



Victorian News

The Australian Society for Microbiology VIC Branch Newsletter
December 2019, Vol 526

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Submission Deadline: 5th of the Month

Find us on Facebook: The Australian Society for Microbiology (ASM) - Victorian Branch

Find us on Twitter : [@ASM_VicBranch](https://twitter.com/ASM_VicBranch)



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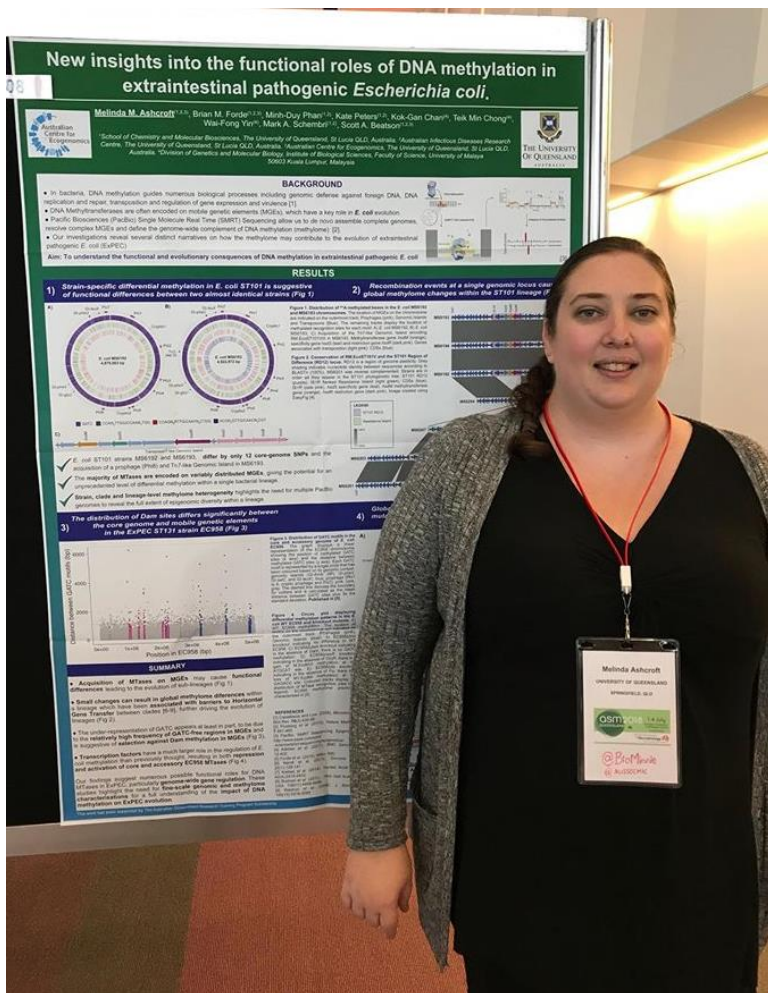
Jake Lacey
Email: jake.lacey@unimelb.edu.au

All notices should be emailed to: l.sonneveld@alfred.org.au

Microbiologist of the Month

Melinda Ashcroft

Postdoctoral Research Fellow in Microbial Genomics
ASM Communications Ambassador



Pictured: Melinda Ashcroft presenting her poster at the ASM conference in Brisbane 2018.

I entered university through a pathway for the disadvantaged as I grew up in a poor household. I believe there should be more federal funds allocated to help support transitioning into tertiary education for those from low socio-economic backgrounds. I can cook a perfect medium-rare steak as I ended up as a grill cook for seven years before coming back to study and getting my Masters in Biotechnology.

My transition into Microbiology was somewhat accidental. I was originally working in Melanoma genetics during my Masters, however realised that I did not want to work in a traditional wet lab environment and so I took an Introduction to Bioinformatics and Genomics course. This led to a Masters project co-supervised

by Associate Professor Scott Beatson who works in Microbial Genomics. Following this

I was offered a summer internship in Scott's lab working on *E. coli* genomics and from there transitioned into a Microbial Genomics PhD. This was quite difficult because I had limited microbiology or bioinformatics experience and thus had a massive learning curve. But 4 years later I submitted my PhD and have been working as a Postdoctoral Research Fellow in Microbial Genomics (first at the University of Queensland and now at the Peter Doherty Institute) ever since.

