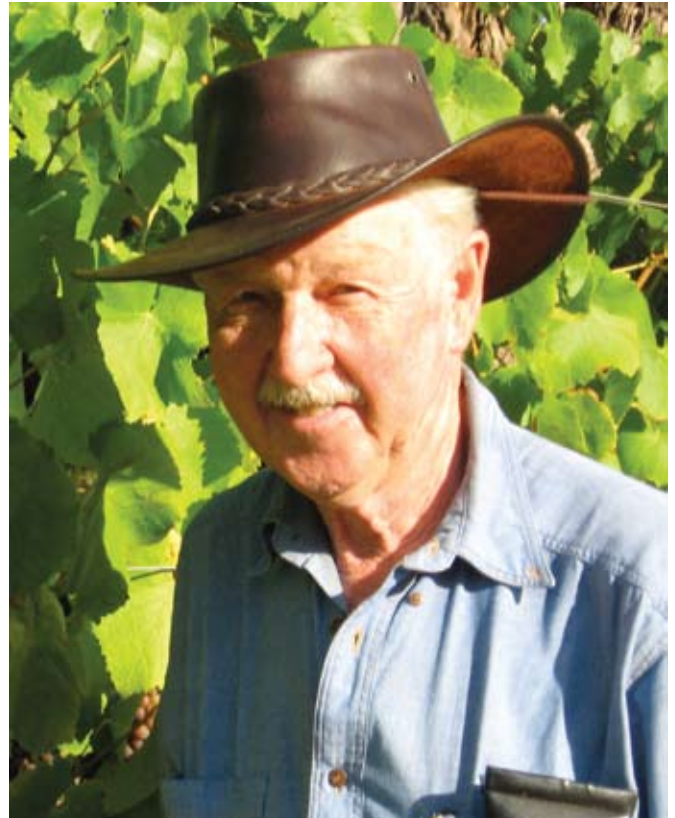


# New ASM Honorary Life Member Ian Holmes

Ian Holmes was one of the first graduates in the newly established BSc(Hons) course in microbiology at Melbourne University under the supervision of Professor Sydney Rubbo. Since Prof Rubbo wanted his department to include all areas of microbiology, he suggested training in virology at the Australian National University with Dr WK Joklik in Professor Frank Fenner's department, where Holmes completed a PhD on poxviruses. After a brief return to the Melbourne department which was about to move into a new building and acquire an electron microscope, and noting an interest in photography, Prof Rubbo encouraged him to use a travelling scholarship to learn electron microscopy in Glasgow with Drs Peter Wildy and Douglas Watson, before returning as a staff member.

Thus began a very fortunate scientific life in that he was always able to follow his interests, and each topic seemed to lead naturally on to the next, as in the book *A trail of research* which he read as a graduate student and never forgot. The identification and reclassification of rubella virus drew him to electron microscopic studies on arboviruses, especially the 'unclassified' ones previously isolated by Ralph Doherty in Queensland. These were mostly bunyaviruses and orbiviruses, and these interests led to a year's study leave in Venezuela in 1970.

In 1973 Ruth Bishop and Geoff Davidson at the Royal Children's Hospital obtained duodenal biopsies from babies with acute gastroenteritis and, since no bacterial cause could be identified, Dr Alan Ferris suggested collaboration with Ian Holmes and Brian Ruck at the University of Melbourne, where EM studies quickly identified a new virus. The fact that at first sight rotaviruses looked so like orbiviruses was the greatest luck and assisted a rapid start on rotavirus characterisation. Rotaviruses turned out to be amazingly common and widespread, occurring in a wide range of animals and even birds, and became a new genus in the family Reoviridae. Structural, chemical, serological, molecular



epidemiological, genetic and vaccine research on rotaviruses occupied the next 27 years up to his retirement in 2000.

Although Ian retains a lively interest in rotavirus research, especially in the area of receptors and receptor-blocking agents, he is happy to leave this in the capable hands of Dr Barbara Coulson. Since he now lives in Red Hill on a property with a small vineyard, he has renewed enthusiasm for following his old role model Louis Pasteur into experiments on winemaking, which now take up most of his time.

## ASM SUSTAINING MEMBERS

**Abbott Diagnostics Division**

**BD Diagnostics**

**Bio Rad Laboratories**

**BioMerieux Australia Pty Ltd**

**Blackaby Diagnostics Pty Ltd**

**Corbett Research**

**Department of Primary Industries**

**Diagnostic Solutions**

**Diagnostic Technology**

**Don Whitley Scientific Pty Ltd**

**Inverness Medical Innovations**

**Millipore Australia Pty Ltd**

**Oxoid Australia Pty Ltd**

**Roche Diagnostics Australia**

**Siemens Health Care Diagnostics**

**Wyeth Australia Pty Ltd**

# Student Special Interest Group

The following are abridged extracts from the ASM Student SIG Newsletter. The complete newsletter is available online at <http://www.theasm.com.au/sigs>

## Message from the Student SIG Convenor

As the convenor of the Student Special Interest Group (SIG) I welcome you to the inaugural edition of the ASM Student SIG Newsletter! The re-establishment of the Student SIG in October 2008 signifies the importance of the student body within ASM. The Student SIG is a division within ASM dedicated to promoting activities relevant to all students. Currently, there are 366 student members within Australia and abroad who share a common interest in microbiology.

The future goals and visions for the Student SIG are to:

- Increase student participation in ASM activities.
- Recognise outstanding students through scholarships and prizes for achievements in research, teaching and/or leadership.
- Promote student research in the form of scientific articles or reviews through the journal *Microbiology Australia* and our newsletters.
- Organise scientific sessions relevant to student members (e.g. careers workshops).
- Increase networking between students across the country.

