



# Australian Neuroscience Society Newsletter

No. 2

July, 2011

[www.ans.org.au](http://www.ans.org.au)



## President's Perspective



Further to my discussions with the membership in Australia last year and in New Zealand before the Auckland meeting, Council had a very productive mid-year meeting on May 27<sup>th</sup> including:

**Name of the Society:** Council passed the following two motions unanimously:

*"that the ANS Constitution be changed to formally include New Zealand"* and

*"that the name of the Australian Neuroscience Society be changed to the Neuroscience Society of Australia and New Zealand"*.

The motions will be put to the AGM at the ANS 2012 Gold Coast meeting.

**Date of the Society meeting:** Continuing concerns have been expressed regarding the date of the meeting.

**Option 1:** leave date at end January / early February. Comments from the membership included: Too close to grant submission deadlines often interfering with attendance and full participation in the meeting; Imposed on those with young families since there is often a clash with school start dates; Combined with grant applications, cuts into the Christmas break.

**Option 2:** change date to early- / mid-December. Comments from the membership included: An earlier date would allow the annual meeting to be used as an occasion for planning joint grant submissions; Too close to final examiners meetings at some Universities and some academic members may be disadvantaged; Too close to Christmas; Too close to SfN (early-mid November) with members often wishing to visit other labs.

A third option of a mid-year meeting was discounted because of clashes with semester dates and northern hemisphere conferences.

Council passed the following motions:

*"that an online secure poll is conducted to assess whether to keep or change the date of the annual meeting to early December."*

*"that if >50% of membership votes and at least 2/3 vote for "change date" or "either", then the date will be changed from 2014" and*

*"that if the benchmark levels for voting are not achieved then coun-*

*cil will reconsider the proposal."* Council also agreed to award an iPad as a prize to encourage voting. We plan to conduct the poll in the first 2 weeks of August.

**2014 meeting:** It has been agreed to hold the meeting in Adelaide. Dr Michael Lardelli has kindly agreed to chair the LOC and Council looks forward to working with Michael and his team. Please note that, should the Society choose to change the date of the meeting to early/mid December, we plan, provided the Adelaide Convention Centre is still available, to hold the Adelaide meeting at the end of 2013.

You will also be aware that the ARC cancelled its call for tenders for the ERA2102 process. I am extremely grateful to the 21 people who so enthusiastically agreed to form the ANS expert panel. The exercise was also worthwhile since it helped raise the Society's profile as a Peak Body. We are all relieved not to have to spend considerable time assessing journal rankings and neuroscience content. The outcome that

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# An invitation to ANS 2012 to be held at Jupiter's Hotel, Gold Coast, Queensland

The 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting of the Australian Neuroscience Society will be held at the recently renovated Jupiters Hotel on the Gold Coast. Jupiters Hotel has a dedicated conference centre and also includes over 600 five star accommodation rooms, so you only need to take a lift to get to the sessions. It is the perfect venue for one of our meetings – with the beach only minutes away – and the lure of the sun, surf and theme parks, set against a rainfor-

est hinterland backdrop. The venue also has the wonderful family ambience of the Gold Coast with baby-sitting for children aged 6 weeks to 16 years available for both day and night.

We anticipate this being one of the largest ANS meetings ever, starting Sunday evening with the first of our four plenary speakers, who are Karl Deisseroth (Stanford), Janusz Lipski (Auckland), Marcus Stoodley (Macquarie) and Heather Young (Melbourne). We also have thirteen symposia with most sessions containing an international speaker. The oral communications and posters will be scheduled over the 3 full days of the conference and will reflect the cutting edge of neuroscience in Australia and overseas.

The Social program will include a Welcome Reception on the Sunday night, Cocktail Party on the Monday night, followed by a combined Student Mixer and Post-Doctoral Social, which is a popular event at ANS events. On Tuesday night the Conference Dinner will be held around the lush pool/barbecue area of Jupiters Hotel. This will be a fun evening with great food, wine and an exotic setting – not to be missed! The meeting will conclude with Farewell Drinks on the Wednesday afternoon, which will be combined with the presentation of poster and oral prizes.

We look forward to welcoming you to the glorious Gold Coast.

**Lizzie Coulson**  
Chair, ANS 2012 Local Organising Committee

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

journal rankings are now abolished and that the discipline content of a paper will be judged on the paper itself, rather than the journal in which it is published, is a good one indeed.

Thanks to the response of medical researchers, professional and patient groups as well as the general public, which sent a very powerful message indeed to the Federal Government, the threat of substantive cuts to NHMRC funding has been averted. The challenge now will be to harness the energy of our clearly extensive networks to lobby for increased medical and health research funding that reflects the real need in society, the true cost of for example research salaries and that will contribute towards securing Australia's health and therefore its economy.

