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Vertical Transmission



Hatch Stokes

President ASM

In the last VI, I mentioned the new look website. Since then we have introduced the ability to join and rejoin the society online, with the new site being the launch point for this. This process has been some time in the making as it required major upgrades of the databases in the national office. Thanks to all the staff in the national office for helping to make this possible, most notably Lina Raco. Most members will have come into contact with or had help from Lina at some point as she has been with the Society since 2003. Lina left the ASM in September to take up another position in the hospital sector in Melbourne. On behalf of all members, I wish her all the best in her new job.

The outcomes for the new Future Fellows scheme were recently announced by the ARC. It was pleasing to see several microbiologists represented within this cohort. One of these was Liz Hartland, who is our 2010 Fenner Prize awardee. Liz also recently represented the ASM at the *Women in Science Breakfast and Workshop* held in Canberra, an event sponsored by the Federation of Australian Scientific and Technological Societies (FASTS). ASM is a member of FASTS and Liz's report can be found elsewhere in this edition of *Microbiology Australia*.

The first teleconference was recently held of our new standing committee, formed to represent members' interests in regard to career matters, including relating to national initiatives to require the accreditation of life scientists. These national initiatives will also potentially have other ramifications for many members, especially in regard to ongoing training requirements. The Chair of this new committee is Silvano Palladino. Other members, appointed by the Executive, are John Merlino, Peter Robertson and Steve Graves. We are now also looking for at least two other members to join the committee by nomination. If you are interested in joining this committee, please go to the ASM website for details on how to nominate. The accreditation of life scientists will have important career ramifications for many members. Recognising this and being aware that the process is moving forward quickly, we invite members with an interest in this process to join our email alert service. This service will ensure you are kept up to date with the workings of the committee, that you become quickly aware of information that comes to our notice from government and the Pathology Associations Council and will provide you with the opportunity to input into the committee in a timely manner. Details of how to register for these email alerts can be found on the ASM website. You will also find the Terms of Reference for that committee there.

Over the next few weeks and months I hope to visit as many state branches as possible, to discuss the latest developments in the Society, where it is going and what we are doing for our members. I look forward to seeing many of you at these meetings.