Finally, with the world constantly facing problems associated with emergent pathogens, unconquered infections, and imminent microbiology issues threatening our environment, it is an exciting time to be a budding microbiologist. Your talent and continued research efforts will help unravel some of these microbiological challenges. I firmly believe that ASM students are the future leaders in microbiology and I hope that this Student SIG will bring all of you closer together through establishing an enriched and collaborative learning environment.

*Si Ming Man, Student SIG Convenor*

## Message from the Committee

This year commemorates the 50th anniversary of ASM, a generational landmark for Australia's largest biological society. This first edition of a quarterly newsletter confirms the re-establishment of the ASM Student SIG. This SIG signifies the importance of undergraduate and postgraduate students in ASM and their important role in the future of this society, as well as the future of microbial research and advancements in Australia. It is the hope of the committee that this SIG will not only provide students with their own niche but also establish an environment where students can voice their opinions, get answers to their

questions, showcase their research studies, and be active in establishing their career in the world of microbiology.

## What can I expect?

This quarterly newsletter is only the beginning to what this SIG has to offer. Where it goes and what it becomes rests in the arms of the student members of ASM. Without active members this SIG can not exist. So what is in this newsletter? Regular features will include:

*Microbe review of the month* and *Microbe image of the month* – this is where you, the researcher, can share with others the work you are doing for your degree.

*Careers advice* – in each issue, two professionals in the area of microbiology will share their highs, lows and insights of what they do and provide us with some career advice. This will help you determine if an area of work is for you or not.

*Students' perspective* – as a student in microbiology, you are not alone. This is where other students share their experiences of being a budding microbiologist.

As this is the first issue of this newsletter, your feedback would be greatly appreciated. Submissions for *Microbe review of the month* and *Microbe image of the month* are now open and a cash prize may be awarded to the most preferred review or image depending on funding availability from ASM. If there is anything that you would like to see in this newsletter, want removed, or done differently, let us know for the next issue. We are interested in what interests you and what ideas you have to share with ASM and its student body.

*David J. Speicher, Student SIG Committee Member*

## About the Student SIG Committee

### Si Ming Man

*School of Biotechnology and Biomolecular Sciences, University of New South Wales, NSW*



Si Ming graduated with a Bachelor of Medical Science (Hons I) and the University Medal in Microbiology from the University of New South Wales (UNSW) in 2007. His Honours research investigated the role of *Campylobacter* and *Helicobacter* species in children with idiopathic inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), which includes Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis. Si Ming's doctoral research aims to examine the pathogenicity of mucus-associated bacteria in paediatric IBD. In addition to his PhD, Si Ming is an academic tutor/demonstrator for 2nd year undergraduate science and

medical students at UNSW and a reviewer for the journal *Inflammatory bowel diseases*. His leadership role also extends beyond the classroom as he is a peer mentor for both the Smith Family and UNSW, enabling him to facilitate the development of students' management and problem-solving skills in their first year of study, and helping them to cultivate a sense of responsibility for their own learning.



### David Speicher

**Griffith Institute of Health and Medical Research (GIHMR), Griffith University, QLD**

David received his BSc (Hons) from Redeemer University College (Canada) in 2003 and his MSc (Hons) from Griffith University through the Sir Albert

Sakzewski Virus Research Center (SASVRC) in 2006. He is currently a Griffith University PhD student in the new Griffith Institute of Health and Medical Research (GIHMR) laboratory on the Gold Coast in Queensland. His doctoral thesis aims at comparing the Australian human herpesvirus-8 (HHV-8) strain and its seroprevalence in a cohort to HIV-infected patients to findings from India and Kenya.

While most of his time is spent on research efforts, David is also an avid outdoorsman and can often be found fishing the Australian Bass Tournaments (ABT) Skeeter bass pro series or camping and bushwalking in remote areas. David's outdoor adventures became infamous when was apart of a group of seven who spent 50 hours bushwalking in Lamington National Park and had to get rescued by the state emergency services. David is also involved with the ACET International Alliance, which provides HIV/AIDS education and medical services in third world countries.

### Rajat Mittal

**Faculty of Medicine, University of New South Wales/ University of Sydney, NSW**

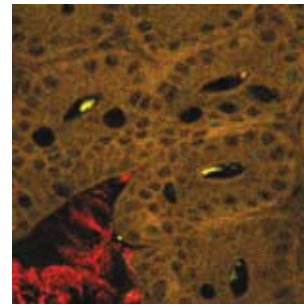
Rajat is a medical doctor currently undertaking a Masters of Surgery through UNSW. Rajat is aiming to finish all his lab work in 2008 and start his thesis writing in 2009. He will be based in Nowra as an orthopaedic registrar next year. Rajat is also concurrently completing a Masters of Medicine to further his research interests at the University of Sydney. Rajat's main interest lies in biofilms and his current project involves investigating biofilm formation in *Staphylococcus epidermidis*. His previous research project examined biofilm-forming *Pseudomonas*.

### Be a part of the Student SIG Committee!

The ASM Student SIG committee is looking for new committee members, so if anyone feels they would like to contribute to the running of the SIG including its newsletter please let us know.

### We would like to hear about your research!

Applications for *Microbe review of the month* and *Microbe image of the month* are now open.



In *Microbe review of the month*, we would like to hear about your interesting research. The subject must be relevant to microbiology, stemming from the current research topic within your Honours/Masters/PhD. It will involve no more than a 1,000 word write up that includes an introduction, results, discussion and conclusion. The introduction should provide an overview of the topic for a general audience and where your work fits within the relevant literature. The article must have a clear conclusion, showing how the research contributes to further the understanding within that area of microbiology.

