



# Australian Neuroscience Society Newsletter

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## President's Perspective

I am pleased to offer the Society's congratulations to several members who have recently been awarded prestigious fellowships and honours.

**Lyn Beazley** (Chief Scientist of Western Australia) was made an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) in the 2009 Australia Day honours list. The award was made for service to medical science, particularly in the field of brain-related research both nationally and internationally, and as a contributor to the development of science policy in Western Australia.

**Shaun Collin** (University of Queensland) was awarded a Western Australian Premier's Research Fellowship for a period of four years to study the eco-physiological impacts of light and vision on biodiversity, sustainability and health. Shaun will move to the University of Western Australia at the end of the year to take-up his Fellowship, which was one of only two awarded in 2008.

**George Paxinos** (Prince of Wales Medical Research Institute, UNSW) was one of sixteen of the country's leading scientists honoured on 24 March by election to the Australian Academy of Science; George was cited for his distinguished work on neuroscience, particularly the construction of brain and spinal cord atlases. It has been a good year for George, who also received one of the twelve Australia Fellowships awarded by the NHMRC in round three. The \$4,000,000 funding over five years will enable George's laboratory to construct a new generation of brain atlases using genetic and imaging techniques. Only one other ANS member, **Sam Berkovic**, has previously been awarded an Australia Fellowship.

**Pankaj Sah** (Queensland Brain Institute) received an NHMRC Excellence Award as the highest ranked recipient of an NHMRC project grant in the last round. Pankaj's laboratory uses electrophysiology, imaging and molecular techniques to study the way the brain's amygdala lays down emotional memory; disorders of this region lead to diseases such as anxiety and post-traumatic stress. Another NHMRC Excellence Award was made to neurologist Graeme Jackson, Director and Founder of Melbourne's Brain Research Institute, for his work in defining the causes of epilepsy and for classifying the brain's developmental abnormalities using MRI.

**2009 Canberra Meeting.** Last year's meeting in Hobart was a hard act to follow but the Canberra LOC rose to the occasion. Michael Ibbotson (Chair), Clarke Raymond, Jan Provis, Greg Stuart and Ted Maddess did an outstanding job under trying budget circumstances. As usual, Sally and Chris Jay ensured that all aspects of the Meeting ran smoothly. David Small and the Programming Committee are to be congratulated for putting together an interesting mix of symposia, talks and posters. There were many memorable moments but, for me, Matthew Wilson's imitations of the sound of spiking neurons were a special treat. The past and present of ANU neuroscience were highlighted during the meeting, with David Curtis receiving the Society's Distinguished Achievement Award and Greg Stuart giving the ANS Plenary Lecture. The conference dinner in the Great Hall of Parliament

House was a highpoint and will be remembered long after we have forgotten the science. (Everyone remembers the dinner at the trotting races during the 1990 Brisbane Meeting, when the bookies cleaned-out the ANS members, but can anyone name the plenary lecturers?)

**President-Elect.** The election for ANS President attracted three outstanding candidates, **Sarah Dunlop** from Western Australia, **Trevor Kilpatrick** from Victoria, and **Paul Pilowsky** from New South Wales. Competitive elections for Council positions are important in keeping the Society open and responsive to its members and I thank all three candidates for standing. I was pleased to announce at the AGM that Sarah had won the election, not least because she will be the Society's first President from the West. I understand that the election result was close, being decided on preferences.

The biennial symposium of the Federation of Asian and Oceanian Societies (FAONS) was scheduled to be held in Bangkok in December 2008 but was postponed until May 2009 because of the political unrest in Thailand. I therefore asked Sarah to take over from me as the ANS representative on the FAONS Council, so as to provide continuity with her term as ANS President in 2010-2011.

**ANS Medallions.** The first ANS Medallion was awarded to YS Chan of the University of Hong Kong at the Society for Neuroscience meeting in Washington DC. Another 13 Medallions were awarded during the 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting in January 2009, including awards to six out-going members of ANS Council, the four plenary lecturers in Canberra, **Bob Porter** (new Honorary Member), and **Michael Ibbotson** (Chair of the LOC). (continued)

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## President's Perspective (cont.)

The ANS Medallion was also awarded to **Paul Pilowsky** in appreciation of both his outstanding service to the Society, as Editor from 1996-2001, and to neuroscience in the Asia-Pacific region in general, for his multifaceted contributions in recent years to the FAONS Executive Committee and the Asia-Pacific Regional Committee (APRC) of IBRO.

*ANS Medallions have been awarded to the following people:*

1. Ying-Shing Chan (APRC Chair, 2002-2008)
2. Glenda Halliday (ANS President, 2006-2007)
3. Andrew Lawrence (ANS Treasurer, 2002-2007)
4. Paul Martin (ANS Editor, 2002-2007)
5. Heather Young (ANS Secretary, 2006-2007)
6. Lisa Foa (Tasmania State Rep, 2005-2008; LOC Chair, 2008)
7. Helen Cooper (Queensland State Rep, 2005-2008)
8. Matthew Wilson (Overseas Plenary Lecturer, 2009)
9. Greg Stuart (ANS Plenary Lecturer, 2009)
10. Phil Beart (Lawrie Austin Lecturer, 2009)
11. Peter Reilly (Eccles Lecturer, 2009)
12. Paul Pilowsky
13. Robert Porter (Honorary Member, 2007)
14. Michael Ibbotson (LOC Chair, 2009)

**2009 Awards and Prizes.** Council was pleased that all of the Society's Awards and Prizes attracted good fields of high quality candidates. For each Award/Prize, ANS officers who do not have conflicts of interest with any of the applicants select three judges who are ANS members. The judges are each asked to rank the applicants; their identities, rankings and comments are not made available to the applicants or the other judges. This was the first year in which Council imposed the new requirement that nominees must be ANS Members in good standing on the 30<sup>th</sup> June in the year of nomination.

**Michael Piper** (Queensland Brain Institute) won the AW Campbell Award, which is awarded for the best contribution by a member of the Society in their first five postdoctoral years.

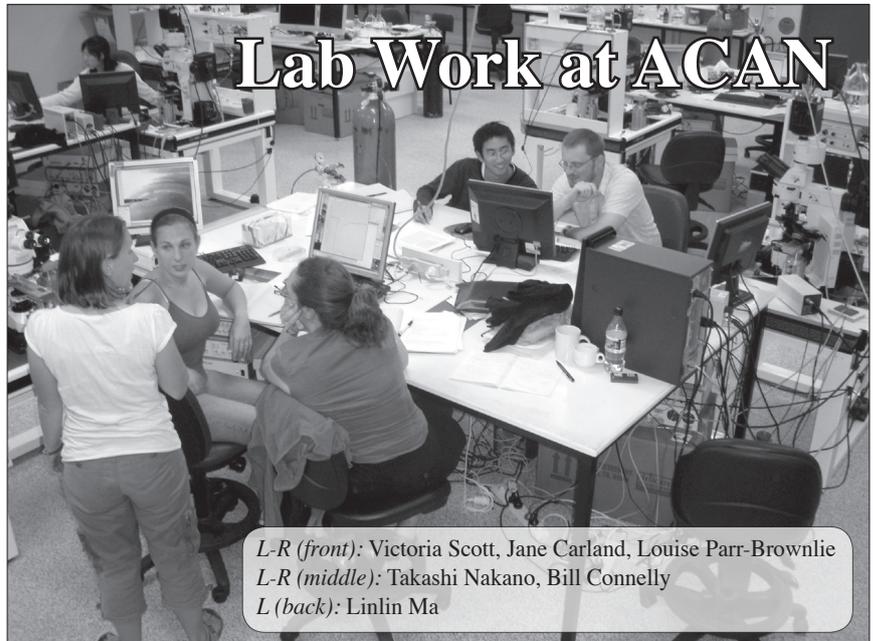
**Sarah Dunlop** (University of Western Australia) won the Nina Kondelos Prize, which is awarded to a female neuroscientist for outstanding contribution to basic or clinical neuroscience research. The Paxinos-Watson Prize is awarded for the most significant neuroscience paper published by a full member of the society in the year prior to submission of the nomination. This year's Prize was awarded to the 2007 paper by **Maarten Kole, Johannes Letzkus** and **Greg Stuart** on "Axon initial segment Kv1 channels control axonal action potential waveform and synaptic efficacy" published in *Neuron* 55: 633-647.