I love my work in Microbiology. I am learning every day and I feel that my work makes a real difference in people's lives as I work on antimicrobial resistance in bacterial pathogens with clinical relevance.

Previously I worked on *E. coli* that cause urinary tract infections, one of the most common infections worldwide. Currently I work on investigating the drivers of the Gonorrhoea epidemic, looking at ways to reduce incidence and antimicrobial resistance, with more of a public health focus.

Northern News From the Hospitals



15th October 2019

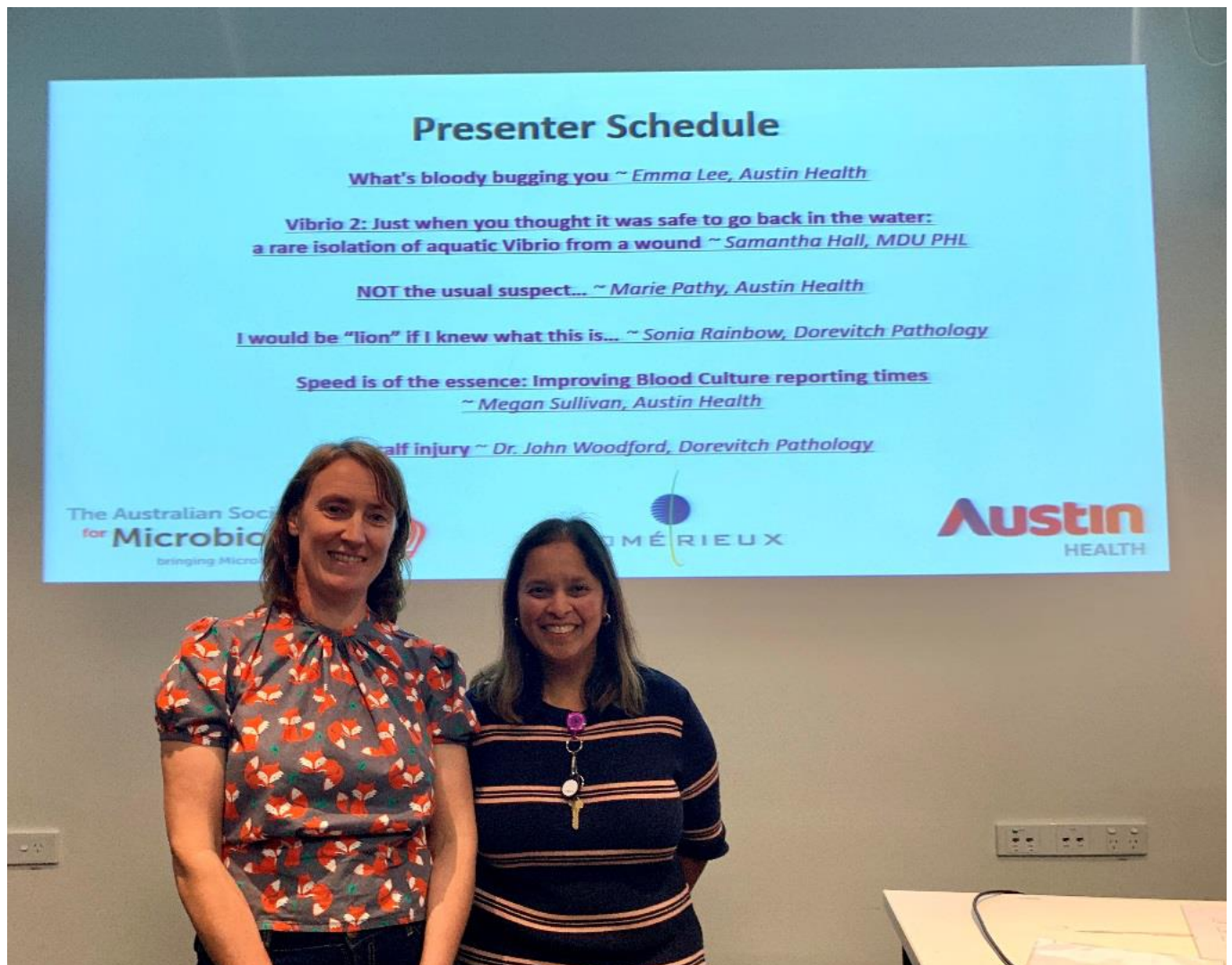
- Event Report -



Proudly sponsored by BioMérieux

News from the Hospitals was presented by the Australian Society for Microbiology (ASM) Victorian Branch, held at the Austin Hospital. The event was chaired by Dr. Marcel Leroi, Director of Microbiology, Austin Health. It was a busy night with six speakers presenting excellent talks on diverse topics.

Congratulations to Sonia Rainbow (Dorevitch Pathology) who was the winner



Pictured: Sonia Rainbow and Seema Kanade (ASM VIC Branch)