In *Microbe image of the month*, we would like to see some of the interesting images derived from your research techniques such as electron microscopy, light microscopy, confocal microscopy, or any other method that produces a form of visual media that aids our understanding of microorganisms such as the microbial processes/physiology, and/or microbial interaction with other forms of life. The image should be accompanied by text (no more than 250 words) explaining the image and outlining the contribution to our understanding of microbiology.

The work from winners of *Microbe review of the month* and *Microbe image of the month* will be published in the *Student Special Interest Group Newsletter* and *Microbiology Australia*, and awarded a cash prize of \$100. Non-ASM members are welcome to apply. A complimentary student membership will be awarded to winners who are not members of ASM. Please submit your application to Si Ming at [s.man@student.unsw.edu.au](mailto:s.man@student.unsw.edu.au)

### Careers advice

What's next after my Honours, Masters, or PhD?

Are there jobs other than research?

What career paths are available to graduates with a microbiology background, and which of these are suitable for me?

Do I need to undertake further study to achieve my goals?

In this issue of the *Student SIG Newsletter*, we invited two professionals with a microbiological background to give us some insights into their respective career paths. We caught up with Professor Hazel Mitchell, who is a medical microbiologist at the University of New South Wales. She is heavily involved in the teaching of 2nd and 3rd year microbiology courses at UNSW as well as the UNSW undergraduate medical program. Her research laboratory is interested in the role of the human pathogen *Helicobacter pylori* in gastric disease, as well as mucus-associated

bacteria in inflammatory bowel diseases. We were also fortunate to have Mrs Jenny Brown from In Vitro Technologies to tell us what life is like working for a scientific company, how she applies her scientific knowledge as a territory manager and the career benefits of entering the world of sales, including opportunities to travel overseas! In Vitro Technologies is a company with 75 years of experience dedicated to the distribution of world class products to the New Zealand research, diagnostic, biotechnology manufacturing and Healthcare and related service industries.

*“Nothing is more exciting than seeing one of your students graduate and become one of Australia’s future microbiologists”*

*“It can be really exciting to see a product which I have sold to a customer being used to conduct ground-breaking experiments”*



### **Academia: Professor Hazel Mitchell**

#### ***What made you become interested in the study of microbiology?***

When I was growing up in Scotland we lived with my grandmother who was a medical doctor. Amazingly she actually had a microbiology laboratory in our house where she cultured specimens from her patients. This early introduction to infectious disease and bacteriology kindled my interest in this area and led me to enrol in a degree in microbiology at the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow, Scotland.

#### ***Tell us a little bit about your research interests***

The focus of my research for over 20 years has been the gastric pathogen *Helicobacter pylori*. Initially this work focused upon the epidemiology of *H. pylori* as at that time *H. pylori* had only just been discovered and little was known about the prevalence and transmission of this bacterium. These early studies were conducted in China and resulted in an enduring collaboration with researchers in Guangzhou. This collaboration has focused upon the pathogenesis of *H. pylori* related disease. Currently in collaboration with researchers in Malaysia and Singapore we are investigating the role of *H. pylori*, host and environmental factors in the aetiology of gastric cancer.

My second area of research is inflammatory bowel disease (IBD). Although it is known that microorganisms play an important role in the initiation of IBD, the identity of these microorganisms remains unclear. We are investigating, in collaboration with researchers at Sydney Children’s Hospital and in Canada, the role of intestinal mucus associated bacteria, including lower bowel *Helicobacter* species and non-jejuni *Campylobacter* species in the aetiology of IBD in children.

#### ***What is the most exciting part of being an academic?***

One of the most exciting things about being an academic is that you have the opportunity to inspire and motivate students in the

area of microbiology, as well as provide them with opportunities to learn how exciting and rewarding scientific research can be. Another exciting aspect of an academic’s life is being able to interact, collaborate and build up friendships with research scientists from around the world. Finally, nothing is more exciting than seeing one of your students graduate and become one of Australia’s future microbiologists.

#### ***What is the worst aspect of being an academic?***

Finding enough time to complete the many administrative duties that are required of an academic.

#### ***What advice would you give to undergraduate or postgraduate students of ASM who would like to pursue a career in academia?***

To undertake a career in academia you have to be passionate about research and teaching. There is no doubt that research and teaching go hand in hand, with each one informing the other. As well as finding an area of research that really ‘turns you on’, it is very important to find a good mentor who can advise and help you through your early years as a researcher and post-doctoral fellow.

#### ***What approach would they need to take in order to get where they want to be?***

There are many approaches that can be taken to get where you want to be. However, no matter what path you take, a PhD as well as a post-doctoral period in a well-respected research laboratory, if possible outside of Australia, is in most cases essential. It is also important to publish as many papers as possible in high impact journals. During your PhD candidature and as a Post-Doctoral Fellow it is important to get experience in teaching, including tutoring and lecturing. Attending national and international conferences and being an active member of a scientific society like ASM is also an excellent way of meeting potential collaborators and also contributing to your discipline.

#### ***If you weren’t a microbiologist, what would you be instead?***

I would really love to be an opera singer. I enjoy music and have over many years been a great fan of the opera. In my next life I hope I will be gifted with a much better voice and then maybe I can follow my dream!



### **Commerce/science:**

#### ***Mrs Jenny Brown***

#### ***What position do you hold and what is your role?***

My position with In Vitro Technologies is territory manager. My role is to visit with laboratory staff, as well as laboratory leaders, purchasing officers and stores managers, to discuss the products which our company supplies and help our customers with their problems that our products may be able to solve.

