

## Retirement of Dr Ailsa Hocking from the Editorial Board of *Microbiology Australia*

Ailsa Hocking was farewelled from the Editorial Board (EB) of *Microbiology Australia* after 16 years of service. Ailsa joined the EB of ASM's official journal at the time when it was renamed *Microbiology Australia*: the year was 1995 and the EB was chaired by Dick Groot-Obbink. When Dick retired as chair in 1999, Ailsa chaired the EB until 2009, passing the role to Chris Burke.

Ailsa has made many contributions to ASM and in 2009 she received the ASM Distinguished Service medal for her various



contributions. She served in the NSW Branch through the mid-1970s and the 1980s as NSW Branch secretary and editing the NSW Branch newsletter. She was on the organising committee (as Secretary) for the 1978 and 1984 conferences in Sydney. In those years ASM members organised all parts of the conference: accommodation, registration and even the bottling of conference wine. She also chaired the Culture Collection SIG.

## Call for nominations Vice-President, Corporate Affairs

Nominations are invited for the position of Vice-President, Corporate Affairs. The role of the Vice President, Corporate Affairs is to provide breadth and continuity of the administration and operational management of the Society. More specifically, ASM VP of Corporate Affairs will work closely with ASM accountants and bookkeepers to oversee the business practice of the Society. She/He will assist the President, with support from the rest of the Executive and relevant professional staff to facilitate the management of the annual conference and the head office.

Candidates for election to the above position can be Honorary Life Members, or Financial Fellows, Members or Senior Associate members of ASM and be proposed and seconded by Honorary Life Members, Financial Fellows, Members or Senior Associate Members of the Society. Nominations must bear the written consent of the candidate. The elected candidate will work closely with current VP of Corporate Affairs to become familiar with various aspects of the business operation of ASM, and will assume the position of VP corporate affair in 2012.

Nominations must be received by the ASM National Office by Friday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2011.

Please use the Nomination for the Position of Vice President, Corporate Affairs form, which is attached.

The form will also be available to download at [www.theasm.com.au](http://www.theasm.com.au)

### Nomination for the position of Vice President, Corporate Affairs of The Australian Society for Microbiology Inc

We the undersigned wish to nominate \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

For the position of Vice President, Corporate Affairs of The Australian Society for Microbiology Inc.

Proposer (FASM / MASM / SASM / Honorary Life Member)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Seconder (FASM / MASM / SASM / Honorary Life Member)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

I accept this nomination for the position of Vice President, Corporate Affairs of The Australian Society for Microbiology Inc.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address your envelope as follows:

National Office Manager, ASM Inc, Unit 23, 20 Commercial Road,  
MELBOURNE VIC 3004

Alternatively you may fax your nomination form to the National Office on (03) 9867 8722 or send as an email attachment to [admin@theasm.com.au](mailto:admin@theasm.com.au)

# Millis-Colwell Award 2011

## Sophie Octavia

I could not contain my excitement when I was told that I had been selected for the 2011 Millis-Colwell Award. This award provided funding to attend the 111th general meeting for the American Society for Microbiology (ASM meeting) in New Orleans, May of this year. Prior to the meeting, I was invited to a pre-meeting lunch and workshop organised by the Burroughs Wellcome Fund (BWF). This workshop was very helpful and I was introduced to other students and postdoctoral fellows who are mostly working on infectious diseases in well-known institutes in the US. I got to meet some interesting people and became friends with some of them.

I presented my abstract, titled "Molecular Evolution and Single Nucleotide Polymorphism Typing of *Bordetella pertussis*". This work was part of my postdoctoral research in A/Prof Ruiting Lan's laboratory at the University of New South Wales. The ASM meeting is the largest I have ever attended. It was quite daunting, but it was definitely an invaluable experience. However, no matter how big the meeting was, I was bound to meet at least one person from the BWF workshop, which was very strange!

