

WELCOME - Welcome to the August 2009 edition of The Australasian Society for Biomaterials and Tissue Engineering (ASBTE) NEWS. This is the first edition under the new editorship of Assoc. Prof. Yin Xiao and Dr David Nisbet. In this issue you will find a summary of the BITE-RM 2009 and 19th ASBTE Conference, a report on the IUSBSE Meeting in Texas, as well as other news items of interest including upcoming conferences and the ASBTE Student Column. We hope you enjoy reading the newsletter.

3rd BITE-RM and 19th ASBTE Annual Conference 2009

Sydney turned on some very hot weather to welcome our colleagues from India to the 3rd Indo-Australian Conference on Biomaterials, Implants, Tissue Engineering & Regenerative Medicine (BITE&RM) held in conjunction with the 19th Annual ASBTE Conference from January 21-23, 2009. The meeting was held at the University of New South Wales, with some social functions being held close by at Coogee Beach. The Conference was supported by the Australian Government, Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research through the International Sciences Linkages Program and was opened with words of welcome from the Conference Chairs, Professor Laura Poole-Warren and Dr Chandra Sharma. There were approximately 150 delegates at the meeting, including a number of students who were supported by travel grants from the Society. The Conference received media attention with several journalists/news units covering it. In particular, several delegates were interviewed by a journalist from the ABC Science Unit and found themselves being aired on national radio in subsequent days.



Entertainment at the Conference Dinner

The scientific program commenced with two plenary talks from Dr. Rinti Banerjee (IIT Mumbai) and Dr Hala Zreiqat (University of Sydney) who spoke on soft and hard materials for drug delivery and tissue engineering respectively. The afternoon consisted of two parallel sessions at which the delegates heard from both Indian keynotes speakers and a selection of Australian early career researchers and students on the subjects of drug delivery, implants, tissue engineering and biomaterial surfaces. Sydney's extreme weather resulted in an quintessentially un-Australian event – an indoor barbeque held at the Crown Plaza Hotel overlooking Coogee Beach, which also happened to be close to some late-night alcohol vendors.



Poster session at 3rd BITE-RM and 19th ASBTE Annual Conference

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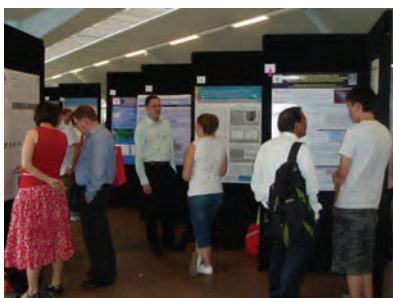
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Day two opened with a plenary talk from Professor Julie Campbell (University of Queensland) who described her work in the development of tissue-engineered arteries followed by a morning of parallel sessions covering delivery and self-assembly materials. Lunch was followed by a very productive poster session at which delegates got the chance to meet with presenters and to cast votes for the best poster presented by our students and early career researchers. The day was rounded off with presentations on composite biomaterials scaffolds and stem cells.

The Conference Dinner was held in the Aquarium Room of the Beach Palace Hotel and was attended by Indian, Australian and International guests including Dr. Sheel Nuna who, in his former role in the Australian High Commission in Delhi, played a pivotal role in initiating the BITE-RM conference series. Whilst Dr. Nuna was able to join us for the dinner, his luggage, however, had not yet joined him! Entertainment at the conference dinner came in the form of indigenous music with a didgeridoo at the fore. The Conference Chair and the ASBTE President demonstrated why they did not pursue careers in the music industry and opted to become scientists instead! Partying went on well into the night with several delegates outlasting the backpackers at the Coogee Bay Hotel.

The final day of the conference started with the AGM of ASBTE and the election of office bearers. Dr Keith McLean was reappointed as President and Dr. Thilak Gunatillake was elected Vice-President. The Society appointed a new Secretary in Dr. Tim Woodfield from New Zealand, and a new Treasurer in Dr. Penny Martens. The President thanked Dr. Jorge Garcia for his long-term commitment to the role of Society Treasurer, a role that was recognised by a presentation at the Dinner on the previous evening. He also thanked the outgoing Secretary Dr. Lisbeth Grondahl for her work over the previous three years and Prof. Justin Cooper-White for his commitment to the Society as Past President.