***How do you apply your knowledge in microbiology in your job?***

As many of my customers are microbiologists, I am able to utilise my knowledge and experience in microbiology to help solve their problems and suggest products within our range which can help them out.

***What made you become interested in becoming involved in commerce/sales associated with science?***

I have always been a 'people person' and had worked in retail sales all through my time at university. I found that working in a laboratory I was constantly frustrated by the routine, and I tried a number of different roles before I moved into sales. Being involved in sales with In Vitro keeps me involved in science, and I still use my scientific experience and knowledge daily.

***What is the most exciting part of your job?***

It can be really exciting to see a product which I have sold to a customer being used to conduct ground-breaking experiments. It's also very exciting for me when I am able to help people out with new products that can solve problems they may have had for a long time. There are also some opportunities to travel both within Australia and internationally, and one of my most exciting experiences was attending training at the Nunc facility in Denmark.

***What is the worst aspect of your job?***

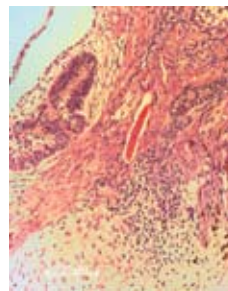
Occasionally things go wrong, either in the delivery of a product being delayed, or an administration error that can result in the wrong product being sent to a customer. Because most of our products are brought in from the USA or Europe, it can take a long time to get the correct product to the customer. This is always very frustrating and we work hard to prevent these errors, but unfortunately it happens from time to time and can result in some unhappy scientists!

***What advice would you give to undergraduate or postgraduate students of ASM who wish to have a career combining science and commerce? What approach would they need to take in order to get where they want to be?***

If you are interested in a job in sales, the best piece of advice I would give is talk to the reps in your area. I began working at In Vitro because I knew my local rep and she gave me a good idea of what it might be like to work in this company. I believe in the quality of products that In Vitro sells, and when a job came available, she encouraged me to apply for it. If you talk to your local reps you will know if you want to represent their company and products, and they will also be able to give you a better indication of what it's like to work in sales in your area.

**Students' perspectives**

*No matter what situation you face in your research, whether amazing or completely horrid, remember that many other graduate students have been right where you are.*



*Students' perspectives* is a section where other students share their experiences of being a budding microbiologist. In this issue of *Students' perspectives*, our very own Mr David Speicher from the SIG Committee shares his thoughts on how to 'drive your research'. David received his BSc (Hons) from Redeemer University College (Canada) in 2003 and his MSc (Hons) from Griffith University through the Sir Albert Sakzewski Virus Research Center (SASVRC) in 2006. He is currently a Griffith University PhD student in the new Griffith Institute of Health and Medical Research (GIHMR) laboratory on the Gold Coast in Queensland. His doctoral thesis aims at comparing the human herpesvirus-8 (HHV-8) strain and its seroprevalence in a cohort of HIV-infected patients in Australia to those in India and Kenya.

We also spoke to Miss Katharina Filarsky about her experience of what it is like to live and study in Australia and how this experience Down Under makes her a better microbiologist. Katharina is 3rd year biochemistry student from the University of Regensburg, Germany and currently completing an exchange study at the University of New South Wales.

*There are so many new people I got to know, a different culture I experienced, and of course this amazing country has a beautiful countryside and many places that I haven't had the opportunity to discover...*



**Driving your research – David Speicher**

It was during a PhD thesis writing workshop that I became aware that many of the horror stories you hear about the difficulties many PhD students face are real. As I looked into this further, I realised that many of these horror stories

are not due to university policy or supervision, as many PhD students meet with their supervisors weekly or fortnightly, but actually from simply following their supervisor's directions for their research and hoping things work out perfectly. While many postgraduate students (Masters or PhD) have the luxury to do their research in established facilities, other students pursue the same goal in small or newly established facilities. Wherever you study or whoever you study under difficulties will arise, but here are four key points to help you reach a successful finish.

- *You are not alone.* No matter what situation you face in your research, whether amazing or completely horrid, remember that many other graduate students have been right where you are. After all this is science and, when exploring the unknown, things never work as they should the first time. Every graduate student has their share of highs and lows and it's important not to let circumstances slow down progress. If you need help ask any post-doc, senior PhD student or supervisor... they've been there.

- *Supervisors are not 'super', they only 'advise'.* Many students maintain the undergraduate mentality when they enter graduate school of "This should be easy. As long as I follow my supervisor's instructions, I'll graduate easily with flying colours". The truth is often quite the opposite. Research in microbiology and other hard sciences is often original in that it explores the unknown. While our supervisors are experts in the field because they have been there much longer than we have, all they can do is advise based upon what they have previously seen. Many of the methodological difficulties we face our supervisors have seen many times because of repeat use, kind of like driving a car, but halfway through a PhD your knowledge of the field should be more current than that of your supervisor's, making you the new expert in the field.

- *This is your research. Be motivated, disciplined, and get the most you can out of it.* As seen previously, there will come a point when your knowledge surpasses that of your supervisor's. While they are busy with lectures and other facets of their career, your full-time job is to study that one area. Many supervisors are so busy that they can only provide guidance once a week, making it your job to determine what needs doing, prepare a plan, and work it to completion. I'm not saying to ignore or bypass your supervisor; in fact for my PhD I have four supervisors. They are all from different facets of the field I study and I think of all five of us as a team with a common goal – my PhD project. They all provide different views and insight to where I should be going, but ultimately the responsibility is on me. I can listen to all their advice but in the end it's my decision what gets done. It's my responsibility to determine what needs doing for the confirmation, how my thesis should look, what and where I'm going to publish.