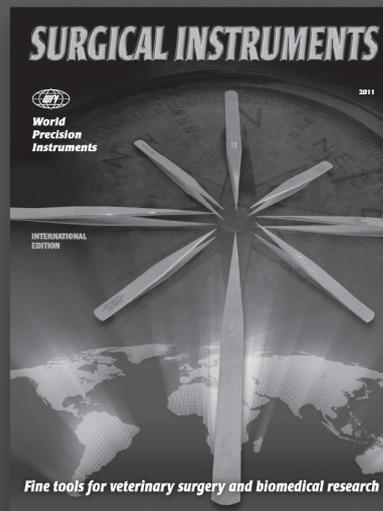
**Sarah Dunlop, July 2011**

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## ANS Council Positions available in 2012

Several Council positions will be available from 2012 and we will call for nominations in the October newsletter. In the meantime, you may like to consider contributing to ANS by serving on Council. The positions available are:

- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Editor
- State Representatives for ACT, NZ, SA, Vic and WA

## Science & Technology Australia Report

The advocacy of neuroscience research from the 'grass-roots' community to the highest tiers of government is instrumental in the continuation of funding and development of quality neuroscientific research in Australia. In this regard, promoting and communicating the value and relevance of our research is as important as conducting the research itself.

Science & Technology Australia (STA) is the peak representative body and powerful advocacy mechanism for scientists nationwide. Recently changing its name from the Federation of Australian Scientific and Technological Societies (FASTS), STA serves to promote awareness and understanding of scientific and technological research such that decision-makers of Australia may ultimately perceive the sciences sector as a driver of economic growth and productivity, not an economic cost.

As the Medical and Cognitive Sciences Cluster Representative on the Board of STA and a member of ANS, I have a particularly avid interest in the promotion of health and medical research in Australia. Since my election to the Board earlier this year, one stand-out issue has come to light that I feel is of direct relevance to our neuroscience research community. Put simply, health and medical research continues to rank poorly on governments' priority lists. Although NHMRC funding recently 'dodged a bullet' with the rumoured \$400mn cuts being abandoned in the 2011/12 Federal Budget – largely thanks to the well-orchestrated and widely-publicised campaign by medical researchers nationwide – nonetheless, the Federal government's unremarkable 'business as usual' approach continues to hold neither value nor vision for the medical research sector. Australia continues to lag behind the OECD average on research expenditure (less than 2% of GDP), ranking 13th amongst OECD countries. Furthermore with regards to the neurosciences, only 10% of annual NHMRC funding is allocated to Neuroscience and Clinical Neuroscience, even though mental disorders, neurological and sense disorders together account for 25% of the nation's total financial burden of disease (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2009-2010).

The distinct absence of medical research in the political agenda was no more evident than at Science meets Parliament in Canberra last month. This annual two-day event organised by STA provides a valuable platform for scientists to learn and directly engage with the policy-making process. This year, presentations and one-on-one interactions with politicians, bureaucrats and media representatives were overwhelmingly dominated by a single issue: climate change. While there is no denying the importance of this issue nationally and globally, it is indeed concerning to see areas such as medical research all but disappear from the agenda. It is our role as scientists to ensure that health and medical research returns to the

government's list of priorities. Continuous communication of the value and indispensability of our research is essential and will ensure that the unified voice that successfully lobbied the government earlier this year, does not merely become a forgotten 'blip' on the Canberra radar. Ongoing advocacy is thus a priority for both STA and ANS.

For more information visit [www.sta.org.au](http://www.sta.org.au) or email [Ineka.Whiteman@sydney.edu.au](mailto:Ineka.Whiteman@sydney.edu.au)

**Ineka Whiteman, PhD**

*Medical and Cognitive Sciences Cluster Representative  
Science & Technology Australia*

## Report from Science meets Parliament

Science Meets Parliament 2011 brought together a wide variety of scientists from a range of disciplines to discuss the role of science in government policy development and decision making. As a young Ph.D. student, I was excited by the opportunity to learn a little about how my future career as a researcher might allow me to influence the health agenda.

The first day included a series of presentations from various political advisors and public servants designed to increase our awareness and understanding of how decisions are made in Government and how we as scientists are able to influence this process. This was coupled with a series of interactive workshops aimed at improving our ability to communicate our work to a lay-audience (including politicians). A theme that was raised repeatedly was that it is important for scientists to be able to communicate their message quickly and concisely and for the 'real world' implications of the work to be immediately identifiable.

This was followed by a dinner at Parliament House, hosted by the very entertaining Annabelle Crabb (ABC online, *Insiders*). John Brumby MP (Former Victorian Premier) gave the keynote address outlining the significant investments that his government had made in science. The highlight of the night for me was discussing my research with a number of MPs and Senators from both sides of politics, as well as hearing their views on the role of government in science investment. The dinner was also a fantastic opportunity to meet scientists from a variety of disciplines.