A special thank you to Dr Leroi for chairing the event and to all the speakers for their engaging talks. A warm thank you is extended to BioMérieux for their generous sponsorship of the evening, to the Austin Hospital for use of their lecture theatre, and to all involved in the organisation of the event.

A list of the presenters can be found on the following page in order of appearance on the night.

Report contributed by the Medical Microbiology Working Group

What's bloody bugging you ~ Emma Lee, Austin Health

An uncommon case of shiga-toxin producing *E. coli*

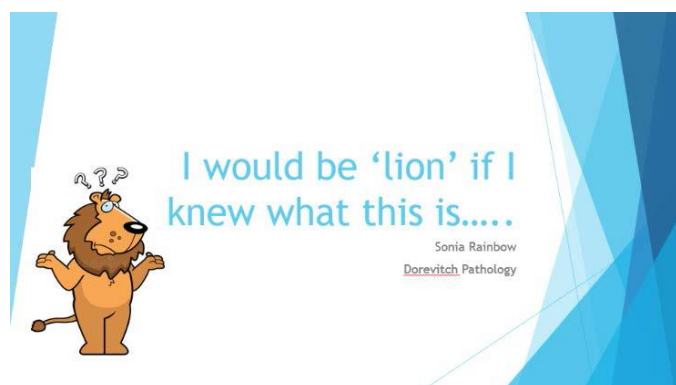


Vibrio 2: Just when you thought it was safe to go back in the water: a rare isolation of aquatic Vibrio from a wound ~ Samantha Hall, MDU PHL

First isolation of *Vibrio owensii* from human infection

NOT the usual suspect... ~ Marie Pathy, Austin Health

A challenging case of *Bartonella henselae*



I would be "lion" if I knew what this is... ~ Sonia Rainbow, Dorevitch Pathology

A collection of peculiar *Mycoplasma arginini* cases



Speed is of the essence: Improving Blood Culture reporting times ~ Megan Sullivan, Austin Health

