



# Australian Neuroscience Society Newsletter

No. 4

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



## President's Perspective

The two years of my Presidency has flown by and I have really enjoyed and highly valued my continued engagement with students, early career researchers, senior researchers, clinicians and basic scientists alike. I take this opportunity to thank the extraordinary level of support I have received from the ANS Executive, namely Ann Turnley, John Rostas, Jacqueline Phillips and David Small, and David Vaney during my first year, as well as all members of ANS Council and Sally and Chris Jay. The Society will be in excellent hands with the incoming President, John Rostas, and newly elected unopposed Executive Members, namely Joe Lynch as Secretary, Andrew Allen as Treasurer and Steve Petrou as Editor. As neuroscientists, we have faced many challenges in the past two years and there are already more on the horizon. It is a great credit to the Society that we have such a talented and passionate membership who will continue to take ANS forward.

**Public consultation on proposed revision of the Australian Code of Practice for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes:** Thank you to all members who made their submissions in response to the issues raised by the Public Consultation, in particular consideration of "whether some procedures such as anaesthesia and surgery should be performed only by a veterinarian or under the direct supervision of a veterinarian." I also made a submission on behalf of ANS addressing all 11 points in the Consultation document and I thank members of Council for their input. The document can be found on the ANS website.

**Joint meeting with ISN in 2015:** Council is very pleased to announce that the ANS bid to hold a joint meeting with the International Society for Neurochemistry in 2015 was successful. The meeting will be held in Cairns from August 23-28, 2015. I thank John Rostas, Andrew Lawrence, David Small, Ann Turnley and the Cairns Convention Centre for all their hard work and support in presenting the bid.



**Involvement with clinicians:** John Rostas and I hosted a highly productive teleconference with a number of ANS clinician members on November 1st and hope to host another before Christmas for those who were unable to join us. We will also be organising a brainstorming session at the Gold Coast meeting, details to be announced.

**Review of the health and medical research sector:** The Federal Government announced its review of the health and medical research sector that will be chaired by Australian of the Year Simon McKeon. The Terms of Reference (available on ANS and Department of Health & Ageing websites) are far reaching. Of note, **11 of the 13 listed matters for review refer either directly or indirectly to research translation.** As a Society that represents primarily basic scientists, I urge you individually to become involved in the review process and I am sure that, as the Peak Body for neuroscience, ANS will also be involved.

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## ANS Annual General meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the Australian Neuroscience Society will be held at 5.05pm on Tuesday, 31 January 2012 in the Marquee Pavilion of Jupiters Hotel, Gold Coast.

## Proposed Changes to ANS Constitution

### Inclusion of NZ membership

At the 2011 AGM in Auckland, the issue of how to better recognise the participation of New Zealand members within the Society was raised. In her President's report Sarah Dunlop noted that the ANS Constitution and name of the Society should reflect New Zealand member

involvement. This was further discussed at the mid-year ANS Council meeting and Council agreed on the following motions, which will now be put to the general ANS membership for discussion and voting at the AGM in 2012 on the Gold Coast:

- *Motion: that the ANS constitution be changed to formally include New Zealand*
- *Motion: that the name of the Australian Neuroscience Society be changed to the Neuroscience Society of Australia and New Zealand*

The current ANS Constitution is available on the ANS website at [www.ans.org.au/news/constitution](http://www.ans.org.au/news/constitution) and the proposed revised version, with changes highlighted, is available at [www.ans.org.au/news/27/65/Proposed-Revision-of-ANS-Constitution](http://www.ans.org.au/news/27/65/Proposed-Revision-of-ANS-Constitution).

### **Modernisation of finance procedures**

The current constitution requires that the majority of financial transactions made by the Society are carried out by the writing of cheques, with no ability to make online payments. This is unwieldy and the issue was discussed at the mid-year Council meeting. It was proposed that the constitution should be amended to allow a single signatory for financial transactions, but that the requirement for authorisation of payments remains with two people. This would allow appropriate oversight of expenditure, but flexibility of payment method and critically, allow online banking. Currently item 9.4 of the ANS Constitution states that "Cheques of the Society shall be signed by any two of four from amongst the President, the Treasurer and the Secretary and a nominated State Representative." The following motion to change item 9.4 of the Constitution will be put to the membership for discussion and voting at the 2012 AGM at the Gold Coast:

*Motion: that item 9.4 of the constitution be changed to read "payments by the society shall be authorised by any two of four from amongst the President, Treasurer, Secretary and a nominated State Representative."*

### **ANS Council Elections**

ANS Council called for nominations for ANS Council positions that fall vacant in 2012, for the positions of Secretary, Treasurer and Editor and State Representatives for ACT, NZ, SA, Vic and WA. A nomination for Treasurer was received from Andrew Allen (University of Melbourne), for Editor from Steve Petrou (University of Melbourne) and for Secretary from Joe Lynch (University of Queensland), who were all elected unopposed. For the State Representatives, nominations were received from Stuart Brierley for SA Rep, from Ruth Empson for NZ Rep, from Riccardo Natoli for ACT Rep and from Lindy Fitzgerald, for WA Rep for a second consecutive term.

Two nominations were received for Vic Rep, from Zane Andrews (Monash University) and Chris Reid (Florey Neuroscience Institutes). Accordingly, a postal ballot for Vic members will be required to fill this position. Included below are brief statements from each of the candidates to assist Vic members with their decision. Also enclosed for Vic members is a ballot paper, with instructions on how to vote and two voting envelopes. Please make sure that you read the instructions carefully so that your vote will count. Completed ballot papers are to be posted to the ANS Secretariat, Sally Jay Conferences and MUST be received by **Wednesday 25th January 2012**. All Vic members are encouraged to vote.

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

**FAONS (Federation of Asian-Oceanic Neuroscience Societies):** I am currently President of FAONS, a role that came with ANS agreeing to host the FAONS Symposium at the Melbourne meeting in 2013. FAONS ([www.faons.org](http://www.faons.org)) represents neuroscience societies from Japan, Thailand, Australia, Korea, Iran, India, China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Israel, Korea and Sri Lanka. Council and FAONS agreed to a different format from usual with 2 x 4 speaker Symposia being folded into the ANS 2013 meeting rather than a stand-alone day. I am very grateful to Linda Richards and Seong-Seng Tan and to Peter Dodd and Andy Lawrence for helping to organise the 2 symposia respectively on "Cortical Development" and "Stress and Drug Addiction". FAONS is also keen to strengthen its links within the region.

**Engagement with other international Societies:** I attended the Japan Neuroscience Society meeting (September 15-17) as well as the International Relations Committee meeting at the Society for Neuroscience (SfN, November 12-16) to discuss global advocacy and major issues facing neuroscience in different countries. A position statement on use of animals in research has been produced and a mechanism for funding advocacy projects is being developed.

**BrainFacts.org:** I am privileged to have joined the Editorial Board of *BrainFacts.org*. SfN was recently awarded \$1.53 million over six years to create and maintain this unique nonprofit online source for authoritative public information about the progress, promise and value of brain research. Together with joint founding partners The Kavli Foundation and The Gatsby Charitable Foundation, SfN will launch the web site in late spring 2012 to enable communication with the public, educators, and policymakers about revolutionary advances in understanding the brain and mind. This will be a very valuable multi-media resource of accurate information that will be readily available to increase global awareness about neuroscience research.

**Sarah Dunlop, President ANS**

## **Vic Representative Nominee Policy Statements**

Zane Andrews

I completed my PhD in 2003 from the University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand and received excellent postdoctoral training at Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut, USA (2004-2008) in the lab of Tamas Horvath, a world recognised expert on the hypothalamic mechanisms regulating energy balance. Yale University is considered one of the world's leading universities through a proven ability to consistently recruit world-leading scientists/educators/academics that publish constantly in top class journals and develop breakthrough technologies. I hope to bring the drive and passion I witnessed at Yale to Victorian Neuroscience. As a young independent neuroscientist I would like to foster the talent of early/mid career Victorian neuroscientists and help investigators to aim high and achieve career goals. I believe creating strong interactive and collaborative networks is one way to succeed in this regard.

I hope to continue on and build from Joanne Britto's amazing achievements over the last four years. This includes promoting Brain Awareness week and promoting neuroscience to the wider community. Lastly, I will represent (and work hard to protect) the needs and interests of all Victorian neuroscientists on the Australia Neuroscience Society Council.

Lets face it, Neuroscience Victoria is the place to be.

