



From the Editor

Please note the following deadline for submissions to Syntrophy Volume 14:4:2013 **closes 23rd May 2013**. Email all contributions, as well as any suggestions or comments, to the Administrative Officer, Natasha Pavic, at natashapavic@hotmail.com.

Syntrophy is distributed to members via details recorded on the National office database. Print copies are available upon request.

Editorial board: Syntrophy is produced via the combined efforts of Natasha Pavic and the committee. The editorial is rotated amongst the editorial board members. The board members solicit the lead articles.

As the Australian Society *for* Microbiology, not just *of* microbiology, our *raison d'être* is to further the science of microbiology. As well as promoting microbiology in general, the Society seeks to encourage people in their practice of the profession of microbiology, whatever their setting.

Like many industries, those working in microbiology are faced with ever-growing demands on their time and energy, often with little thanks or reward. Maybe it doesn't help that our endeavours are often out of view.

As a Branch we are continually thankful for the contributions made to furthering the science of microbiology by people

across the diverse spectrum that makes up our Society. We acknowledge the hard work of putting together presentations or of hosting meetings, and are aware that there is effort involved in attending events in our leisure time. Examples of these can be seen in the reports from several recent SIG meetings as well as the BD Student Awards contained in this newsletter.

Thanks to its sponsors, the NSW-ACT Branch is able to offer many different types of awards to recognise the achievements and service of its members and encourage them in their contribution to microbiology. Yet we all know someone working in microbiology who although

highly deserving would never put themselves forward for this kind of recognition. Maybe that's you too. Perhaps it's time to put your name forward, or encourage that person you know to do the same?

Look out for awards advertised in this and future editions of *Syntrophy*, or visit the branch website www.asmnsw.com.au/awards.

We can all do with a bit of encouragement. We hope this newsletter encourages you too.

Peter Huntington

FOCUS *What does the symbiont *Blattabacterium cuenoti* do for its cockroach hosts?*

A/Prof Nathan Lo, School of Biological Sciences, University of Sydney

If you think you have been with your partner a long time, *Blattabacterium cuenoti* has maintained a high-fidelity relationship with its cockroach hosts for over 130 million years. The proto-cockroach diversified into 4500 extant species, including the charismatic giant soil-burrowing cockroach *Macropanesthia rhinoceros* (Figure 1), as well as the more well-known pest species *Periplaneta americana* and *Blattella germanica*. If we make two phylogenetic trees, one with genes of the cockroach and termite hosts and the other with genes of their

respective *B. cuenoti*, we find they match up beautifully. This is because the symbiont is transferred strictly from mother to offspring inside the eggs.

B. cuenoti is found in specialized 'bacteriocyte' cells of the cockroach 'fat-body' (an organ akin to the liver in vertebrates). These bacteriocytes are adjacent to other specialized fat-body cells that contain uric acid, a nitrogen-rich compound. Cockroaches are unique among insects in storing uric acid rather than excreting it as a waste product, which led

researchers in the 1970s to hypothesize that the main role of *B. cuenoti* was nitrogen recycling via uricolysis. However, testing this idea using traditional microbiological methods proved difficult because of *B. cuenoti*'s recalcitrance to being cultured. Recently, researchers have turned to genome sequencing to infer the symbiont's functions.

Genome sequences are now available from seven diverse *B. cuenoti* representatives, and range in size from 590-641 kb. This is much smaller than the genomes

Continued on page 8...

In this issue

Focus	1
News & Notices	2
ASM Sponsors 2013	2
ASM Awards 2013	6
Focus continued	8
Recent Reports	9
ASM Contact Details	14



BIOMÉRIEUX

Introducing : SNAP N' CAP



The novel swab capture system from Medical Wire.

- ***Captured swab is removed with cap.***
- ***High absorbency for optimum sample uptake.***
- ***Maximum release of micro-organisms into liquid media.***
- ***Ideal for use with automated platforms such as PREVI Isola™***
- ***SNAP N' CAP is featured on***
 - Σ-Transwab®, Fecal Transwab®***
 - Σ-Virocult® and Σ-VCM®***

News & Notices

Call for Lead Articles!!!

If you would like to contribute an article to *Syntrophy*, please contact Nick Coleman at nicholas.coleman@sydney.edu.au.

