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Natalie and I would like to wish all Young Bugs a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. In this edition of YBB we have reports on the West Australian and Victorian BD award nights as well as a report from Rebecca Wake on the WA Quiz night. We also have reports on activities at the ASM 2002 conference in Melbourne from Suzanne Keeling regarding the Careers in Microbiology Workshop and from Cheryl Power about the plenary session for the BD award winners. Ben Shields from Victoria is our in the spotlight feature.

As outgoing National Convenor of the Student SIG, I would like to sincerely thank the ASM 2002 local organising committee for arranging and supporting student activities at the ASM conference. In particular for the plenary session for the BD award winners, the ASM branch winners' session, the Careers in Microbiology Workshop and for allowing undergraduate students to attend the last session of each day without registering. I met with several undergraduate students who thoroughly enjoyed attending these sessions and I hope will be joining the ASM. I would like to welcome Joanne Clarke as the new National Convenor of the Student SIG and offer my continued support to the Student SIG.

Natalie and I would like to thank Corrine,

Editor of *Microbiology Australia*, for her support in producing YBB and wish her all the very best in her new endeavours.

Wendy and Natalie

ASM 2002 Conference
BD Student Award Presentations

The fifth and final plenary session of the conference showcased winners of the BD student travel awards. Despite the occasional tremble in both body and voice, all seven speakers showed they were fully deserving of their wins and gave the audience 90 minutes of exciting science.

The presentation from Kahli Weir from CSIRO Entomology, Canberra and Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga NSW was entitled *Isolation and characterisation of enzymes capable of degrading the pesticide endosulfan.* Kahli discussed how the increasing use of pesticides has lead to increased levels of residues which can create significant problems such as contamination of food and drinking water as well as being toxic to other organisms in the surrounding ecosystem. In her work she is attempting to isolate proteins from bacteria that can degrade and detoxify selected pesticides. These proteins may then be used in clean-up processes to remove pesticide residues from the environment.

Hsing-Ju Tseng from the Department of Microbiology and Parasitology, University of Queensland, St. Lucia, Queensland spoke about her work on the role of manganese (Mn) and Mn transporter in the protection of *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* from oxidative stress. *N. gonorrhoeae* is one of very few aerotolerant bacteria that does not appear to possess superoxide dismutase (SOD) which is held to play an essential role in the removal of toxic

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oxygen species. Hsing-Ju provided data to show that strains of *N. gonorrhoeae* are more resistant to killing when grown on media containing Mn and highly susceptible to both superoxide and hydrogen peroxide killing if they lacked an Mn uptake system, thus showing a critical role for their Mn uptake system.

Wendy Hart from Institute of Medical and Veterinary Sciences and the University of South Australia, Adelaide described her work on *Antibiotic resistance in enteric bacteria of piggery workers*. The use of antibiotics in livestock for growth promotion, prophylaxis or therapy results in the emergence of antibiotic resistant bacteria which can be passed on to humans via the food chain or by direct contact. The Australian pig industry has supported a number of studies to reduce reliance on antibiotics and to encourage prudent usage. Wendy presented results from a study which assessed the levels of resistance in enteric bacteria isolated from pigs, pork meat and human faecal specimens.

The presentation from Michelle Sait from the Department of Microbiology and Immunology, University of Melbourne, VIC was entitled the *Isolation of phylogenetically-novel soil bacteria.* Michelle stated that maintaining the health and productivity of soil is a critical

consideration for farmers and consumers. More than a billion microbes live in a teaspoon of soil and it is these microbes that provide plants with nutrients and determine the structure of soils, yet the number of microbes grown in the laboratory is less than 1% of the number of microbes seen microscopically. Some of these previously unstudied microbes have now, for the first time, been grown in the laboratory, enabling work to begin to discover what they do and to start to use them to our advantage.

Qinning Wang from the Department of Microbiology, University of Western Australia, Perth spoke on his work which has involved the cloning of *Erysipelothrix rhusiopathiae* neuraminidase gene. Erysipeloid is a localised skin infection, similar to cellulitis, with lesions on fingers, hands and feet and the patient complaining of severe pain and swelling. In some cases it may spread to remote areas and be accompanied by systemic manifestation such as fever and joint pains. The bacterium which causes the infection, *E. rhusiopathiae,* produces an enzyme called neuraminidase which has been demonstrated to play a role in bacterial attachment and subsequent host cell invasion. Qinning plans to explore the role of this enzyme by firstly cloning the neuraminidase gene and investigating if it is present in isolates from various sources. He will subsequently make a neuraminidase deficient mutant and compare the pathogenicity of parent and mutant strains.

Lucy Thompson from the University of NSW, Sydney, described her work on *Transcription profiling of Helicobacter pylori using microarrays.* Lucy said that 20 years ago scientists considered the stomach to be an area where no bacteria could live because of gastric acid; however, it is now well established that about 95% of stomach ulcers are caused by a bacterium called *H. pylori* which can live in the stomachs of people sometimes for their entire lifetime. Antibiotics can be used to treat the infection; however, the treatment is expensive, can make patients sick and, in some cases, is ineffective because *H. pylori* acquires resistance to the drugs. Lucy is using microarrays to study how this bacterium regulates its gene expression with respect to how it survives in the stomach. A better understanding of this gene regulation can provide clues for the development of improved drugs and possibly a vaccine.

Shane Powell from the University of Tasmania, Hobart, spoke of work she has done in collaboration with The Australian Antarctic Division studying microbial communities in contaminated Antarctic soil by looking at changes in the DNA present in the marine sediment. Shane stated that as Antarctica is our last relatively untouched wilderness, it is important to understand our impact on the environment so that we can attempt to minimise it. At Casey station there are several projects looking at the effects of human activity on the surrounding environment, particularly the impact of fuel spills and abandoned landfill sites. Microorganisms have an important role in the degradation of pollutants so it is likely that microbial communities will change in response to pollution – these can be examined by molecular methods including denaturing gradient gel electrophoresis (DGGE).