The Istvan Törk Prize is for the best oral presentation by a student member of the Society at the Annual Meeting and was awarded to three students in 2009: **Dana Bradford** (Queensland Brain Institute), **Simona Carbone** (Flinders University) and **Ben Sivyer** (Queensland Brain Institute).

The Sir Grafton Elliot-Smith Award is for the best poster by a student member of the Society at the Annual Meeting and was awarded to five students in 2009: **John Cirillo** (University of Adelaide), **Benjaporn Homkajorn** (Flinders University), **Hyunchul Lee** (University of Sydney), **Laura Oluich** (Howard Florey Institute), and **Sonali Pandit** (Garvan Institute of Medical Research)

**Australian Course in Advanced Neuroscience (ACAN).** One of the most enjoyable aspects of being ANS President has been my involvement with ACAN, most formally as the ANS representative on the Course Management Committee since July 2007. Moreover, I have had the pleasure of seeing ACAN in operation at the Moreton Bay Research Station over several years and two of my PhD students have benefited greatly from attending previous courses.

When I visited ACAN in April 2008, shortly after becoming ANS President, I was presented with an interesting proposal by the course founders, Alan Finkel and Steve Redman, and the present course director, John Bekkers. They noted that ACAN was now well established and running smoothly, with a strong reputation at home and abroad, and it may be appropriate for the Australian neuroscience community to assume responsibility for the course. They proposed that the funds and equipment of ACAN Ltd be transferred to ANS Inc. In addition, Alan Finkel committed to providing another \$500,000 funding from the A & E Finkel Foundation, to ensure the continued viability of the course in the short-term.



ANS Council expressed strong support for the plan at the mid-year meeting, subject to a satisfactory agreement being negotiated between ANS, ACAN Ltd and the Finkel Foundation. Andrew Lawrence was co-opted back-on to Council to chair a small group to work out the nuts and bolts of the agreement, given his extensive experience with the Society's financial and constitutional arrangements. In fact, it turned out to be more complicated than any of us expected, both for ACAN Ltd to donate its assets and for ANS to accept them. A final agreement was only reached at the end of 2008, with ANS Council the last party to formally approve the agreement, two days before it was signed at the Canberra AGM.

The signing of the agreement on 29<sup>th</sup> January was one of the highlights of the Canberra Meeting. Alan Finkel, Steve Redman and David Copolov signed as the Directors of ACAN Ltd; Alan and Elizabeth Finkel signed as the Trustees of the Finkel Foundation; Ann Turnley and I signed on behalf of ANS; John Bekkers witnessed the agreement as the ACAN Course Director. The signing was followed by a well-received speech by Alan Finkel, in which he outlined both the history of ACAN and his hopes for the future. Five weeks later, Jackie Phillips sent the ANS officers a short email message: "Just to let you know we are the proud owners of an ANS (ACAN) Account to the value of \$574,560.33, to be exact."

The ACAN Agreement specifies how the course should be administered following the acquisition and a copy can be downloaded from the ACAN page on the ANS website ([www.ans.org.au/acan/](http://www.ans.org.au/acan/)). A new Course Management Committee (CMC) has been constituted, comprising the ANS President (ex-officio), the Course Director (ex-officio), two nominees of the Finkel Foundation (Alan Finkel and Steve Redman), and three nominees of the ANS Council (Cliff Abraham, Sarah Dunlop and Pankaj Sah). On the unanimous advice of the new Committee, ANS Council was delighted to appoint Alan Finkel as Chair of the CMC.

## **President's Perspective (cont.)**

The extraordinarily generous donation by Alan and Elizabeth Finkel to the Australian Neuroscience Society may serve more purposes than simply underwriting the viability of ACAN in the next few years. The continued success of ACAN may provide a role model of how professional scientific societies can facilitate postgraduate and postdoctoral training across institutional boundaries. This seems particularly important in Australia because PhD training in this country usually involves negligible course work but Government funding agencies have no mechanisms for filling the gap.

**Australian Brain Bee Challenge (ABBC)**. Although the first national final of the Brain Bee was held at the Melbourne IBRO Congress in July 2007, ANS has only played an informal role in the administration of ABBC, helping to identify the state coordinators to take the competition nationally, beyond the Queensland base established by Linda Richards and the Queensland Brain Institute (QBI). This hands-off approach reflected both financial caution in case the IBRO Congress ran at a loss and concerns over whether the Brain Bee should be a core business of the Society.

The undoubted success of the Brain Bee in most of the States and in New Zealand has led to a groundswell from ANS members and the state representatives for ANS to take a more active role, reflecting the Society's position as the peak neuroscience body in the country. Last year, ANS provided funds for the state/region winners and their guardians to attend the national final of the Brain Bee at QBI in August 2008. (It was not possible to hold the final at the Hobart Meeting in January 2008, which followed only six months after the IBRO Congress.) However, the national final will return to the ANS Meeting from now on, with the 2009 final being held at the beginning of the Sydney Meeting in January 2010.

An MoU has been drawn-up between the Society and QBI specifying that the ABBC will be administered under the joint auspices of the two organisations. The ABBC would operate within a policy framework set by the ABBC Executive Board, comprising a nominee of the Director of QBI, a nominee of the ANS Council, and the chair of the ABBC National Committee (Linda Richards). The National Committee will comprise the national chair, the state/region coordinators, and the national administrator (Rhonda Lyons, QBI). It has been designated a Committee of ANS and will report on its activities to the ANS Council as well as to the Executive Board. The state/region coordinators will be appointed in consultation with the respective state representatives on ANS Council.

Financial responsibility for the national activities of ABBC rests with QBI while the state/region committees and associated institutions are responsible for raising sponsorship money to fund local activities. ANS will provide appropriate space at the Annual Meeting for conducting the ABBC national finals, and other financial support will be determined by Council yearly in advance. ANS Council resolved to provide \$13,000 funding to cover the airfares and accommodation for the state/region winners and their guardians to attend the national final in Sydney.

ANS is proud to be the co-sponsor of the ABBC, which is a marvelous initiative that reaches out to the wider community. I congratulate Linda Richards, the state/region coordinators and their committees for their tireless efforts in making Brain Bee the great success that it has become. The 2009 members of the ABBC National Committee are: Linda Richards (Queensland, Chair), Keely Bumsted-O'Brien (ACT), Vaughan Macefield (New South Wales), Elizabeth Coulson (Northern Territory), Paul Thomas (South Australia), Rob Gasperini (Tasmania), Juliet Taylor (Victoria), Jennifer Rodger (Western Australia), Louise Nicholson (North Island of New Zealand) and Stephen Bunn (South Island of New Zealand). Further information about the Australian Brain Bee Challenge can be found at the competition's informative website, <https://abbc.edu.au>.

**2010 Sydney Meeting**. Planning for the joint meeting between ANS and the Australian Physiological Society (AuPS) from 31<sup>st</sup> January to 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2010 is proceeding well under the joint chairmanship of Sam Solomon and Roger Dampney. The meeting will celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of AuPS. I am delighted to announce that Herbert Herzog of the Garvan Institute of Medical Research has accepted Council's invitation to give the ANS Plenary Lecture. Gilles Laurent from the Max Planck Institute for Brain Research in Frankfurt will give the Overseas Plenary Lecture. On the AuPS side, the plenary lecturers will be David Adams (Queensland Brain Institute) and David Atwell (University College London).