The requirements for all articles submitted are: 600 word limit

No more than 5 references

A short biography to be submitted with the article



Introducing Cepheid's latest addition to the GeneXpert menu – Now TGA registered!

Xpert[®] CT/NG

Three targets. 90 minutes. No repeat testing.

- Chlamydia trachomatis
- Neisseria gonorrhoeae (dual targets deliver confirmation on the first result)

Three specimen types:

- Urine
- Self-collected vaginal
- Endocervical



Xpert cartridge design eliminates contamination and protects integrity of results

Built-in controls ensure optimal sensitivity and specificity

- Sample Processing Control — Monitors the real-time PCR reaction
- Sample Adequacy Control — Confirms sample contains human cells
- Probe Check Control — Verifies optimal reagent performance



Diagnostic
TECHNOLOGY

For further information,
please contact Diagnostic Technology:
info@diagnostictechnology.com.au 1800 803 950
www.diagnostictechnology.com.au

ASM Sponsors 2013

Platinum



www.biomerieux.com.au

Gold



www.merckmillipore.com

Silver



Helping all people
live healthy lives

www.bd.com



www.edwardsco.com.au



www.thermofisher.com.au

Bronze



www.abacus-als.com



Diagnostic
TECHNOLOGY

www.diagnostictechnology.com.au



FRIDAY 31ST MAY 2013

WHOLE GENOME SEQUENCING IN CLINICAL AND PUBLIC HEALTH MICROBIOLOGY

CIDM-PH & SEIB Workshop

Loewenthal Auditorium, Westmead Hospital, Sydney

Invited Speakers:

Professor Eddie Holmes, University of Sydney and Fogarty International Center, National Institute of Health, USA

Dr Grant Hill-Cawthorne, SEIB and the University of Cambridge, UK

Dr Tanya Golubchik, Departments of Medicine and Statistics, University of Oxford, UK

A/Prof Ruiting Lan, University of New South Wales

Dr Sebastian van Hal, Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Sydney



The aim of this workshop is to give microbiologists an overview of the applications of next generation sequencing (NGS) in diagnosis and surveillance of infectious diseases. The emphasis will be on methods of analysis of bacterial and viral genome sequencing data generated by NGS platforms, principally by benchtop Illumina and Ion Torrent, and on the utility of NGS for infection control and public health.

A Centre for Infectious Diseases & Microbiology – Public Health (CIDM-PH) and Sydney Emerging Infections and Biosecurity Institute (SEIB), University of Sydney, Workshop

Program and Registration
www.cidmpublichealth.org

www.sydney.edu.au/seib

Workshop Enquiries

Ph: (02) 9845 9870

lou.orszulak@swahs.health.nsw.gov.au

Workshop Location, Accommodation and Travel

Workshop Location

Loewenthal Auditorium, Westmead Education & Conference Centre, Westmead Hospital
Cnr Hawkesbury & Darcy Roads
Westmead, Sydney, NSW 2145
Australia

Accommodation

The following links may be helpful in finding accommodation close to Westmead Hospital:

Wesley Lodge Westmead www.wesleylodge.com.au

Park Royal Parramatta www.parkroyalhotels.com

Transport

The following links may be helpful in finding public transport to Westmead:

