



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

34th Annual Meeting of the ANZSCDB at Combio, September 30 2014

National Convention Centre

Canberra ACT

Dear Friends and Colleagues

This is my first official report as President of ANZSCDB and I am pleased to present the activities and initiatives that the society has been involved in over the past year.

Outgoing and incoming executive

Thanks to the last executive Pete Currie, Ian Smyth (secretary) and Kieran Harvey (treasurer) for their huge effort in running the society and ensuring it was left in very good shape when the new executive took over at the AGM at Combio2013. The change in executive also saw Edna Hardeman step down as immediate Past-President and join the overarching ANZSCDB Committee where she continues to provide valuable input. Christina Mitchell has now resigned from this committee and we thank Chris for her valuable input.

Over the past year I have been lucky to work with a highly motivated and hardworking team on the new executive. This includes the Secretary Jo Bowles (IMB, UQ), Treasurer Rohan Teasdale (IMB, UQ), President-Elect Sally Dunwoodie (Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute, Sydney) and Past-President Pete Currie.

New membership renewal strategy

One of the legacies of the last executive was a move to a new secretariat ASN Events. The executive decided that the move to the new secretariat was a good opportunity to alter our membership renewal strategy so that all memberships are now up for renewal on 1st January (members joining in the last quarter of any year receive membership for the following year). This brings us in line with many other societies, makes it much easier to keep track of membership renewal reminders, and allows more accurate budget planning. We thank you all for your patience while this change was put in place earlier this year.

State/NZ Chapter activities and representatives

Our state and NZ representatives are playing an increasingly important role in the society, with a major responsibility being the organisation of the state meetings. Annual Cell and Developmental Biology Days are held in Victoria, Queensland, SA and NSW, while WA and NZ attach their efforts to established meetings. All state meetings are highly successful and the reps do an amazing job of organising speakers and other sponsorship. These meetings have become a major focus for ANZSCDB and I would like to thank our reps and other committee members for the huge effort they put into the organisation of these events.

2014 State Meetings

NSW – 31 March, Lowy Cancer Research Centre, speakers Denise Montell (USA), Freddy Ratdke (Switzerland) and Megan Wilson (NZ)

Qld – 26 September, Translational Research Institute Brisbane, Speakers Marino Zerial (Germany) Fiona watt (UK) Patrick Humbert (Melbourne)

Victoria – 5 November, Alfred Hospital. Speakers Emma Whitelaw (Melbourne) and Jane Visvader (Melbourne)

SA – 18 November, venue and speakers to be confirmed

WA and **NZ** – while not possessing the critical mass to support an independent meeting at this stage, ANZSCDB this year sponsored a student prize at both the Combined Biological Sciences Meeting (WA) and the Reproduction and Development Satellite Meeting (NZ) run as part of the Queenstown Research Week.

Thanks especially to our retiring state reps for all their hard work: Kelly Smith (Qld), Matt Naylor (NSW), Donna Denton (SA), Megan Wilson (NZ) and Evan Ingleby (WA). In Victoria both state reps will continue for another year as both were elected last year following the early retirement of a previous rep.

New state reps will be elected at the upcoming AGM.

External Meeting Support

In addition to providing support for our state meetings we also sponsor a number of other external meetings. One of the major meetings sponsored this year was the **Hunter Cell Biology Meeting**. This is held in March each year and continues to be a major conference for many of our members in both cell and developmental biology. In 2014 the ANZSCDB sponsored lecture was delivered by **Joan Brugge** (Harvard Medical School, USA).

This year also sees the return of the **Australian Developmental Biology Workshop**. The 7th workshop will be held from 12-15 November 2014 at Tangalooma Resort on Moreton Island in Brisbane. Speakers include **Robb Krumlauf** (Stowers Institute for Medical Research, Kansas City, Missouri, USA), **Sally Dunwoodie** (Victor Chang Cardiac Research Centre, Sydney, Australia), **Mary Mullins** (Perelman School of Medicine, University of Pennsylvania, USA), **Phil Crosier** (University of Auckland, New Zealand), **Thomas Lecuit** (Development Biology Institute of Marseille Luminy, Marseille, France). This workshop is a fantastic opportunity for those newer members of the Australian Developmental Biology community to interact with colleagues in a highly interactive environment and we are very pleased to provide support for this meeting.

