



Victorian News

The Australian Society for Microbiology VIC Branch Newsletter

December 2018, Vol 518

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Submission Deadline: 4th of the Month

Find us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/250340155042466/>

Contact Details

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Victorian Branch
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Email: catherine.satzke@mcri.edu.au or
asmvicbranch@gmail.com

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Email: admin@theasm.com.au
Weblink: www.theasm.org.au
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Email: lazavan@students.latrobe.edu.au

The ASM Victorian Branch Committee would like to thank Karena Waller for her many years of fantastic service as Chair of the Committee. Karena will remain on the Committee with a major role in the Teaching and Learning portfolio.

All notices should be emailed to: jhea@unimelb.edu.au



Save the Date

Monday 18 February 2019

Professor Alex Van Belkum

“Evolution in Clinical Microbiology?”

Alex is a major key opinion leader in MALDI-TOF, Antimicrobial Resistance and Whole Genome Sequencing. He will be visiting Australia to speak at the ASA'S Antimicrobials 2019 in Sydney, and we are fortunate to have him present in Melbourne for ASM on rapid diagnostics and the way forward to combat AMR.

Professor Alex van Belkum, PhD PhD, fellow of the American Academy of Microbiology, has been primarily involved in research on molecular epidemiology, molecular and culture-based diagnostics and antimicrobial resistance testing in the domain of clinical microbiology. A scientific director of microbiology research at bioMérieux, a diagnostics company based in the South of France, he is also the editor-in-chief of European Journal of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases, which 2016 impact factor is 2.7. He is the author of more than 540 PubMed-cited papers, with an H index of about 90. He has worked at the Universities of Leiden and Rotterdam, both in The Netherlands, and at the latter institute he still holds a honorary professorship in molecular microbiology. He moved to industry 7 years ago where he is a microbiologist in the Data Analytics Unit with a prime interest in next generation sequencing and the use of other data-rich technologies in clinical microbiology. He published five books and is one of the editors of “Molecular Microbiology: diagnostic principles and practice” published by ASM Press, American Society of Microbiology, Washington.



Where: St Vincent's Hospital, Melbourne

Time: From 6pm onwards – food and drinks provided followed by presentation

Cost: Free event for ASM Members (Student or Full Members)
\$20 - Non-ASM Member

Registration details coming shortly

For further event details and enquiries please contact Seema Kanade

(seema.kanade@dorevitch.com.au), Jaelyne Birrell (jaelyne.birrell@gmail.com) or Sangeeta Singh (vu2bhy@hotmail.com)

Call for Abstracts

Apply NOW to participate in

ASM Nancy Millis Student Award 2019

It's a great way to attend next year's ASM Annual Scientific Meeting in Adelaide
(30 June - 3 July 2019)

Where: Venue to be advised

When: Date to be advised (will be held in late February)

Presentations: Competitors will deliver 10 minute presentations and receive 5 minutes of question time

Awards: Two major awards are available to help students attend the national ASM meeting. Winners will receive:

- ASM Nancy Millis Student Award – conference registration, a return economy airfare and \$500 towards the cost of accommodation and is awarded to the best student presenting research carried out as part of a PhD or Masters by Research
- Victorian ASM Branch Award – conference registration (early bird rate) and \$400 towards the cost of a return economy airfare and/or accommodation is awarded to the best student presenting research carried out as part of a Masters by Coursework or an Honours degree

Applications close: 5pm on Friday 8 February 2019

Further details (including application forms and instructions) can be obtained by emailing:

Karena Waller (klwaller@unimelb.edu.au)

Christmas Party

- Event Report -

On Thursday the 29th of November 2018, ASM Vic Branch members and their families, friends and colleagues gathered at Hot Honey Café in Middle Park to celebrate the year that has been.

Guests were treated to a special presentation by Professor Liz Harry from the University of Technology Sydney, titled “Unlocking the secrets of an ancient antibiotic: Honey”. Liz spoke to the use of medicinal honey throughout history, dating back to as early as the Aztec Empire, with relatively recent work showing the broad spectrum antimicrobial activity of honey and no reports of resistance. Medicinal honey has been shown to aid wound healing, with several approved dressings available for use in clinics. However, the exact mechanisms behind the antimicrobial activity of honey are only just starting to be understood. The low water activity (~80% sugar) and low pH of honey contributes to the antimicrobial activity of honey, as do antimicrobial peptides, phenolics and hydrogen peroxide production which vary between different honeys. Manuka honey, derived from the nectar of *Leptosperum scoparium* flowers, contains unique floral factors with antimicrobial activity, including Methylglyoxal (MGO). Liz and her research group has shown that manuka honey can prevent bacterial biofilms from forming as well as treat established biofilms, which could have significant implications for the treatment of wounds. Her work continues to investigate how manuka honey can kill bacteria without inducing resistance and which components (e.g. MGO) are responsible for the antimicrobial activity, either in isolation or synergistically. If you are interested in finding out more about Liz’s work, please follow the link below:

<https://www.uts.edu.au/staff/elizabeth.harry>

Guests also enjoyed a fabulous sit-down feast prepared by Emma and her team at Hot Honey Café, a definite must visit if you are in the area. The party gave guests the opportunity to socialise with branch members they have known for years as well as introduce themselves to new members. There was quite a hubbub of discussion happening between courses which is very encouraging and what the ASM Vic Branch strives to facilitate. The ASM Vic Branch Christmas Party caps off another successful year of branch activities. Stay tuned for more great ASM Vic Branch events in the New Year!



Report contributed by: Jacqueline Heath (ASM Vic Committee)



ASM History SIG

ASM Memorabilia

If any ASM members have significant ASM memorabilia that they would like to donate to the ASM archives or would like to suggest topics suitable for possible symposia at future ASM Annual Scientific Meetings, please send details of the memorabilia or suggested symposia topics to:

History SIG convener
c/o Australian Society for Microbiology Office
9/397 Smith Street
Fitzroy VIC 3068

How to join the Australian Society for Microbiology at a reduced rate!

Did you know that non-members can join the Australian Society for Microbiology at a reduced rate? Well, you can!

As a non-member, by paying the fee to attend an event hosted by ASM VIC Branch, you can use this amount to put towards an annual membership of the Australian Society for Microbiology.

To do so, please follow these instructions:

1. Register to attend the event hosted by ASM VIC Branch via the advertised trybooking link, and pay the attendance fee.
2. Attend the event, and then within 2 weeks after the event, go to the ASM membership area at <http://www.theasm.org.au/membership/>
3. Choose the appropriate membership for you and then click on:
[Click here to join or update your details](#)
4. Click 'Begin here' and create a Currinda membership profile for yourself. Then, pay the membership full fee.
5. Following payment, download the paid receipt (showing your payment) and email it along with your postal address to:
Priscilla Johanesen, Treasurer VIC Branch priscilla.johanesen@monash.edu
6. A cheque refunding the event fee will be posted to you.

Please note: you must complete the above process within 2 weeks following an event to take advantage of this offer. After this time, the event fee cannot be used to pay membership fees.

ASM Member Awards Apply Now

The ASM offers a variety of awards to its members. Take full advantage of your membership by applying now for one of the awards listed below with deadlines approaching. For more details and additional awards please refer to the National webpage <http://www.theasm.org.au/awards/>

The deadlines for all award applications are now **March 31st** of each year.

Visiting Speakers Program

Do you know of an outstanding speaker coming to Australia?

If so, consider them for the Visiting Speakers Program (VSP).

**Further information about the VSP and the speaker recommendation form
can be found at:**

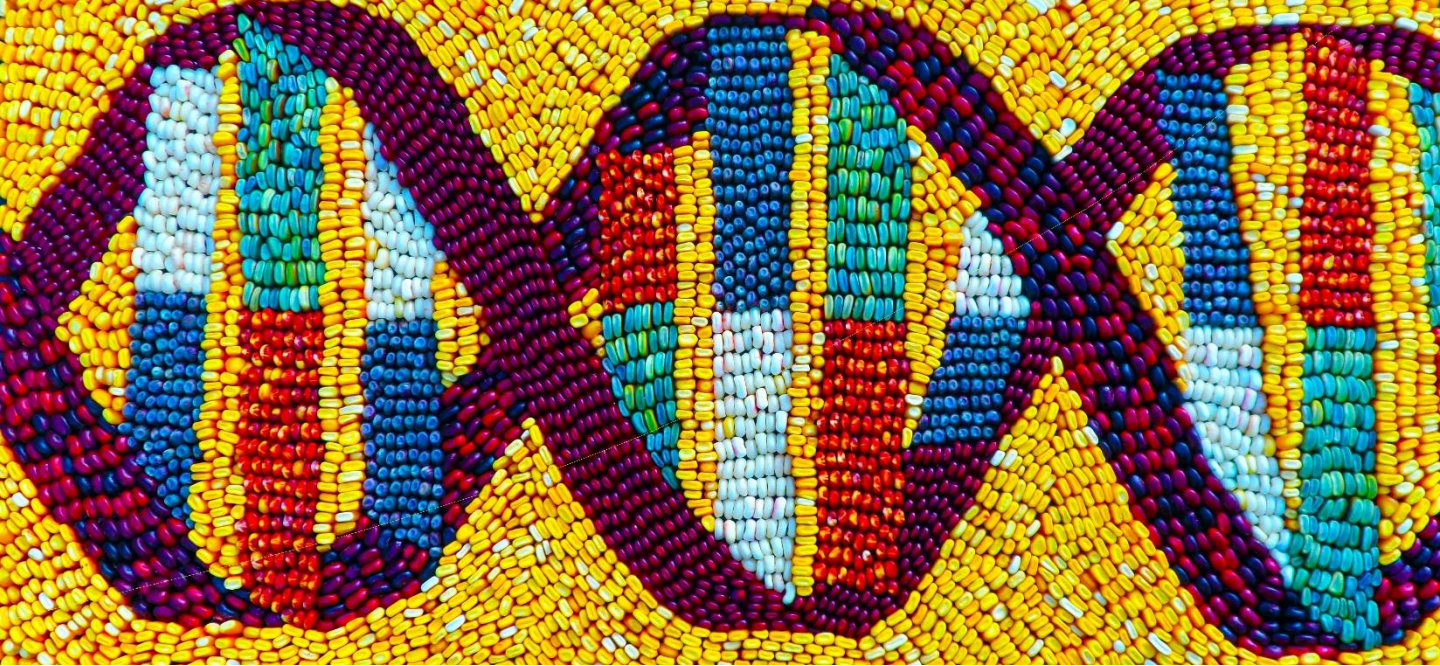
<http://www.theasm.org.au/events/visiting-speakers-program/>