Cityrail Timetable information <http://www.cityrail.info>

Transport Infoline <http://www.131500.com.au>

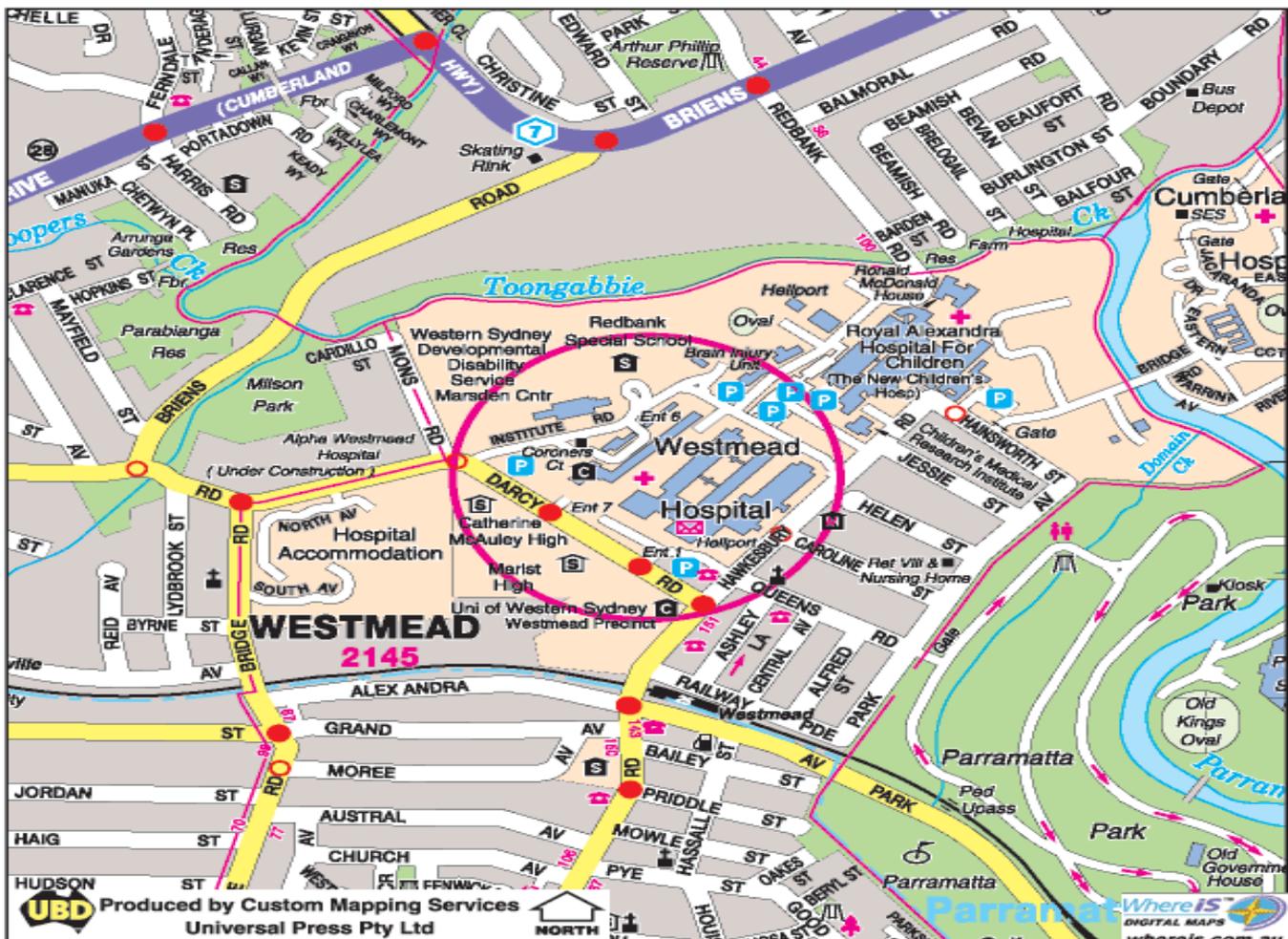
For more information on public transport, visitor guides and information on Sydney, please visit <http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au>

Parking

Limited car parking is available on site. The following fees apply: up to 1 hour \$5, 1-2 hours \$8, 2-3 hours \$10, 3-4 hours \$12, 4-5 hours \$14, > 5 hours \$16.00.

Special needs

This meeting is accessible to all attendees. Please notify Lou Orszulik at Lou.Orszulik@swahs.health.nsw.gov.au





Joe Levey Country Travel Award 2013

AWARD: The Joe Levey Country Travel Awards (up to two will be awarded per year) will consist of a maximum of \$500 to cover budget travel and accommodation costs for a country microbiologist to visit another laboratory or institution within NSW or the ACT, with the aim of learning a new technique, or to attend a scientific meeting within Australia.

ELIGIBILITY: All current Australian Society for Microbiology members who reside in a country region of NSW. Applicants must have been a member of ASM for at least 12 months before the Award application is submitted.