David Vaney 30<sup>th</sup> March 2009

## **Vale – Julia Shand**

Julia Shand was born on 28th March 1956. She graduated from The University of Durham, England in 1978 with her BSc (Honours) whereupon she worked until 1988 in the Department of Zoology, University of Bristol developing her passion for the study of vision under the tutelage of the late Dr J.N. Lythgoe. Julia's work was highly successful in attracting funding to allow her to explore the wonders of the perception of light in different animal species. She immigrated to Australia where she started her doctoral studies in 1989 at the Department of Marine Biology, James Cook University of North Queensland and in collaboration with the Australian Institute of Marine Science, Townsville. She obtained her PhD in 1994 and during this time she and her husband, Rob McCauley, had two children, Rebecca, born in 1991, and Guy, in 1993. Throughout her career, Julia put her family first and foremost.

The family moved to Western Australia where Julia took up a position in 1996 at the Department of Zoology, The University of Western Australia, to continue her research into the comparative neurobiology of vision. She moved her lab in 2007 becoming integrated with Experimental and Regenerative Neurosciences, School of Animal Biology, The University of Western Australia where she continued to develop her Colour Vision group in collaboration with many esteemed scientists and colleagues, encompassing a highly potent local, national and international team. Julia received considerable research funding, publishing her findings in a wide variety of highly respected international scientific journals. She supervised Honours, Masters and PhD students, as well as postdoctoral researchers, and consistently undertook her share in the world of scientific service.

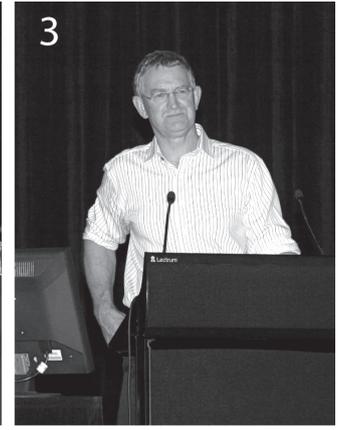
Julia will be remembered by us all with very deep love and fondness for the extraordinary sense of calm that surrounded her and with which she surrounded, and quietly encouraged, others. She led by example and by truth and by sheer hard work. She had the kindest sense of humour and the gentlest of demeanours. Just as Julia put others first throughout her life, so she did during her long illness which she fought with such bravery and determination, at the same time making her acceptance and departure graceful, without complaint and thus easier for others.

Julia, who taught the world so much about the way we and other animals see colour and light, was the serene essence of colour and light itself. She shone, simply and gently and will continue to shine through her work and through her family.

Our thoughts and hearts are with Julia's beloved husband, Rob, their much loved children, Rebecca and Guy as well as Julia's sister, Sarah, and her brother, Laurence.

Sarah Dunlop, Professor.  
The University of Western Australia.

# 29th Annual Meeting in Canberra



**1.** Presentation of ANS Medallions to out-going Council members, left to right: Andy Lawrence (Treasurer, 2002-2007), Lisa Foa (Tasmania State Rep, 2005-2008), Glenda Halliday (President, 2006-2007), Heather Young (Secretary, 2006-2007), David Vaney, Helen Cooper (Queensland State Rep, 2005-2008) and Paul Martin (Editor, 2002-2007). **2.** ANS Plenary Lecturer, Greg Stuart, receives ANS Medallion from David Vaney. **3.** Lawrie Austin Lecturer, Phil Beart. **4.** Signing of The Agreement between ANS, ACAN Ltd and The Finkel Foundation, left to right: Elizabeth Finkel, Alan Finkel, David Vaney, Ann Turnley and Steve Redman. **5.** Past-President Glenda Halliday presents ANS Medallion to new Honorary Member, Bob Porter. **6.** David Curtis addresses the AGM following receipt of the Distinguished Achievement Award. **7.** Conference dinner in The Great Hall of Parliament House. **8.** Bob Porter, David and Laurie Curtis. **9.** David Copolov, Alan and Elizabeth Finkel, Steve Redman. **10.** Michael Ibbotson (LOC Chair), Matt Wilson (Overseas Plenary Lecturer) and Glenda Halliday. **11.** Former Presidents, Elspeth McLachlan and Marcello Costa.

# AUSTRALIAN COURSE IN ADVANCED NEUROSCIENCE

*ANS recently acquired the Australian Course in Advanced Neuroscience (ACAN). To mark this occasion, we asked ACAN's founder, Alan Finkel, to reflect on its establishment, history and future directions.*

For an electrical engineer, my engagement with neuroscience has been longer and more enduring than might be expected. After completing a PhD at Monash University in electrical engineering and then a postdoctoral research fellowship at the John Curtin School of Medical Research, I started a company named Axon Instruments in Silicon Valley, California, for the purpose of making voltage clamp amplifiers. In 1983, our inaugural device was the Axoclamp, a combined single-electrode and two-electrode voltage clamp – an analogue, manually operated device. By the time Axon was acquired in 2004, our leading device was a fully automated patch-clamp called the PatchXpress, which I liked to think of as sixteen computer postdocs in a box, tirelessly running their patch clamp experiments, pooling their results, analysing the data and collating them for statistical analysis.

As a PhD student and postdoctoral research fellow I was fascinated by neuroscience. I realized, however, that I was a better engineer than I was a research scientist, so I founded a company that enabled me to apply my engineering expertise to the field that interested me. Throughout Axon's existence our commitment was unwaveringly to quality. I knew that quality would breed success better than hype or marketing. This is as true in research as it is in business.

At Axon we also understood that one has to invest on many fronts, including the cultivation of future customers. For that reason, we regularly supplied equipment at no cost to the summer neuroscience courses in Woods Hole and Cold Spring Harbour. On the few occasions I was able to personally spend some time at either of those two courses I was amazed by the enthusiasm and hard work of the students and instructors.

After Axon was acquired in 2004 I was at an age, position and attitude to give back to the Australian neuroscience community that had given me my career start and supported me throughout. I had a breakfast with my wife Elizabeth, and with my friend Professor David Copolov, to discuss the best way to do this, and after probing my interests they encouraged me to establish a "Woods Hole Down Under" course to rival the best of the best. David prodded me along and very soon there appeared an extremely enthusiastic group of Australia's preeminent neuroscientists supporting the initiative that eventually became known as the Australian Course in Advanced Neuroscience (ACAN).

The inaugural Course Director, Professor Steve Redman, and the inaugural Course Committee decided on electrophysiology and imaging as the main focus of the annual, three-week residential course. We also decided early on that ACAN should not be associated with a single university or research institute because ACAN's purpose was to serve young Australian and New Zealand researchers without any selection bias. Ultimately, we chose North Stradbroke Island as neutral territory. We were very fortunate to be able to rent the University of Queensland's excellent laboratory facilities on the island and, without compromising the national stature and independence of the course, we consistently benefited from the resources and the supportive academic and general staff of both the Moreton Bay Research Station and the Queensland Brain Institute.

Running the course on a beautiful island has the added benefit that it is a low-key getaway location, conducive to uninterrupted hard work. When you board the ferry from the mainland to the island, the day-to-day distractions of home are left behind on the wharf. The students and instructors arrive with clear heads and a strong inclination to focus on the course. This is important because the course is demanding, with lectures and lab sessions morning, afternoon and evenings for six days a week. Nevertheless, squeezed into the schedule there is sufficient time for the students to socialize, to discuss their career aspirations with the instructors, and to explore parts of the island.

As I mentioned, Steve Redman was the inaugural course director. He was succeeded by John Bekkers, our current course director. Both have performed fantastically as the course directors and I offer

my enduring thanks to them and other members of the John Curtin School of Medical Research for making ACAN the success that it is. Their efforts were supported by Joe Lynch and Pankaj Sah from QBI, two of our most resilient, generous and capable course instructors.

