



Friday 31 August 2007

Dear Network Participant,

Thanks to our Network Newsletter sponsors, **BioAustralis**, we will soon have a new-look Network Newsletter. In a couple of weeks there will also be a special conference edition of the Newsletter sent out featuring all of the news from the 2007 ASP & Network Conference, survey results and interviews with some speakers.

The August edition of the ARC/NHMRC Research Network for Parasitology Newsletter holds the following items for you:

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[1] Congratulations to Professor Alan Cowman who has recently been awarded an inaugural Australian Fellowship

Alan Cowman is a most deserving winner of an Australian Fellowship. These highly prestigious Fellowships were introduced by the NHMRC “to provide support for the most outstanding health and/or medical researchers [and] outstanding research teams...to undertake research that is of major importance in its field and of significant benefit to Australian health and medical research.” Each Fellowship is worth \$4 million over five years.

Alan will apply his funding to the continuing search for better treatments for malaria. World-wide, this parasitic disease infects an astonishing 600,000,000 people – about 10% of humanity – and kills up to 3,000,000 people every year. The World Health Organisation (WHO) has stated that overcoming malaria would be one of the greatest single contributions to alleviating poverty in the developing world. Professor Cowman and his team will intensify their research into malaria vaccine and drug development, with a particular three-fold focus: preventing the parasite from disguising itself from the immune system; inhibiting the ability of the parasite to invade red blood cells; and preventing infected red blood cells from sticking to blood vessel walls. (Report source: WEHI)

[2] Congratulations to the ASP Fellows of the Society awarded at the 2007 ASP & Network Conference

- **Russell Hobbs from Murdoch University and**
- **Prof Roger Prichard from McGill University**

In the upcoming Network Newsletters we will feature profiles of Russell and Roger.

[3] ASP Awards – deadline for nominations 30 September 2007

The John Frederick Adrian Sprent Prize

The John Frederick Adrian Sprent Prize is awarded for an outstanding thesis in Parasitology for which the PhD degree was awarded during the previous three years.

The Bancroft-Mackerras Medal for Excellence

The Bancroft-Mackerras Medal for Excellence is awarded to recognise outstanding contributions of one of its members to the Science of Parasitology. It is based particularly on work published over the last 5 years.

See www.parasite.org.au/Awards.html for more details

Electronic or hardcopy applications will be accepted

Send to ASP Executive Secretary

**Lois Small, Berrimah Veterinary Laboratories,
Department of Primary Industry, Fisheries and Mines**

GPO Box 3000, Darwin NT 0801
email lois.small@nt.gov.au

Events

Check out the latest parasitology events on the Network website
<http://www.parasite.org.au/arcnet/events/index.html>

[4] Parasites in Focus – photography exhibition at Questacon – the National Science and Technology Centre in Canberra

The Network organised “Parasites in Focus” Parasite Photography Exhibition is currently on display at Questacon – The National Science and Technology Centre until early November 2007. This exhibition is supported by the ASP, Questacon – The National Science and Technology Centre, and DEST. This exhibition shows a series of stunning images of parasites photographed by Australian researchers. We are looking for future hosts for this exhibition – if you would like to see this photographic display at a venue near you or if you would like to see your own parasite images become part of this exhibition please contact Lisa Jones by email Lisa.Jones@uts.edu.au or telephone 02-95144006.

[5] Hypothetical – Global Warming and Parasites held 11 July 2007 at New Parliament House, Canberra, ACT.

The Network organised and hosted the highly entertaining “Hypothetical – Global Warming and Parasites” public event which was held in the Great Hall at New Parliament House on Wed 11 July 2007. This lively debate was hosted by the **ABC's Robyn Williams** and featured an expert panel of scientists, legislators and politicians:

- **Senator Lyn Allison**, Leader of the Democrats and spokesperson for Education; Health and Ageing; Resources, Energy and Infrastructure; Treasury and Commonwealth-State Relations.
- **Dame Bridget Ogilvie**, Companion to the Order of Australia for services to science policy and parasitology. Former chief of the Wellcome Trust and researcher on parasite immunology.
- **Lieutenant Colonel Bob Cooper**, Director of the Army Malaria Institute.
- **Prof Bart Currie**, Head of the Tropical and Emerging Infectious Diseases Division at the Menzies School of Health Research in Darwin, Senior Infectious Diseases Physician at Royal Darwin Hospital and Professor in Medicine at the Northern Territory Clinical School, Flinders University.
- **Dr Peter Daszak**, Executive Director of the Consortium for Conservation Medicine in the U.S.A.
- **Dr Eva Bennet-Jenkins**, acting CEO of the Australian Pesticide & Veterinary Medicines Authority.