I was very delighted to know that our field of research in the area of evolutionary microbiology has a high interest in the ASM. There were so many relevant sessions that definitely opened my eyes. There were many interesting sessions, both oral and poster presentations, which made me secretly wish I could clone myself so I could attend all of them. Leading researchers, whose papers I had cited over and over again in my PhD thesis, were there standing before my eyes, giving keynote lectures as well



I was presented with a certificate of Millis-Colwell award by Prof Keith Klugman, Chair of the International Board of the ASM (Photo courtesy of Jessica Mclean).

as presenting their posters. Unfortunately, they were so popular and were always stuck in the crowds, so I only got the chance to speak to their postdoctoral fellows, who were really kind and insightful.

I was also invited to the ASM International Reception where I was presented with the award. I met Jessica Mclean from the ASM International Affairs Department, who was very helpful. After the ASM meeting, I went to Chapel Hill, North Carolina to visit A/Prof Peggy Cotter's laboratory at the University of North Carolina for two weeks. My research interest is to understand the evolution of *Bordetella pertussis* in the presence of vaccine-induced selection pressure and A/Prof Cotter's laboratory was the first to develop a novel allelic exchange system in *Bordetella* spp. The Millis-Colwell award has given me an opportunity to learn a step-by-step process of this system as well as *in vivo* and *in vitro* models to study molecular pathogenesis of *Bordetella* spp.

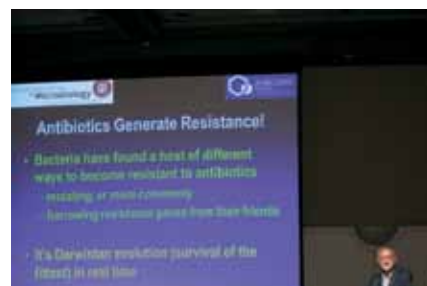
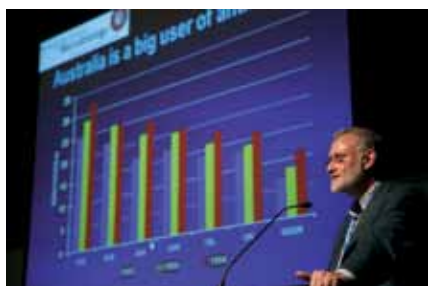
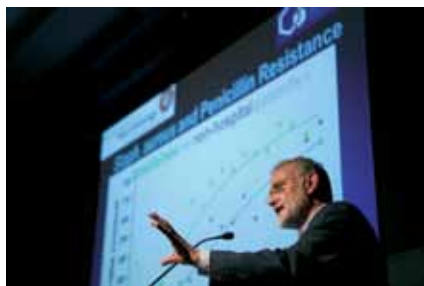
On my first day at the laboratory, I brought one of our Australian icons, Vegemite. The taste of Vegemite definitely traumatised many, although A/Prof Cotter herself quite enjoyed it. Throughout my time in the laboratory, I was mainly looked after by their laboratory manager, Michael Henderson. He was very patient in explaining everything they do in the laboratory. He made sure I completely understood the concept so I could transfer the skills and knowledge to the students back in A/Prof Lan's laboratory. Unfortunately, cloning does not always give a happy ending story and I was not able to see the final outcome of the allelic exchange. Regardless, I have learnt how to troubleshoot and be ready to expect failures when it comes to doing it myself.

There were not always many things to be shown every day so I got to 'shadow' other students and postdoctoral fellows in A/Prof Cotter's laboratory. They were lovely people and very helpful. They did not mind me watching their every move and tried their best to make me feel comfortable. During my stay, I also learned how to do *in vitro* macrophage invasion assays for *Bordetella* spp. as well as intranasal challenges in mice. I am very glad I have learned from one of the best. They remain helpful even after I returned to Sydney. They encouraged me to contact them if we encounter any problems and are eagerly waiting for our success story in cloning *B. pertussis*.

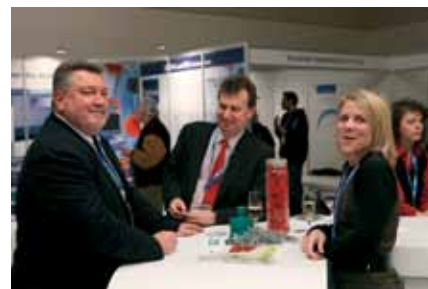
I am truly grateful to the Australian Society for Microbiology for giving me this lifetime experience. Not only has it broadened my knowledge and outlook in research, but it has also helped in developing an important international collaboration. I would also like to thank Janetta Stones and Prof Liz Harry, who were always helpful and ready to answer all of my enquiries.