CRITERIA:

Applicants are required to submit the following:

1. A one page account of their current employment and responsibilities.
2. A one page proposal of their objectives in seeking further training. This proposal should provide clear justification of the need to travel. The ASM NSW-ACT Branch committee must be convinced that the training cannot be undertaken at, or near, the applicant's place of work and that the visit funded will result in benefits that could not reasonably be expected to have accrued at the applicant's place of work. Applicants must specify the proposed start and finish dates for training.
3. Statements of approval to undertake training from their supervisor and host.
4. Estimate of travel and accommodation costs & amount requested with justification. Payment will be made on presentation of tax invoices or receipts.
5. Recipients are required to write a brief one page report for Syntrophy, to be submitted no later than 4 weeks after the completion of training or conference attendance.

CLOSING DATE: 20th June 2013

APPLICATIONS TO:

Peter Huntington, ASM NSW-ACT Branch Secretary

Email: phuntington@nsccaahs.health.nsw.gov.au

Ph: (02) 9926 4329



**Australian Society for Microbiology
NSW-ACT Branch**

James Vincent Scholarship

SCHOLARSHIP: The James Vincent scholarship may take the form of either a travel grant to attend a relevant national or international conference, to obtain skills available only at another institution in Australia or overseas, or to satisfy other specific requirements of their higher degree research programme. The scholarship will be awarded by the School of Molecular Biosciences of the University of Sydney, under the recommendation of the NSW Branch of the Australian Society for Microbiology.

ELIGIBILITY:

- Honours and postgraduate research students at the University of Sydney or University of New South Wales.
- Students working in the area of symbiotic nitrogen fixation, the major research area of Professor Vincent, may receive preference.
- If not currently a student member of ASM, applicants must be eligible for membership and apply for membership at time of application for award.

CRITERIA:

1. Applicants should submit details of their academic record and two referee's reports
2. Applicants should briefly justify their proposal and suggested budget in terms of the object of the scholarship.
3. The value of the scholarship shall depend on the financial needs of the applicant subject to the availability of funding, but shall not exceed the previous year's net income to the fund. The amount offered each year will be limited to the earnings generated from the funds held in the Vincent award, less 10% which will be added to the capital to allow for growth.
4. The scholarship is tenable for 1 year.
5. 1 award per year. No award may be given in the event that the NSW branch committee in consultation with the J Vincent representatives at USyd and UNSW feel there is no suitable applicant.

CLOSING DATE: 30th June 2013

Send applications to:

Assoc. Prof. Andrew Holmes,
School of Molecular and Microbial Biosciences,
University of Sydney, NSW 2006
Email: andrew.holmes@sydney.edu.au

Or

Prof. Brett Neilan,
School of Biotechnology and Biomolecular Sciences,
The University of New South Wales
UNSW
SYDNEY NSW 2052
Email: b.neilan@unsw.edu.au

Focus continued



Figure 1

of their closest culturable relatives (3-5 Mb), which are *Flavobacterium* spp. The seven *B. cuenoti* genomes are remarkably similar in gene content and order, which suggests that genome size reduction occurred early in the evolution of the symbiosis.

Surprisingly, genes encoding uricolytic enzymes are absent in all examined *B. cuenoti*. However, genes for glutamate synthesis from urea and ammonia are universally present. In *B. cuenoti* from pest cockroaches, genetic pathways for producing all essential amino acids, as well as various vitamins, are present, but in *B. cuenoti* of the wood-feeding cockroach *Cryptocercus punctulatus* and the termite *Mastotermes darwiniensis*, many of these amino acid synthesis pathways are absent (Figure 2).

Why have *B. cuenoti* from *C. punctulatus* and *M. darwiniensis* lost the ability to produce essential amino acids? We hypothesize that the gut fauna of these insects, which is highly unique in containing parabasalid and oxymonad flagellates and associated bacteria, has taken over the role of *B. cuenoti* in the supply of amino acids to the host. Because of their host's social behaviour, the microbes are reliably transferred from mother to offspring, which has led to relaxed selection on the maintenance of such pathways.

In conclusion, long term relationships usually cause each partner to change to some degree, and this is certainly the case for *B. cuenoti*. In the case of *C. punctulatus* and *M. darwiniensis*, this change appears to have been enhanced by the presence of an additional another group of high fidelity partners resident in the gut. *B. cuenoti* appears to provide an important role in nitrogen recycling for all of its host species, which allows the latter to store nitrogen as uric acid in times of plenty, and later metabolize it during times of scarcity.