Written by Cheryl Power from notes and abstracts provided by the speakers.

Careers Workshop

The ASM Careers Workshop was organised by Wendy McDonald, Viraj Nawagamuwa, Megan Brooks, Glenn Marsh and Suzanne Keeling. A variety of enthusiastic and highly accomplished speakers were invited to present a brief history of their careers in the field of microbiology as well as providing some creative insights into their career highs and lows.

Graham Mitchell, Foursight, kicked the workshop off by recounting some amusing anecdotal stories and claiming that most of his achievements were the result of luck! He also emphasised the importance of overseas postdoctoral experience as it generates a "bag full of techniques" and some vital contacts for future collaborations.

Bonnie Bassler, Princeton University, exuded her passion and enthusiasm for the communication language of bacteria and encouraged young scientists to have the courage to ask questions and not to be afraid of the unknown.

John Power from CSL Limited highlighted the importance of mentors, being prepared to change fields and maintaining your passion. Mark Tizard, AAHL, talked about the importance of choosing a good supervisor, taking opportunities when they arise and being prepared to go outside your comfort zone. Danilla Grando, RMIT University, emphasised the importance of publishing promptly, trying to collaborate and keeping up with progress.

All speakers kindly gave their time and generated renewed enthusiasm in research and set the challenge to go that one step further. The careers workshop was definitely one of the highlights of ASM 2002.

WA BD Award Night

On the 23 July, the WA branch of the ASM gathered in our favourite green-carpeted seminar room to hear presentations by the WA travel award winners. The recipient of the BD award was Qinning Wang who is in his third year of a PhD at the Department of Microbiology, UWA. Qinning spoke about *Erysipelothrix rhusiopathiae*, a bacterium that can cause disease in farmed animals such as sheep, pigs and poultry as well as the humans that come into contact with these animals or their wastes. The severe form of the infection results in septicaemia or endocarditis. Qinning described his considerable efforts to clone, express and characterise the neuraminidase gene that has been suggested to play a role in disease caused by this organism.

Judy Peng, also a PhD student at UWA was the recipient of the national award and spoke about the marine-dwelling bacterium *Vibrio alginolyticus*. This

bacterium is significant to the aquaculture industry as it can causes acute infections in fish, oysters, prawns and crabs and is also pathogenic towards humans. Judy is working on purifying and characterising the haemolysin produced by this organism to understand its role in pathogenicity.

The recipient of the branch travel award was Susan Aulfrey, again a PhD student at UWA and another bacteriologist. Susan spoke to us about her research on histamine production by *Moraxella* (formerly known as Branhamella) *catarrhalis*. This species of bacteria is found only in the human respiratory tract. Some strains may be harmlessly carried in the host while others cause a wide variety of diseases which may be related to the production of virulence factors such as histamine.

After the interesting array of talks, a chicken and champagne supper was provided and enjoyed by all. We hope all the winners enjoy the ASM annual meeting in Melbourne, that they endevour to share ideas with like-minded microbiologists and pick up some free socks!

Victorian BD Award Night

The Victorian ASM student awards night was held on the 30 July at the Woodruff Lecture Theatre, University of Melbourne. This year there were eight students competing for the BD award for PhD or Masters by research students and four students competing for the Branch award for Honours or Masters by coursework students.

Competing for the Branch award were Denisse Leyton, presenting her work on identification of EpA, a novel SPATE autotransporter in clinical isolates of LEE-negative enterhemorrhagis *E. coli*; Allison Marty presenting her work on the association of the Respiratory Syncytial Virus matrix protein with cellular membranes; Kylie White presenting her work on genetic manipulation of a gene in the LPS synthesis cluster of *C. jejuni;* and Natalie Counihan presenting her work on the relevance of the neutralising antibody response in determining the efficacy of influenza vaccines. The winner of the branch award was Allison Marty from the University of Melbourne.

There was also a wide range for presentations from the students competing for the BD award. Catherine Satzke spoke about the novel virulence of Group B Streptococcus; Khairil Latiff spoke about the interaction of Respiratory Syncytial Virus M and M2-1; Viraj Nawagamuwa presented his work on *C. jejuni* and Guillain-Barré Syndrome; Suzanne Keeling spoke about her work on the evaluation of reuse of secondary waste water for agricultural irrigation; Sharon Tennant spoke about the hunt for virulence-associated genes of PYV-Y entercolitica; Michelle Sait spoke about the isolation of phylogenetically-novel soil bacteria; Ruth Haites presented her work on the biogenesis of inositol containing phospholipids in mycobacteria; and Ajith Pedura-Hewa presented his work on the development of a new genotyping system for Salmonella. The winner of the BD award was Michelle Sait, also from the University of Melbourne.

WA Quiz Night

The WA branch of ASM held its annual Quiz Night at the Subiaco Football Club on Wednesday 14 August. Despite a last minute cancellation by the original Quiz Master, a replacement was found and the night proved to be a success with over 200 participants. Once again there was tremendous support from our sponsors which allowed for almost everyone to walk away with at least one prize whether it be a bag of lentils or a bottle of wine.

Each table of eight people were put to the test with nine rounds of questions, ranging from literature to 'Around the House'. First prize was a draw, each table winning a dinner for eight people and 10 bottles of wine.

The money raised from the Quiz Night helps to send our up and coming microbiologists to the annual conference. Next year some lucky person will be going to Auckland, New Zealand, to the 2003 conference which is being held in conjunction with the New Zealand Microbiology Society.

