



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

**36th Annual Meeting of the ANZSCDB at ComBio, October 6 2016
Brisbane Convention Centre
Brisbane, Queensland**

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.

The Executive

The Society *Executive* from September 2013 to September 2015 were: Carol Wicking (President), Josephine Bowles (Secretary), Rohan Teasdale (Treasurer), Peter Currie (Past President) and Sally Dunwoodie (President Elect). Thank you all for the time that you devoted to the ANZSCDB. A special thanks goes to Carol Wicking, Josephine Bowles and Rohan Teasdale as they execute the majority of the work that is required to run the ANZSCDB.

The Society *Executive* from September 2015 to September 2017 are: Sally Dunwoodie (President), Annemiek Beverdam (Secretary), Michael Piper (Treasurer), Carol Wicking (Past President) and Sharad Kumar (President Elect). My thanks go to all for their hard work and enthusiasm.

The Committee

The Society *Committee* holds our corporate memory and brings experience and wisdom to the ANZSCDB. This year we say farewell and thank you to Phil Crosier who, from New Zealand, has made a huge contribution to the ANZSCDB for many years. The remaining Committee members are: Edna Hardeman (NSW), Miranda Grounds (WA), Peter Koopman (QLD), Joan Heath (VIC) and Peter Currie (VIC). The *Committee* can best serve the ANZSCDB if there is balance in gender, geographical representation based on the number of ANZSCDB members in different locations, and research strengths (cell biology and/or developmental biology). Two new members will join the Committee who fit these criteria.

State and New Zealand Chapter activities and representatives

In recent years our State and NZ representatives have been playing an increasingly important role in the society. Their major responsibility is to organise a local meeting. These annual Cell and Developmental Biology Days are held in Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia, while in Western Australia and New Zealand they work with established meetings. These meetings are increasing in popularity and the State Representatives are incredibly successful at organising stimulating scientific programs and attracting funding additional to that which the ANZSCDB provides. These meetings are a major focus for

ANZSCDB and I would like to thank our State representatives and other members of the organising committee members for all their hard work and enthusiasm.

2016 State Cell and Developmental Biology Meetings

NSW: 11 April, Garvan Institute, speakers Robert Weigert (NIH, USA), Melisa Little (MCRI, VIC) and Jane Visvader (WEHI, VIC).

WA: 26 August, Combined Biological Sciences Meeting, invited speakers included Daniela Stock (Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute, NSW), Oliver Rackham (Perkins Institute for Medical Research, WA) and Evan Ingley (Perkins Institute for Medical Research, WA).

Qld: 30 September, Institute for Molecular Biosciences, speakers Andy Oates (Francis Crick Institute, UK), Lars Ittner (UNSW), Geraldine O'Neill (Kid's Research Institute, NSW), Caroline Ford (UNSW), Kelly Smith (IMB, QLD), Nicole Bryce (UNSW).

VIC: 21 October, Melbourne Brain Centre.

SA: 14 November.

The State Representatives for September 2015 to September 2016 are:

QLD: Guillermo Gomez, Annette Shewan (retiring)

NSW: Stuart Fraser, Kazu Kikuchi (retiring)

ACT: Koula Diamond

VIC: Sebastian Dworkin, Jan Kaslin (retiring)

WA: Ralene Endersby, Fiona Pixley (retiring)

SA: Sophie Wiszniak, Michael Lardelli (retiring)

NZ: Caroline Beck

Thanks go especially to our retiring State Representatives for all their hard work in strengthening the ANZSCDB through student and early career researcher engagement and interaction.

New State Representatives will be elected at the upcoming AGM.

External Meeting Support

The ANZSCDB provides financial support to two meetings that benefit our members.