*Morgan James (left) at SmP with other delegates.  
(Photo courtesy of Lorna Sim on behalf of Science & Technology Australia)*

The following day we were addressed by the Hon Kim Carr MP (Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research) who gave an impassioned speech on the importance of funding both basic and applied science research. We then



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## Report from Science meets Parliament *(contin.)*

travelled to the National Press Club where Prof. Ian Chubb (Chief Scientist of Australia) emphasized the need for politicians and members of the general public to respect the rigor and credibility of the scientific process, undoubtedly referring to the nature of the climate change debate in Australia at present. I then had the opportunity to meet with Ken Wyatt MP (Liberal member for Hasluck) who, as a former science teacher, was interested to discuss my research and the challenges of getting young people to pursue a career in science.

Overall, I was encouraged by the fact that members of both sides of politics were supportive of both translational and basic research in the health field. As a young researcher, it was also extremely interesting to gain insight into how I might be able to influence health and science policy throughout my career. I would like to thank the ANS for the opportunity to attend Science Meets Parliament and would strongly encourage others (particularly young researchers) to participate in the program in coming years.

**Morgan James, PhD Student**  
*University of Newcastle*

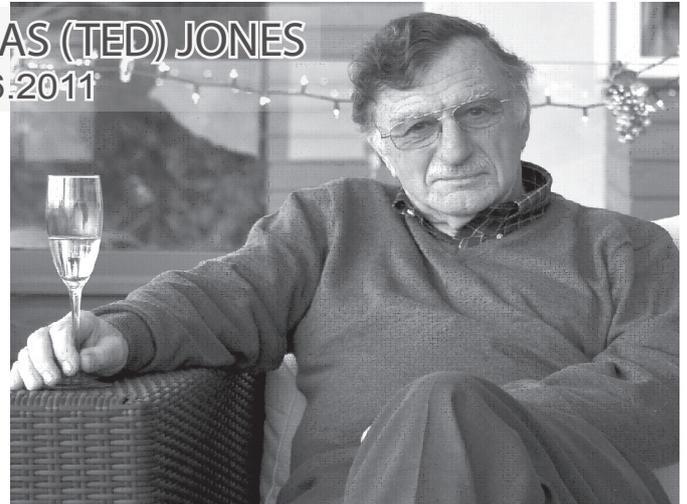
## Obituary:

### EDWARD GEORGE THOMAS (TED) JONES 26.03.1939 – 6.06.2011

“Physiology and pathology are reducible to anatomy plus some hypotheses” (Panizza, 1869) is a sentiment that Ted Jones clearly subscribed to. His meticulous neuroanatomical studies on the brain and spinal cord led to major advances in understanding central nervous system function.

Ted Jones was born in Upper Hutt, Wellington, New Zealand on 26<sup>th</sup> March 1939. He was educated at the University of Otago and received his medical degree MBChB in 1962 from the University of Otago Medical School. Following a brief period in clinical practice as a House Surgeon in Tauranga and general practice in Auckland, Ted returned to Dunedin as a Demonstrator and Assistant Lecturer in the Department of Anatomy (1946-65) after which he was a postgraduate student of Tom Powell in the Department of Anatomy in Oxford, obtaining his PhD in 1968. As a sign of things to come, Ted published a single author paper in *Nature* while still a graduate student. The topic “Cortical and Thalamic Connections” was one in which he was to become preeminent in his subsequent career. Ted always spoke of Powell with enormous gratitude and respect and attributed much of his success as a neuroscientist to the excellent experience of being taught by him, although the key attribute of attention to detail was already apparent in Ted’s three single author papers published in 1966 on studies of muscular- and neuro-anatomy in the Australian possum. After a short return to Dunedin as Lecturer and Associate Professor (1969-71) where he obtained an MD (with distinction) in 1971, he moved to the US where he spent the rest of his career apart from some brief overseas sojourns. Beginning in Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, Mo., he was Associate and then Full Professor (1972-84) and then Professor and Chairman, Department of Anatomy and Neurobiology, University of California, Irvine, 1984-1998, from where he moved to be Distinguished Professor of Psychiatry and Social Science and Director, Center for Neuroscience, University of California, Davis, 1998-2009. From 2009 Ted relinquished his Director’s role but continued as Distinguished Professor Emeritus, University of California, Davis, to the day he died in an untimely manner on 5 June 2011. While at Irvine Ted led the Neural Systems Laboratory, Frontier Research Program in Brain Mechanisms of Mind and Behavior, RIKEN, Japan, spending several months of the year there. One of his observations, typical of his wry humor, was that he was skeptical about legendary hard working Japanese post-docs as, in his experience, his US post-docs in Riken worked much harder. He also had some difficulty in persuading the local scientists to include controls in their experimental design, as this was considered to be “negative thinking”. Ted set high standards for the people who worked with him, but even higher standards for himself.

