year our sell out event was "Are Friends Electric? Our Future Lives with Robots" presented by Prof Tony Prescott of Sheffield Robotics and included a hands on demonstration of one of their companion robots. The recording will shortly be available on our YouTube channel.

Also, after many years of wanting to, and with a few false starts, we are now streaming and recording our events subject to the presenter's permission. Previously we had tried to do this in house, and although we could access the equipment and technology, we were not able to dedicate the manpower needed. We have now solved this issue by engaging with Product Forge to record and stream events.



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### Challenges

#### The Barriers We Face

I see two barriers to overcome.

One is our ambition to host and sponsor a more diverse range of events to try to reach areas of our community which we may be neglecting. We are hampered by a lack of volunteers, but I am optimistic this may change shortly.

The other is the internal processes within BCS HQ. To date the Edinburgh branch has been able to operate with very little contact with HQ simply because we are successful, well managed, professional, ethical, and trusted. Following on from the implementation of GDPR, some things we were handling ourselves are now handled by HQ. There has also been a change in the way funding requests are handled by HQ which has not been reflected in the financial reports we receive. In all this has caused delays and some frustration. We are in discussions with them around how they can become more responsive.

### Inclusion and Diversity

#### How We Are Working for Everyone

BCS HQ runs an Unconscious Bias course for all committee members. Unfortunately, they run the courses in London or via facilitators. Sadly their facilitators list is no longer current, and our nearest facilitator is over 100 miles away. When I contacted them, they were reluctant to make the journey.

During Q1 2019 I plan to work with HQ to ensure we can get the training we need locally as a group, working with the other Scottish branches to satisfy their training needs.

### Committee

#### About the Committee

The committee has a very low turnover and has sat at 12 members for the past five years. During that time we have only lost three members, with Jonathan Shenton, our Treasurer, standing down at the AGM after seven years of service. Following an email to the membership before the AGM, I am confident we will boost our numbers, our diversity and our ability to engage and deliver more.

Each year HQ recognises a small number of individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to the Society. This year Edinburgh scooped four with Certificates of Appreciation awarded to:

- Allan Davidson
- Seb Rose
- Margus Lind
- Lee Parry