The WA branch of ASM would like to thank the following companies for their support of the 2002 Quiz Night and look forward to future association with them. Abbott, Anchor Foods Pty Ltd, Amarin Thai, Bayer Pharmaceuticals, BD, bioMérieux, Blackaby Diagnostics, Cambridge Media, D'Orsogna Ltd, Fremantle Football Club, GUD, Interpath, Lederle, MEDOS, Oxoid, Pfizer, Pharmacia, Roche Diagnostics, Roche Pharmaceuticals, Rockeby biomed, The Mousetrap and Trigg Island Café.

In the spotlight... Ben Shields

After completing my VCE in the rural Victorian City of Mildura on the Murray River, I came to Melbourne to begin a science degree at the University of Melbourne. In addition to my studies, I found the 2 hour public transport trip from the city to the wintry chills of Waverly Park to watch the mighty Hawks play footy a most worthy pastime.

I completed my honours year in the department of microbiology and immunology at the University of Melbourne in 1997. After this year I had planned to take a break from science before embarking on the pursuit of a research assistant position.

However, a friend of mine mentioned to her honours laboratory that I was interested in working as a research assistant and, fortunately for me, I was given the opportunity of 2 months' work in the Children's Virology Research Unit (CVRU) at the Macfarlane Burnet Centre for Medical Research. This probationary period, in which I succeeded in convincing my supervisors that I knew one end of a pipette from the other, turned into more than 2 years in the CVRU.

During my employment as a RA, I developed the technical skills in basic virology and protein expression and

purification which I would use later in my PhD studies. I also had the opportunity to assess my career options and to make an informed decision on whether entering into postgraduate studies was the best option for me. I began my PhD at the beginning of 2000 under a scholarship from the Macfarlane Burnet Centre.

I find that the prospect of ownership of your own ideas and the scope to investigate the possibilities that these ideas have in the advancement of science to be the most exciting aspect of my PhD. I also believe that a career as a medical researcher provides the opportunity to gain life experience in laboratories overseas and to work on projects which investigate different infectious agents or diseases.

The field of virology research is fascinating to me and I am constantly amazed by discoveries of the strategies that the different viruses employ to survive and thrive in the world we share with them. I am particularly interested in the ability of different viruses to 'choose' the types of tissues and host cells that they infect and the mechanisms involved in the entry of the virus into the cell.

My PhD studies focus on investigating the role of the attachment protein (G protein) of respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) in attachment to host cells. Recent evidence suggests that heparin sulfate proteoglycans (glycosaminoglycans) and the CX3CR1 chemokine receptor play a role in G protein mediated attachment of RSV. My work involves dissection of the domains of the ectodomain of the G protein and I aim to define the regions that are involved in interaction with cell surface glycosaminoglycans.

The approach I have taken to investigate this has been to clone a portion of the G protein ectodomain (G88) into a bacterial expression system which can be expressed, purified and used in binding assays with mammalian cells. I have developed an immunoflow cytometric assay which enables the quantification of recombinant protein bound to cells.

Binding of G88 to HEp-2 cells is dose dependent and is abrogated when the cells are co-incubated with heparin glycosaminoglycan, a soluble analog of heparin sulfate. In binding assays using Chinese Hamster Ovary (CHO) cells deficient in glycosaminoglycan synthesis, I found that G88 binding is greatly reduced compared to wild type CHO cells. Thus I have established that G88 binds to mammalian cells in a glycosaminoglycan dependent manner.

With the knowledge that positively charged residues of heparin binding proteins interact electrostatically with the negative charges on glycosaminoglycan sulfate groups, I decided to introduce alanine (an uncharged amino acid) at positions within G88 which were either lysine or arginine. These substitutions were introduced at positions which had been demonstrated in a previous study (not done by us) to be responsible for binding of G protein to mammalian cells and immobilised heparin.

However, my results indicate that removing these positively charged residues did not result in a decrease in G88 glycosaminoglycan dependent binding to mammalian cells which suggests that there are heparin binding regions of the G protein in addition to those identified previously. I am currently working on defining these regions and am investigating the ability of G88 recombinant proteins to block infection of HEp-2 cells with RSV.

Potentially, definition of the heparin binding domains of the G protein and construction of a G protein derived reagent which blocks infection of mammalian cells with RSV could lead to the development of prophylactic treatment for RSV infection in humans. At present the only antiviral available for treatment of RSV infection is ribavirin, which is expensive, toxic at the administered dose and of dubious efficacy. Therefore, development of safe, effective antivirals is of prime importance.

Conference Report

Gregory Tannock

The Victorian Branch of the Australian Society for Microbiology and the Local Organising Committee (LOC) were delighted with the success of ASM2002 which was held at the Melbourne Convention Centre from 29 September to 3 October. Opened by The Honourable John Brumby, Treasurer of Victoria and Minister for Innovation, the conference attracted over 1000 delegates. The conference theme, *Microbiology Macrotechnology Melbourne,* allowed reflection on local and global events that have raised community awareness of microbiology and the impact that microbes can have on our society.

Keynote speakers presented first rate plenaries on the impact of foot and mouth disease on communities in the United Kingdom, the global anxiety caused by the 'white powder' attacks, the threat of bioterrorism, and the impact of HIV/AIDS, to name a few of the topics discussed. We heard about 'the good, the bad and the ugly' microbes in sessions on biotechnology, environmental, clinical and medical microbiology.

John Bowman and Frank Fenner, FASM

microbiology
macrotechnology
melbourne

ASM 2002

The ASM2002 industry exhibition was exceptionally successful and we value highly the ongoing support of our industry partners. ASM2002 also received generous support from the Victorian Government to take the science of microbiology to the wider community via the Outreach media programme which resulted in publication of over 300 articles in the print media and on radio or television. The LOC hope that the success of their media initiative will inspire ASM to continue a programme of dialogue between scientists and the wider community.