Ted Jones’s work on the structure and function of the central nervous system is distinguished by its enormous breadth and scope, both intellectually and technically. He made seminal contributions to understanding the circuitry, cellular properties, and basic organizational plans of the cerebral cortex and thala-



mus, their development, functional interrelationships, plasticity, and pathology. Ted Jones authored more than 20 books and more than 400 scientific publications. His work on schizophrenia, focused on changes at the molecular and cellular levels, showed that even small abnormalities in human brains can cause chemical imbalances, leading to the disease and other long-term nervous-system disorders. Ted was at the forefront of neuroplasticity research at a time when most neuroscientists did not accept the concept, a concept that is now rightly dominating therapies for ameliorating the effects of neurological disasters such as stroke and neurotrauma. For those of us in the field, Ted’s publications were always a reference point, a golden standard to which we could only aspire. As one of our younger colleagues put it, Ted Jones was a Rolls Royce of Neuroscience.

Ted Jones was also a distinguished historian of Neuroscience, in particular editing and adding new translated material to an edition of Cajal’s “Degeneration and Regeneration of the Nervous System” in a collaboration with Javier DeFelipe. His association with Spanish neuroscience was recognized by the award of MD (honoris causa) University of Salamanca, 1996. Ted Jones is one of only two New Zealanders to be elected Members of the National Academy of Sciences of the U.S.A. He was President of the Society for Neuroscience and received numerous honours and awards in recognition of his contributions to neuroscience.

We knew Ted as much as a friend as a fellow neuroscientist. He gave us sympathetic and wise advice when we were dealing with some difficult professional problems, for which we remain forever grateful. In spite of the pressure under which he worked, Ted and Sue were always gracious hosts and unstinting with their time when we had the pleasure of staying with them in Laguna Beach and Winters.

The whole scientific community has lost one of its greatest minds and many of us have lost a dear friend. Ted is survived by his wife Elizabeth Sue, two children, Christopher and Philippa, and three grandchildren, Mike, Susanna and Emilie.

**Katarzyna Dziegielewska and Norman Saunders**  
*University of Melbourne*

# Australian Course in Advanced Neuroscience (ACAN)

## Australian Course in Advanced Neuroscience (ACAN)

This year ACAN turned seven. Since 2005, over eighty young Australian and New Zealand neuroscientists have attended the course and, judging by feedback from our students (e.g. below), it has lost none of its ability to inform and enthuse. ACAN instructors work hard to maintain the freshness of the course. Every year we update the syllabus to include the very latest advances in cellular and molecular neuroscience while preserving coverage of the fundamentals. For example, we have increasingly added molecular techniques and fluorescence imaging to the program, and we hope to add even more optogenetics in the near future.

Next year ACAN will run from Sunday 15 April to Saturday 5 May 2012. The call for applications will go out in October/November this year, with a closing date in mid-December. Look out for advertisements nearer the time. Meanwhile, information is always available on the course website (<http://www.ans.org.au/acan>). If you are a PhD student, postdoctoral fellow or junior faculty with a desire to learn neurophysiology from some of the world's leading experts, I strongly encourage you to apply. You will be able to look forward to a career-enhancing experience.

**John Bekkers**, Director, ACAN



**ACAN 2011 Class Photo**

(L-R): Michel Herde (Dunedin), Malinda Tantirigama (Dunedin), Scott Jones (Canberra), Jamie Flynn (Newcastle), Bryan Leaw (Melbourne), Cherry Mao (Auckland), Tenelle Wilks (Perth), James Daniel (Sydney), Chantelle Fourie (Auckland), Terry Middleton (Sydney), Swetha Murali (Sydney), Yanfeng Zhang (Dunedin).

When I was accepted for ACAN 2011 I was overwhelmed at the opportunity and very excited. The next part of my PhD project required me to do hands-on electrophysiology independently. I needed to become an expert electrophysiologist in a very short amount of time and translate that into my PhD work as quickly as possible. In all honesty, nothing could have prepared me for the experience I had at ACAN, as it exceeded the goals and expectations that I had for the course.

Week one was a very steep learning curve! The lectures in the morning provided top-end knowledge that related to the lab session in the afternoon. It quickly increased my knowledge about electrophysiology and its applications. For the first week we had our own personal expert electrophysiologist by our side in the lab, which accelerated our learning. Our tutor also answered all my never-ending questions, no matter how silly they seemed.

In the following two weeks I very quickly became absolutely addicted to electrophysiology! By this time, I wanted to spend every moment of every hour in the lab. Sleeping definitely seemed like a waste of time. My brain was literally like a sponge soaking up all this exciting knowledge and skills from the great teachers. The course progressively built us into confident patch-clampers, so that in the last week we were also able to add fluorescence imaging to our already multifaceted experiments. I still remember every moment of patching a Purkinje cell filled with a calcium indicator dye and stimulating its different inputs! Paired recordings and dendritic patching were a highlight! Armed with our skills, everyone produced remarkable projects in the last two days of the course and presented their work with flare!