The 16th Hunter Cell Biology & 2nd Hunter Systems Biology Meetings (incorporating the 9th Hunter Imaging Workshop) were held at the Crowne Plaza Hunter Valley Resort, Hunter Valley, NSW on April 11-15. The Convenors were: Patrick Humbert and Sharad Kumar, Hunter Cell Biology Meeting; Roger Daly, Hunter Systems Biology; Paul Timpson, Imaging Workshop. International speakers included: Rune Linding (University of Copenhagen), Claus Jorgensen (CRUK, Manchester University), Tom Misteli (National Cancer Institute, USA), Rong Li (Stowers Institute, USA), Magdalena Zernicka-Götz (NIH, USA), Roberto Weigert (NIH, USA). This annual meeting is expanding in scope and keeping abreast of the latest developments in research.

The 8th Australian Developmental Biology Workshop will be held at the Flinders Hotel, Flinders, Mornington Peninsula, 11-14 December 2016. The Convenors are: Ian Smyth, Edwina McGlenn, Quenten Schwarz, and Natasha Harvey. The presenters are: Claude Desplan (New York University), Brigid Hogan (Duke University), Cliff Tabin (Harvard University), Alan Davidson (University of Auckland), Mirana Ramialison (Monash University). This workshop, held biennially, provides the opportunity for early career stage

researchers to learn developmental biology from the leaders in the field in an intense and intimate environment.

ComBio

ComBio is the annual meeting of the ANZSCDB and continues to be the major focus of our scientific efforts.

ComBio2015

ComBio2015 was held at the Melbourne exhibition and Convention Centre from 27 September to 1 October 2015. The organising committee devoted a huge amount of their time and expertise to ensuring the success of the meeting. The Convenor, Marie Bogoyevitch (University of Melbourne), worked with David Jans (Monash University) Paul Gleeson (University of Melbourne), and Edwina McGlinn (Monash University).

ComBio2015 delivered 13 invited international plenary speakers, 7 plenaries by medalists of the participating societies, 239 symposium presentations, 36 colloquium presentations, a career development forum and 243 posters. In all, more than 800 registrants came together to enjoy the breadth of science that was on offer and the valuable networking opportunities.

ANZSCDB Student Cell Biology Poster Prize: Lauren Forbes Beadle (Monash University, VIC). The *Drosophila melanogaster* MACPF protein torso-like is required for the cellular immune response.

ANZSCDB Keith Dixon Prize for a Developmental Biology Poster: Bassem Akladios (UNSW Australia). YAP activates beta-catenin in murine epidermal stem/progenitor cell proliferation.

David Walsh prize for the best student talk: Heidi Neubauer (Centre for Cancer Biology, SA). Determining the oncogenic role of sphingosine kinase 2.

Toshiya Yamada prize for the best postdoctoral talk: Nicole Schonrock (Garvan Institute of Medical Research, NSW), Institute of Medical Research. Exploring the epitranscriptome: m2G and intellectual disability.

ANZSCDB offers student bursaries (ComBio registration) to student members whose supervisors are also ANZSCDB members. Bursaries to attend ComBio2016 were awarded to all those who applied and met the above selection criteria: Bassem Akladios (UNSW), Emma Watson (WEHI), Xiaochen Fan (CMRI), Rebecca Stewart (WEHI), Tianqi Xu (UniSA).

ComBio 2016 will be held at the Brisbane Convention Centre from 3-7 October. The Conference Chair is Joseph Rothnagel (University of Queensland) and the Program Chairs are Rebecca Ford (Griffith University) and Dominic Chi Hiung Ng (University of Queensland).

ComBio 2017 will be held at the Adelaide Convention Centre from 3-7 October. The Conference Chair is Michael Michael (Flinders University) and Rachel Burton (University of Adelaide) is the Deputy Conference Chair. Natasha Harvey (Centre for Cancer Biology, SA) is the Program Chair and Matthew Gilliam (University of Adelaide) is the Deputy Program Chair.