Chris Reid:

I currently work at the Florey Neuroscience Institute as an Australian Future Fellow specifically in the field of epilepsy. The ANS has a central role in promoting and nurturing neuroscience in Australia and New Zealand. Strong affiliation with IBRO extends this influence internationally, specifically within the Asia-Pacific region. I have been an active member of ANS since 1996 having attended the majority of annual conferences in that time. I have also had an active role in teaching at ACAN and recently taught at an IBRO associate school in China. If elected, one goal will be to foster a stronger role for Victorian neuroscientists in these important teaching forums. Also, I feel that the administrative burden of the federal granting system on scientists in general is too great. I would use my position to lobby for changes in this system specifically to reduce numbers and as a consequence quality of peer review. I would support initiatives such as the Australian Brain Bee challenge and aim to increase local school involvement potentially around events such as the Myer lecture series. Finally, I would see my role as a communicator contacting the Victorian membership on important local and national issues and advising them of useful seminar and information sessions.

## **Milestones for "The Rat Brain in Stereotaxic Coordinates"**

Congratulations to George Paxinos and Charles Watson on the upcoming 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2012 of their seminal publication of the brain atlas "The Rat Brain in Stereotaxic Coordinates". This year has seen the number of citations tick over 50,000, making it the third most cited book in science after "Molecular Cloning" and "The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders."

## **Vale David Prast**

It was with the greatest sadness to learn that David Prast died recently at his home in Sydney. David was the most outstanding advocate both for those with spinal cord injury and for researchers striving to understand this devastating condition and to find ways to promote neurological recovery and reduce its impact. David's passion and enthusiasm touched us all, never once faltering in his mission to increase awareness and put the needs of those living with spinal cord injury right to the fore. David set the bar extremely high, always doing what he said he would do and thereby achieving his lofty goals. He thus accomplished much, his influence being far reaching both nationally and internationally. He was a key player in many ventures including setting up the first State Government Neurotrauma Research Program in Western Australia, being a Director of Spinal Cure and subsequently of Spinal Cord Injuries Australia, pioneering the International Campaign to Cure Paralysis, being involved with the Spinal Cord Injury Network and also recently setting up Walk On in a number of states in Australia. David also visited labs and attended many scientific conferences both at home and overseas inspiring and challenging many of us as researchers and clinicians to take bold steps in the quest to make a difference. As a person, David was so wonderfully warm and generous, always, always seeing the positive side and gracing everybody with his more than winning smile. David's legacy and the work and will go on, but far too early have we lost a dynamic force and a dear friend. Our thoughts are with his wife Michelle and his family.

**Sarah Dunlop, President ANS**



*Elizabeth Boutet, Sarah Dunlop, Louise Goodes, Lara de la Harpe of the WA Neurotrauma Research Program: some of David Prast's many "Dudettes".*

# News from State Representatives

## Victoria (Joanne Britto)

### 2011 ENS Workshop

On 31<sup>st</sup> October 2011, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Enteric Nervous System (ENS) Workshop was held at the University of Melbourne. The workshop was organized by Dr Richard Anderson (University of Melbourne), who brought together some of Australia's leading researchers in the field of enteric neuroscience, as well as an international speaker, Dr Alan Lomax, from Queen's University, Canada. The workshop provided an exciting opportunity for enteric neuroscientists from around the country to present their research, as well as providing a great opportunity for PhD students and post-docs to interact with leading national enteric neuroscientists in a small and informal forum.

The speakers included Prof. Nigel Bunnett (Monash University), Prof. John Furness (University of Melbourne), Prof. Joel Bornstein (University of Melbourne), A/Prof. Paul Bertrand (University of NSW), Dr Nick Spencer (Flinders University), Dr Alan Lomax (Queens University) as well as 5 PhD students, who covered a variety of topics that included ENS development, intestinal inflammation, ischemia, plasticity and remodeling of the ENS, intestinal links to autism and the use of stem cells to treat enteric neuropathies.

Overall, the workshop was a huge success and showcased the exciting ENS research being conducted in Australia. Next year's ENS workshop will be held in Adelaide. The organisers of the 2011 ENS Workshop would like to thank ANS and the University of Melbourne Neuroscience and Behavioural Sciences Research Domain for their sponsorship of the event.

