



The Australian Society for Microbiology Inc.

Unit 23, 20 Commercial Road
Melbourne VIC 3004
Tel: (03) 9867 8699
Fax: (03) 9867 8722

Email: admin@theasm.com.au

Web: www.theasm.com.au

ABN 24 065 463 274

For *Microbiology Australia*
correspondence, see address below.

EDITORIAL TEAM

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from the ASM Melbourne office.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

Prof Ian Macreadie/Mrs Jo Macreadie
CSIRO Molecular and Health Technologies
343 Royal Parade, Parkville VIC 3052

Tel: (03) 9662 7299

Fax: (03) 9662 7266

Email: editor@theasm.com.au

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Advertising enquiries to

Simon Henriques, Cambridge Publishing

Tel: (08) 9382 3911

Fax: (08) 9382 3187

Email: Simonh@cambridgemedia.com.au

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Vertical Transmission



Keryn Christiansen

President ASM

It is with great pleasure that I welcome Liz Harry to the roles of Vice-President Scientific Affairs and Chair of the National Scientific Advisory Committee (NSAC). Liz will be well known to many of our members. She is an associate professor at the Institute for the Biotechnology of Infectious Diseases, at the University of Technology, Sydney, where she heads a team of twelve research and postdoctoral students. Liz has been very active within The Australian Society for Microbiology (ASM). She has been a committee member in the NSW branch for the last three years, was chair-elect of that branch in 2006, and chair in 2007. She has served on the national council and is also on the subcommittee for the visiting speakers program. Although already acquainted with Liz, I really got to know her when we both attended 'Science Meets Parliament' earlier this year. I was impressed by her energy, her enthusiasm for the discipline and her commitment to her students and to ASM. I feel confident that she will make a major contribution to the society and look forward to working with her on the executive committee. Liz takes over from Hatch Stokes who is now the President-Elect.

Hatch has been Vice-President of Scientific Affairs for the last three-and-a-half years, providing great leadership as Chair of the NSAC and as a member of the executive committee. Currently Hatch has undertaken to conduct negotiations with the UK Society for General Microbiology to establish a scientific exchange scholarship similar to that recently established with the American Society for Microbiology. Both these scholarships will provide our members with the valuable opportunity to present at either the US or UK annual scientific meetings and to visit relevant research institutions. I will keep you informed on the progress of these negotiations,

In 2009 our society will be fifty years old. To celebrate this achievement, Way back When – Consulting Historians have been contracted to research and write a history of the ASM, that reflects the society's past, present and future. A jubilee management committee chaired by David Ellis, with members Hatch Stokes, Peter Coloe, Lyn Gilbert, Ailsa Hocking and Dick Groot Obink, has been established to oversee and direct this project. Oral history interviews have already started and the ASM 2009 Annual Scientific Meeting in Perth will be a focal point for the project, but it is intended that this material will be available to all members in a format that is yet to be decided by the committee. The realisation of this project will be a worthy celebration of the development and growth of the ASM.

I remind members to plan now to attend the 2008 Annual Scientific Meeting in Melbourne (6–10 July). Hopefully many of you will be generating the data that will become the basis for an abstract submission. The local organising committee (LOC), with Sue Cornish as chair and Danilla Grando as chair of the scientific programme subcommittee, has been working hard with NSAC to provide an interesting and stimulating program. I thank all members of the LOC and NSAC for their tireless work for the ASM. The many hours taken to put together the annual meeting are contributed on a voluntary basis and the society is indebted and greatly enriched by this commitment.