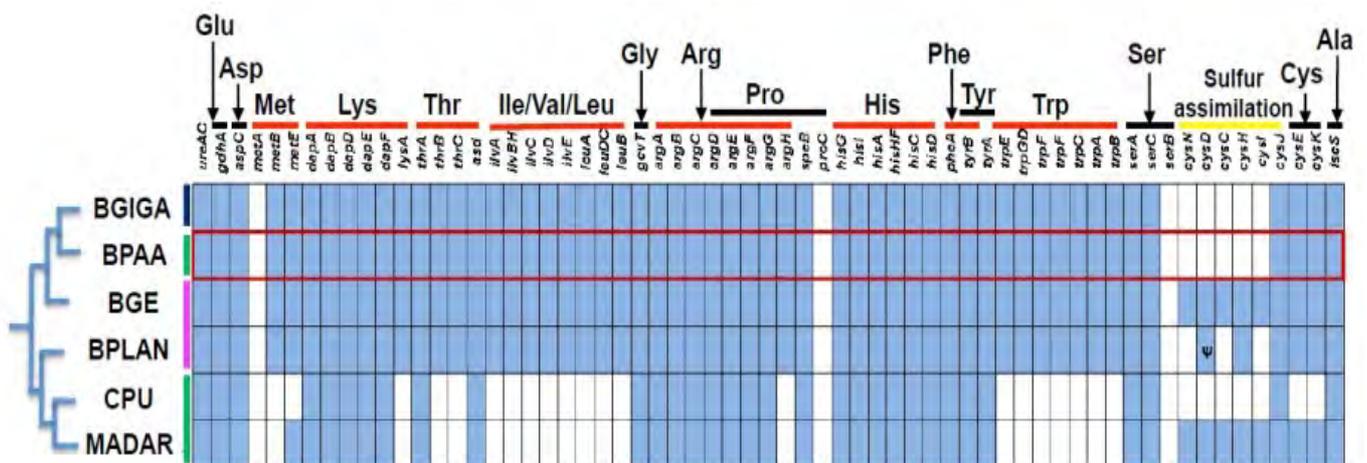


Figure 2. Presence or absence (blue and white boxes, respectively) of genes associated with amino acid synthesis, urea recycling and sulfur assimilation in the genomes of six *B. cuenoti* strains (Hosts are as follows: BGIGA: *Blaberus giganteus*; BPAA: *Panesthia angustipennis*; BGE: *Blatella germanica*; BPLAN: *Periplaneta americana*; CPU: *Cryptocercus punctulatus*; MADAR: *Mastotermes darwiniensis*). Green, pink and blue vertical bars indicate wood-feeding, omnivorous/pest and litter-feeding hosts, respectively. Phylogenetic relationships among the six strains were inferred based on an alignment of 13 protein coding genes, and are congruent with host relationships. Essential amino acid synthesis pathways are indicated by red horizontal bars, non-essential amino acid synthesis pathways are indicated by black bars. *cysD* in BGE is a pseudogene.

Focus continued

References

Maintenance of essential amino acid synthesis pathways in the *Blattabacterium* symbiont of a wood-feeding cockroach. Tokuda G*, Elbourne LDH*, Kinjo Y* (*equal first authors), Saitoh S, Sabree Z, Hojo M, Yamada A, Hayashi Y, Shigenobu S, Bandi C, Paulsen IT, Watanabe H, & Lo N (in press) *Biology Letters*

Genome shrinkage and loss of nutrient providing potential in the obligate symbiont of the primitive termite *Mastotermes darwiniensis*. Sabree S, Huang C, Arakawa G, Tokuda G, Lo N, Watanabe H, & Moran N (2012) *Applied and Environmental Microbiology*, 78: 204-210.

Evidence for co-cladogenesis between diverse dictyopteran lineages and their intracellular endosymbionts. Lo N, Bandi C, Watanabe H, Nalepa C, & Beninati T (2003) *Molecular Biology and Evolution*, 20: 9107-9113.