Society Awards

The President's Medal is the highest honour bestowed by ANZSCDB and recognises outstanding contributions to cell and developmental biology in Australia and New Zealand. The 2016 President's Medalist is Professor Sharad Kumar, the Director of the Centre for Cancer Biology and a Research Professor and Chair of Cancer Biology at the University of South Australia. His laboratory has made several seminal contributions to cellular and molecular biology. For example, he discovered a number of key genes/proteins, including the Nedd genes, such as Nedd1, a key centrosomal protein required for g-tubulin recruitment; Nedd2 (caspase-2), one of the first mammalian caspase; Nedd4, the first and the founding member of the WW-HECT type of ubiquitin-protein ligase family; Nedd5 (Sept2), the first characterised mammalian septin; and Nedd8, a ubiquitin-like protein involved in a protein modification pathway, now widely known as *neddylation*. His group also discovered a large part of the *Drosophila* cell death machinery, including four caspases and both Bcl-2-like proteins, and defined a caspase-independent, autophagy-dependent cell death process. Other discoveries from his team include Ndfips as regulators of the Nedd4 family of ubiquitin ligases, the functions of Nedd4 family of ubiquitin ligases and Ndfips in regulating ion channels and transporters, and an unexpected role of caspase-2 as a tumour suppressor. He continues to study caspase biology and functions, mechanisms of developmentally programmed cell deaths, and the physiological functions and regulation of the Nedd4 family members. He is a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Science, and the Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences. His contributions to cell biology and biomedical research have also been recognised through the ASBMB Amersham Biosciences Award, the Ranbaxy Research Award, the ASBMB Lemberg Medal and the FAOBMB Research Excellence Award.

The Emerging Leader Award recognises the up-and-coming leaders in cell and developmental biology in Australia and New Zealand. In 2016 this award goes to Associate Professor Ben Hogan, a Group Leader and NHMRC & National Heart Foundation Career Development Fellow at the Institute for Molecular Bioscience, The University of Queensland in Brisbane. Ben has led the Vascular Biology and Development Laboratory at the IMB since 2010 and is Co-Division Head of the Genomics of Development and Disease research division.

Ben investigates vertebrate vascular system development using high-throughput genetic approaches for gene discovery and innovative microscopic approaches to visualise developmental processes at the cellular and individual protein resolution, in real time. The aim is to understand how the blood and lymphatic vascular lineages form during embryonic development, and use both zebrafish and mouse model systems. Their research findings have led to the discovery of genes that cause inherited lymphoedema in humans and promote pathological lymphatic growth in cancer.

Corporate Supporters and Members

I am sorry to report that Sigma-Aldrich, Carl Zeiss and Leica Microsystems are no longer sponsoring the President's Medal, Emerging Leader and International Student Travel Awards, respectively. This is due to changes in funding models for these companies and because Sigma-Aldrich is being taken over by Merck.

A concerted effort was made to find new sponsors. Although this proved unsuccessful it did result in the signing up of three additional corporate members. The ANZSCDB Corporate Members are: Promega Australia, Australian BioResources, Pakair Cargo Specialists, Corning Incorporated and NewSpec Pty Ltd.

Membership

Increasing the number of ANZSCDB members remains a goal for the society. We have 334 members at 29/08/2016 distributed as follows: QLD 65, NSW 75, ACT 6, VIC 106, TAS 1, SA 39, WA 12, NZ 9, overseas 16, and corporate 5. Member numbers were 372 in 2015, 337 in 2014 and 283 in 2013.

Newsletter and Social Networking

We currently have two newsletters per year that are the major vehicle for disseminating information about the society. Our Newsletter Editor Fiona Wylie communicates with the various contributors, works with ANZSCDB members to produce one to two member profiles per edition, and assembles the newsletter. This is a big task and we thank Fiona and all those who contribute to the content and the process.

ANZSCDB has a presence on facebook and twitter thanks to Megan Wilson (NZ) who established these accounts and keeps everyone informed, in real time! The ANZSCDB facebook page is a great source of information and we are really grateful to Megan for keeping us all informed and up to date.

Thank you again to all those I have mentioned for their hard work in enabling the ANZSCDB to raise funds, hand out funds and awards, and for keeping members connected. Importantly I also wish to thank all society members for your enthusiasm to belong, to network, to collaborate and to support each other. Together we can grow Cell and Developmental Biology in Australia and New Zealand.

Regards



Sally Dunwoodie
President ANZSCDB
October 2016