The amazing people I met at ACAN were a big part of the experience for which I will always be thankful. We experienced lots of laughter and became good friends in this short time. The three weeks at ACAN went by in a flash and I wished that I never had to leave. The amount of knowledge and skills I gained in three weeks was more than I could ever have imagined and it created in me an entirely new level of passion for neuroscience. I will always treasure the experience at ACAN and use the skills I learnt there for the rest of my career.

**Chantelle Fourie**, PhD student

*Department of Physiology, Centre for Brain Research, The University of Auckland*

Last year, while perusing my copy of the ANS Newsletter, I saw the advertisement for ACAN 2011. As a postdoctoral researcher with a keen interest but very little experience in neurophysiology, I decided to apply for the course and was delighted when I was offered a position. So it was that I set out across Moreton Bay on a windy Sunday morning in March with high hopes of learning the fine arts of tissue slicing, patch clamp recording and fluorescent calcium imaging. That evening I was introduced to my fellow course participants and our instructors. We joked over a barbecue and a few beers as we got to know each other and prepared ourselves for the challenging three weeks that lay ahead.

The course was structured such that we usually had three hours of lectures each morning, followed by a practical session that lasted into the evening. We covered a large range of topics including the fundamentals of neurophysiology, the electrical properties of axons and dendrites, synaptic integration, ion channels, neurotransmitter release and synaptic plasticity. The theory underlying the various techniques that we were shown during the course was also taught in detail. As someone with no previous practical experience in electrophysiology, I found that while the learning curve was steep I was enjoying learning the new material in a way I hadn't experienced since I was an undergrad (which was some years ago, as my fellow, younger ACAN trainees were eager to point out). Thanks to our amazing team of instructors, everyone was patching cells within a few days. If it's challenging to learn patch clamping within three weeks, it must be even harder to teach it in such a short time frame and so the lion's share of the credit must go to the outstanding team of demonstrators.

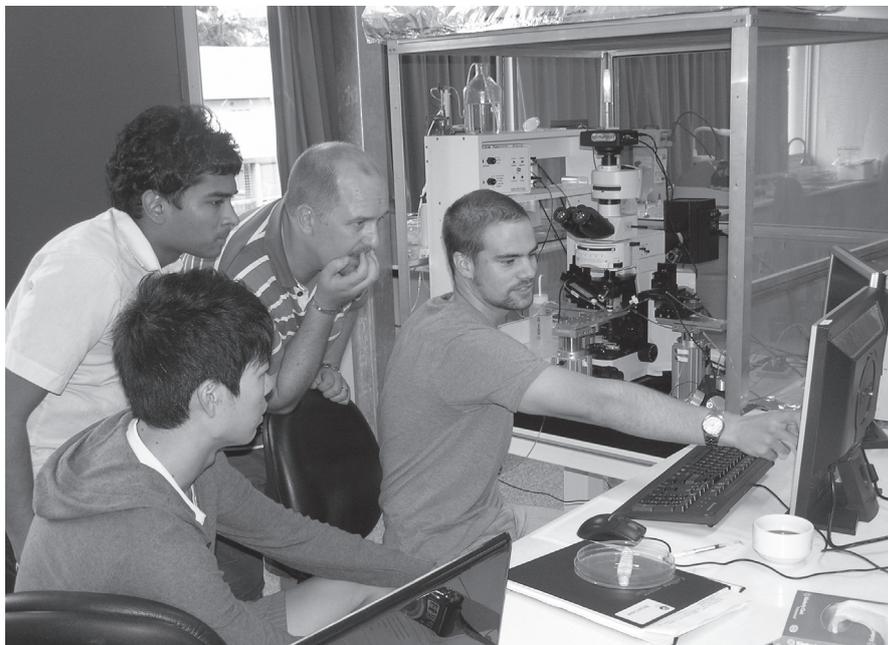
We worked in pairs for the duration of the course, culminating in the opportunity to work on a project of our own design for

the last two days of the course and present our findings. Over three weeks we bonded as a group, eagerly looking forward to Sundays when we got to go to the beach. Most of us acquired nicknames during the course (some of us ended up with three or four). In the labs there was always a great sense of excitement and fun throughout our group.

So overall, the experience is difficult to summarise. I made some new friends and colleagues, had amazing discussions with neuroscientists of renown and young neuroscientists who I'm sure will be famous one day, and learned an awful lot about neurophysiology. I came back from the course full of enthusiasm for my own science and brimming with ideas about what could be achieved, as if a new world was open to me. I cannot personally recommend the course highly enough.