Many others have contributed organizationally to ACAN's success, and for the record I name them here: Christine Hirst, Cliff Abraham, David Adams, David Vaney, Fred Mendelsohn, Garry Rodda, George Paxinos, Glenda Halliday, Greg Stuart, Ian Gibbins, James Vickers, Joe Lynch, Johanna Montgomery, John Clements, Judy Morris, Lyn Beazley, Pankaj Sah, Peter Schofield and Sarah Dunlop.

In addition, there have been numerous course instructors from New Zealand, USA, UK and Australia who have generously volunteered their time, providing an extraordinary level of training for our students.

When I look back over past five years and ask myself what contribution ACAN has made and continues to make, my answer is that ACAN has enabled a steep improvement in the research productivity of the young scientists who have attended. It does so by enabling them to learn the latest from the greatest. Further, ACAN gives them an opportunity to discuss their projects and careers with twenty or more neuroscience experts in a setting that allows time for a meaningful dialogue. Young scientists whose ambitions have been sharpened by interactions with international leaders are more effective throughout their careers, thus ACAN helps to raise the productivity and quality of Australian and New Zealand neuroscience research as a whole. Our research is already world class, ACAN helps to make it even better.

Given that ACAN has been so successful, why hand it over to the ANS? There are lots of reasons: it will be better for the long-term continuity of the course; ANS ownership will ensure greater awareness of the course, better networking, maximum prestige and mentoring for the students. Plus, it feels like the right thing to do. Like the members of the out-going ACAN Course Management Committee, ANS is passionate about maximizing the effectiveness and the appeal of neuroscience research.

As David Vaney mentioned, ACAN is well funded for several years. But that is not enough, simply because the future for neuroscience research is so bright. I am sure you will agree with me that the brain is the most complex research frontier of all, full of challenges that will keep neuroscientists busy for at least another 100 years. To do our best, Australia and New Zealand have to provide the best training to our early career scientists for the next 100 years or more. We have to introduce them to the leading-edge research instrumentation and techniques that are in use in the best labs here and overseas. We have to expose them to a variety of creative thinkers who bring an international perspective to collaborations, challenges and careers.

To achieve these goals, ACAN – through the ANS – must continue to raise funds from corporate and philanthropic sectors. Please keep ACAN in mind, it is an ideal recipient of scholarship support. In addition to financial support from research bodies as diverse as Neurosciences Australia and the Neurological Foundation of New Zealand, we have also enjoyed in-kind support from equipment suppliers, law firms and accounting firms. We have also benefited from scholarship support from pharmaceutical companies and research institutions.

If you, as an ANS member, think of a potential supporter, please speak to them and if they are interested contact John Bekkers, David Vaney or me.

Finally, it would be fantastic if you could advocate for NHMRC to provide financial support for this training program. The idea of our funding bodies providing support for advanced research training to optimize the efficiency of our research work force makes economic sense. As a private company, Axon was always willing to fund advanced training programs for its engineers because the payback was manifest. ACAN should not receive preferential treatment from the NHMRC, but being a prototype for the concept of advanced training courses it should certainly be considered as a worthy recipient to prove the value of this approach to providing a kick-start to the careers of our young scientists.

**Alan Finkel**

# IBRO-ANS Advanced Neuroscience School on Neuroethology

20 January 2009 – 27 January 2009, Canberra & Kioloa, Australia

<http://www.rsbs.anu.edu.au/neuroethologyschool/>

Organizers: Andrew Barron, Jan Hemmi, Ajay Narendra, Richard Peters, Judith Reinhard, Jochen Zeil

The IBRO-ANS Advanced Neuroscience School on Neuroethology took place at the ANU's Kioloa Coastal Campus and was modeled – in a reduced form - after an IBRO Advanced Neuroscience School on Neuroethology held in Buenos Aires, Argentina in 2007 (see [http://schools.ibro.info/Pub/Pub\\_Front.asp](http://schools.ibro.info/Pub/Pub_Front.asp)).

The school attracted 20 PhD students/early postdocs from Australia, China, Iran, Japan, Jordan, New Zealand and Russia. The school was organized with 4 days of lectures by a team of international experts on a variety of neuroethological topics, from neural circuit analysis to neuroethological robotics, followed by two days of lectures show-casing some of the strengths of Australian neuroethology. On two days, students participated in practical projects on ant navigation, spectrographic colour measurements, analysis of movement, landmark orientation in honeybees, video film analysis and robotics experiments. Most participants attended the ANS 2009 in Canberra after the school.

This school aimed to provide a forum for the next generation of neuroscientists from across the Australasian and Asia-Pacific region to meet and interact with established neuroethologists from around the world and to get an overview of current neuroethological research in Australia.

Neuroethology is defined as the study of the neural basis of animal behaviour under natural conditions: Neuroethologists seek to understand biodiversity from the perspective of neural systems and behaviour. Some of the big open questions to which neuroethology will make substantial contributions over the next decades, are, for example, the ecology of learning and memory, the neural basis and control of social behaviour, the information processing mechanisms underlying animal navigation, and the evolution of experience-dependent formation and modification of neural circuits. In addition, neuroethological research will contribute to and benefit from current research into autonomous robots.

There is currently a world-wide surge in both neurobiology

and in robotics research to “go natural”, to understand information processing and navigational guidance under natural, real-world conditions. Australia is at the forefront of some of these booming research areas and is well-placed to play an increasingly leading role, not only in the region, but also on the international scene. It was thus timely to provide a forum for young scientists to get involved in this cutting-edge and promising inter-disciplinary research agenda.

The school provided several avenues for students to actively participate. Students were asked to bring posters of their work which were displayed throughout the school and discussed during three specified evening poster sessions. On the first day, students gave brief poster talks. Students were encouraged to interrupt lectures with questions and many did. However, most of the discussions happened during social times. The practical projects allowed students to gain hands-on experience with field work. These practical projects were briefly presented to all participants on the final evening of the course.

#### **International Faculty:**

William Kristan (USA):	Overview of Neuroethology & Systems Neurophysiology
Barbara Webb (UK):	Neuroethological Robotics
George Pollak (USA):	Processing of Communication Calls in Bats
Kentaro Arikawa (Japan):	The Colour Vision System of Butterflies
Eric Warrant (Sweden):	Vision & Eye Specializations in Insects
Martin Giurfa (France):	Analysis of Associative Learning in the Honeybee
Daniel Tomsic (Argentina):	Neurophysiology of Predator Avoidance

#### **Australian Faculty:**

Sarah Dunlop (Perth):	Starting and Maintaining a Research Career
Ryszard Maleszka (Canberra):	Behavioural Genomics
Andy Barron (Sydney):	Neuropharmacology of Honeybees
Judith Reinhard (Brisbane):	Olfaction and Cognition in Honeybees
Jan Hemmi (Canberra):	Vision and Behaviour in Fiddler Crabs
David O'Carroll (Adelaide):	Motion Vision in Insects
Sarah Dunlop (Perth):	Brain Training: Nature's Experiments & Neurological Recovery
Ulrike Siebek (Brisbane):	Colour Vision in Reef Fish
Richard Peters (Canberra):	Movement Signaling in Lizards
Ajay Narendra (Canberra):	Navigation in Ants

The school was sponsored by the International Brain Research Organization, The Australian Neuroscience Society, The ARC Centre of Excellence in Vision Science, The Centre for Visual Sciences (ANU), The Adelaide Neuroscience Research Institute and The Queensland Brain Institute.

## Science Meets Parliament – March 2009, by Justin Rubio

The first day of SmP was located in Old Parliament house and was dedicated to preparing us for face-to-meetings with members of parliament (MOP) the following day. Important pieces of advice were; don't preach, have a point, make it simple and establish a connection. Above all, it became very clear to most of us that the meetings were not about lobbying or getting on one's "soap box" to state one's case, but were more so an informal discussion revolving around the topics of interest indicated by the MOP and policy areas we wanted to influence. A fine balance indeed.....