No Annual Scientific Meeting of ASM would be complete without an exciting social program and ASM2002 was no exception. Delegates indulged in wining, dining, dancing and debating at the various social events highlighted by the Sashay at Storey Hall and culminating with the final farewell over champagne and strawberries.

The success of ASM2002 was the result of many successful partnerships. One important interaction was the partnership

Elizabeth Montgomery, FASM

The Hon. John Brumby

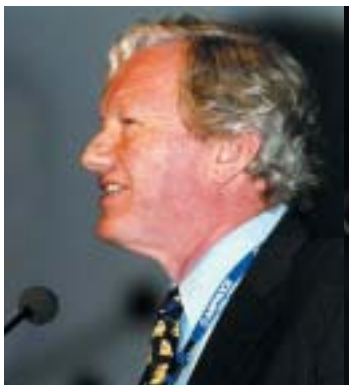
The Hon. John Brumby and Frank Fenner, FASM

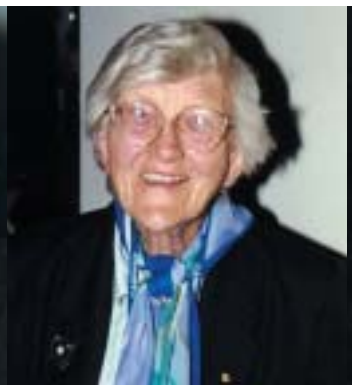
that developed between the LOC and Janette Sofronidis, the conference manager at ASM National Office. Thanks Janette for a great job!

Finally, I would like to thank Greg Ashworth, Elizabeth Barresi, Barbara Bell, Helen Billman-Jacobe, Scott Bowden, Peter Coloe, Sue Coloe, Elizabeth Grabsch, Elizabeth Hartland, Geoff Hogg, Stephen Jones, Diane Lightfoot, Cheryl Power, Roy Robins-Browne, Chris Sotiropolous, Dick Strugnell, David Tribe and Steven Wesselingh for creating the best microbiological partnership ever!

Jan Tennent, LOC Chair

Rubbo Orators: Past and Present

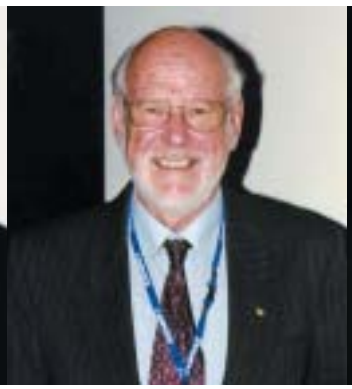

Adrian Lee

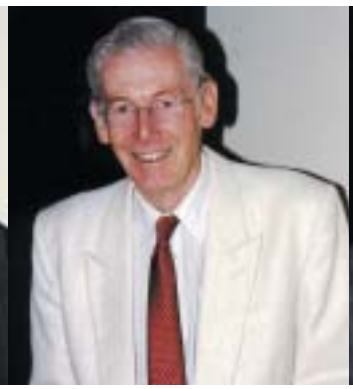

Nancy Mills


Graham Mitchell


Frank Fenner


Ian Gust


James Pittard


Frank Gibson


David Kemp

2002 BD Award Winners


Lucy Thompson


Hsing-Ju Tseng


Wendy Hart


Michelle Sait


Shane Powell


Quinning Wang


Kahli Weir

ASM 2002
Annual Scientific Meeting

ASM 2002 photography provided by Professor Gale Spring, RMIT and Danielle Edwardes, Austin & Repatriation Medical Centre, VIC


fic society
3000
• Mission
microbiological
professional

New Members

NSW

Carmen ANDRIOLAS

Monique AKOURI

Nicholas BAJIC

Jodie CABBAN

Leona CAMPBELL

Margaret FAEDO

Caroline FORD

Kathryn HUGHES

Meera KARUNAKABAN

Linda MASONDOLE

Fotula PAPADOROULOS

Anthony PAVIC

Lily PEREG-GERK

Owen PHILLIPS

Linh Mai VO

Qld

Helen MIDDLETON

Tanya NELGAR

Trine THOMSEN

SA

Michael BEARD

VIC

Donna CAMERON

Aneta GUBALA

Xiaoyan HAN

Elena IVANOVA

Raquel MEYER

Danielle RAGAZZON

Emma TAPP

Nathan TREMBATH

WA

Ruth BLACKHAM

Marilina CHIARI

New MASM

ACT

Shareen LATA

Sandra LUTWYCHE

Sarah THORNTON

NSW

Rani CHOWDHURY

Margaret FAEDO

Neville FIRTH

Andrew HALYBURTON

Peter HUNTINGTON

Wieland MEYER

Dennis MOK

Anthony PAVIC

Lily PEREG-GERK

Gary SMITH

James TRICAS

Kerry WEEKS

QLD

Leonie BARNETT

Flavia HUYGENS

Arthur KOLLARAS

Dallas ROGERS

Robin SHERLOCK

SA

Robert HALL

Julie SPARGO

TAS

Sarah FOSTER

VIC

Sheorey HARSHVARDHAN

Elena IVANOVA

Ivan JASENKO

Correna LEONG

Nicole MORTON

Ajith PEDURA-HEWA

Emma TAPP

WA

Shelley ALTMAN

Carolien GIELE

Karen GRIFFITHS

Hong Kong

Wai LAM

ASM SUSTAINING MEMBERS

Abbott Diagnostics Division

Ansell International

BD

Biocene Pty Ltd

biolab

Bio Mediq (DPC) Pty Ltd

bioMerieux Australia Pty Ltd

Bio-Rad Laboratories

Blackwell Publishing Asia

Buynet Plus

Churchill Diagnostic Pty Ltd

Dade Behring Diagnostics

Diagnostic Technology

The Kelly Company Pty Ltd

Millipore Australia Pty Ltd

Ortho – Clinical Diagnostics

Oxoid Australia Pty Ltd

Rockeby biomed Limited

Selby Biolab

TECRA International Pty Ltd

ASM 2002: microbiologists make a difference

The ASM 2002 organising committee took the decision to invest in a formal media programme with the broad aim of informing the community about the difference microbiologists make to the community.