ANZSCDB has previously provided support for a number of other meetings on an ad hoc basis. Early in the year we committed to supporting two such meetings **EMBO Workshop on Wnt Signalling** – Stem Cells development and Disease, October 5-9 2014, Broome WA and **Ozophagy 2014**, February 7 2014, Melbourne. However, it soon became clear that the number of requests for such support was drastically increasing and it was becoming difficult to budget for these meetings over the year. It was also felt that some criteria needed to be established to determine which meetings should be supported and for what amount. The executive therefore took the decision to cease funding of these meetings for the time being and raise the issue at the Council Meeting and AGM so we can formulate a policy on if and

how members would like to see these meetings supported and what process should be followed.

COMBIO

Combio is the annual meeting of the society and continues to be the major focus of our scientific efforts

Combio2013

Combio2013 was held in Perth. Although registration numbers were lower than normal the science was fantastic. Thanks to the organisers led by long term ANZSCDB member George Yeoh (WAIMR), and other ANZSCDB representatives Miranda Grounds, Aleksandra Filipovska, Evan Ingley and Archa Fox.

To re-cap the award and prize-winners were:

President's Medal: Professor Alpha Yap (IMB, The University of Queensland)

Young Investigator Award: Associate Professor Natasha Harvey (Centre for Cancer Biology, South Australia)

ANZSCDB Cell Biology Poster Prize: Simon Brayford, The University of New South Wales. The regulation of cell motility by tropomyosin

ANZSCDB Keith Dixon Prize for a Developmental Biology Poster: Eamon Coughlan, Monash University. Novel expression of microRNA (MIR)-196A1 and MIR-196A2 in the mammalian central nervous system.

David Walsh prize for the best student talk: Hannah Vanyai, Walter and Eliza Hall Institute, Melbourne. The histone acetyl transferase, MOZ, is required for multiple genetic pathways during palate development

Toshiya Yamada prize for the best postdoctoral talk: Dr Kerry Miller, Murdoch Children's Research Institute, Melbourne. Two novel mouse models of human craniofacial dysmorphology

Leica PhD Student International Travel Award. Cesar Canales Martinez (School of Medical Sciences UNSW) to attend the American Society for Human Genetics in Boston in October 2013.

Combio2014

Combio2014 will be held in Canberra from September 28 to October 2. The organising committee is based in Sydney but the current refurbishment of the Sydney Convention Centre necessitated a move to Canberra. The conference chair is Edna Hardeman, and the cell and developmental biology streams have been organised by ANZSCDB representatives Kat Gaus and Richard Harvey respectively and we thank them for their efforts in organising a great meeting. Plenary speakers include Nobel Laureate John Gurdon, Jennifer Lippincott-Schwartz, Marino Zerial, Aki Kusumi, Kateri-Moore and Tom Rando.

This year the society has also included a session entitled "Making cell and developmental biology attractive in the current funding climate". In this Q&A type session we plan to discuss some strategies we as a group can employ to increase the prospects of funding for our disciplines in the face of an increasing push towards directly translational research.

ANZSCDB provided bursaries to cover registration for 9 students to attend Combio 2014 ANZSCDB aims to promote student attendance at Combio through these bursaries.

Combio2015

Organisation for Combio 2015 is well underway and will be held in Melbourne from 27 September to 1 October. The conference chair is Marie Bogoyevitch (University of Melbourne), programme co-chair (ANZSCDB) is David Jans (Monash University) and ANZSCDB representatives on the local organising committee are Edwina McGlenn (ARMI, Monash) and Paul Gleeson (University of Melbourne). We look forward to an exciting meeting in 2015.

Combio 2016 will be held in Brisbane.