# **ASM 2011**

## **Annual Scientific Meeting and Exhibition**







## Conference Report

**The 2011 Annual Scientific Meeting of the Australian Society for Microbiology was held at the Hotel Grand Chancellor in Hobart, Tasmania, from the 4<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> of July. Delegates were treated to unseasonal (?) cold and blustery weather for most of the week, with the treat of snow on nearby Mt Wellington. However, staying inside for lunch didn't seem so bad with the excellent hot food served in the exhibition hall and this also provided plenty of opportunity for delegates to view the latest technology and products displayed by the exhibitors.**

The meeting kicked off with a full day of workshops on Monday, covering a wide range of topics including a regular favourite on antimicrobial resistance and a locally topical one on the Tasmanian Devil Facial Tumour Disease. That evening the meeting was officially opened by ASM President John Turnidge and followed by the Bazeley Oration given by Michael Houghton, Li Ka Shing Professor at the Institute of Virology, University of Alberta. Professor Houghton gave a very interesting account of his discovery of Hepatitis C virus and subsequent research into vaccines against the virus.

The scientific program proper ran from Tuesday to Friday, and the Scientific Program Committee ensured a wide range of topics were covered to provide something for all the delegates. Attendance and interest were high for most of the symposia and concurrent sessions, with something for everyone's interests, and some excellent proffered papers. The poster sessions were well attended and stimulated vigorous discussions among the audience.

While everyone that attended will have their own "wow moments", I'd like to share mine. Professor Arturo Casadevall of the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, United States, put fungi front and centre by showing them growing in the soil around the Chernobyl nuclear site and using radiation as an energy source

and then hypothesising that fungi may have played a role in the extinction of dinosaurs! In keeping with the importance of the problems besetting the Tasmanian Devil, Professor Stephen O'Brien gave a very stimulating talk on the effects of genetic isolation on the survival of mammalian species.

The "Rubbo" was a great success with delegates transported to the nearby iconic Wrest Point Casino for pre-dinner drinks and snacks before the oration by Professor Bo Barker Jorgenson from the Max Planck Institute for Marine Microbiology, Germany. His description of the discovery and characterisation of bacteria within deep ocean sediments was delivered in a delightfully laconic manner entirely fitting with the notion that some of these organisms have a doubling time of over 300 years. It was then time to take it easy with a sit down dinner followed by some lively dancing.

In keeping with a number of recent ASM conferences we took our science out into the community. In this instance it was a Public Lecture on antibiotic resistance, delivered by Professor John Turnidge and attended by over 150 people. John provided an entertaining and informative talk on the use and misuse of antibiotics and the current problems we face from antimicrobial resistance; this was followed by some stimulating discussion based on questions from the audience.

The meeting concluded on Friday when the ASM flag was passed to David MacMillan, chair of the Brisbane organising committee for the 2012 meeting, who showed a few photographs of the venue - the Brisbane Convention Centre, including one where it was underwater during the recent floods. We hope it dries out in time.

A notable innovation for this conference and one that we hope will be continued, was that PDF files of some of the posters and oral presentations will be made available to conference delegates after the conference via the conference website <http://www.asm2011.org/>. Photos of attendees at various social functions and scientific sessions at the conference are also available.

The small but dedicated local organising committee would like to thank all those that contributed to our great meeting, including the ICMS team, the sponsors and exhibitors, the speakers and most of all the delegates.

Stephen Tristram and Margaret Cooley, Co-Chairs of the Local Organising Committee

Chris Burke, Convenor of the Scientific Program.