Prior to SmP, Bradley Smith (Executive Director Federation of Australian Scientific and Technological Societies) had collected information from MOP concerning areas of science in which they were most interested. SmP representatives were then put into teams of three based on an alignment between their previously indicated expertise and the area of interest of the MOP. It was advised that teams get in touch ahead of the meeting to determine what each wanted to discuss and potential areas of synergy. There was an SmP dinner, with 50 or

so MOP that evening and Prof Penny Sackett (Chief Scientist) gave a very impassioned speech focussing on the need for action on climate change.

Fortunately, I was involved in teams where all participants agreed to make "investment in education and innovation" the policy area we wanted to influence prior to the meeting. This was not a difficult sell as both the Chinese, U.K. and U.S. governments have indicated in recent times that investment in research and innovation are key to economic recovery from the current downturn, and economic prosperity in the future. I met with Sharryn Jackson and Belinda Neil (both ALP house of representatives) for 45 minutes and both were very interested in our specific areas of research. The second day of meetings with MOPs was broken by lunch at the National Press Club, with Senator Kim Carr (Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research) the guest speaker.

I found SmP to be extremely well organised (congratulations to Bradley Smith) and a fascinating insight into the world of politics.

# FASTS – *Australia's peak science body at work*

You are a member of the Federation of Australian Scientific and Technological Societies (FASTS), Australia's peak science body, through your ANS membership.

FASTS represents 60 professional societies and 60,000 scientists, with professional staff who serve you, the ANS and the Australian scientific community in a number of ways.

FASTS ongoing activities include 'Science meets Parliament' – FASTS' annual flagship event, where more than 200 scientists have face-to-face meetings with politicians on key science issues.

## ANS/AuPS Joint Meeting in Sydney 2010

### Call for Symposia

The Programme Committee for the joint meeting of the Australian Neuroscience Society and the Australian Physiological Society would like to receive proposals for symposia for the scientific meeting which is to be held at the Sydney Convention Centre from Sunday 31st January - Wednesday 3rd February 2010. Symposia will normally have 4 speakers and be arranged in themes of interest to the broad membership of one or both societies. Some limited funding is available to contribute to costs of invited overseas speakers. This will be between \$1200 and \$3000, depending upon the number of symposia with international speakers. No funding is available to support costs of Australian speakers.

Proposals can be sent by email to the ANS Secretary, A/Prof. Ann Turnley (turnley@unimelb.edu.au). Each proposal should state the name of the symposium, and should provide the name of a symposium chair (normally not a speaker, but symposium organisers can nominate themselves for this role if they are not speaking) and provide a short introduction to the symposium topic. In addition, each proposal should indicate the name and affiliation of each speaker, provide a title and a brief abstract of each presentation, a short curriculum vitae for each speaker with a list of their major achievements/publications (no more than a single A4 page per person) and should give an indication of whether each speaker has accepted the invitation to present at the symposium.

All proposals for Symposia must be received **no later than 8 May, 2009**.

### Call for Satellite Meetings

If you are planning to hold a satellite meeting in conjunction with the ANS:AuPs meeting in Sydney in 2010 and want to be included in the program, ANS Council needs to receive proposals by 22<sup>nd</sup> May for consideration at the mid-year council meeting. Proposals can be sent by email to the ANS Secretary, A/Prof. Ann Turnley (turnley@unimelb.edu.au).

### Other work includes:

Highlighting science with the Prime Minister and the Cabinet through the Prime Minister's Science, Engineering and Innovation Council (PMSEIC). Organising forums and workshops on key science issues. Developing science policy at a high level and providing input to Parliamentary Committees, Government Departments and Government reviews and inquiries. Assisting member societies to raise and develop issues, distributing information to member societies weekly, and receiving feedback.

Highlights of 2008 included:

Forums on 'Rights and Obligations of Scientists and Researchers' and 'Supporting Risk-Aware Research'

A national roadshow to gather inputs to FASTS' submission to the Cutler Review

Submissions to reviews on Higher Education Research Training, Future Fellowships, Defence, Higher Education Endowment Fund, ERA journal ranking, Questacon, CRC

Continuation of FASTS' successful request for release of ARC grants in early October

FASTS' statement on Climate Change – reported in 145 media outlets

FASTS' Taxonomy paper highlighting this endangered species at Smp 2008.

In 2009 FASTS will:

Hold 'Science meets Parliament' on 17/18 March – ANS sends two representatives annually

Provide to Parliament examples of science success stories from FASTS' members

Present 'On the Radar' briefings on upcoming issues in science that need to be addressed by government, industry and the media – contact FASTS with your ideas

Contribute to the development of National Curricula in science and mathematics

Investigate whether science graduates have sufficient industry-ready practical skills.

In addition to its continuing and prospective activities FASTS will:

Establish an expert list of FASTS members for media commentary – via your society

Hold a forum on Governance of Science – how can science self-organise better?

FASTS seeks your help to keep science at the forefront of the national agenda in these challenging times. For more information visit the FASTS' website [www.fasts.org](http://www.fasts.org) <<http://www.fasts.org/>>. President: Professor Ken Baldwin. Executive Director: Bradley Smith.

## ANS POLICY ON REQUESTS FOR PUBLICITY VIA EMAIL CIRCULATION

The standing policy of the ANS is to minimize email traffic to members. This is done by bundling brief announcements or news which needs to be disseminated between print newsletters into (at most) monthly plain text email circulars. Attachments are not sent with email to members, with very few exceptions (such as our core business of an annual Society meeting). This is to reduce both the risk of virus transmission via attachments received from outside sources, and the volume (ie. cost) of email traffic through University or Institute based servers. Meetings and other significant announcements (such as job vacancies) will also receive Society publicity, via links to appropriate web pages from the ANS web site, and by subsequent inclusion into the next print ANS newsletter when appropriate. Requests for these publicity services should be directed either to the Secretary, or to Sally Jay Conferences.

### ANS website and newsletter

The ANS website is on-line at <http://www.ans.org.au/>. Members are

encouraged to regularly check the website for updated information on positions vacant, travel awards and national and international neuroscience meetings. While announcements and news items cannot always be broadcasted as an email to ANS members, they are promptly loaded on the ANS website and so it is always worth a regular check of the news page. Current and recent newsletters are available to be downloaded in PDF format and information about ANS, including the current list of council members, historical facts and how to apply for ANS Awards and Prizes is readily available. For further information or requests to place announcements on the ANS website, please contact Ann Turnley (email [turnley@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:turnley@unimelb.edu.au), phone 03 8344 3981).

Similarly, we are very happy to include information or news items in the ANS newsletter. Anticipated copy deadlines are set out below. Material for inclusion can be topics for discussion, meeting announcements, meeting reports, prizes and awards received by ANS members, obituaries, and any other items of potential interest to members of our society.

## Victoria

### Brain Awareness Week Victoria

Brain Awareness Week (BAW) events this year were organized by the ANS Victoria Committee in collaboration with the Brain Foundation and the Society for Neuroscience Melbourne Chapter. Our week started with a special issue of the Triple R radio science program, Einstein A Go Go, dedicating the show to BAW. The RRR presenters questioned the three guests, Stephen Robinson, Joanne Britto and Michael Williams to gain insight into why and how we research the brain.

We were fortunate to have Assoc Prof Stephen Robinson present two public lectures on "Tips to a Healthier Brain". Both were well received and attended by over 150 people. It was encouraging to see people showing an interest in understanding how the brain works, and displaying a positive curiosity towards prevention and treatments of brain disorders.

One area that we focused on this year was to promote neuroscience research as a career. During the week, 18 researchers visited schools around Melbourne to showcase their research and describe their own career paths. In some instances, the image of 'the scientist' was modernized to include young, enthusiastic students and post-docs who amazed teachers and students with their knowledge and ability to communicate science.

Not to leave researchers out of our BAW celebrations, over 100 neuroscientists attended a Victoria Neuroscience Network evening. Keeping in the tradition of our ANS annual meeting (where posters, a glass of wine/beer and a relaxing setting are key ingredients for a good scientific discussion), it was a pleasure to see researchers from multiple universities and research institutes enjoy the gathering.