It can be daunting having to make some really difficult choices, but as a colleague once told me "a PhD is not about what you prove or fail to prove the purpose is to make you think things through. Determine what you are doing, what could go wrong, and why you do what you do and why things turn out the way they did. Ultimately a PhD is designed to make you think". Many PhD students find themselves in trouble because they overlook some major tasks, no matter how many times they meet with their supervisor. Apart from bearing the responsibility, you also get your share of the reward when you begin publishing as first author.

- *Realise when to stop (keep focused and take breaks).* Many PhD students try to do too much that they spread themselves so thin that while their thesis looks big it lacks a single strand of cohesion. Keep focused. It's only a PhD and not the next Nobel Prize, although that may be to come if you work hard and are lucky enough. You should focus on determining the answer to one simple problem and show where it fits into the big picture. If you do too much you'll get disjointed and loose relevance as you become so busy you don't have time to reflect and think. Most of the 'ah-ha' moments and great ideas and insights come when we take our mind off our work

to do something more relaxing. This gives the brain time to think things through. So if you feel like you are up against a brick wall... take a step back, breathe and relax, and when the answer comes, move forward focusing on the task at hand.

I agree that trying to accomplish a PhD can be a daunting task, especially when you reach submission time and realise that you failed to do one critical step. Hopefully, by keeping these four key points in focus you will be able to run with your own project, realising that you are the driving force in a team of researchers, and when the difficult times come don't worry you are not alone, there's a whole team behind you. It is only when things get horrid that you can step back, breathe, realise that you are not the only one in this predicament, and that the whole purpose of a PhD is to make you think. Don't try to wrack your brain too much because, when you least expect, it the answer will find you.



### Life of an overseas exchange student –

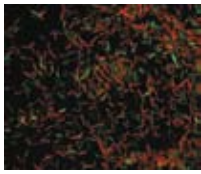
**Katharina Filarsky**

*How did you come to a decision of undertaking an exchange study in Australia?*

It was clear from the beginning of my studies that I wanted to go on an international exchange experience. One factor for doing an overseas exchange program was employability. I think the ability to speak a different language and show motivation by doing research in a foreign country are important attributes that employer consider for future employees. In science, you can go almost anywhere worldwide, even if you cannot speak the local language, as most labs communicate in English. One aspect that encouraged me to do research in Australia was the partnership formed between my host university (University of Regensburg) and UNSW as well as the willingness of UNSW to offer admission in my desired program. I also considered if I would be able to have fun whilst on the exchange program. For a successful exchange program you need to choose a country you would really like to visit so you can discover new things while enjoying your stay. In my case, all these factors helped me decide to undertake an exchange program in Australia.

*How is your exchange program structured and how does this exchange contribute to your degree in Germany?*

I'm staying in Australia for 7 months. During that time, I'm working in the lab for 6 months and then travelling for an additional month. My studies in Germany require me to work in different labs in different scientific fields so that I can learn as many scientific techniques as possible, including microbiological techniques. In each of the labs I have to stay for at least 5 weeks. The 6 month stay here in Australia directly contributes to my degree back in Germany.



**What type of experience or skills related to microbiology were you hoping to get out of your exchange study?**

My programme in biochemistry is relatively fixed. The opportunity to work in different labs has helped broaden my mind and ability to use different methods and different research areas encompassing biological sciences. Although I already had some experience in microbiology from my university, I was hoping that I could get a more in-depth view by going to an exchange program in a medical microbiological laboratory. Through this program I was able to learn techniques such as fluorescent in situ hybridisation, dead/live viability staining and confocal microscopy, and bacterial infection assays, all of which are relevant to modern molecular microbiology.

**Was funding an issue? How did you fund your stay in Australia?**

As students are usually poor, funding will always be a big issue for all students as it was for me. In Germany, I worked a lot in restaurants and different companies to earn the money needed for this exchange program. But that's not always possible because many students don't have the time to work in addition to their studies.

I also applied for scholarships to fund my studies. The first rule is to try everything! Often students don't apply for scholarships because they think they are not good enough, but grades are often not the most important thing when determining whether a scholarship is awarded or not. To find out which scholarships are available, you should ask the student office and other students who have applied for scholarships as well as your professors. It's also very important to do some research on the price of rent in the city you will visit. Take into account that you will spend more money than at home because you want to explore places.

**What has been the highlight of your Australian exchange experience?**

It's really hard to pick one thing as a highlight. There are so many new people I got to know, a different culture I experienced, and of course this amazing country has a beautiful countryside and many places that I haven't had the opportunity to discover. My time here is not over yet and I'm sure there will be more chances to see the beauty this country has to offer. If I have to choose one highlight it would be the Oktoberfest celebration at the university as this occasion is really famous back home in Munich. The Australian Oktoberfest has a different feel to the ones in Germany, but it was fun and I met so many nice people.

**Are there many exchange students studying in Germany? What advice would you give to future students thinking of doing an exchange in Germany?**

When you go to a foreign country you always have to take into account the time required to find an apartment, to get to know the people, and to settle in to the lab. Also watch out at which time of the year you want to undertake an exchange program as university semesters are not aligned between different countries. You don't have to speak German to go to Germany, but of course

some basic language is necessary for the daily life. In comparison to Australia, the student fees are really low. We pay about 600 Euro per semester (which is about A\$1200) depending on where you study. The semesters are in the summer from April to August and in winter from October to February. There is lots of student accommodation organised by the so-called 'Studentenwerk'. To search for suitable accommodation you should apply for one of the apartments as soon as possible, but it is also very common to live in private shared houses. The price of rent depends on the city you live. For example, Munich is quite expensive compared to smaller cities like Regensburg. The cost of food across Germany is very similar. Many exchange students visit from Europe or Asia but we welcome everyone! I hope to see you in Germany.