# ASM Awards

## Frank Fenner Award 2011

### Professor Mark Schembri

*School of Chemistry & Molecular Bioscience, University of Queensland, St Lucia Campus, Brisbane, QLD*



Mark Schembri completed his PhD at Monash University in 1996 on *Acinetobacter* and its role in biological phosphate removal under the supervision of Prof John Davies and Prof Ron Bayly. He then took up a three-year postdoctoral position at the Technical University of Denmark with Prof Per Klemm, where he

started working on adhesins of uropathogenic *E. coli*. At the end of this period he returned briefly to Australia and worked with SA Water, but then returned to Denmark where he continued his initial postdoctoral studies. During this period he was awarded a prestigious Skou Fellowship by the Danish Natural Science Foundation. Mark returned to Australia in 2004 to take up a senior lectureship position at the University of Queensland. He was promoted to Reader in 2007 and Professor in 2010 and was also awarded an ARC Future Fellowship in 2010. His major research area is in the field of bacterial pathogenesis, with a major focus on uropathogenic *Escherichia coli* (UPEC), where he studies the role of bacterial surface proteins (for example, fimbriae and autotransporter proteins) in adherence, aggregation, biofilm formation and colonisation of the urinary tract. Adhesion is an essential prerequisite for colonisation of the urinary tract and his research has yielded seminal papers that define the role of fimbriae and autotransporter proteins in this process. He also studies the molecular mechanisms that lead to biofilm formation by UPEC. Biofilms are microbial communities characterised by cells that are irreversibly attached to a substratum or to each other and he was the first to profile the transcriptome of *E. coli* during biofilm growth. His long-term goal is to understand the cellular and molecular processes by which UPEC and other bacterial pathogens cause acute, recurrent and chronic infections. His research has led to the publication of 97 papers in leading microbiology journals as well as journals with a broader

readership in biology. Highlights include papers in *EMBO Journal*, *PNAS*, *Molecular Microbiology*, *Cellular Microbiology*, *Journal of Biological Chemistry*, *PLoS Pathogens* and *Nature Reviews Microbiology*. He served as an ex officio member of the ASM Queensland branch committee from 2005 to 2008 and is the Chair, Division of Microbial Genetics, Physiology and Pathogenesis for the 2012 ASM annual meeting.

## BD ASM Student Award winners 2011

### Sandra P Morales

*Special Phage Services Pty, Brookvale  
University of Technology, Sydney, NSW*



Development of bacteriophage cocktails for the management of nosocomial and community-acquired MRSA.

Sandra is a microbiologist from the University of Los Andes with a Master of

Molecular Biotechnology degree from The University of Sydney. Sandra has over 10 years' experience in clinical microbiology and her main areas of interest are bacterial infection control and the development of novel antimicrobials. In 2005, Sandra joined Special Phage Services Pty Ltd, Australia's only bacteriophage (phage) therapy company where she, as the senior research scientist, manages a variety of human and veterinarian phage projects. Sandra is also completing a PhD thesis at the University of Technology on the relevance of bacteriophage therapy in the era of antibiotic resistant bacteria, under the supervision of Dr Anthony Smithyman, Dr John Ellis and Dr Lewis Gibson.

### Dk Seti Maimonah Pg Othman

*University of Queensland, St Lucia, QLD*

Is anaerobic respiration central to colonisation of the human host by *Haemophilus influenzae*?

Dk Seti Maimonah Pg Othman is currently pursuing a PhD in Microbiology at University of Queensland (UQ) under the



guidance of Dr Ulrike Kappler and Prof Alastair McEwan. She obtained her Bachelor of Science and Honours in Microbiology from UQ. She began to investigate the role of metalloenzymes in pathogens since her honours year. Her current research focuses on the study of the molybdenum enzymes in *H. influenzae* pathogenesis. Her project included the study of metabolic pathways used by *H. influenzae* under different oxygen levels and how these respiratory enzymes play a role in aiding the pathogen to survive these different environments. She is a recipient of a Brunei Government Scholarship throughout her study at UQ. Apart from her interests in pathogens, she has a passion for baking and loves to read books during her spare time.

### **Michele M Squire**

*Microbiology and Immunology, The University of Western Australia, Perth, WA.*



A novel molecular type of *Clostridium difficile* in neonatal pigs in Australia

Michele Squire commenced her PhD at the University of Western Australia in February 2010, researching *C. difficile* infection in Australian neonatal pigs, for which she holds an

Australian Biosecurity Cooperative Research Centre postgraduate scholarship. Her principal supervisor is Professor Thomas V Riley, who is widely held as Australia's leading expert in the diagnosis, epidemiology and pathogenesis of *C. difficile* infection. Michele was previously a clinical nurse consultant in gastroenterology and has had a long-standing interest in microbiology and infectious disease. She returned to university in 2001 to study microbiology, and completed her degree with honours at The University of Western Australia. She also holds a business degree from the University of Southern Queensland.