Society Awards

The President's Medal (sponsored by Sigma-Aldrich) is the highest honour bestowed by ANZSCDB and recognises outstanding contributions to cell and developmental biology in Australia and NZ. I am delighted to announce that the 2014 ANZSCDB President's Medallist is **Professor David James**, the Leonard P. Ullman Chair in Metabolic Systems Biology at the Charles Perkins Centre and Professor in the School of Molecular Bioscience and Sydney Medical School at The University of Sydney. David's earlier pioneering work on the discovery of the glucose transporter GLUT4, set the stage for a stellar career which has resulted in seminal contributions to our understanding of the mechanisms underlying insulin action. David will be known to many of you for his service to the promotion of cell biology in Australia over many years. He was highly involved in ANZSCDB during the early days of its inception, and was instrumental in the merging of the three relevant societies to form Combio. David has also been heavily involved in the organisation of the Hunter Cellular Biology Meeting and is the current President of the Hunter Cellular Biology Meeting Inc. Committee.

The ANZSCDB Young Investigator Award (YIA – sponsored by Carl Zeiss) recognises the up-and-coming leaders in cell and developmental biology in Australia and NZ, and acknowledges their efforts in that difficult period of establishing their own independent research groups. I am extremely pleased to announce that this year's winner is **Associate Professor Ian Smyth**. Ian did his PhD with Brandon Wainwright at UQ before taking up post-doc positions initially in Edinburgh with Ian Jackson and subsequently in London with Fiona Watt. He returned to Australia in 2006, this time to Melbourne to establish his own research group in the departments of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology and Anatomy and Developmental Biology at Monash University. Ian has made major contributions to our understanding of skin and kidney development, primarily using the mouse as a model. He is a mouse geneticist of some renown and an excellent developmental biologist. In addition to his scientific achievements Ian has shown notable leadership skills, not least of which were his contributions as the last secretary of ANZSCDB, a position he held for three years rather than the normal two. During that time he oversaw some major re-structuring of ANZSCDB, including the massive move to a new secretariat.

Leica International Student Travel Award (sponsored by Leica Microsystems)

Last year our Past-President Peter Currie, in conjunction with Leica, instituted a new student award to assist with international travel. We had so many excellent applicants for this award this year (14 in total) that we made the decision to offer two awards. This year's recipients are **Claire Homan** from the University of Adelaide and **Jordan Follett** from the University of Queensland. Claire will attend the International Society for Stem Cell Research 13th Annual Meeting in Stockholm and Jordan the Gordon Research Conference on Neurobiology of Brain Disorders.

Corporate Supporters

We are extremely grateful to all of our corporate supporters. Sigma-Aldrich have generously supported the President's Medal over many years and have agreed to continue with this arrangement. Likewise Carl Zeiss continue to provide much appreciated support for the Young Investigator Award, and Leica Microsystems support our International Student Travel Award. Our other corporate supporters are Promega and BioTools. Our corporate supporters are entitled to free advertising in the society newsletters. A number of other companies and institutes support the state meetings and we are also grateful to them.

Membership

Membership continues to be an issue for our society but with a lot of work by our state reps and executive we have been able to lift the membership to 337 as of September 21 this year. Our Treasurer Rohan Teasdale has been working to attract more corporate members. We continue to explore ways we can attract members and make the society attractive for colleagues to join.

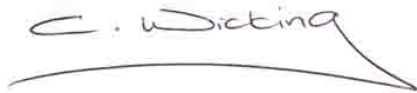
Newsletter and Social Networking

We currently have two newsletters per year and these continue to be a major vehicle for disseminating information about the society. Our Newsletter Editor Fiona Wylie not only coordinates and assembles each newsletter but also writes much of the content. She is an extremely valuable member of our team and we thank her for the huge effort she puts in for each newsletter.

Also a huge vote of thanks to our outgoing NZ rep Megan Wilson who established our facebook and twitter accounts. I personally find the ANZSCDB facebook page a great source of information and I encourage all members to follow us on facebook and twitter. Fortunately Megan has agreed continue to maintain these valuable resources.

I thank you for your support over the past year and look forward to a productive and successful time for the society over the coming year.

Regards



Carol Wicking, PhD
President ANZSCDB
September 2014