The results were beyond our wildest expectations. Highlights included:

- PhD student Joanne Clarke talking about her search for new antibiotics in flies. Joanne gave some 20 or so interviews to TV and radio and her work was reported everywhere from Channels SBS, 2 and 9, to the *Oman Times* and beyond.
- Overseas visitors Linqi Zhang and Rebecca Caffrey holding the conference's first press conference for Channels SBS, 2 and 7 and following up with a live interview on the *World at Noon.*
- Melbourne malaria researchers and State Innovation Minister John Brumby speaking to a full house of TV crews and other media to talk about their contribution to the malaria genome announcements.
- Frank Fenner generously giving a series of interviews on smallpox and bioterrorism to TV, radio and print.
- International coverage of stories through the mainstream media and *New Scientist.*

Other participants in the media programme included Shona Blair on honey, Paul Kitching and Tony Della-Porta on foot and mouth, Gregor Reid on probiotics, Michael Nissen on respiratory viruses, Bill Costerton on oil and biofilms, Suzanne Keeling on water quality and Bonnie Bassler on quorum sensing.

Thank you all for putting up with the many demands of the media during the conference.

Media monitoring is a crude science but to date we are aware of 104 TV mentions and 179 radio mentions in Australia, with 58 print and 26 web mentions in Australia and overseas. The TV and radio stories in Australia were seen by a cumulative audience in excess of 19 million people.

For a full media report visit http://www.asm2002.org and click on media or contact Niall@byc.com.au

Contributions listing interesting sites or short reviews are welcome. Please send to <pbishop@nursing.usyd.edu.au>.

Drug discoveries sites

http://www.drugdisc.com/

http://www.arqule.com/drug/

http://www.drugdiscoverytoday.com/

http://www.ddw-online.com/

Food/water microbiology sites

http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~ebam/bam-toc.html

USFDA Bacteriological Analytical Manual online. Full text up to date version and, most importantly, free.

http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/food-aliment/mh-dm/mhe-dme/compendium/e_index.html

Health Protection Branch, Canada – Compendium of Analytical Methods (Food Microbiology). Full text current version

http://www.fsis.usda.gov/ophs/microlab/mlgbook.htm

USDA/FSIS Microbiology Laboratory Guidebook. Full text current version of USDA food microbiology methods.

http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~mow/intro.html

USFDA Bad Bug Book. General microbial food poisoning information

http://www.epa.gov/nerlcwww/index.html

USEPA Microbiology Home Page. Many water microbiology methods including cryptosporidium and giardia.

http://www.iso.ch/iso/en/CatalogueListPage.CatalogueList

ISO Standards Search.

http://www.standards.com.au/catalogue/script/search.asp

Australian Standards Search.

http://www.bd.com/industrial/difco/manual.asp

Difco Manual Online. Full text of current version.

http://www.bd.com/clinical/QCPI/qcpidownload.asp

BBL Quality Control and Product Information Manual for Prepared Media.

http://www.aoac.org/

Association of Official Analytical Chemists.

http://www.nccls.org/

National Committee for Clinical Laboratory Standards.

http://www.phls.co.uk/

UK Public Health Laboratory Service.

http://www.apha.org/

American Public Health Association.

http://www.dfst.csiro.au/icmsf.htm

International Commission on Microbiological Specifications for Foods.

Meetings

Contributions listing relevant meetings are welcome. Please send to: <pbishop@nursing.usyd.edu.au>

2002

25-28 November

Gold Coast International Hotel, Qld

The Asian Fisheries Society
5th Diseases in Asian Aquaculture Symposium

Contact: OzAccom Conference Services
PO Box 164
Fortitude Valley, Qld 4006
Tel: (07) 3854 1611
Fax: (07) 3854 1507
E-mail: daa5@ozaccom.com.au
Website: http://afs-fhs.seafdec.org.ph
Then two satellite workshops:

29-30 November

Gold Coast International Hotel

Epidemiology and Risk Assessment

and

29 November – 4 December

University of Queensland in Brisbane

Asia Pacific Regional Molluscan Health Management Training Program Phase II

Contact: Dr Tiina Hawkesford
Tel: (07) 3234 0701
E-mail Tiina.Hawkesford@dpi.qld.gov.au
Website: http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au/

1-5 December

Burswood International Convention Centre, Perth, WA

8th Western Pacific Congress on Chemotherapy & Infectious Diseases Australian Society for Antimicrobials

Tel: (03) 9682 0244
Fax: (03) 9682 0288
E-mail: wpccid@icms.com.au
Website: www.icms.com.au/wpccid

2003

26 March

Hotel Sofitel, Melbourne

Clunies Ross National Science & Technology Award
Announcement of winners and presentation dinner

Contact: Mary Bolger
(03) 9854 6266
E-mail: info@clunieross.org.au

6-10 April

Sydney Convention & Exhibition Centre

11th Triennial International Symposium on Viral Hepatitis and Liver Disease

Website: www.tourhosts.com.au/isvhld
For more details see opposite.

