

P029 Whither aluminium

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Whatever happened to aluminium as a metal of interest in biological systems? Twenty years ago at the ICBIC Meeting in Boston there was a session devoted to aluminium and (truly) great scientists including the late JD Birchall FRS and the ever present RJP Williams FRS gave fascinating and informed talks which filled the meeting room to capacity. Twenty years on and there have been a succession of symposia and conferences covering all aspects of metal biology and yet aluminium is no longer included as a metal of interest. Even in relation to neurodegenerative disorders such as Alzheimer's disease there is no mention or reference to aluminium in either the aims of the meeting or the constitution of invited speakers. Plenty of copper and zinc and iron (almost mimicking the propaganda that links this triad of metals with senile plaques in AD) as usual, one might almost say *ad nauseam!* Why does this meeting propose to continue to support this vacuum? Is it because we know all that we need to know about the most abundant metal on the Earth's crust and how it impacts upon biological systems? Is our burgeoning exposure to a known neurotoxin, the cause of dilaysis encephalopathy, no longer of any consequence? Is the coincidence of elevated aluminium and congophilic amyloid angiopathy in a late resident of Camelford just that, a coincidence? Is anybody interested in finding out? If there is anybody out there who is interested then I would be more than happy to tell you about these things and more as well as providing a little balance to the copper, zinc and iron brigade already invited to speak.