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Supported by the Australian Research Council, the National Health and Medical Research Council and the Australian Society for Parasitology.

Over 300 people enjoyed being part of this Hypothetical event and a transcript of the debate will be available shortly, downloadable from the events section of the Network website <http://www.parasite.org.au/arcnet/events/index.html>

[6] National Science Week 2007

Network Scientists based at IBID, UTS have been involved in more Outreach activities in 2007; Dr Kate Miller (IBID, UTS) and Lisa Jones (Network) have been running hands-on parasite workshops and interactive displays for students of all ages and the general public whilst Dr Sheila Donnelly (IBID, UTS) has been presenting her fascinating and gory “Revenge of the Body Snatchers” talk for high school students as part of Science in the City.

Kate and Lisa took their parasite workshops to Tocal, in the Hunter Valley in May this year, and along with other IBID, UTS scientists, to the Australian Museum as part of Science in the City for two weeks in August. Kate and Lisa have also run their very popular “Parasite DNA extraction workshop” for senior school students either visiting UTS as part of National Science Week activities or as part of a careers visit.

[7] Research and evidence for Global health policy lecture – Prof Judith Whitworth (ANU) at The University of Melbourne

6.00 - 7.00pm, Tuesday 4 September 2007, Sunderland Lecture Theatre Ground Floor, Medical Building, corner of Grattan Street & Royal Parade The University of Melbourne

This free, public event is general admission. Seats are not reserved.

At the 23rd Mathison Oration Professor Whitworth, Director of the John Curtin School of Medical Research at the Australian National University, will consider some of the key health research discoveries of the 20th century. She will examine the role of health in economic and social development and current initiatives in research for improving health policy internationally and she will look at examples of health policy informed by research and strategies to facilitate the use of research and evidence to inform policy.

Have you been involved in public events promoting parasitology or want to feature your parasitology event on the Network website? Contact Lisa Jones (email Lisa.Jones@uts.edu.au or telephone 02-95144006)

Network Researcher Exchange, Training and Travel Awards

[8] Network Travel Award Winners

Congratulations to the most recent Network Researcher Exchange, Training and Travel Award winners:

- **Stephane Hemmerter**, Institute for the Biotechnology of Infectious Diseases, University of Technology, Sydney to attend the Workshop on Molecular Evolution, Woods Hole, Massachusetts USA from 22 July to the 10 August 2007
- **Dr Nevi Parameswaran**, from Murdoch University for a Researcher Exchange August 27th to September 8th '07, Salford UK: 2 weeks with Geoff Hide, The Centre for Molecular Epidemiology and Ecology, University of Salford, and September 8th to 26th, Washington D.C, USA: 2 weeks with Michael Grigg, National Institute of Health (NIH) and 3 days with Mark Jenkins, Animal Parasitic Disease Laboratory, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
- **Phillipe Boeuf**, Research Fellow, Department of Medicine (RMH/WH) The University of Melbourne for a Researcher Exchange to Academic Unit of Child Health University of Manchester
- **Fiona McCallum**, PhD student, The Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research, for a Research Exchange to the Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI), Kilifi, to work in KEMRI malaria laboratory, 17 July - 30 September 2007
- **Leanne Robinson**, PhD Student, The Walter & Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research to attend the annual Epidemiology & Control of Infectious Diseases Training Course at St Mary's Hospital Campus of Imperial College in Paddington, London, from September 3-14, 2007
- **Jody Zawadzki**, Project Leader and Senior Research Scientist, Department of Primary Industries Victoria, for a Research Exchange to the Novartis Centre de Recherche Santé Animale CH-1566 St-Aubin to undertake a short Research & Development project under the supervision of Dr Ronald Kaminsky, Head of Parasitology and also to the University of Bern and the University of Zurich to meet with Professor Maser and Professor Seeberger to develop international networks and discuss collaborative projects for the future