25-30 April

Clearwater Beach, Florida, USA

Pan American Society for Clinical Virology

27-30 April

The Clinical Virology Symposium

Contact: Steven Specter,
E-mail: sspecter@hsc.usf.edu
Website: http://www.hsc.usf.edu/MEDMICRO/virology/

26-30 April

Woods Hole, USA

Fourth International Conference on the Molecular Biology and Pathogenesis of the Clostridia

Contact: Prof. Julian Rood,
Monash University
Tel: (03) 9905 4825
E-mail: julian.rood@med.monash.edu.au
Website: http://www.ouhsc.edu/cp2003/

4-9 May

Sydney, NSW

SWAPS: Short Course in Clinical Parasitology

Contact: Stephen Neville
Tel: (02) 9828 5136
Fax: (02) 9828 5129
E-mail: Stephen.Neville@swsahs.nsw.gov.au

Early May

Sydney

A Short Course in Clinical Parasitology Preliminary Announcement of a series of practical workshops in microbiology

Sponsored and supported by the NSW branch of ASM The South Western Area Pathology Service in conjunction with the NSW Branch of the Australian Society for Microbiology

This is the first time this course has been offered under the banner of ASM and is the third time this very popular course has been run by the South Western Area Pathology Service. As with previous courses the numbers will be strictly limited due to the intensive hands-on component. The course is scheduled to run in early May 2003.

More information and application forms can be obtained from:

Stephen Neville
Tel: (02) 9828 5136
E-mail: Stephen.Neville@swsahs.nsw.gov.au

Please note, this course will have a premium for non-ASM members equivalent to the cost of becoming a member of ASM... what are you waiting for? Join now.)

25-28 May

Jamberoo Valley Lodge, Jamberoo, NSW (40 km South of Wollongong)

BacPath VII 2003

Will cover a broad area of bacterial pathogenesis, with some invited speakers presenting on the impact of genomic and post-genomic technologies on this research area.
To subscribe to the BacPath e-mail list send e-mail to: Mailserv@cc.monash.edu.au
Contact: Prof Mark Walker
University of Wollongong
Tel: (02) 4221 3013

25-30 May

San Antonio, USA

XV ISHAM Congress International Society for Human and Animal Mycology

Contact: TBA

28 September – 2 October

Auckland, New Zealand

Microbiology – Art in Science NZ/ASM 2003: Joint Annual Scientific Meeting & Exhibition of the New Zealand & Australian Societies for Microbiology

Contact:
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MicroNZ 2003 Secretariat
Tel: (03) 9867 8699
E-mail: secretariat@micronz2003.org
Website: www.micronz2003.org

6-10 October

Conrad Jupiters Gold Coast, Qld

The Australian Institute of Medical Scientists
South Pacific Congress 2003
Sun, Surf and Science!

Contact: Fran van Til
e.events limited
PO Box 647
Rangiora 8254, New Zealand
Tel: (64) 3 313 2097
Fax: (64) 3 313 2098
E-mail: fran@eenz.com

1-5 December

Melbourne Convention Centre

13th International Symposium on the Biology of Actinomycetes

Convener: Dr Ipek Kurtbüke,
University of the Sunshine Coast, Qld &
Symposium Secretariat
C/o Conference Strategy Pty. Ltd.
PO Box 1127 Sandringham Vic 3191
Website: www.conferencestrategy.com.au

6-10 April 2003

Sydney Convention & Exhibition Centre

11th Triennial International Symposium on Viral Hepatitis and Liver Disease

Website: www.tourhosts.com.au/isvhld

Plan now to attend the 11th International Symposium on Viral Hepatitis and Liver Disease in Sydney from 6-10 April, 2003.

The Triennial meetings are unique in including all the hepatitis viruses and in giving equal emphasis to basic science, clinical medicine and public health.

Faculty and delegates are drawn from almost every country and the programme will be packed with new concepts and data.

Highlights will include:

- Evaluation of novel antiviral drugs for hepatitis B and C
- Prospects for therapeutic vaccines
- The nature of immunity to hepatitis C
- The molecular basis of hepatocellular carcinoma

Eminent international speakers review progress since the last meeting in Atlanta, so you can expect to have your own ideas enriched and challenged during the meeting.

Faculty is to include D Anderson, F Chisari, N Crofts, S Hadzyannis, M Houghton, I Gust, G Inschaupse, S Jameel, M Lai, J Lau, D Lavanchy, S Lemon, J Liang, S Locarnini, A Lok, W Mason, T McNaughton, T Miyamura, M Nassal, G Nossal, R Purcell, C Rice, M Rizzetto, M Roggendorf, P Simmonds, C Trepo, H Will

The workshops provide an unrivalled forum for you to present your latest work to a group with specialist interest in your field, and there will be ample opportunity for you to make new contacts and renew old friendships.

Several new features are planned:

- Debates on current controversies
- Exhibition facilities for non-commercial scientific enterprises and patient support groups
- Facilities for self-organised micromeetings
- The Hepatitis History Project

The venue is the Sydney Convention Centre, which is located on the harbour front only a few minutes' walk from the central business district. A Gala Social Event will provide a taste of the cosmopolitan Sydney scene, but delegates who can find a few extra days will be able see something of the unique Australian flora and fauna in beautiful surroundings within easy reach of the city.

Individuals and organisations are encouraged to contribute their work by submitting an abstract, and the submission deadline is 15 December 2002.

For details see the Symposium website www.tourhosts.com.au/isvhld

BAX® System with automated detection: AOAC approval and FSIS adoption for *Listeria monocytogenes*

The AOAC Research Institute has recently approved the BAX® System *Listeria monocytogenes* PCR assay for screening with automated detection for Performance Tested Status (certificate No. 070202). The system is currently undergoing approval for Salmonella and *E. coli* 0157:H7.