**Interested in becoming an ASM Student Member or renewing your membership?**

Benefits of student membership include:

- Membership of the largest biological society in Australia.
- Access to society publications, a video library and the society's journal, *Microbiology Australia*.
- Networking with students from across Australia.
- A programme of continuing education via lectures and workshops organised at Branch level.
- A programme of continuing education via the Visiting Speakers' Programme which brings out five to six eminent and world-recognised microbiologists and research scientists to tour around the states of Australia.
- A five day Annual Scientific Meeting which is held each year, rotating around the states of Australia.
- The opportunity to participate in a variety of annual awards, fellowships and scholarships.
- Access to over 26 Special Interest Groups, including the Student Special Interest Group and other interest groups covering most sub-disciplines of microbiology.

The Student Membership Application is at <http://www.theasm.com.au/membership>. If you have any membership queries please contact Lina Raco: [lina@theasm.com.au](mailto:lina@theasm.com.au)

**Further contact details**

Si Ming Man (Convenor)  
 School of Biotechnology and Biomolecular Sciences  
 University of New South Wales, Sydney NSW 2052  
 Tel (02) 9385 3514 Fax (02) 9385 1483  
 E-mail [s.man@student.unsw.edu.au](mailto:s.man@student.unsw.edu.au)

Rajat Mittal  
 Faculty of Medicine, University of New South Wales, NSW  
 E-mail [rajatmittal@yahoo.com](mailto:rajatmittal@yahoo.com)

David Speicher  
 School of Dentistry and Oral Health, Gold Coast campus,  
 Griffith Institute of Health and Medical Research (GIHMR),  
 Griffith University QLD 4222  
 Tel (07) 5678 0438 Fax (07) 5678 0789  
 E-mail [d.speicher@griffith.edu.au](mailto:d.speicher@griffith.edu.au)

Feel free to contact any of the committee members if you have any questions or suggestions concerning our newsletter or the ASM Student SIG.

## 2009-2010 meetings

Contributions listing relevant meetings are welcome. Please send to: [editor@theasm.com.au](mailto:editor@theasm.com.au)

### 2009 – Golden Jubilee Year

**13-15 March 2009**

*Sydney Convention & Exhibition Centre NSW*

**XXV World Congress of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine**

[www.rcpa.edu.au/PathologyUpdate](http://www.rcpa.edu.au/PathologyUpdate)

**24-26 March 2009**

*Melbourne VIC*

**13th Australian Food Microbiology Conference**

The Australian Institute of Food Science and Technology Incorporated: "Back to Basics and Beyond"

Members of ASM can attend at the AIFST member rate

[www.aifst.asn.au/templates/bbb\\_content.aspx?pageID=513](http://www.aifst.asn.au/templates/bbb_content.aspx?pageID=513)

**25-28 March 2009**

*Cypress Lakes Resort, Hunter Valley NSW*

**ASID 2009 – Australasian Society for Infectious Diseases (ASID) Annual Scientific Meeting**

[www.asid.net.au](http://www.asid.net.au)

**30 March – 2 April 2009**

*Harrogate International Centre, UK*

**SGM 164th Meeting**

**5-7 April 2009**

*Seoul, South Korea*

**BIT Life Sciences' 2nd Annual World Congress of Industrial Biotechnology-2009**

A dedicated event on industrial biotechnology, with a theme of *Innovative Biotechnology for Sustainable Bio-economy*.

<http://bit-ibio.com/program.asp>

**7-9 May 2009**

*The Carrington Hotel, Katoomba, Blue Mountains, NSW*

**Viruses in May**

Australia's only meeting focused specifically on the clinical, diagnostic & management aspects of viral infections.

Programme themes:

- Principles of clinical virology
- Congenital infection
- Paediatric infection & vaccination
- Blood-borne viruses
- Hepatitis

Convenors: Professor Bill Rawlinson & Dr Monica Lahra

Conference Management: Australian Society for Microbiology

Contact: Meg Lukies, Event Coordinator

[www.virusesinmay.com](http://www.virusesinmay.com)

**10-13 May 2009**

*Buenos Aires, Argentina*

**VTEC 2009 – 7th International Symposium on Shiga Toxin (Verocytotoxin) – Producing *Escherichia coli* Infections**

[www.vtec2009.com.ar](http://www.vtec2009.com.ar)

**17-21 May 2009**

*Philadelphia, PA, USA*

**109th General Meeting of American Society for Microbiology**

[www.asm.org](http://www.asm.org)

**21-25 June 2009**

*Hamilton Island QLD*

**10th International Symposium on Double-Stranded RNA Viruses**

Coordinators: Barbara Coulson & John Taylor

[www.dsrna2009.org](http://www.dsrna2009.org)

**28 June – 2 July 2009**

*Goteborg, Sweden*

**FEMS 2009 – Third Congress of European Microbiologists: Microbes and Man – Interdependence and Future Challenges**

[www2.kenes.com/fems-microbiology/Pages/home.aspx](http://www2.kenes.com/fems-microbiology/Pages/home.aspx)

**6-10 July 2009**

*Perth Convention Centre, Perth WA*

**ASM 2009 Perth – Annual Scientific Meeting & Exhibition**

Australia's largest microbiology event for 2009 celebrating ASM's 50th Golden Jubilee Year