I would like to thank the following people for their time and effort in making BAW a success this year:

ANS Victoria Committee: Richard Anderson, Nicole Bye, James Duce, Lisa Hutton, Heath Pardoe, Juliet Taylor and Michael Williams.

Brain Foundation: Steve Robinson and Gerald Edmunds

Society for Neuroscience Melbourne Chapter: Jenny Gunnensen, Luning Jiang and Kathryn Munro.

School outreach speakers: Ana Babarumani, Joanne Britto, Emma Burrows, David Gonsalvez, Jenny Gunnensen, Sarah Hellewell, Tony Hannan, Peter Kitchener, Ryan Maloney, Kathryn Munro, Burcu Saglam, Bridgette Semple, Deanne Thomson, Rogan Tinsley, Michael Williams, Agnes Wong, Steve Wood and Tamara Yawno.

Joanne Britto, ANS Victoria Representative



Victorian Committee (from left to right: Lisa Hutton, Richard Anderson, Heath Pardoe, Nicole Bye, Joanne Britto and Michael Williams).

## Western Australia

### Kids Brain Training activities at Scitech on Sunday 22 March, 2009, 10-2pm.

The activities were inspired from the University of Washington Kids Activities website. They were run by staff and students from the University of Western Australia. The activities aimed to provide a basic overview of what the brain is and why it is important. By targeting children using simple language and fun concepts, we hope to stimulate discussion at home and maybe even have children educate their parents!

The target audience is schoolchildren age 5-12 visiting the Science museum. The museum normally receives 250 entries on a Sunday and we anticipated attracting additional numbers (up to 500) through increased advertising in local media (TV, radio and newspapers). The event has been running for 4 years with regular support from IBRO. We endeavour to include new activities each year to continue to attract and interest regular attendees.

This year, activities included: make a brain out of vegetables, the brain chatterbox, the memory game, optical illusions and new in 2009: Who am I? A comparative brain display. The event was coordinated by Sherralee Lukehurst and Dr Jenny Rodger.

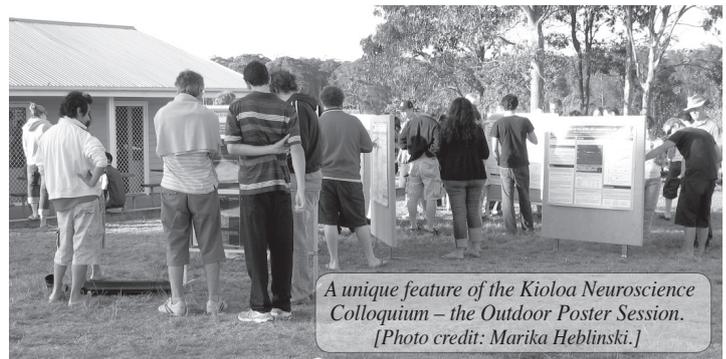
## SURF, SAND and SCIENCE – THE KIOLOA NEUROSCIENCE COLLOQUIUM

Over the weekend of the 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> of March, 70 neuroscientists from Canberra, Sydney, and Newcastle gathered for the annual Kioloa Neuroscience Colloquium.

Though records (and memories) are sketchy, stalwarts of the meeting suggest it has been running for at least 14 years. Currently hosted by the Eccles Institute of Neuroscience, ANU and held on the NSW South Coast at the beautiful Kioloa Coastal Campus of the ANU, this event provides a relaxed atmosphere for ACT/NSW neuroscientists to discuss recent findings and initiate and strengthen professional and social links. In the last 2 years the meeting has been greatly enhanced by sponsorship from the ANS. This has enabled the introduction of Plenary Lecturers from outside the region. These lectures have been a great success and have contributed to a near doubling of registrations over this period. This year the Plenary Lectures were given by Prof George Augustine (Duke-NUS Medical School, Singapore) and ANS President Prof David Vaney (Queensland Brain Institute).

Traditionally, the Kioloa Neuroscience Colloquium is an excellent venue for students and early career researchers to gain experience in oral scientific presentation. This is seen as an important function of the meeting and culminates in the awarding of the Best Student Oral prize. Congratulations to Danni Cheng from the Prince of Wales Medical Research Institute, who was this year's winner.

As well as Plenary Lectures and open oral sessions on both Satur-



A unique feature of the Kioloa Neuroscience Colloquium – the Outdoor Poster Session. [Photo credit: Marika Heblinski.]

day and Sunday, the Saturday includes an official conference swim, a poster session, an excellent BBQ Buffet dinner and, for some, a long night around the camp fire. This is where many strong ties are formed, accompanied by the odd creative scientific insight.

Thanks to the core supporters in Sydney and Newcastle for annually drumming up van-loads of registrants, to fellow organisers, Maarten Kole, Brendan O'Brien, and Greg Stuart, and to the ANS. The success of this meeting is due entirely to your support. Looking forward to next year already!

Clarke Raymond

## UPCOMING CONFERENCES . . .

**3rd International Vocational Outcomes in Traumatic Brain Injury Conference. May 7 – 9, 2009. The Empire Landmark Hotel & Conference Centre, Vancouver, BC, CANADA.** State of the art, practical, solution-focused data will be provided on rehabilitation of survivors of traumatic brain injury. Professionals will be able to immediately use the information they receive. This information will include proven strategies that will help their clients return to work. By presenting current research with practical, solution-focused data, we aim to create a synergy and future research collaboration between professionals in the field. Register today at [www.tbicvancouver.com](http://www.tbicvancouver.com). Contact Shelley Johnson at 604.875.1775, [sljproductions@telus.net](mailto:sljproductions@telus.net)

**Joint Scientific Meeting of the Australian and New Zealand Society for Neuropathology, Inc and the Australian and New Zealand Paediatric Pathology Group. Saturday, May 16th 2009, 9am-5pm. Prince of Wales Medical Research Institute, Randwick, NSW.** This one-day scientific meeting will feature clinical and research presentations of interest to those with a neuropathologic and paediatric pathology focus. The meeting commences with presentations of interesting cases and will be followed by oral research presentations. One session also devoted to student and young investigator presentations. Deadline for submission of cases for the case presentation is March 1st. Deadline for submission of abstracts is May 1st, 2009. Registration is just \$50 (and includes morning and afternoon teas and lunch). For further information, please contact Dr Antony Harding, Secretary/Treasurer, Australian and New Zealand Society for Neuropathology, Dept of Pathology, D06, Sydney University, NSW, 2006, or e-mail: [aharding@usyd.edu.au](mailto:aharding@usyd.edu.au).

**3rd FAONS Symposium, May 18-20, 2009. Bangkok, Thailand.** For further information see <http://www.faons2008.com/>

**3rd Alzheimers and Parkinsons Disease Symposium: Pathomechanisms in Neurodegeneration. May 21-22, 2009. Brain and Mind Research Institute, Sydney.** For more information contact Juergen Goetz ([jgoetz@med.usyd.edu.au](mailto:jgoetz@med.usyd.edu.au)).