The Conference Chair (Laura Poole-Warren) and the President (Keith McLean) display their musical talent at the Conference Dinner.

The science of the final day started with a Plenary Lecture from Professor Marcus Textor from the ETH in Switzerland who spoke on his work on bioinspired surface modification and parallel sessions on bioreactors, hydrogels, IP, surfaces and scaffolds saw the conference close at 2.30pm. During lunch the winners of Awards were presented with their prized cheques and certificates.

The Early Career Researcher Award went to Dr. Simone Rizzi (QUT); the Student Oral Award to Rogambha Ramaswamy (University of Sydney) and the Poster Award to Jelena Rnjak (University of Sydney).



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The President, Keith McLean, presents the outgoing Treasurer, Jorge Garcia, with a certificate of appreciation on behalf of the Society.

The Society thanks the Conference Chair, Prof. Laura Poole-Warren, for organising a wonderful meeting and also the Science and Organisational Committees for all their work. In addition, the Conference attracted a variety of sponsors who the ASBTE wishes to thank: The Australian Government; UNSW; CSIRO; CRC Polymers; AorTech Biomaterials; Invibio plc; Phillips Ormonde Fitzpatrick; Australian National Fabrication Facility Queensland Node; Applied Biosystems and the Government of NSW. In addition, the Society is also grateful to the two exhibitors who were present: BMG Labtech and Australian Tissue Engineering Centre.

The Society looks forward to welcoming delegates to the 20th Annual Conference in Brisbane in 2010.

NEW ASBTE Committee

A new committee was voted into office at the 19th AGM. The committee includes:

Dr. Keith McLean, President;

Dr. Thilak Gunatillake, Vice-President;

Dr. Tim Woodfield, Secretary;

Dr. Penny Martens, Treasurer.

The Ordinary Members are Dr. Lisbeth Grondahl; A.Prof. Yin Xiao; Dr. Jorge Garcia and Dr. David Nisbet.

The committee meets quarterly to discuss issues relevant to the Society.

ASBTE Conference 2010

The 20th Annual ASBTE Conference will be held in Brisbane, Australia in February 10-12, 2010. The meeting will be co-hosted by the University of Queensland and Queensland University of Technology. The conference details will be updated in our society website: www.biomaterials.org.au.

Asian Biomaterials Federation:

The ASBTE is a member of the recently formed Asian Biomaterials Federation. Recently, the 2nd Asian Biomaterials Conference was held in Singapore (26-27th June, 2009) following the 1st ABMC Meeting in Tsukuba, Japan, (6-8th December, 2009). ASBTE members Professors Laura Poole-Warren, Justin Cooper-White and Hans Griesser attended the meeting. ASBTE was

officially represented by Laura and Justin at the AGM.



Report from the ASBTE Student Reps (Lauren Clements, Donna Menzies & Nick Kirkland)

Welcome once again to the student column of the ASBTE newsletter. With the AGM held at the ASBTE conference earlier this year, we have said goodbye to two of our representatives: Brooke Farrugia and Ivan Djordjevic who are nearing the end of their PhD's. However, we would like to welcome Donna and Nick as two new student reps who will join Lauren. Here is a brief introduction to our two new reps:

Donna:

Hi, I'm Donna Menzies and am in the last year of my PhD at CSIRO Molecular and Health Technologies and Monash University in Melbourne. My research is concerned with the development and characterisation of low-fouling gradient and patterned surfaces to study the specific interaction of various proteins and cells. The conference held in UNSW, Sydney, in January 2009 was a great introduction to the ASBTE group and I look forward to serving as a student representative alongside Lauren and Nick for the coming year.

Nick:

My name is Nick Kirkland and I am a British/American student currently (hopefully) half way through my PhD at the University of Canterbury in Christchurch, New Zealand. I completed my MEng degree in Design, Management and Manufacturing Engineering at the University of Durham, England in 2007 and moved to NZ shortly afterwards. My current work is part of a project on magnesium biomaterials funded by the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology (FRST) in NZ. The research revolves around the development and testing of appropriate magnesium alloys primarily for use as orthopaedic applications, although we are looking at a wide range of possible uses.



Photographs from the student mixer at the annual Conference.