### **Sylvia A Baltzer**

*School of Biological Sciences, Flinders University, Adelaide, SA.*



Topology confirmation and functional characterisation of the small multidrug transporter QacC

Sylvia Baltzer is currently undertaking her PhD at Flinders University, focusing on the small multidrug transport system in *Staphylococcus aureus*. In particular, she is working on the *S. aureus* QacC protein, which is a member of the small multidrug resistance family and represents a prototype for Gram-positive bacteria. In her honours year she worked on another membrane transporter which was purported to belong to the major facilitator superfamily. Her interests lie in membrane protein topology and in protein modelling.

### **Anjana Chakravorty**

*Monash University, Melbourne, VIC*

Host immune response during *Clostridium perfringens* mediated gas gangrene.



Anjana completed her BSc in Microbiology and Immunology at Monash University. She then completed her honours in microbiology looking at modulation of host signalling in response to HIV infection. She is

currently finishing her PhD in microbiology, investigating the host immune response to the histotoxic clostridia.

### **Judith Fernandez-Piquer**

*University of Tasmania, Hobart, TAS*



Influence of storage temperature on bacterial communities in live Pacific oysters (*Crassostrea gigas*).

Judith Fernandez-Piquer is a final year PhD student with a

scholarship from the Seafood CRC at the University of Tasmania, Hobart. Her research aimed to protect the safety and quality of edible oysters through the use of predictive microbiology tools in the cold supply chain. Her project included defining storage

temperature effects on *Vibrio parahaemolyticus*, study of the changes in bacterial communities and development of predictive microbiology tools to help in supply chain management. Prior to her PhD, Judith undertook a one-year internship within the Advanced Food Microbiology department at Unilever R&D. She holds an MSc in Food Safety from Wageningen University in the Netherlands, a BSc in Food Technology from the University of Barcelona and a BSc in Chemical Engineering from the Polytechnic University of Barcelona. She was born in Spain but has been able to combine her passion for learning new cultures and travelling with her educational and professional career.

## ASM Teacher's Travel Award

### Priscilla Johanesen

Monash University, VIC

Priscilla Johanesen has been teaching microbiology in a full-time capacity as a lecturer at Monash University for five years. She is involved in teaching a wide range



of microbiological topics in the areas of science, biomedical science and medicine. Teaching undergraduate students is a very rewarding and challenging career and she hopes to engage and excite students on how amazing the world of microbiology is. Priscilla says:

*The annual scientific meeting covers a wide variety of topics and is well suited for educators hoping to get the most up-to-date information on all aspects of Microbiology. Additionally, it allows educators, from different undergraduate institutions, a chance to get together and discuss new and innovative teaching methods. The teaching with technology symposium was particularly valuable this year. The availability of such an award that recognises the efforts of educators from tertiary institutions and offers support to attend the annual scientific meeting is a credit to the ASM. Thank you for this award in 2011. I recommend all teachers to apply for such an award in the future.*

## Rubbo Orator 2011

### Prof Bo Barker Jørgensen

Max Planck Institute for Marine Microbiology, Germany;  
Centre of Geomicrobiology, University of Aarhus, Denmark



Prof Bo Barker Jørgensen was born on 22 September 1946 in Copenhagen and studied biology at the Universities of Copenhagen and Aarhus. Prof Jørgensen completed an MSc in Biology from Aarhus University (AU) in

1973 and was hired as lecturer in the same year and as senior lecturer two years later. He obtained a PhD degree from AU in 1977 and a DSc degree in 1979. In 1987 Prof Jørgensen was granted a five-year research professorship of the Danish Natural Science Research Council. In 1992 he became the founding director of a Newman Planck Institute for Marine Microbiology in Bremen. In 1993, he was also hired as full professor in Geology at the University of Bremen and as adjunct professor in Biology at Aarhus. In Bremen he established the Department of Biogeochemistry and became the first managing director of the institute. In October 2007 Prof Jørgensen returned to Denmark to found a new Centre for Geomicrobiology at Aarhus, with joint funding from the Danish National Research Foundation and the Max Planck Society. In 2011 he will retire from the Max Planck Society and from Bremen University. Prof Jørgensen will continue in Aarhus as professor of Geomicrobiology and head of the Centre for Geomicrobiology. Prof Jørgensen's research interests include: marine biogeochemistry and microbial ecology; deep sub-seafloor biosphere; arctic sediment microbiology; sulphide oxidation and sulphur bacteria; upwelling and oxygen minimum zones; methane fluxes and anaerobic methane oxidation in the seabed.