**10th European Congress of Stereology and Image Analysis, Universita' Degli Studi Di Milan, Italy, 22-29 June 2009.** Further information: <http://ecs10.mat.unimi.it>

**XXIVth International Symposium on Cerebral Blood Flow, Metabolism and Function & IXth International Conference on Quantification of Brain Function with PET, Chicago, U.S. June 29- July 3, 2009.** - <http://www.kenes.com/brain>

**AWCBR 2009 27th International Australasian Winter Conference on Brain Research, Copthorne Resort Hotel, Queenstown, New Zealand, 27 Aug-2 Sept, 2009** Description: To promote interaction between academic & clinical brain research disciplines including anatomy, biochemistry, kinesiology, neural modelling, neurology, molecular biology, pharmacology, physiology, and psychology. Intensive morning, late afternoon and evening sessions with free time mid-day for interactions and activities. Contact: Prof. Cliff Abraham e-mail: [awcbr@psy.otago.ac.nz](mailto:awcbr@psy.otago.ac.nz) Registration: <http://www.awcbr.org>

**International Society for Autonomic Neuroscience (ISAN), Sydney, Australia, 1-4 September 2009.** Further information: Vaughan Macefield [v.macefield@uws.edu.au](mailto:v.macefield@uws.edu.au)

**Frontiers in Spinal Cord Research Conference, Queensland Brain Institute, The University of Queensland, Brisbane. 7-8 September 2009.** Further information: Alison van Niekerk [a.vanniekerk@uq.edu.au](mailto:a.vanniekerk@uq.edu.au)

**9th International Congress of the Polish Neuroscience Society, Warsaw, 9-12 September 2009.** For further information on the meeting please visit: [www.ptbun.org.pl](http://www.ptbun.org.pl)

**32nd Annual Meeting of the Japan Neuroscience Society (Neuroscience2009) will be held on September 16-18, 2009** at Nagoya Congress Center, Japan. This is the largest neuroscience meeting in Japan, with more than 3,000 participants expected.

The topics covered during the meeting are wide-ranging, including molecular, cellular, systems, cognitive and computational neurosciences. Both basic and clinical neuroscience studies will be included. See [http://www.jnss.org/english/index\\_e.html](http://www.jnss.org/english/index_e.html)  
Call for Travel Awards application: from January 15 to February 28, 2009

Call for Abstract: from February 3 to April 15, 2009

Advanced registration ends: from February 3 to July 23, 2009

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### WOMEN IN NEUROSCIENCE REGISTER

IBRO Women in World Neuroscience Programme has been formed to improve career development, mentoring and networking opportunities for women neuroscientists around the world, with special attention to women in disadvantaged regions [http://www.ibro.info/Pub/Pub\\_Main\\_Display.asp?LC\\_Docs\\_ID=3370](http://www.ibro.info/Pub/Pub_Main_Display.asp?LC_Docs_ID=3370). One of the initiatives of this group is to create an easily accessible and updated list of women neuroscientists that can be referenced for selecting conference speakers and for future WWN initiatives, including a mentorship program. If you wish to be included in this register, could you please send a short biographical sketch including your field of research and contact details to Dr. Siew Yeen Chai [sychai@floreys.edu.au](mailto:sychai@floreys.edu.au) at the Howard Florey Institute.

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### DONATIONS TO ANS RESEARCH (GIFT) FUND

Members are reminded that donations to the ANS Research (Gift) Fund are tax deductible. If you wish to make a donation, please email the ANS Treasurer, Prof Jackie Phillips at: [j.k.phillips@murdoch.edu.au](mailto:j.k.phillips@murdoch.edu.au) all donations, regardless of amount, are most welcome.

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### Proceedings of the Australian Neuroscience Society 2009

The Proceedings of the 2009 ANS Annual Conference in Canberra, contained on the CD provided at the meeting, are Volume 19 and should be cited as Proc. Aust. Neuroscience Soc. Vol 19, 2009.

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### DEADLINES FOR FUTURE NEWSLETTERS

July 2009 Newsletter	16 <sup>th</sup> July 2009
October 2009 Newsletter	15 <sup>th</sup> October 2009
December 2009	3 <sup>rd</sup> December 2009

#### *Address and contact details for the ANS secretariat*

Sally Jay Conferences can be contacted by the following means:  
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Phone: (08) 8362 0038  
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Email: [ans@sallyjayconferences.com.au](mailto:ans@sallyjayconferences.com.au)  
Web: [www.ans.org.au](http://www.ans.org.au)

Authorized by Ann Turnley  
Secretary – Australian Neuroscience Society Inc  
Centre for Neuroscience  
University of Melbourne  
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# Annual General Meeting

Thursday 29 January 2009 at 12.10pm

Royal Theatre, National Convention Centre, Canberra, ACT

## *Minutes*

### **1. Attendance and apologies**

No apologies were received.

### **2. Minutes of the 2008 Annual General Meeting**

(minutes previously circulated in April newsletter)

*Motion: The minutes of the ANS General meeting held in Hobart in January 2008 are accurate.*

Moved: Louise Nicholson; Seconded: Michael Ibbotson; Vote: unanimous

### **3. President's report – David Vaney**

David Vaney commenced by thanking George Paxinos, Glenda Halliday, Andrew Lawrence and Elspeth McLachlan for the success of the Melbourne IBRO meeting in 2007, which left the Society in good shape, both scientifically and financially. He then described how ANS had originally offered to put \$30,000 of the IBRO profit back into the Asia-Pacific region but that he had proposed an alternate strategy to Council. Rather than directly giving \$30,000 to the Asia-Pacific Regional Committee of IBRO (APRC), he proposed to double it to \$60,000 but to support APRC activities within Australia, so that Australian neuroscience benefits as well.

David followed with a description of the first use of the funding, which was the ANS/IBRO Neuroethology school held just prior to the Annual Conference. This was supported by \$20,000 of the ANS IBRO surplus funds plus another \$27,000 from IBRO and resulted in a very successful school. He then thanked Jochen Zeil and Jan Hemmi for the wonderful job they did of organising the school. This school also had a follow-on effect with invertebrate neuroscience and neuroethology much better represented at the 2009 ANS meeting than previously. ANS is also sponsoring two Asia-Pacific students to attend ACAN, both this year and next. Again, this comes with leveraged funds from IBRO, who will contribute towards airfares and course fees. David then noted the strong emphasis ANS has always put on ties between Australia, New Zealand and the Asia-Pacific region and how these recent initiatives, and others to come, further build on existing ties.

### **4. Secretary's report - Ann Turnley**

Ann Turnley thanked Heather Young for the work she did as previous ANS Secretary and for making it a smooth transition. Final membership details for 2008 were presented: 838 members in total, 579 Full, 235 Student and 15 Honorary or retired. It was pleasing to see that many members who did not go to the Hobart meeting renewed their membership.

ANS website: John Dodson at the University of Sydney was thanked for hosting the new ANS website free of charge. Members were reminded to check the website for announcements and to post jobs and upcoming conferences and to send all requests to post information on the website to the ANS Secretary.

### **5. Treasurer's report – Jackie Phillips**

The Treasurer's reports were tabled and Jackie Phillips noted that, although ANS funds are in extremely good shape, except for the IBRO meeting in 2007, the last few Annual meetings have been run at an overall deficit to ANS funds. She noted that the membership fees do not cover all of ANS expenses and is something that will be looked at over the next year.

For the 2009 meeting, 137 student travel grants were awarded, the most for any meeting, which, as of 16/1/2009, had 417 full registrants and 227 student registrants.

*Motion: That the financial statement be accepted.*

Moved: Andrew Lawrence; Seconded: Phil Robinson; Vote: unanimous

*Motion: That HLB Mann Judd be retained as the ANS auditors..*

Moved: Andrew Lawrence; Seconded: Phil Robinson; Vote: unanimous

Jackie finished by thanking Sally & Chris Jay, Andrew Lawrence, all members of ANS Exec / Council and Murdoch University (for postage, stationary etc).

### **6. Editor's report – David Small**

David commenced by thanking the ANS programming committee : Prof. David Small, Chair, Dr. Michael Ibbotson, Prof. Jan Provis, Prof. Caryl E. Hill, Prof. Bruce Walmsley, Dr. Kristen Pammer, Dr. Shaun Cloherty, Dr. Keely Bumsted-O'Brien, Dr. Clarke Raymond

For the 2009 meeting, of the abstracts received, there were 7 Oral-only requests (all awarded), 158 Oral-preferred requests (128 orals awarded over 16 oral sessions), 260 Poster-preferred requests (9 were given orals) and 52 Poster-only requests (all awarded posters). He then described how the format for abstracts will be a little broader in the future and will not have to be of a set format, as long as the abstract

contains a result. David then thanked Symposium Program Advisory Group (SPAG) and asked anyone who would like to be involved with this group to contact him.