The US Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) have announced that it is adopting the BAX® System to screen meat and poultry samples for *Listeria monocytogenes*. After an evaluation, FSIS determined that the BAX® System was as sensitive as the current method in detecting *Listeria monocytogenes*. The BAX® System was evaluated at the FSIS Microbial Outbreaks and Special Projects Branch laboratory in Athens, Georgia, to determine whether it would be beneficial to the agency. Testing methods used by FSIS laboratories undergo rigorous evaluations to determine their validity and reliability. FSIS is now planning to evaluate the BAX® system to screen samples for *E. coli* O157:H7 and Salmonella.

The BAX® System is manufactured by DuPont Qualicon in Wilmington USA and is distributed in Australia by Oxoid Australia.

For further information, please contact:

Jacqueline Thorn at Oxoid Australia

Tel: 1800 331 163.

Cancidas® for salvage therapy in invasive aspergillosis

Cancidas (caspofungin acetate) is the first of a new class of antifungals called echinocandins (or glucan synthesis inhibitors) now available to treat life threatening fungal infections that are becoming more prevalent as the number of people with a compromised immune system is increasing [1].

Cancidas acts by specifically inhibiting the synthesis of beta (1,3)-D-glucan, an integral component of the cell wall of many pathogenic fungi, including Aspergillus. Disruption of cell-wall structure leads to osmotic instability and ultimate lysis of the fungal cell [2,3].

The mechanism of action of Cancidas differs from that of both amphotericin B and the azoles [2-4]. Importantly, Cancidas does not affect mammalian cells, which do not contain beta (1,3)-D-glucan [5].

"Cancidas is currently approved in Australia as a salvage therapy in invasive aspergillosis, but there is potential for greater use," said Associate Professor David Ellis, mycologist at Women's and Children's Hospital in Adelaide. "Clinical experience will determine this future use," he continued.

A single 70mg loading dose should be administered on day 1, followed by 50mg daily thereafter. Duration of treatment should be based on the severity of the patient's underlying disease, recovery from immunosuppression and clinical response [6].

References

1. Fastenau J, Crowley S, Davies G & Mavros P (2001). *Trends in Invasive Fungal Infections.* Prague, Czech Republic, October 18–20 2001.
2. Groll AH & Walsh TJ (1997). *Curr Opin Infect Dis* 10:449–58.
3. Debono M & Gordee RS (1994). *Annu Rev Microbiol* 48:471–97.
4. Graybill JR, Najvar LK, Luther MF *et al. Antimicrob Agents Chemother* 41:1775–7.
5. Data on file.
6. Product Information: CANCIDAS® (caspofungin acetate, MSD) Use: Invasive aspergillosis in adults (if refractory, intolerant of other therapies) Precautions: Pregnancy, lactation, children < 18 yrs Adverse Reactions: Histaminergic reactions; thrombophlebitis; fever; GI upset; others, see full PI Interactions: Cyclosporin; inducers incl efavirenz, nelfinavir, nevirapine, phenytoin, rifampicin, dexamethasone, carbamazepine CANCIDAS (Injection) (S4) Single use vials Pack 50mg [1], Pack 70mg [1] Dose admin by IV infusion over 1 hr. Adults. Day 1: 70mg, thereafter 50mg/day (incr to 70mg if necessary); moderate hepatic insufficiency: maintenance dose 35mg/dose.

   Refer to full Product Information before prescribing. Product Information is available directly from Merck Sharp & Dohme or by reviewing MIMS CD August 2002.

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Pathtech news

Pathtech is pleased to announce the release of the following new products: CLP Barrier Tips, Molecular Biology consumables and reagents/kits, Electrophoresis and Lab Storage.

Thermo CRS provides accurate, cost-effective and timely laboratory automation solutions. CRS offer lab integration software, instrument interfaces, world-renowned mover technologies and informatics.

Multiskan Spectrum has the ability to read from visible to UV wavelengths using both microplates and cuvettes. Wavelength can be selected from 200nm to 1000nm, in 1nm steps without changing a filter.

Multidrop Micro rapidly and accurately dispenses microvolumes of 1-50ul into 384- and 96- well microplates, using 1ul increments.

The Finnpipette Focus is the new addition to the successful family of Finnpipettes. The Finnpipette Focus is specifically designed to reduce user stress and optimise pipetting performance.

Infors offer stackable incubator shaker systems. The Multitron II and the Minitron are both compact systems, which can be used on or under the bench.

Contact: Susan Veal

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PO Box 211, Blackburn South, Vic 3130

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Fax: (03) 9899 0811

E-mail: info@pathtech.com.au

Invanz®: a simpler approach to patient management

Invanz (ertapenem sodium) is a new, once a day injectable antibiotic for the treatment of moderate to severe community acquired mixed infections. Invanz is a 1-ß methyl-carbapenem, related to the beta-lactam class of antibiotics, which includes penicillins and cephalosporins [1].

Invanz is indicated for the treatment of adult patients with moderate to severe infections caused by susceptible strains of microorganisms that are suspected or proven to be resistant to all other antibiotics, or for patients unable to tolerate other antibiotics [1].

Invanz is also indicated for initial empiric therapy for the treatment of complicated intra-abdominal infections and acute pelvic infections including post-partum endomyometritis, septic abortion and post-surgical gynaecological infections [1]. Invanz simplifies patient management with a convenient one gram, one dose, once a day regimen [1].

Dr Bernie Hudson, microbiologist, Royal North Shore Hospital, Sydney, said the convenient dosing schedule of Invanz is likely to appeal to clinicians as it contrasts sharply with some other antibiotic regimens that must be administered in separate doses up to four times daily – sometimes in combination with other drugs. Invanz can be administered by intravenous infusion or intramuscular injection.