## Q&A for Stephen Kidd, FASM



### ***Describe your career in microbiology in fewer than 100 words.***

I completed my PhD in molecular microbiology in 1998, at the University of Queensland (UQ). I then worked as a postdoc in the UK, at the University of Birmingham. My research during this time involved the investigations of different transcription factors that responded to heavy metal stresses. I also worked on a Ministry of Defence contract while in the UK. I returned to UQ to work as a postdoc on different stress responses in pathogenic bacteria. In 2008 I took a position as lecturer at the University of Adelaide (School of Molecular and Biomedical Science) and continue to work on pathogenic bacteria.

### ***How long is it since you completed your studies and what is your role where you are now?***

I was awarded my PhD in 1998. So, in some respects that is when I “completed my studies”. My role now is research and teaching. Quite obviously this involves a lot of time trying to attract funding to undertake our exciting research interests and to develop a research group. I teach microbiology to first, second and third year students (science, biotechnology and biomedical students).

### ***What do you see as the biggest challenges for microbiology today?***

In the context of both teaching and research, the field of microbiology faces some new and exciting challenges. As with a lot of science, the challenges in research and the way we approach them can be applied to how we teach, stimulate and engage students. The application of new technologies to

answer bigger and bigger questions, an ability to generate and cope with larger data sets and increasing volumes of information and the importance of answering concepts, ideas or questions with a transdisciplinary approach – all the time maintaining the significance of ‘basic’ or ‘traditional’ microbiology.

### ***Why did you decide to apply for an FASM?***

I was aware of the process and requirements needed to apply for an FASM and increasingly I saw myself with an opportunity to *easily* put together an application.

### ***How did you find the whole process from initial enquiry to the final decision?***

Overall, despite being some work, the process was relatively easy.

### ***How do you see the FASM helping your career progression?***

I think it has shown a degree of relevance to the national community of microbiologists. I do think it helps, and has helped me show that my research is significantly appreciated by ASM. This is particularly beneficial in the context of highlighting your attributes in a broad school/faculty.

### ***Did you have an exemption from Part 1 or Parts 1 and 2?***

I was exempt.

### ***What was the format of your Part 3 dissertation?***

I had been an author on a couple of major review articles and these, in part, formed the basis for my Part 3 dissertation, together with several papers. I did rewrite, update and add sections.

### ***How long did it take you to prepare your Part 3 dissertation and what aspects made this easy or difficult?***

As described above, it was not a difficult process. Over the course of a couple of weeks I was able to put together, format and rewrite the entire document.

### ***Has your award of an FASM been recognised by your employer in some way?***

It has – as evidence of my engagement with the national community of microbiologists and the recognition of this community of the quality of my research.

### ***Do you have any suggestions for ASM that might help other candidates?***

I believe if members become aware of the process, as it is at the moment, they will realise that this is something that is not a time-consuming task. Also the promotion of Fellows (FASMs) as highly regarded researchers in microbiology in Australia would lend credence to the quality of this ‘award’ and, in particular, mid-career researchers would realise the benefits to this recognition.

### ***Would you recommend FASM to other microbiologists?***

Absolutely. If you become aware of what is required, it may become obvious that with not a lot more work this is something that can be easily done.

# Parasitology Masterclass 2011 – Cairns, Queensland

The ASM/ACTM Parasitology & Tropical Medicine Masterclass 2011, this year held in Cairns, Queensland, was once again a tremendous success. This year, the masterclass was combined with the 6th National Workshop on Strongyloidiasis, providing a mix of general parasitology on the first day, followed by a day focusing on the importance of Strongyloidiasis to the health of Australians and those overseas.