**19-24 July 2009**

*Manchester, UK*

**24th International Conference on Yeast Genetics and Molecular Biology**

[www.yeastgenetics.org](http://www.yeastgenetics.org)

**26-30 July 2009**

*Toronto, Canada*

**SIM 2009 Annual Meeting and Exhibition**

<http://www.simhq.org/>

**25-28 August 2009**

*Christchurch, New Zealand*

**26th NRL Workshop on Serology**

Workshop Secretariat: National Serology Reference Laboratory

Contact: (03) 9418 1117

Email [alison@nrl.gov.au](mailto:alison@nrl.gov.au)

[www.nrl.gov.au](http://www.nrl.gov.au)

**29-31 October 2009**

*Hamilton Island, QLD*

**Mycology MasterClass IV**

**[1 November 2009 – Additional MasterClass Workshop for laboratory staff]**

Convenor: Associate Professor David Ellis

Conference Management: Australian Society for Microbiology

Contact: Janette Sofronidis, Conference Manager

## 2010

**28 June – 1 July 2010**

*Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre, Melbourne VIC*

**11th International Symposium on the Genetics of Industrial Microorganisms**

Chair: Ian Macreadie

[www.gim2010.org](http://www.gim2010.org)

**4-8 July 2010**

*Darling Harbour Convention Centre, Sydney NSW*

**ASM 2010 Sydney**



# Australian Society for Microbiology Incorporated

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Michelle Jackson

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Janette Sofronidis

### Event Coordinator & Registration Services

Meg Lukies

### Membership Services

Lina Raco

## BRANCH SECRETARIES

### ACT/NSW

Kerry Varettas

Senior Hospital Scientist

SEALS Microbiology

St George Hospital

Gray Street, Kogarah NSW 2217

Tel (02) 9350 3325

Fax (02) 9350 3349

Email Kerry.Varettas@sesiahs.health.nsw.gov.au

**VIC** Ms Sue Cornish  
Mayfield Education Centre  
2-10 Camberwell Road  
Hawthorn East VIC 3123  
Tel (03) 9811 9012  
Email scornish@mayfield.edu.au

**WA** Miss Nicola Barrett  
PathWest Microbiology and  
Infectious Diseases  
QE2 Medical Centre, SCGH  
Hospital Avenue, Nedlands WA 6009  
Tel (08) 9224 2444  
Email nicola.barrett@health.wa.gov.au

**NT (sub branch)** Mr Paul Southwell  
Royal Darwin Hospital  
Microbiology  
TIWI NT 8100  
Tel (08) 8922 8004  
Email paul.southwell@nt.gov.au

## CONVENORS OF ASM STANDING COMMITTEES

**BioSafety**  
Mr Lee Smythe, Supervising Scientist  
WHO/FAO/OIE Collaborating Centre  
for Reference & Research on Leptospirosis  
Queensland Health Scientific Services  
39 Kessels Rd, Coopers Plains QLD 4108  
Tel (07) 3274 9064 Fax (07) 3274 9175  
Email Lee\_Smythe@health.qld.gov.au

**Clinical Microbiology**  
Dr Stephen Graves  
Director of Microbiology  
Hunter Area Pathology Service (HAPS)  
John Hunter Hosp, Newcastle NSW 2300  
Tel (02) 4921 4420  
Mobile 0407 506 380  
Fax (02) 4921 4440  
Email stephen.graves@hnehealth.nsw.gov.au

**Ethics Committee**  
Emeritus Prof Nancy Millis  
University of Melbourne  
School of Microbiology, Parkville VIC 3052  
Tel (03) 9344 5707  
Email jmjohn@unimelb.edu.au

### National Scientific Advisory Committee

Assoc Prof Liz Harry  
University of Technology Sydney  
Inst. for Biotech. of Infect. Diseases  
Broadway NSW 2007  
Tel (02) 9514 4173 Fax (02) 9514 4021  
Email liz.harry@uts.edu.au

**Publications/Editorial Board**  
Dr Ailsa Hocking  
CSIRO, Div Food Science & Technology  
PO Box 52, North Ryde NSW 2113  
Tel (02) 9490 8520  
Email ailsa.hocking@csiro.au

**Research Trust Advisory & Development Committee**  
Assoc Prof Elizabeth Dax  
National Serology Reference Laboratory  
4 Fl, Healy Building  
41 Victoria Parade, Fitzroy VIC 3065  
Tel (03) 9418 1111  
Email liz@nrl.gov.au

## CONVENORS OF ASM SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

**Division 1 Antimicrobials**  
Dr John Merlino  
Concord Repatriation General Hospital  
Microbiology and Infectious Diseases  
Hospital Road, Concord NSW 2173  
Tel (02) 9767 6658  
Email merlinoj@email.cs.nsw.gov.au

**Mycobacteria**  
Dr Janet Fyfe  
Mycobacterium Reference Laboratory  
Victorian Infectious Diseases  
Reference Laboratory, 10 Wreckyn Street  
North Melbourne VIC 3051  
Tel (03) 9342 2617 Fax (03) 9342 2666  
Email Janet.Fyfe@mh.org.au

**Mycology**  
Dr Weiland Meyer, Westmead Hospital  
ICPMR CIDMLS Microbiology  
Level 2, Room 3114A  
Darcy Road, Westmead NSW 2145  
Tel (02) 8344 5701  
Email w.meyer@usyd.edu.au