**James Daniel**

Postdoctoral Fellow  
Children's Medical Research Institute  
Sydney



**ACAN Lab Photo**

(L-R) Malinda Tantirigama, Bryan Leaw, Clarke Raymond (course faculty), Scott Jones.

## UPCOMING CONFERENCES & MEETINGS

See ANS website [www.ans.org.au/upcoming-conferences](http://www.ans.org.au/upcoming-conferences) for more details

5th Alzheimer's and Parkinson's Disease Symposium, 25-26 August 2011. Brain and Mind Research Institute (BMRI), University of Sydney.

Fourth Congress of the Pan-Asian Committee for Treatment and Research in Multiple Sclerosis (PACTRIMS) 25-27 August 2011 Kyoto, Japan.

Australasian Winter Conference on Brain Research. 27-31 August, Queenstown, New Zealand.

23rd Biennial Meeting of the ISN/ESN, 28th August-1st September 2011, Athens, Greece.

Brain Sciences UNSW Symposium, 8 September 2011, University of New South Wales, Sydney.

Biannual World Congress on Huntington's Disease, 11-14 September 2011, Melbourne, Australia.

Frontiers in Neurogenetics & Brain Imaging (a symposium following the World Congress on Huntington's Disease), 15 September 2011, Melbourne

7th Congress of the International Society for Autonomic Neuroscience, Buzios, Brazil, 12-16 September, 2011.

Neuroscience2011, the 34th annual meeting of Japan Neuroscience Society (JNS), September 14-17, 2011, Yokohama, Japan,.

4th Protein Misfolding and Neurological Disorders Meeting, 16-19th September 2011, Heron Island, Queensland.

56th Annual Conference of the German Society for Neuropathology and Neuroanatomy, 21 – 24 September 2011, University of Tübingen, Germany.

ComBio2011, 25 – 29 September 2011, Cairns Convention Centre, [james.burnell@jcu.edu.au](mailto:james.burnell@jcu.edu.au)

Joint Meeting European Society of Microcirculation and German Society of Microcirculation and Vascular Biology (GfMVB), October 13-16, 2011, Munich, Germany.

Developmental Disturbances in the Nervous System, 27th - 29th October, 2011, Berlin, Germany .

2nd International Conference on Medical Bionics: Neural interfaces for damaged nerves, 20-23 November 2011, Phillip Island, Victoria.

Australasian Society for Psychiatric Research (ASPR) 2011 Conference, 5-8 December 2011, Otago University, Dunedin, New Zealand.

ISDN2012 19th Biennial Meeting of the International Society for Developmental Neuroscience "Neurodevelopment and Neurological Diseases", 11-14 Jan, Mumbai, India.

The 20th International Visual Field and Imaging Symposium, 22-25 January 2012 Melbourne, Australia

International Brain Injury Association's Ninth World Congress on Brain Injury, March 21-25, 2012, Edinburgh, Scotland

10th International Conference on Brain Energy Metabolism "Bioenergetics of Neurological Disease and Aging", April 17 - 20, 2012, Monterey, California, USA.

2012 International Motoneuron Meeting – Motoneurons and Beyond, 23-27 July 2012, Sydney

2012 International Congress of Neuroethology, 5–10 August 2012, College Park, Maryland, USA.

APSN/JSN 2012, the Joint Symposium of 11th Biennial Meeting of APSN and 55th Meeting of JSN, Sept 29-Oct 2, 2012, Kobe, Japan.

# Australia - New Zealand Brain Bee Challenge 2011

Brain Awareness Week kicked off across Australia and New Zealand in March, 2011 with the first round of the Australia – New Zealand Brain Bee Challenge. 5629 students from 305 schools participated in Round 1. Below is a break-up of participating students/schools by state/region:

State/ Region	Number of Students	Number of Schools
ACT	144	9
NSW	1733	77
NT	92	5
NZN	565	59
NZS	120	14
QLD	1127	60
SA	497	20
TAS	43	6
VIC	888	31
WA	420	24
<b>Total</b>	<b>5629</b>	<b>305</b>

From round one, students were selected to participate in round 2 – the State and Region Finals, which are currently underway. To date Western Australia, Victoria, South Australia, Victoria, ACT and both New Zealand South & North Island finals have been held (See State reports or below for the announcement of winners). Queensland & NT Finals will be held on 19 July at the Queensland Brain Institute (QBI) with Ms Tania Major (2007, Young Australian of the Year) and Dr Jim Peacock (former Chief Scientist) as the guest speakers. 130 students from 20 Schools will participate in these finals, with 4 representatives from NT. Participants will also have an opportunity to tour facilities and interact with lab staff through supervised tours during the day. The NSW State final will take place in early August.