The meeting benefited greatly from the input of international profile parasitologists such as Professor Balbir Singh from the University of Malaya, Associate Professor John Freaton from the Parasitology Reference Unit of the National Institute for Communicable Diseases in South Africa and Professor David Blair from James Cook University. Professor Singh provided a particularly well received session on *Plasmodium knowlesi* – the fifth human malaria, found to be infecting many people in the Borneo region of Malaysia, and now reported from many other South East Asian nations. Associate Professor Freaton described a recent upsurge in cases of Gnathostomiasis in Southern Africa, and provided a thorough background on the clinical presentation and diagnosis of this disease – all the more pertinent to Australian parasitologists given the recent report of Gnathostomiasis acquired in the Kimberley region of Western Australia. Professor Blair also provided a particularly informative session in trematode infections in Asia and the Pacific. Both talks eloquently combined the most up-to-date information on the area, but importantly maintained relevance to those working at the clinical and diagnostic coalface of parasitology.

Dr Harsha Sheorey (St Vincent's Hospital, Melbourne) described the current state of anti-parasitic treatments, whilst Dr Rogan Lee (Westmead Hospital) discussed the current state of play in parasite diagnostics. Dr Tom Schulze and Dr Therese Kearns, respectively, discussed parasitic infections in refugees and the control of scabies outbreaks. Sujatha Fernando (Pathology West and Central West Pathology Service, NSW) provided a very comprehensive and popular review of the histological manifestations of skin infections with a variety of parasites.

The second day of the meeting, incorporating the National Strongyloides Working Group meeting provided a broad range of speakers from diagnostic, nursing, medical and community groups together to discuss this problematical parasitic disease. An international focus was added by Dr Yasmin Sultana's (Westmead Hospital) report on Strongyloidiasis in Bangladesh.



Dr Andrew Butcher teaches delegates about the finer points of *Strongyloides* diagnosis in the practical area.



Dr Harsha Sheorey, Dr Norbert Ryan, Prof Balbir Singh and Mr Garrick Van Arkadie enjoy the masterclass dinner at the Pullman Reef Hotel.

Case histories from Dr Wendy Page (Miwatj Health Centre) and Dr Harsha Sheorey set the clinical scene, and these were followed by presentations from many speakers on the clinical impact, distribution and diagnosis of *Strongyloides stercoralis* infection, particularly in Australia. A meeting on Saturday morning instituted a number of programs to further assist in control of this disease and progress towards a notifiable status for *S. stercoralis* infections in Australia.

An important aspect of the meeting, which ran throughout the duration, was the practical parasitic training areas set up and manned by a number of eminent parasitologists, particularly Dr Norbert Ryan (VIDRL) and Dr Andrew Butcher (South Australia Health). Norbert and Andrew tirelessly offered their substantial experience in parasitic diagnostics to any registrants who wished to spend time at their tables. Specimens of common and exotic parasites were available for investigation and microscopes provided by Olympus were set up with video cameras for tutorial sessions. The practical training area was always filled with participants and the use of experts available for informal training and tutorials proved highly popular; it will be repeated at future Parasitology Masterclasses. Particular thanks to Andrew and Norbert for donating their time, expertise and energy to this highly successful part of the conference.

Many people worked together to produce a highly successful conference that was enjoyed by all. Those on the organising committee (Dr Andrew Butcher, Dr Harsha Sheorey, Associate Professor David Porter, Dr Norbert Ryan, Garrick Van Arkadie, Professor Rick Speare, Tony Jennings, Dr Wendy Page and Dr Jenny Shield) deserve particular thanks and recognition for their tireless input into the masterclass. Julie Allen and her team from the Full Pretzel provided excellent PCO support and a thoroughly enjoyable social program. Also, a special thank you also to our sponsors (the Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia, MSD Australia, Oxoid Australia and r-Biopharm), without the support of whom this event could not have occurred. The meeting was also made possible with a small meetings grant from the ASM itself. For those who were with us in Cairns, and for those missed out this year, we look forward to seeing you in Adelaide for Parasitology Masterclass 2013.

**Dr Richard Bradbury**

**Chairperson, ASM Parasitology & Tropical Medicine SIG**