### Ne(w)roscience in Victoria

On Friday November 4th this year, Monash University's Clayton campus was the location for a mini-symposium entitled "Ne(w)roscience in Victoria". Organised by ANS members Julian Heng and James Bourne, this day-long symposium featured research presentations from 9 young, independent researchers within the state of Victoria, as well as a plenary speaker (A/Prof Mark Bellgrove) from the University of Queensland.

The symposium was devised as a networking opportunity for young, independent researchers (1-8 years of establishing their own research team), as well as to provide an opportunity



*Lunch at Ne(w)roscience.*

to showcase their research. The speaker programme also featured expatriate investigators (Stephanie Bissiere, Nicolas Plachta, Jan Kaslin) who now call Melbourne home, and provide good examples of the global competitiveness of the research infrastructure within the state of Victoria to attract top level researchers from around the world to establish their research programmes here.

With over 90 registrants throughout Melbourne coming for the meeting, the audience was treated to a veritable feast of neuroscience research which ranged from 3 main topics: (i) brain function, neurophysiology and behaviour (Zane Andrews, Stephanie Bissiere, Tim Silk); (ii) molecular regulation of cell signalling and neurodevelopment (Nicolas Plachta, Julian Heng, Ben Emery) and (iii) Lessons from neurodevelopment for brain repair and regeneration (Clare Parish, Lachlan Thompson, Jan Kaslin). In addition, the speaker programme was augmented by an invitation to A/Prof Mark Bellgrove (University of Queensland) who gave an exhilarating presentation on the genetics of brain behaviour in humans. We thank the ANS and our sponsors (the Monash Neuroscience and Mental Health Network, ARMI) for their generous support for this event.

In response to the overwhelming support for this pilot scheme, the organisers are now prepared to run this as an annual event. Anyone with interest to participate in next year's meeting should contact Julian Heng for further details (Julian.Heng@monash.edu).

## ANS ANNUAL MEETING 2012

The 32nd 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 rainforest hinterland backdrop.

The final program and the abstracts will be up on the website ([www.sallyjayconferences.com.au/ans2012](http://www.sallyjayconferences.com.au/ans2012)) in mid December. An email broadcast will be sent when the program and abstracts are available for viewing.

Also - don't forget there are **six exciting satellite meetings** happening before and after the main ANS conference. Find out the details at [www.sallyjayconferences.com.au/ans2012/satellite.html](http://www.sallyjayconferences.com.au/ans2012/satellite.html)

**DANDIS - Dementia, Ageing and Neurodegenerative DISEases** group Website: <http://web.qbi.uq.edu.au/dandis/>

### Cellular and Functional Imaging

Contacts: Pankaj Sah: [pankaj.sah@uq.edu.au](mailto:pankaj.sah@uq.edu.au) David Reutens: [pa@cai.uq.edu.au](mailto:pa@cai.uq.edu.au)

### Australasian Auditory Neuroscience Workshop

Website: [www.aannetwork.com](http://www.aannetwork.com)

### Vision Down Under 2012: ACEVS Satellite Meeting on Vision

Website: [www.physiol.usyd.edu.au/vision2012/](http://www.physiol.usyd.edu.au/vision2012/)

### Neuronal Polarity in Health and Disease: Role of Cytoskeleton and Vesicular Trafficking

Contact: Fred Meunier: [f.meunier@uq.edu.au](mailto:f.meunier@uq.edu.au)

### BioAutism 2012

Web: [www.qbi.uq.edu.au/bioautism-2012](http://www.qbi.uq.edu.au/bioautism-2012)

# UPCOMING CONFERENCES & MEETINGS

For more detailed information go to the upcoming conferences webpage at [www.ans.org.au/upcoming-conferences](http://www.ans.org.au/upcoming-conferences).

**ISDN2012 19th Biennial Meeting of the International Society for Developmental Neuroscience "Neurodevelopment and Neurological Diseases"**, Mumbai, India, 11-14 Jan 2012: [www.isdn-conference.elsevier.com](http://www.isdn-conference.elsevier.com)

**The 20th International Visual Field and Imaging Symposium**, Melbourne, Australia: 22-25 January 2012: [www.ivfis.com](http://www.ivfis.com)

**International Brain Injury Association's Ninth World Congress** on Brain Injury Edinburgh, Scotland March 21-25, 2012: [www.internationalbrain.org](http://www.internationalbrain.org).