## South Australia

Individual Competition: 1<sup>st</sup>: Adit Chakranarayan, Christian Brothers College (Pictured below with Professor Don Bursill, The Chief Scientist for South Australia);



2<sup>nd</sup>: Sam Tafari, Christian Brothers College; 3<sup>rd</sup>: James Hughes, Pedare Christian College

Team Competition: 1<sup>st</sup>: Henley High School Henley Beach; 2<sup>nd</sup>: Hallett Cove School; 3<sup>rd</sup>: Scotch College

## Australian Capital Territory

Individual Competition: 1<sup>st</sup>: Ashly Vu (St Francis Xavier College) (Pictured below with Professor Greg Stuart);



2<sup>nd</sup>: Howard Tam (Gold Creek School); 3<sup>rd</sup>: Qizhang Liu (Gold Creek School)

Team Competition: 1<sup>st</sup>: Gold Creek School; 2<sup>nd</sup>: Canberra Grammar School; 3<sup>rd</sup>: Burgman College

## New Zealand South Island

Individual Competition: 1<sup>st</sup>, Connor Clemett, Riccarton High School (Pictured below with A/Prof. Stephen Bunn (left) and (right) Prof. Cliff Abraham



2<sup>nd</sup>, Joyce Wui-Ai Wong, Riccarton High School; 3<sup>rd</sup>, Oliver Bailey, Golden Bay High School

Team Competition: 1<sup>st</sup>, Riccarton High School; 2<sup>nd</sup>, Motueka High School; 3<sup>rd</sup>, Kaikorai Valley College

Congratulations to all the winners. Winners of the Individual competition in each State/Region will compete in the Australian and New Zealand National Finals to be held at the ANS meeting in January, 2012 at the Gold Coast, QLD sponsored by ANS and ADInstruments. Winners of the team competitions in each State/Region received a student's microscope (Primo Star HAL microscope, full-Köhler stage drive R, FOV 20) generously donated by our National Sponsor, Carl Zeiss Australasia, PTY LTD. We are very grateful to our sponsors for their ongoing support of our national programs.

## **Victoria – Joanne Britto**

### **Student Brain Symposium**

All brain research students of Victoria are invited to attend the Student Brain Symposium Hosted by the Students of Brain Research (SOBR) network. This is the first neuroscience conference in Melbourne held by students, for students. Attendees are invited to submit abstracts for Poster presentations. The best abstracts will be reviewed for Oral presentations.

Prizes and Awards of up to \$1000 (including an ANS 2012 Registration Prize sponsored by ANS Victoria).

When: Thursday October 6th, 2011

Where: Melbourne Brain Centre, Royal Parade, Parkville

Registration: Free

Abstracts due Friday 19th August. To register, visit: [www.facebook.com/SOBRnetwork](http://www.facebook.com/SOBRnetwork)

Contact: [SOBRnetwork@gmail.com](mailto:SOBRnetwork@gmail.com)

### **Frontiers in Neurogenetics and Brain Imaging Symposium**

A one-day neuroimaging symposium will be held in conjunction with the World Congress on Huntington's Disease to be held in Melbourne, September 2011.

Venue: Monash Biomedical Imaging (MBI), Monash University 770 Blackburn Road, Clayton Melbourne. For information and registration: [www.med.monash.edu.au/psych/research/activities/neuroimaging-symposium.html](http://www.med.monash.edu.au/psych/research/activities/neuroimaging-symposium.html).

Price: Early Bird Fee \$138 (GST inclusive), available until 31 July 2011. Registration available on site at \$165 (GST inclusive). Student Fee \$83 (GST inclusive). The main focus of the symposium will be to bridge the gap between neurogenetics, brain imaging and behaviour. The meeting will consist of plenary and invited key note presentations from leading experts in the field. Please contact [jessica.despard@monash.edu](mailto:jessica.despard@monash.edu) with any queries.

### **Victorian Brain Bee Final**

The Victorian final of Brain Bee was held at the University of Melbourne on 28<sup>th</sup> June. Trevor Kilpatrick, Director of the Melbourne Neuroscience Institute, welcomed the 120 students and their teachers from 24 schools, including students from Manangatang and Murtoa in the far north west of Victoria. The students and their teachers enjoyed themselves immensely, thanks largely to the excellent talks, enthusiastic lab and tour guides, and to the relaxed and engaging tone set by Jo Britto, who acted as quiz master. Although the quiz was the main focus of the day, students heard about the latest research of the bionic eye (from Erica Fletcher), addiction (Jhodie Duncan), the adolescent brain (Murat Yucel) and about life as a PhD student (Agnes Wong). The tours of the Anatomy & Pathology museum and laboratories at the Florey Neuroscience Institutes and the University of Melbourne provided a real glimpse of life as a researcher and fuelled their enthusiasm. Geoff Donnan concluded the day by highlighting the high standard and keenness of the contestants in his closing remarks.

The Brain Bee in Victoria is generously sponsored by the Florey Neurosciences Institutes, the Melbourne Neuroscience Institute, the Mental Health Research Institute and the University of Melbourne. Zeiss kindly donated a microscope to the winning school.