The clinical efficacy and tolerability of Invanz have been confirmed in a number of clinical trials investigating a variety of disease categories. Invanz was evaluated in comparison with ceftriaxone or piperacillin/tazobactam.

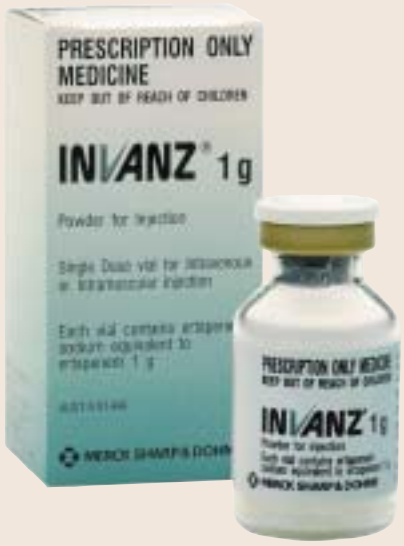
Reference

1. Product Information: INVANZ® (Ertapenem sodium) INDICATIONS: Carbapenem antimicrobial. Infections due to susceptible organisms, complicated intra-abdominal, acute pelvic infections in selected adult patients. PRECAUTIONS: Predisposition to seizures esp CNS disorders; renal impairment; pregnancy, lactation, children <18 yrs. ADVERSE REACTIONS: Superinfection; pseudomembranous colitis; seizures; GI upset; inj site (IV) effects; headache; raised LFTs; others, see full PI. INTERACTIONS: Probenecid. CONTRAINDICATIONS: Sensitivity to carbapenems, beta-lactams; IM use: sensitivity to amide-type LAs, severe shock, heart block.

VIALS: Ertapenem Na (1.046g equiv. ertapenem 1g); NaOH, Na bicarbonate (Na 137 mg/vial); for reconstitution with 0.9% NaCl (IV) or 1% lignocaine HCl (IM); vials

Pack 1g [1]. DOSAGE: Dose 1g daily by IM or IV infusion (over 30 mins) for 3-14 days; advanced renal failure: 500 mg daily. Refer to full Product Information before prescribing.

Product Information is available directly from Merck Sharp & Dohme or by reviewing MIMS CD, August 2002.



IKA Ultra-Turrax® T 8-8002000

Hand-held disperser for small volumes from 0.5ml upwards. Rotor-stator configurations have been specially developed for tissue decompositions, clinical and medical diagnostics and for suspension, e.g. centrifugates products.

Dispersing elements: S8N - 5G with 5mm diameter for Eppendorf tubes, centrifugal glasses, cuvettes, etc. S8N - 8G with 8 mm diameter for test tubes.

The dispersing tools may be sterilised in accordance with all known methods. Powerful 100 watt drive with infinitely variable speed control from 5000-25000 rpm. A separate power pack is included in the package.

Features:

- safe provided by 12 V low voltage
- light-weight, the drive weighs only 0.84 lbs
- may be optional – used as hand-held or stand instrument
- 0.5ml - 50ml
- 5,000-25,000 rpm

Recommended Accessories: T8.1.0 Dispersing Station #26025.00, choose between 5mm or 8mm dispersing tool from accessories.

For further information please contact your local Medos office.

TECRA®
Excellence in Rapid Testing

Advanced Visual Immunoassay sets a new standard in Salmonella detection…

12 September 2002

TECRA® International today announced the release of TECRA Salmonella ULTIMA™, a new advanced Visual Immunoassay for screening food, food related and environmental samples.

Salmonella ULTIMA offers significant speed, convenience and cost advantages compared with Standard Methods and other rapid methods that use M-broth and 2 selective enrichments. Salmonella ULTIMA will give a result in less than 36 hours. There is one simple enrichment protocol for all food, a simple two-step enrichment with **no M-broth** or secondary enrichment required and a Single Selective Enrichment broth. Results are easily read by eye with the option of using a plate reader.

Time and cost savings are important to all laboratories. Salmonella ULTIMA offers substantial time and cost savings through a reduction in the amount of culture media used and less time spent preparing culture media and subculturing.

Highly toxic selective enrichment media are not used with Salmonella ULTIMA. Rappaport-Vassiliadis R10 Broth or Rappaport-Vassiliadis Soy Peptone are used, which improves laboratory safety.

TECRA International is a global leader in the development, manufacture and marketing of rapid tests for the detection of bacteria and toxins in food, cosmetics and pharmaceuticals. The range of TECRA rapid methods includes tests for Salmonella, Listeria, E. coli O157, Campylobacter, Pseudomonas, Staphylococcus aureus, Staphylococcal Enterotoxins, Bacillus Diarrhoeal Enterotoxin and Folate in Folate-fortified foods. TECRA also develops and markets dehydrated culture media and environmental swabs for use with its diagnostic kits.

For more information please contact
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Fax: +61 2 9453 3422
Email: enquiries@tecra.net
or
Visit www.tecra.net

Syngene has unveiled its new GeneWizard

The GeneWizard is an automated gel analyzer, a cost-effective system for laboratories that want quicker, more accurate results when capturing and analyzing gels.

The GeneWizard comes fully integrated, and consists of a unique purple cabinet housing a camera, data processor and built-in transilluminator that can accommodate gels of up to 15x13cm.

The system has been customised to save molecular biologists time by allowing them to automatically capture high-quality gel images using a one-button click, which requires no focusing, zooming or aperture alterations.

GeneWizard even comes with the power of Syngene's powerful image analysis software, GeneTools, already pre-loaded on it. This means users can save even more time by performing automated molecular weight determination, band matching and other analysis applications from their captured images.

It is an ideal tool for any molecular biology laboratory with a limited budget that needs to generate high-quality DNA gel images.

For further information please contact your local Medos office.

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