[9] Network Travel Award *NEW* application dates for 2007/08/09

The Network Management and Advisory Committee recently approved an increase in funding for the Network Researcher Exchange, Training and Travel Awards and so we have re-set the following dates for submission of

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Supported by the Australian Research Council, the National Health and Medical Research Council and the Australian Society for Parasitology.

your Network Travel Award application. Following each of these dates the applications will be assessed by the Network Management Committee and applicants will be advised of the outcome where possible within four weeks.

2007/08/09 dates for submission of Network Travel Award applications:

- Friday 28 September 2007
- Friday 30 November 2007
- Friday 25 January 2008
- Friday 28 March 2008
- Friday 30 May 2008
- Friday 25 July 2008
- Friday 26 September 2008
- Friday 28 November 2008

Profile



Adele Lehane at Woods Hole Biology of Parasitism Course

[10] Adele Lehane is a PhD candidate in Prof. Kieran Kirk's lab in the School of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, at The Australian National University. Adele recently won a Network Travel Award to attend the Woods Hole Biology of Parasitism course in June 2007. Adele speaks to Lisa Jones about her experiences on the course and how it has helped her research.

Adele, tell me about your area of research?

"I'm doing my PhD on malaria, concentrating particularly on the parasite's digestive vacuole, which is the acidic organelle where the antimalarial drug chloroquine accumulates and poisons the parasite. Chloroquine-resistant parasites accumulate much less chloroquine in the digestive vacuole – but we don't know the reason why. So far my work has focused on how chloroquine-resistant parasites are able to stop the build-up of chloroquine in their digestive vacuoles. We've found out that there's a pathway through which chloroquine can exit from the digestive vacuole in chloroquine-resistant parasites. I'd like to go on to investigate other aspects of the physiology of this organelle."

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Supported by the Australian Research Council, the National Health and Medical Research Council and the Australian Society for Parasitology.

What interests you about working in this area?

“The development of resistance to chloroquine has had a devastating impact on malaria control. Any clues on how to circumvent it or prevent other drugs from suffering the same fate could prove valuable. I’m also interested in learning about the basic physiology of the digestive vacuole because, although it is very important in the malaria parasite physiology, very little is known about it. Its intracellular location in an intracellular parasite makes it a challenge to study.”

How do you see your research developing in the future?

“I hope that my research will contribute to a better understanding of the mechanism of chloroquine resistance. I’m also hopeful that studying other aspects of digestive vacuole physiology, particularly the presence and characteristics of transporters on the digestive vacuole membrane, may reveal new, urgently-needed drug targets.”

How has the Network travel award helped your research develop?

“The Network travel award made it possible for me to attend the Biology of Parasitism course in Woods Hole. This eight-week course combines the benefits of a conference and hands-on training in techniques, and has given me valuable direction for my research. It provided a great opportunity to meet leaders in the field of parasitology, as well as committed parasitology students from around the world. This resulted in many valuable discussions and I envisage that collaborations will arise from our time together. I’m also confident that many of the new techniques that I learned will be useful, both for my PhD and for other members of the lab.”

What advice do you have for other Network scientists who want to apply for a travel award?

“I’d encourage other Network scientists to apply. My experience in Woods Hole confirmed for me the value of the fresh perspectives and training opportunities that overseas experience can provide.”

What advice do you have for science students who are considering parasitology as a career?

“I’d certainly encourage science students to pursue parasitology if that’s where their interest lies. Parasitic diseases are a huge global problem and dedicated researchers with diverse experiences and skills are needed to tackle them. Parasitology offers a whole range of interesting research opportunities whether your interest is in molecular biology, cell physiology, chemistry, or a range of other disciplines.”

What do you see as the benefits of being part of the Network?

“Being part of the Network helps in keeping up to date with parasitology research in Australia, through the website, newsletters and meetings, as well as offering opportunities for funding support for interstate and overseas training. All of this fosters skills development, the exchange of ideas, and collaborative research.”