Winners for Victoria - Individual Competition: 1<sup>st</sup> Olufolakemi Bolarinwa (Reservoir High School); 2<sup>nd</sup> Paul Chen (Camberwell Grammar); 3<sup>rd</sup> Becky Punshon (St Leonard's College)



*Olufolakemi Bolarinwa with Heather Young (Victorian Brain Bee coordinator), Joanne Britto (Victorian ANS representative and Quizmaster) and Geoff Donnan (Director, FNI).*

Winners for Victoria - Team Competition: 1<sup>st</sup> John Monash Science School; 2<sup>nd</sup> Camberwell Grammar; 3<sup>rd</sup> St Leonard's College.

### **Heather Young and Joanne Britto**

## **New Zealand – Louise Nicholson**

### **North Island Brain Bee champion crowned**

Auckland college students dominated the North Island Brain Bee Championship held at The University of Auckland this week with Byung Cheol Cho from Auckland Grammar School crowned individual North Island Champion. Byung and 3 fellow schoolmates made it a clean sweep for the 2500-pupil Auckland Grammar School when they also took home the Brain Bee Championship Teams title.

Launched in 2007 in New Zealand, the Brain Bee Championship attracts some of New Zealand's brightest Year 11 students, challenging them in subjects about the human brain and neuroscience. The first round of this year's North Island competition involved almost 1200 students from Whangarei to Wellington, with 150 students from 44 schools participating in person at the North Island finals.

Teams and individuals were tested on topics such as intelligence, memory, emotions, sensations, movement, stress, ageing, sleep, addiction, Alzheimer's and stroke.



*Winner of the North Island Brain Bee Challenge individual event, Byung-Cheol Cho from Auckland Grammar School.*

Byung Cheol Cho quickly established and held a strong lead in the individual competition, being pressed by runner up Fuma Naito from Westlake Boys' High School with Kaustubha Ghate, also from Auckland Grammar School, in third spot.

Auckland Grammar further showed their dominance and knowledge of the subjects in the Brain Bee Championship

## North Island Brain Bee *(contin.)*

Teams final, pulling together to keep out Westlake Girls' High School in second place, with Auckland's St Cuthbert's College in third and neighbouring Diocesan School for Girls in fourth place.

Meg Speirs, Project & Communications Manager for the major Brain Bee Challenge sponsor The Catwalk Trust, says: "The Catwalk Trust is committed to finding a cure for spinal cord injury, and the sponsorship of this competition is our way of fostering exceptional young minds. The aptitude of these students promises a great deal for the future of neuroscience in New Zealand."

North Island Brain Bee winner Byung Cheol Cho will now prepare to take on his counterpart from the South Island along with the individual winners from Australia's eight states at the Australia - New Zealand Brain Bee Challenge, early next year. The Australia-New Zealand finals event will be held as a feature component of a large international neuroscience conference on Australia's Gold Coast early next year.

New Zealand Brain Bee Challenge coordinator, Professor Louise Nicholson from The University of Auckland says: "The 2011 Brain Bee Challenge was a huge success. It was a very exciting day, with the pressure of the competition off set by opportunities for teachers and students to talk to scientists at the University and take part in laboratory visits. We had some 75 staff participating to some degree in the Brain Bee Challenge, and it is wonderful to see this interaction between current researchers and the scientists and researchers of tomorrow.

"Science is so important in our everyday lives and neuroscience is such an exciting and fascinating field of study. The Brain Bee Challenge gives both students and teachers' first-hand experience of the exciting opportunities The University of Auckland can offer those with a real interest in science and in particular, neuroscience."

## Western Australia – Lindy Fitzgerald

The WA finals of the Brain Bee were held on 28<sup>th</sup> June, 2011 and involved 93 students and their teachers from 16 schools across WA. Participants travelled from as far as Broome and Kalgoorlie to compete in the state finals. The competition was opened by Winthrop Professor Alan Harvey who gave a presentation on the importance of Neuroscience research in human health and society. The students participated in games and tours throughout the day, visiting research labs in the Faculty of Science at UWA and the Anatomy Museum.

The winning school (Shenton College) is thrilled to be receiving the Zeiss microscope and the WA state winner, Regi Martin from Newton Moore Senior High School in Bunbury is looking forward to competing in the national finals in 2012. Prizes were awarded by the Vice-dean of Science, Winthrop Professor Lynette Abbott.



*Prof Lynette Abbott and WA Brain Bee winner Regi Martin.*

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## 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.

## 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.

## ANS WEBSITE AND NEWSLETTER

The ANS website is on-line at [www.ans.org.au](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.

## DEADLINES FOR FUTURE NEWSLETTERS

October 2011	13 <sup>th</sup> October 2011
December 2011	8 <sup>th</sup> December 2011

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