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ASBTE Student Column

It was great to see so many students at the ASBTE symposium in Sydney either presenting oral presentations or posters. The meeting provided a wonderful opportunity for students and researchers to showcase their research, discuss ideas and hopefully forge new collaborations. Congratulations must go to Yogambha Ramaswamy and Jelena Rnjak for winning the best student oral presentation and poster respectively.

On a less formal note, it was great to see so many students and researchers come and join us in the Oceans Bar for Student Drinks. As can be seen from some of the photos above, the student night was a great success and allowed us to get to know our fellow students, and have some fun at the same time.

As one last reminder: don't forget to let us know about any exciting news or achievements in your research. We are always interested in hearing fellow students research interests and if there is anything in particular that you would like to see featured on the student page or this column please let us know.

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19th ASBTE Conference Awardees Dr Simone Rizzi, Ms Yoghambha Ramaswamy and Ms Jelena Rnjak receive their awards from Drs. Grace Chan (Philipps, Ormonde, Fitzpatrick), Penny Martens (Treasurer), and Keith McLean (President).

Report on IUSBSE

Dr. Keith McLean and Prof. Laura Poole-Warren, the recently elected ASBTE delegates to the International Union of Societies for Biomaterials Science and Engineering (IUSBSE), attended a committee meeting held during the Society for Biomaterials Annual Meeting in San Antonio, Texas. The meeting brought the delegates up to date with progress toward the 9th World Biomaterials Congress (WBC) in Chengdu, China (2012) and the 10th WBC in Montreal, Canada. The Chinese organisers of the 9th WBC requested that each Society appoint an Ambassador to the meeting and the ASBTE Committee has asked the Vice-President and IUSBSE Fellow, Dr. Thilak Gunatillake to take on this role. Societies were also asked to begin consideration of plenary and keynote speakers for 9th WBC which will be called for by June 30th, 2010. Delegates were reminded of the method of selection of locations for future meetings as the President of IUSBSE is being sent requests from cities around the world, including Sydney and Melbourne suggesting a willingness to organise meetings in those cities. Society delegates bring proposals for future meetings to IUSBSE. Societies were also reminded that they should not hold Society meetings in the year of the WBC and it was suggested that Societies should sign a formal agreement to this effect. A proposal will be brought to a future meeting.

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Building Connections with Australasian Society for Stem Cell Research (ASSCR)

ASBTE is seeking to enhance its connections with other societies in the field of regenerative medicine. The Committee has been in discussion with the recently formed Australasian Society for Stem Cell Research (ASSCR).

The objectives of ASSCR are:

1. To support stem cell research and encourage scientific exchange to promote research within our region. This will facilitate networking within the stem cell research community in Australia and New Zealand, and worldwide. The ASSCR is the Australasian representative for the Stem Cell Asian Pacific Network (SNAP), an active stem cell network of researchers throughout Asia.

2. To provide all interested parties with the opportunity to access information relating to scientific, medical and ethical advances in the broad field of stem cell research. A particular emphasis of the society will be to communicate this information to the general public.

The ASSCR is focused on the development of stem cell research and dissemination of information within the Australasian region. ASBTE and ASSCR are seeking to develop strong connections by making members aware of each others activities. Details of ASSCR's 2nd annual meeting are shown below.

THE ASSCR SECOND ANNUAL MEETING, THE SHINE DOME, CANBERRA Sunday 22nd to Tuesday 24th NOVEMBER 2009

The ASSCR 2nd annual meeting aims to bring together our regions best stem cell scientists working in different areas of stem cell research as well as a prestigious International Speaker.

The meeting themes include:

- Regulation of pluripotency, including embryonic stem and iPS cells.
- Embryonic stem cell differentiation.
- Stem cell regulation.
- Cancer stem cells.
- Mesenchymal stem cells; origins, biology, identification and applications.
- Organ specific stem cells.

Interested in becoming a member of ASBTE?

Membership Rates: Full Member (Calendar Year) \$60; Student Member (Calendar Year) \$30. Membership forms are available at www.biomaterials.org.au

ASBTE Website (www.biomaterials.org.au)

Remember, any member wishing to supply news items, links, PhD scholarships, job listings, or other relevant information should submit these to Dr. David Nisbet (david.nisbet@eng.monash.edu.au).

ASBTE NEWS is a biannual newsletter that covers news from The Australasian Society for Biomaterials and Tissue Engineering. If you have a news item that you wish to be included please contact the editors:

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