Biography

Nate Lo did his PhD at the University of Sydney in Michael Slaytor's insect biochemistry lab. He then worked as a postdoc in Milan (Italy) with Claudio Bandi, and in Tsukuba (Japan) with Hiroaki Noda. Nate is now the co-chief investigator of the Molecular Ecology, Evolution, and Phylogenetics (MEPP) laboratory in the School of Biological Sciences, University of Sydney. His primary research interest is in the evolution of insect/symbiont relationships, and particularly in using metagenomic approaches to understand the activities of unculturable bacterial symbionts.

Reports from Recent Events

Mycology SIG Meeting Royal North Shore Hospital 25th March

The meeting was held at the new RNSH building with a record 47 people attending. Some were fortunate to have a quick inspection of our new Microbiology Labs.

Five talks were presented:

1. **Dr Tasman Armytage**, (Haematology Registrar/Fellow, Dept RNSH) presented a case of mucormycosis caused by *Rhizopus oryzae* (*Rh. arrhizus*) in an AML middle aged woman whom had undergone an allograft bone marrow transplant. The fungus was isolated from several maxillary sinus samples. The patient survived the infection after surgery and going into remission, but unfortunately, later succumbed to her malignancy.
2. **Dr Phil Britton** (Paediatrician Fellow, New Children's Hospital Westmead), presented "Another flesh eating bug". His was a case of *Saksenaea vasiformis* in a 12 year old girl who first presented with what appeared to be a mosquito bite that rapidly developed into a large necrotic area on her upper arm over a period of only four days. No underlying immune suppression existed. The girl underwent some radical debridement surgery then skin grafts. Fortunately, no muscles were involved and functionality was maintained. *S. vasiformis*, a zygomycete fungus, is not a commonly encountered fungus. It is more likely fatal if systemic infections occur rather than subcutaneous infections (that have a much better outcome). Infections develop after insect bites (eg mosquito, scorpions) and traumatic environmental injuries.

Reports continued

3. **Dr Vana Nagendra** (Microbiology Registrar, Liverpool Hospital), presented "Exotic or endemic fungi?" a case of *Histoplasma capsulatum* from a male residing in Australia who had emigrated from Laos where he had previously gone caving. Reactivation of the *H. capsulatum* in his ankle occurred after he was given immune modulation therapy. *H. capsulatum*, a dimorphic fungus, is found in Australia where it is associated with bat guano in limestone caves and bird droppings (eg old chicken coops/farms, starling roosts etc.). It is more prevalent overseas and is more likely to be found in returned travellers or in this case, emigrants who have the fungus remain dormant for a long time but then develop infections due to reactivation caused by malignancy/immune suppression. It is rarely encountered.
4. **Dr Vicki Sukumaran** (Infectious Diseases Registrar, RNSH), presented a case of mixed fungal infection with *Scedosporium prolificans* and *Sc. apiospermum* after a garden injury. The middle aged woman was seen by her GP and given antibiotics after the wound was cleaned and stitched. Three months and three surgeries later, she presented to the infectious diseases team at RNSH. A piece of wood was removed from her leg and the mixed fungi were grown. She was treated with voriconazole and terbinafine. Now many months later she has recovered.
5. Finally, **Dr Archie Darbar** (Microbiology Specialist, RNSH) & **Kerry Weeks** (Mycology Lab, RNSH), presented a case of chromoblastomycosis in an elderly man, with renal disease. He had sustained a hand injury while gardening. The first sample was not cultured for fungi (histopathology only). Subsequent samples, three years later, grew the dematiaceous fungus, *Fonsecaea pedrosoi* complex. This fungus is the most common cause of chromoblastomycosis. This fungus generally occurs in tropical/temperate parts of the world, mainly in males who are outdoor workers. The extremities are usually infected after traumatic implantation with organic material. Infections can develop and remain chronic over many years.

Thank you to all those who spoke and gave their time and those who were interested to attend. It was great to see so many university students there as well. Also thank you to the Kolling Institute (University of Sydney) for the use of their lecture theatre and dining facilities. A final thank you to the ASM for their online promotion and to the ASM sponsors for funding the gourmet supper. The next Mycology SIG meeting will likely be held at The University of Sydney, towards the end of 2013. Stay tuned...

