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## Vertical Transmission



**Julian Rood**

President ASM  
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This edition of *Microbiology Australia* contains the announcement of the programme for the 2005 Annual Scientific meeting in Canberra. It looks like an outstanding conference, with many terrific national and international speakers.

Highlights will include the Rubbo Oration, *Systems biology and biological complexity*, to be given by Dr Leroy Hood, President of the Institute for Systems Biology in Seattle. Dr Hood is a pioneer in the field of molecular biotechnology and genomics, with wide ranging interests spanning from fundamental research to scientific instrumentation. He was the winner of the 2002 Kyoto Prize in Advanced Technologies and was responsible for the development of the automated DNA sequencer.

The CSL-sponsored Bazeley Oration entitled *New vaccines for enteric infections* will be given by Dr John Robbins from the National Institute of Child Health and Development in Bethesda. Dr Robbins won the 1996 Lasker Award for the development of the conjugate Hib vaccine.

International invited speakers giving Plenary Lectures include Phillippe Sansonetti (Paris), James Staley (Seattle),

Michael Danson (Bath), Margaret Hammerschlag (New York), Mark Chee (San Diego) and Chris Whitfield (Guelph). The Chair of the Canberra Organising Committee, George McLean, and the 2005 NSAC Divisional Chairs are to be congratulated for putting together such a great programme.

I am delighted to be able to announce that, in keeping with the policy that I discussed in my closing talk in Sydney, we have been able to reduce the ASM members' early registration fee from \$750 to \$590 and the student members' early fee from \$250 to \$200, despite inflation. These will be the lowest ASM registration fees, in actual dollar terms, for at least 5 years. This new registration policy is part of a broader process enacted by National Council with the objective of giving the members greater value for money for their ASM membership. Support this initiative by making sure that you come to the Canberra Meeting in record numbers.

The ASM Standing Committees (Clinical Microbiology, Biosafety and NSAC) have been very active over the past few months. The Clinical Microbiology Committee in particular has been reinvigorated under the leadership of Stephen Graves. This issue contains detailed descriptions of the activities of each of these committees; read them carefully as they will provide you with an excellent overview of the key functions of ASM.

We have now completed the first complete cycle of NSAC membership and the 2004 Chairs, Jon Iredell, Paul Young and Peter Cox, have rotated off the committee; Hatch Stokes continues as Vice-President and NSAC Chair. We are indebted to all four Chairs for their outstanding effort in organising the symposia for the 2004 Sydney meeting. They have been trailblazers and have set an exceptionally high standard for those that follow. I am pleased to announce that the newly appointed 2007 Chairs are David Ellis (Division 1), Tuck Weng Kok (Division 2), Vadakattu Gupta (Division 3)

and Renato Morona (Division 4). Please give them every assistance in organising the symposia for the 2007 meeting.

While on the subject of annual scientific meetings, please note that the 2006 (Gold Coast) and 2007 (Adelaide) meetings will be held in July not in September. Holding the meeting at this time gives us a competitive advantage in terms of attracting the trade to the meeting and makes the booking of venues a simpler task. It is most likely that future meetings will also be held in July.

ASM has made several representative appointments in the past few months. Our delegates to the IUMS Congress in July will be Julian Rood (Bacteriology and Applied Microbiology), Paul Young (Virology) and Wieland Meyer (Mycology). The Australian Academy of Science will help to support the travel costs of these delegates to the San Francisco meetings. Elizabeth Frankish will represent the society at Standards Australia and Marie Gerrard on the AS2243.3 committee. John Andrew has been appointed to the National Pathology Accreditation Advisory Council.

Finally, I am pleased to report that the response to the revised eligibility guidelines for the Fenner Research Prize has been very good. We have an excellent field of candidates from which to select the winner of the 2004 Prize; the winner will be announced in the next issue of MA. Please note the call elsewhere in this issue for applications for the 2005 Fenner Prize.

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