Alternatively, contact Catherine Satzke (catherine.satzke@mcri.edu.au),

who is the Chair for the ASM VIC Branch.

MICRO NEWS and VIEWS

- Life in Deep Earth totals 15 to 23 billion tons of carbon
<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2018/12/181210101909.htm>
- DNA study shows stethoscopes loaded with bacteria, including staphylococcus
<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2018/12/181212135044.htm>
- Mini 'solar panels' help yeast shine at churning out drug ingredients
<https://www.sciencenews.org/article/mini-solar-panels-help-yeast-churn-out-drug-ingredients>
- Swarming behavior discovered in fish-dwelling parasite
<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2018/12/181213112134.htm>
- Biologists turn eavesdropping viruses into bacterial assassins
<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2018/12/181213142206.htm>
- Endangered northern bettongs aren't picky truffle eaters
<https://www.sciencenews.org/article/endangered-northern-bettongs-not-picky-truffle-eaters>
- The potentially deadly bacterium that's on everyone's skin
<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2018/11/181128082753.htm>
- 3D chemical maps of single bacteria
<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2018/11/181116110543.htm>
- Around the world, reported measles cases jumped 31 percent in 2017
<https://www.sciencenews.org/article/global-reported-measles-cases-jumped-31-percent-2017-cdc>
- Biological templating: Using a virus to speed up modern computers
<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2018/12/181205093731.htm>
- The virus detectives: The secret of brown trout dying uncovered
<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2018/11/181128114823.htm>
- Symbiosis a driver of truffle diversity
<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2018/11/181114144328.htm>
- A gut-brain link for Parkinson's gets a closer look
<https://www.sciencenews.org/article/parkinsons-disease-gut-microbes-brain-link>



2nd Australian Mobile Genetic Elements Meeting

Melbourne, 2019

February 14th-15th

AMREP, Alfred Hospital, Prahran



Come and join us at AMREP for two days of exciting talks on the **identification** and **biology** of Mobile Genetic Elements!

Priority given to talks from Postgraduate Students and ECRs.

Abstract Submission by 11th January.

Registrations close 1st February.

Further details available on the website: www.mgepb.org

Advertise in the ASM VIC Branch Newsletter!

Would you like to advertise your event, job vacancy or other news item in our newsletter?

Advertising rates are:

Not-for-profit adverts: free of charge

For-profit adverts: \$50 per advert

If so, please contact Karena Waller
(catherine.satzke@mcri.edu.au)

ASM VIC CALENDAR 2018

When planning meetings, please book dates with Karena Waller
(Phone: (03) 8344 0045, Email: klwaller@unimelb.edu.au)

- **ASM Vic Branch Event – Prof Alex Van Belkum - “Evolution in Clinical Microbiology?” – 18th February 2018, St Vincent’s Hospital, Melbourne**
- **ASM Nancy Millis Student Award 2019 – TBC (Late February)**



asm2019
SOUTH AUSTRALIA

30 June -
3 July
Adelaide Convention
Centre
www.theasm.org.au

The Australian Society
for **Microbiology** 
bringing Microbiologists together

**Submission Deadline for November
ASM Victorian News:
February 4th 2019**

Email submissions to: jhea@unimelb.edu.au