### **7. Presentation of Distinguished Achievement Award to David Curtis – David Vaney**

The Distinguished Achievement Award is “an occasional award for an outstanding contribution by an individual to neuroscience in Australia, and to the Australian Neuroscience Society”. The award is a cast bronze medal designed by Michael Meszaros, an acclaimed Melbourne sculptor, which depicts the artist’s view of the chain of connections between the brain, the organism and the outside world.

Council agreed unanimously to confer the Distinguished Achievement Award on Emeritus Professor David R Curtis, who is an Honorary Member of the Society. David Curtis is a giant in Australian neuroscience but he will not be well known to younger members of the Society, as he retired as Director of the John Curtin School of Medical Research in 1992. David Curtis graduated MB BS from the University of Melbourne in 1950 and, after three year’s clinical training, took up a Research Scholarship in the John Curtin School of Medical Research, under the supervision of John Eccles in the new Department of Physiology. Curtis graduated PhD from the Australian National University in 1957, having been appointed a Research Fellow in 1956. Curtis was promoted to a tenured Fellowship in 1957, appointed to a Personal Chair of Pharmacology in 1962, and made Professor and Head of the new Department of Pharmacology in 1973. Curtis was elected to Fellowship of the Australian Academy of Science in 1965, the Royal Society of London in 1974, and the Royal Australasian College of Physicians in 1987, and served as President of the Academy from 1989-1992. Curtis was Director of the John Curtin School from 1989-1992 and was appointed a Companion in the Order of Australia in 1992.

David Curtis then spoke briefly and thanked the ANS for presenting him with the Award.

### **8. 2009 ANS Awards and Prizes**

The Sir Grafton Elliot Smith Prize was previously awarded for the best essay on a neuroscience topic by a student member of the Society but Council decided that this award will now be given for the best poster presented by a student at the annual conference. At the 2009 Meeting, the Sir Grafton Elliot Smith poster prize and Istvan Tork oral prizes were awarded at the farewell drinks at end of the meeting.

*AW Campbell Award* for best contribution by a member of the society in their first 5 postdoctoral years was awarded to Dr Michael Piper from the Queensland Brain Institute.

*Paxinos-Watson Prize* for the most significant neuroscience paper published in 2007. This award was made possible by a generous donation to the Society by Professor George Paxinos and Professor Charles Watson, commemorating the new edition of their important key reference text “The Rat Brain in Stereotaxic Coordinates” by Academic Press. In 2009 the award was also supported by Elsevier Australia, who will provide a 12 month subscription to their new Brain Navigator program, plus a \$500 book voucher.

The Paxinos-Watson prize for 2009 was awarded to Maarten Kole, Johannes Letzkus and Greg Stuart for their paper published in Neuron entitled: Axon initial segment Kv1 channels control axonal action potential waveform and synaptic efficacy.

*Nina Kondelos Prize.* This was made possible by a donation from George Paxinos and named after his late sister and is for a female neuroscientist who has made an outstanding contribution to basic or clinical neuroscience research. It was awarded to Sarah Dunlop.

*The ANS Medallion* was awarded to Paul Pilowsky in appreciation of his long service to the Society, both as Editor from 1996-2001 and as the Australian representative on FAONS and APRC in recent years.

*Honorary ANS membership* was awarded to Robert Porter for his significant contribution to the establishment of the Society across all fields of neuroscience. He was made an Honorary Member at the AGM in July 2007 but was unable to attend the AGM in Hobart last year to receive his award. The award was presented by Glenda Halliday, who was President of ANS in 2007.

### **9. Vote on Council nominations for Honorary ANS membership**

Nominations for Honorary ANS membership for Stephen Redman, Elspeth McLachlan, Max Bennett, Marcello Costa and John Rostas were proposed to Council by Glenda Halliday and all motions were put to vote and passed unanimously by Council.

David Vaney asked that all nominees leave the room and their nominations were then discussed and put to vote.

Council recommends awarding of Honorary Membership of the Australian Neuroscience Society to Stephen Redman for his longstanding and ongoing national and international contributions to neuroscience.

*Motion 1: to award Honorary Membership to Stephen Redman*

Moved: Linda Richards; Seconded: George Paxinos; Vote: unanimous

Council recommends awarding of Honorary Membership of the Australian Neuroscience Society to Elspeth McLachlan for her longstanding and ongoing national and international contributions to neuroscience.

*Motion 2: to award Honorary Membership to Elspeth McLachlan*

Moved: Joel Bornstein; Seconded: Bogden Dreher; Vote: unanimous

Council recommends awarding of Honorary Membership of the Australian Neuroscience Society to Max Bennett for his commitment to and support of the Society and neuroscience in general.

*Motion 3: to award Honorary Membership to Max Bennett*

Moved: Nick Levitis; Seconded: Joel Bornstein; Vote: unanimous

Council recommends awarding of Honorary Membership of the Australian Neuroscience Society to Marcello Costa for his national commitment to neuroscience and particularly to the promotion of neuroscience to the broader community.

*Motion 4: to award Honorary Membership to Marcello Costa*  
Moved: Bill Blessing; Seconded: Joel Bornstein; Vote: unanimous

Council recommends awarding of Honorary Membership of the Australian Neuroscience Society to John Rostas for his contributions to neuroscience, including his six terms as ANS editor and his continued activity in regional and national forums setting neuroscience research policy.

*Motion 5: to award Honorary Membership to John Rostas*  
Moved: Paul Martin; Seconded: Phil Beart; Vote: unanimous

#### **10. Signing of Agreement between The Australian Neuroscience Society and Australian Course in Advanced Neuroscience Ltd and The A. & E. Finkel Foundation**

Andrew Lawrence joined the ANS Officers on stage. David Vaney then spoke about ACAN and the donation from The Finkel Foundation to ANS. Andrew Lawrence then introduced the signatories in groups, who came on the stage in turn and were welcomed by David Vaney and Ann Turnley

*Signatories:*

David Vaney (ANS President)

Ann Turnley (ANS Secretary)

Alan Finkel (Finkel Foundation Trustee and ACAN Ltd Director)

Elizabeth Finkel (Finkel Foundation Trustee)

Stephen Redman (ACAN Ltd Director)

David Copolov (ACAN Ltd Director)

John Bekkers (ACAN Course Director and Witness to The Agreement)

Andrew Lawrence coordinated the signing of 3 copies of The Agreement by the 4 Groups of signatories. Alan Finkel signed as both a Trustee of the Finkel Foundation and as a Director of ACAN Ltd. Alan Finkel addressed the ANS membership.

#### **11. Future ANS meetings**

The 2010 meeting will be a joint meeting with AuPS in Sydney. Gilles Laurent from the Max Planck Institute has accepted an invitation to be the Overseas Plenary Lecturer. The ANS Plenary Lecturer is to be announced, the AuPs Plenary Lecturer will be David Adams (UQ) and the UK Physiological Society Visiting Lecturer will be David Atwell (UCL).

#### **12. Council members for 2009**

David Vaney announced that Sarah Dunlop was the new President-Elect.

#### **Officers**

*President:* David Vaney

*President-Elect:* Sarah Dunlop

*Secretary:* Ann Turnley

*Treasurer:* Jacqueline Phillips

*Editor:* David Small

*Public Officer:* Michael Ibbotson

#### **State and National Representatives:**

*ACT:* Clarke Raymond

*New South Wales:* Peregrine Osborne

*New Zealand:* Louise Nicholson

*Queensland:* Elizabeth Coulson

*South Australia:* Nicholas Spencer

*Tasmania:* Rob Gasperini

*Victoria:* Joanne Britto

*Western Australia:* Donald Robertson

David thanked Glenda Halliday for the worked she did as Past-President of ANS and awarded her an ANS Medallion.

#### **13. Other business**

No other business was received.

**Meeting Close :** 1:15pm.