If you have ideas for future meetings, please contact me. 9926 4319 or email

kweeks@nsccha.health.nsw.gov.au

Kerry Weeks, Senior Hospital Scientist, Mycology Lab, PaLMS, RNSH

Reports continued

Becton Dickinson Awards Night University of Technology, Sydney 26th March

A good crowd turned up at the UTS Science Building for the Becton-Dickinson (BD) Awards Night. The BD Award allows an outstanding PhD student to attend the annual meeting of the Australian Society for Microbiology. Submitted abstracts are reviewed by a panel of judges, and the finalists present a talk at the awards night. The night is also an opportunity to enjoy pizza, drinks, and the company of other microbiologists.

One finalist this year (Jose Burgos-Portugal, UNSW) was unable to present on the evening, leaving a field of three to battle it out for the award. The quality of talks at the BD awards is always high, and tonight was no exception. The participants need to summarise their PhD work in a short space of time (12 min), and they need to hold up under 3 minutes of questions. This evening, the questions were challenging, with A/Prof Ruiting Lan of UNSW acting as chief inquisitor, and ensuring that the contestants had the knowledge to back up their presentations.



First speaker was Laura Nolan, from the Whitchurch lab at the UTS i3 institute. After a rocky start caused by some technical hiccups, Laura recovered well, and told us an interesting story about twitching motility in *Pseudomonas*. She has discovered that extracellular ATP (eATP) influences twitching motility in *P.aeruginosa*. The eATP is derived from a cell lysis phenomenon, that occurs in some (but not all) of the *P.aeruginosa* cells in the culture. It was great to see the movies of live bacterial cells in Laura's talk - these give insights that cannot be easily shown on a graph, but also make for an entertaining presentation. Laura is currently using transposon mutagenesis to identify the genes and proteins that respond to eATP in *Pseudomonas*.

Our second speaker was Mohammad Hamidian, from the Hall lab in the School of Molecular Bioscience, University of Sydney. Mohammad's PhD research is on *Acinetobacter baumannii*, which is a Gram-negative bacterial pathogen that is increasingly recognised as a serious clinical problem. The value of a strong strain collection was one theme that emerged from Mohammad's talk. Using 27 isolates, collected over a 14 year period from several local hospitals, Mohammad has been able to show that the cephalosporin resistance gene *ampC* is moving between strains of *A.baumannii* by at least two different mechanisms, involving either direct insertion of a transposon, or larger-scale chromosomal rearrangements.



Reports continued

The speed with which bacteria acquire resistance is frightening; it seems that despite the good work of the Hall lab and others, *A.baumannii* is likely to be a problem for years to come.



The third and final speaker, Rita Rapa, is a student in the Stokes lab, in the i3 institute at UTS (a strong showing of locals tonight!). Rita's talk was also on the topic of mobile genetic elements, and their role in resistance. Rita works on *Vibrio cholerae*, and interestingly, her isolate collection was derived from the George's River in Sydney. It is surprising to think that we have this 'third world' pathogen right here with us in Sydney, and notably, these

environmental cholera isolates were pathogenic in mouse assays. Rita has discovered that one isolate contains a 32 kb genomic island, which is inserted in the *recA* gene.

Intriguingly, the island carries its own *recA* gene, and a variety of other DNA repair genes. Rita has shown that these genes provide resistance to UV radiation when cloned into *E.coli*. It is not yet clear what role these DNA damage repair genes play in the pathogenicity of cholera - this is a fascinating and still-evolving story.

While all speakers succeeded in entertaining and informing the crowd, only one could emerge as the winner. The judges awarded the BD award on the night to Laura Nolan. The high quality of the talks demanded that the ASM NSW/ACT Branch award also be presented, and this was awarded to Rita Rapa. Congratulations to all the finalists. We look forward to seeing more of their work in the future.

-Reported by Nick Coleman

Students, judges, chair and representatives from BD.