**8th Asia Pacific Symposium on Neural Regeneration (APSNR)**, in conjunction with the 5th Pan Pacific Symposium on Stem Cells and Cancer Research (PPSSC), Taichung, Taiwan, April 12-16, 2012: [www.ppssc.com.tw/index.html](http://www.ppssc.com.tw/index.html)

**10th International Conference on Brain Energy Metabolism "Bioenergetics of Neurological Disease and Aging"** Monterey, California, USA April 17 - 20, 2012: [www.ncire.org/ICBEM2012](http://www.ncire.org/ICBEM2012)

**7th World Congress for Neurorehabilitation 2012 (WCNR 2012)**, Melbourne, 16 - 19 May 2012: [www.dconferences.net.au/wcncr2012/](http://www.dconferences.net.au/wcncr2012/).

**The Joint 12th International Child Neurology Congress and 11th Asian and Oceanian Congress of Child Neurology**, Brisbane, Australia, May 27- June 1, 2012: [www.icnc2012.com](http://www.icnc2012.com)

**11th International Meeting on Cholinesterases**, Kazan, Russia, June 3-11, 2012: [www.11che.ru](http://www.11che.ru)

**21st annual meeting of International Behavioral Neuroscience Society (IBNS)**, Hawaii, USA, June 5-10, 2012: [www.ibnshomepage.org/annualmtg12.htm](http://www.ibnshomepage.org/annualmtg12.htm).

**2012 International Motoneuron Meeting – Motoneurons and Beyond**, Sydney 23-27 July 2012: [www.motoneuronmeeting.org](http://www.motoneuronmeeting.org)

**2012 International Congress of Neuroethology**, College Park, Maryland, USA, 5–10 August 2012: [www.neuroethology.org/meetings](http://www.neuroethology.org/meetings)

**2nd International Neural Regeneration Symposium**, Shenyang, China, September 22-26, 2012: [www.nrronline.org/conference](http://www.nrronline.org/conference)

**APSN/JSN 2012, the Joint Symposium of 11th Biennial Meeting of APSN and 55th Meeting of JSN**, International Conference Center, Kobe, Japan Sept 29-Oct 2, 2012: [www.apsneurochem.org](http://www.apsneurochem.org)

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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: [jacqueline.phillips@mq.edu.au](mailto:jacqueline.phillips@mq.edu.au). All donations, regardless of amount, are most welcome.

## 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 [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

April 2012

6<sup>th</sup> December 2012

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# Annual General Meeting

5:05pm, Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2012  
Marquee Pavilion, Jupiters Hotel  
Gold coast

## *Agenda*

1. Attendance and apologies
2. Minutes of the 2011 Annual General Meeting
3. President's report
4. Vote on motions to formally include New Zealand in the Constitution and name of the Society
  - *Motion: that the ANS constitution be changed to formally include New Zealand*
  - *Motion: that the name of the Australian Neuroscience Society be changed to the Neuroscience Society of Australia and New Zealand*
5. Secretary's report
6. Treasurer's report
7. Vote on motion to update payment options for the Society
  - *Motion: that item 9.4 of the constitution be changed to read "payments by the society shall be authorised by any two of four from amongst the President, Treasurer, Secretary and a nominated State Representative."*
8. Editor's report
9. 2012 ANS Awards and Prizes
10. Vote on Council nominations for award of Honorary ANS membership to Perry Bartlett and Fred Mendelsohn.
  - *Motion: that Council recommends the award of Honorary Membership of the Australian Neuroscience Society to Perry Bartlett in appreciation of both his outstanding service to the Society, including as ANS President-Elect, President and Past-President from 1999-2002, and his sustained contributions to the development and promotion of neuroscience in Australia. The research in Perry's laboratory encompasses molecular and cellular neuroscience, with a particular focus on neural stem cells, his group being one of the first to show the presence of neural stem cells in the adult brain.*
  - *Motion: that Council recommends the award of Honorary Membership of the Australian Neuroscience Society to Fred Mendelsohn in appreciation of both his outstanding service to the Society, including as ANS President-Elect, President and Past-President from 2001-2004 and his sustained contributions to the development and promotion of neuroscience in Australia. The central focus of Fred's research interest is the renin-angiotensin system, showing that in addition to the systemic humoral renin-angiotensin system, there are local renin-angiotensin systems that function in many tissues such as the kidney and brain.*
11. Future ANS meetings
12. Council members for 2012
13. Other business