Tell me about the highlight of your science career so far?

“The Biology of Parasitism course is definitely one of the highlights.”

What would you like to do in the future?

“I hope to finish my PhD in 2009, and afterwards I’d like to stay in parasitology and work overseas for a while. Ultimately I’d like to return to Australia and set up my own lab. I’d like to keep working on parasites that cause human disease. Attending the Biology of Parasitism course gave me a broader perspective on active areas of parasitology research, which will certainly help when the time comes to make a decision on what research direction to take after my PhD.”

Positions vacant

***There are new jobs on the Network website in parasitology - check the Network website for full details of all current vacancies
<http://www.parasite.org.au/arcnet/jobs>***

If you would like to be alerted when a new job is advertised on the Network website please let me know by email (lisa.jones@uts.edu.au)

[11] Future Generation Fellowships at The University of Melbourne

Four Future Generation Fellowships are available at The University of Melbourne for exceptional candidates in the sciences, humanities, music, visual and performing arts and social sciences.

To submit your application, you must access the online advertisement at:

www.jobs.unimelb.edu.au

by using the position number (FGF2007) or title as the keyword in the Job Search screen.

Closing date: 31 Aug 2007

Postdoctoral Position and PhD project in Schistosome Research

Positions are currently available in the laboratory of Dr Bernd Kalinna, Senior Research Fellow at the Centre for Animal Biotechnology, Faculty of Veterinary Science, University of Melbourne, Australia.

For further information on our research see:

http://www.cab.unimelb.edu.au/cab_schisto.htm or contact

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[12] PhD Scholarship on *Aedes* Mosquitoes at University of New South Wales

A full-time postgraduate scholarship is available for a suitably-qualified candidate with a good Honours degree in science, with majors in Zoology or Biochemistry or a related field, or an equivalent qualification, to undertake research studies leading to a PhD in biological sciences investigating the systematics and biogeography of the *Aedes* mosquitoes using morphological and molecular data.

Further information can be obtained from Prof. Bill Ballard

(w.ballard@unsw.edu.au)

[13] Research Officer - Parasitology at PRIMARY INDUSTRIES, NSW Department of Science and Research

A Professional Officer Grade 1-4 to be located in Sydney Western Suburbs, Menangle is required to initiate, conduct, supervise, and implement research to limit the impact of endemic internal parasitic diseases of livestock, particularly cattle and sheep.

For further details see <http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/aboutus/about/employment> or contact Garry Levot, tel: (02) 4640 6376, email garry.levot@dpi.nsw.gov.au

Applications Marked 'Confidential' To Employee Services Officer (Recruitment), NSW Department of Primary Industries, Locked Bag 21, Orange NSW 2800 or email: employee.services@dpi.nsw.gov.au

Closing Date: 14/9/2007

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Supported by the Australian Research Council, the National Health and Medical Research Council and the Australian Society for Parasitology.

[14] Research Assistant at UTS and the Department of Microbiology at St. Vincent's Hospital Sydney

A collaborative research project between UTS and the Department of Microbiology at St. Vincent's Hospital Sydney has uncovered that the parasite *Dientamoeba fragilis* is emerging as a cause of gastrointestinal disease such as diarrhoea and dysentery in the Australian population. This research project will study the ability of this parasite to cause disease and develop new technologies for its diagnosis.

For more details see <http://www.parasite.org.au/arcnet/jobs/job022.html>

If you require further information on the position contact Professor John Ellis (UTS) on 02 9514 4161 or Dr Damien Stark (St Vincent's Hospital Sydney) on 02 8382 9194.

Closing Date: 14 September 2007

[15] Australian Chicken Meat Federation (ACMF) Inc - Program Development Coordinator for Chicken Meat Industry R&D

The ACMF is seeking a Program Development Co-ordinator for a two year contract (with possibility of extension) to further develop, expand and enhance the Chicken Meat Research & Development Program of RIRDC. The successful applicant will be working with a small, enthusiastic team out of the ACMF's North Sydney offices, and will be interacting with a broad range of industry stakeholders and providers of research services.