L to R:

Michael Wawrzyniak (Becton Dickinson)
 Peter Huntington (RNSH)
 Liz Harry (UTS)
 Ruth Hall (USYD)
 Ruiting Lan (UNSW)
 Mohammad Hamidian (USYD)
 Rita Rapa (UTS)
 Laura Nolan (UTS)
 David Newsome (Becton Dickinson)



ASM CS&M SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP

NSW-ACT Branch of the Australian Society for Microbiology,
Clinical Serology and Molecular Special Interest Group

Convenor: Deane Byers tel:(02) 9045 6070 Email: serology@rcpaqap.com.au
Treasurer/Secretary: David Dickeson tel:(02) 9845 6861 Email: david.dickeson@swahs.health.nsw.gov.au

It was great to see a good crowd of **60** at the latest CS&M SIG meeting, held at Douglass Hanly Moir Pathology, North Ryde. The meeting was kindly supported by the ASM NSW-ACT Branch.

Our first speaker, **Paul Austin** (Section Leader - Serology, Department of Virology & Immunology, LabPLUS, Auckland City Hospital, New Zealand), presented *'Whadd'ya mean the result is wrong ? The QC is perfect!!'*. Our international guest presented four interesting cases where QC was valid (within specified manufacturer ranges), yet patient results were clinically misleading and/or simply incorrect. The four assays were from four differing IVD producers assaying four different analytes. Paul suggested adherence to routine QC rules may not prevent poor quality patient results from being generated and reported. The dislocation of kit QC material from patient specimens is not restricted to a particular analyte or IVD manufacturer and the laboratory can usually implement effective compensatory monitoring / corrective protocols. The identification of like issues associated with other assays requires vigilance, commitment and high level communication with end user clinical colleagues. [Further information: PAustin@adhb.govt.nz]

Our second speaker, **Philip Cunningham** (Chief Operating Officer, St Vincents Centre for Applied Medical Research & Senior Operations Manager NSW State Reference Laboratory for HIV, St Vincents Hospital), presented *'Point of Care tests for HIV in Australia: update'*. Philip outlined the situation in Australia and talked about PoCT and the HIV 'window period', test performance and assays available. Philip suggested the following considerations; a training program for operators including accreditation, quality assurance - essential, targeted testing (high prevalence settings - sexual health settings, high case load GPs), formalise 'relationship' with NATA accredited labs, reactive PoCT tests confirmed with conventional testing, develop protocols and testing strategies, innovative education for the community, clear understanding about any tests limitations eg. acute infection and false positive results. [Further information: p.cunningham@amr.org.au]

Our final speaker was **Dr Miriam Paul** (Microbiology/Serology, Infectious Diseases Physician, Douglass Hanly Moir Pathology), presenting *'QuantiFERON-TB Gold In-Tube Assay: Principles, Pitfalls and Predictive Value'*. Miriam outlined TB in Australia and spoke about latent TB and reactivation. Some of the figures presented in terms of the estimated cost of TB screening programs in low risk populations were overwhelming. The use of screening assays and the QuantiFERON-TB Gold assay was explained including performance in various populations. There was also interesting discussion generated regarding indeterminate results and variability. [Further information: mpaul@dhm.com.au; Arthur.Tsiagalos@qiagen.com]

Thank you to all of the speakers, attendees and sponsors for a very informative evening... Look forward to seeing everyone at the next meeting... **Deane Byers** ASM NSW-ACT Branch CS&M SIG Convenor



ASM Contact Details

ASM NSW-ACT Branch Secretary – Peter Huntington

Tel: +61 2 9926 4329

Email: phuntington@nscchahs.health.nsw.gov.au

ASM NSW-ACT Branch Treasurer – Jim Manos

Tel: +61 2 9351 8942

Email: jim.manos@sydney.edu.au

ASM National Office

P.O. Box 375 South Melbourne

VIC 3205, Australia

Tel: 1300 656 423

Fax: 1300 655 841

Email: admin@theasm.com.au

Submissions and enquiries can be directed to the Administrative Officer

Natasha Pavic at natashapavic@hotmail.com. Companies seeking to fill positions and ASM members seeking employment are welcome to place an advertisement in an upcoming issue of Syntrophy. Please contact the Administrative Officer with your details for inclusion.

Websites

National ASM:

www.theasm.org.au/

ASM NSW-ACT Branch:

www.asmnsw.com.au/

ASM National Conference Calendar

July 2013	ASM2013 Adelaide
July 2014	ASM2014 Melbourne
July 2015	ASM2015 Canberra