**Mycoplasmatatales**  
Dr Steven Djordjevic  
Elizabeth Macarthur Agricultural Institute  
Private Mail Bag 8, Camden NSW 2570  
Tel (02) 4640 6426  
Email steve.djordjevic@dpi.nsw.gov.au

**Ocular Microbiology**  
Dr Carol Lakkis  
University of Melbourne  
Clinical Vision Research Aust  
Crn Cardigan & Keppel St  
Carlton VIC 3053  
Tel (03) 9349 7420  
Fax (03) 9349 7498  
Email clakkis@vco.org.au

**Parasitology & Tropical Medicine**  
Dr Andrew Butcher  
Senior Medical Scientist  
Adjunct Senior Lecturer  
University of South Australia  
Institute of Medical & Veterinary  
Science  
The Queen Elizabeth Hospital  
Department of Clinical Microbiology &  
Infectious Diseases  
28 Woodville Road, Woodville SA 5011  
Tel (08) 8222 6728  
Fax (08) 8222 6032  
Email andrew.butcher@imvs.sa.gov.au

**Public Health Microbiology**  
Dr Geoffrey Hogg  
University of Melbourne  
Microbiological Diagnostic Unit  
Parkville VIC 3052  
Tel (03) 8344 5713  
Email g.hogg@mdu.unimelb.edu.au

**Clinical Serology & Molecular**  
David Dickeson  
Serology Manager, Centre for Infectious  
Diseases & Microbiology Lab Services  
Level 3, ICPMR, Westmead Hospital  
Westmead NSW 2145  
Tel (02) 9845 6861 Fax (02) 9633 5314  
Email david.dickeson@swahs.health.nsw.gov.au

**Veterinary Microbiology**  
Dr Glenn Browning  
The University of Melbourne  
Vet Preclinical Centre  
Gratton Street, Parkville VIC 3052  
Tel (03) 8344 7342  
Email glenfb@unimelb.edu.au

**Women's & Children's Microbiology**  
*Convenor*  
Dr Suzanne Garland  
Royal Children's Hospital  
Microbiology, 132 Grattan Street  
Melbourne VIC 3000  
Tel (03) 9344 2476  
Email Suzanne.garland@rwh.org.au

*Secretary*  
Mr Andrew Lawrence  
Women's & Children's Hospital  
Microbiology & Infectious Diseases Dept  
72 King William Rd, Nth Adelaide SA 5006  
Tel (08) 8161 6376  
Fax (08) 8161 6051  
Email andrew.lawrence@cywhs.sa.gov.au

**Division 2 Virology**  
Vacant

**Division 3 AquaSIG – Water Microbiology**  
Mr Simon Rockliff  
ACT Health  
ACT Government Analytical Laboratories  
Micro Section, Locked Bag 5,  
Western Creek ACT 2611  
Tel (02) 6205 8701 Fax (02) 6205 8703  
Email simon.rockliff@act.gov.au

**Cosmetics & Pharmaceuticals**  
Dr Paul Priscott  
AMS Laboratories Pty Ltd  
8 Rachael Close  
Silverwater NSW 2128  
Tel (02) 9704 2300  
Mobile 0414 772 096  
Fax (02) 9737 9425  
Email paul@amslabs.com.au

**Culture Media**  
Mr Peter Traynor  
Oxoid Australia Pty Limited  
20 Dalgleish Street, Thebarton SA 5031  
Tel 1800 33 11 63  
Email peter.traynor@oxoid.com.au

**Education**  
Dr Chris Burke  
Degree Coordinator  
National Centre for Marine Conservation  
and Resource Sustainability  
University of Tasmania, Locked Bag 1370  
Launceston TAS 7250  
Tel (03) 6324 3806  
Fax (03) 6324 3804  
Email C.Burke@utas.edu.au

**Food Microbiology**  
Sofroni Eglezos  
Technical Manager  
EML Consulting Services Qld Pty Ltd  
1/148 Tennyson Memorial Avenue  
Tennyson QLD 4105  
Tel (07) 3848 3622 Fax (07) 3392 8495  
Mobile 0410 664 530  
Email sofroni@eml.com.au  
www.eml.com.au

**Laboratory Management**  
Captain Dennis Mok, MASM  
Health Services – New South Wales  
Victoria Barracks  
Paddington NSW 2021  
Email: convenorsig@gmail.com

**Microbial Ecology**  
Dr John Bowman  
University of Tasmania Antarctic CRC  
GPO Box 252-80, Hobart TAS 7001  
Tel (03) 6226 2776  
Email john.bowman@utas.edu.au

**Microbial Informatics**  
AProf Michael Wise  
University of Western Australia  
Biochemistry M310  
35 Stirling Highway, Crawley WA 6009  
Tel 08 6488 4410  
Fax 08 6488 1148  
Email michael.wise@uwa.edu.au

**Probiotic & Enteric Microbial Diversity SIG**  
Dr James Chin, NSW Agriculture  
PO Box 128, Glenfield NSW 2167  
Tel (02) 4640 6359  
Email james.chin@dpi.nsw.gov.au

### Rapid Methods

Vacant

**Students**  
*Convenor*  
Si Ming Man  
PhD Candidate, School of Biotechnology  
& Biomolecular Sciences  
University of New South Wales  
Sydney, NSW 2052  
Tel (02) 9385 3514  
Fax (02) 9385 1483  
Email s.man@student.unsw.edu.au

**Division 4 Molecular Microbiology**  
Dr Peter Lewis  
School of Environmental & Life Sciences  
University of Newcastle  
Callaghan NSW 2308  
Tel (02) 4921 5701  
Fax (02) 4921 6923  
Email peter.lewis@newcastle.edu.au