For further information visit the ACMF and RIRDC websites

- www.chicken.org.au and
- www.rirdc.gov.au

Contact Vivien Kite, Research Manager for the RIRDC Chicken Meat R&D Program, on tel 02 9929 4077 or email vivien.kite@chicken.org.au

[16] Wanted! PhD students, School of Biomedical Sciences at Monash University

Several PhD students are needed to participate in a large ARC funded project to develop novel vaccines, and be involved in several exciting research projects in the areas of infectious diseases and allergies. A basic understanding of immunology, biochemistry and molecular biology is desirable. There will be ample opportunities for career development and/or postgraduate studies.

Contact and further information:

Prof. Els Meeusen

Tel 03-9905 2513 or email els.meeusen@med.monash.edu.au

Website <http://www.med.monash.edu.au/physiology/abrl>

Scholarship applications close: 31 October 2007

[17] 2007 PhD Scholarship Opportunities at the University of Queensland and Australian Biosecurity CRC for Emerging Infectious Disease

Survey and Risk Assessment of Non-Encapsulated Forms of *Trichinella* in Mainland Australia

Trichinellosis is a globally distributed zoonotic disease caused by ingestion of raw or under-cooked meat. Mainland Australia has always considered itself *Trichinella*-free, however, there is limited published evidence to support this status.

This project will conduct a survey for *Trichinella* in indicator animals such as feral pigs, foxes, dingoes, wild dogs and quolls in 'high-risk' areas in northern Queensland and southern Victoria. Improved and alternative diagnostic tests for wildlife surveillance and meat inspection purposes will be developed and applied to known *Trichinella* endemic areas to establish diagnostic parameters for the tests. Risk assessment studies will also be performed to quantify the risk of introducing *Trichinella* into mainland Australia or if detected, the risks of this emerging zoonosis to public health and the export industry.

Visit Australian Biosecurity CRC for Emerging Infectious Disease website for application forms and instructions.

<http://www.abcrc.org.au>

Applications close 28 September 2007

Contact:

Dr Rebecca Traub, School of Veterinary Science, The University of Queensland, St Lucia Qld 4072, Ph: 07 3365 3325, E: r.traub@uq.edu.au

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Supported by the Australian Research Council, the National Health and Medical Research Council and the Australian Society for Parasitology.

[18] British Council Australia Chevening scholarships 2008/2009

The Chevening Scholarships program is funded by the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and administered by The British Council. The programme offers outstanding graduates and young professionals the opportunity to study at UK universities.

See http://www.britishcouncil.org/au-educationuk-scholarships-postgraduate-chevening_scholarships.htm for details.

Applications close on the 12th October 2007

Other**[19] Network staffing changes 2007**

We have bid farewell to Carly Johnson, who was helping with Public Relations for the Network. Carly has joined the Financial Department of the QLD State Government as a communications officer – we wish her well for the future. I will shortly be taking some maternity leave and the best way to contact me during this time is by email (Lisa.Jones@uts.edu.au). I will still be updating the Network website and producing the Newsletter during this time. We hope to have another person to help Nick with the Network during this period we will send an email to all Network participants to introduce them when they start.

If you have any parasitology news stories, job adverts, or up-coming events please contact me by email Lisa.Jones@uts.edu.au or telephone 02-95144006.

Please send me items for the next newsletter by 19 October 2007.

Best wishes,

Lisa
Communications Coordinator,
ARC/NHMRC Research Network for Parasitology





BioAustralis is a proud supporter of the ARC/NHMRC Research Network for Parasitology

BioAustralis specialises in producing high purity metabolites from microbes as laboratory research tools, including **nematocides, antiprotozoans, insecticides, antimicrobials, antivirals** and **antifungals**. Visit our website for a full product listing **www.bioaustralis.com.au**

BioAustralis also have an extensive microbial library through our parent company, Microbial Screening Technologies. Using innovative search tools that allow quick identification of microorganisms producing specific metabolites and our efficient fermentation technologies, we can produce a broad range of metabolites for the parasitology researcher.

Contact:

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Ph/fax 612 9757 4246

Email: info@bioaustralis.com