Identifying obstacles and making improvements



A calf injury ~ Dr. John Woodford, Dorevitch Pathology

A case of bovine listeriosis

Visiting Speaker Program

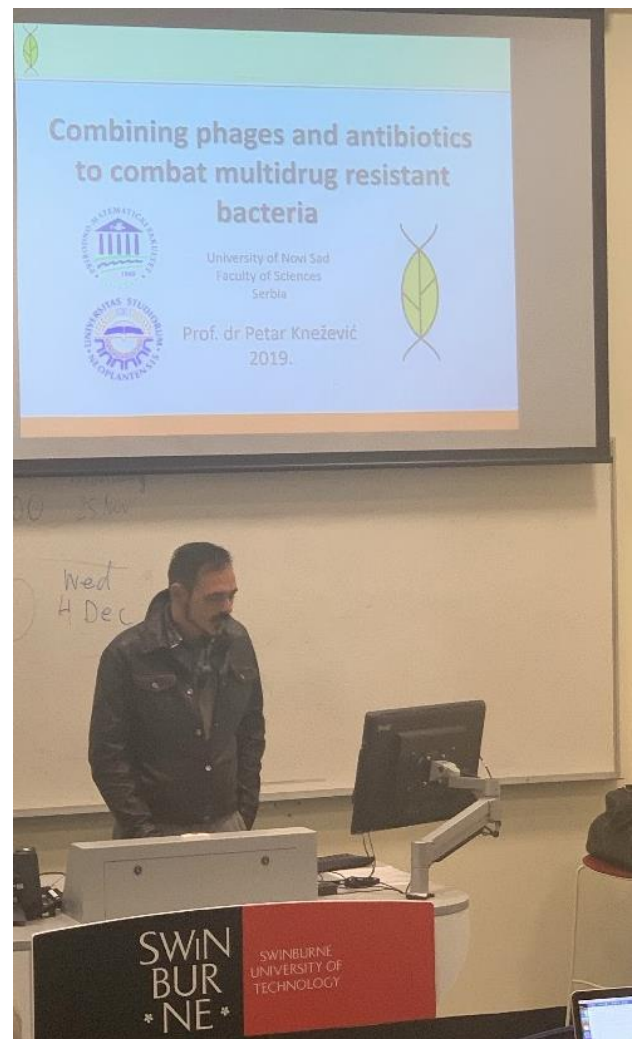
A/Prof Petar Knezevic

-Event Report-

The Visiting Speakers Program welcomed Associate Professor Petar Knezevic from the University of Novi Sad on Monday the 21st of October 2019 at Swinburne University. A/Prof Petar had travelled to Australia to present at the Westmead Institute for Medical Research and proceeded to present as a VSP in Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth. Petar's seminar for the Victorian Branch was entitled "Bacteriophage-Antibiotic Synergy" based on the progress and current research in the bacteriophage field.

A/Prof Petar is an associate professor in Microbiology in the Faculty of Science and a member of the International Committee on Taxonomy of Viruses where he is a chair for the family Inoviridae. Petar's seminar gave an overview of the relationship between bacteriophages and antibiotics detailing how the combination of the two can aid in combating multidrug resistant bacteria. Additionally, Petar gave an insight into how some combinations of bacteriophage and antibiotic may not aid in the treatment of bacterial infections.

We had a range of attendees on the night from University of Melbourne, La Trobe University and Swinburne University, with a mixture of both postgraduate students and post-doctoral researchers. A special thank you Prof. Enzo Palombo for hosting A/Prof Knezevic for the ASM Vic Branch's VSP.



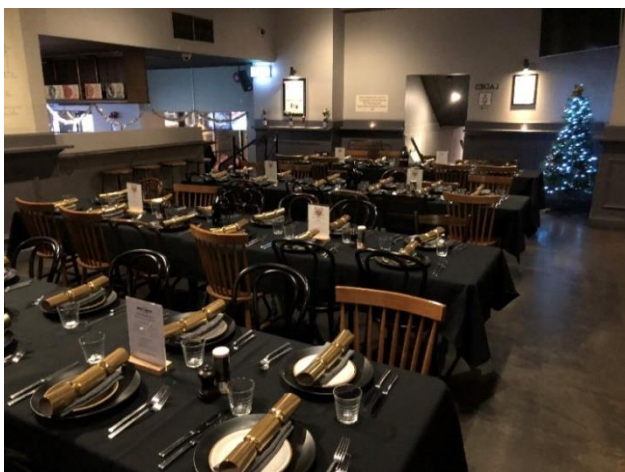
Report contributed by Lauren Zavan

ASM Vic Branch Christmas Party 2019

-Event Report-

On Thursday the 5th of December, the ASM Vic Branch hosted their member, friends and colleagues at The Crafty Squire for this years Christmas Party to celebrate the end of the year and the year to come. Our guests enjoyed a delicious two-course sit down meal prepared by the team at The Crafty Squire which also included one of their delicious James Squire beverages. Our Christmas parties are an opportunity for members to socialise with one another in a relaxed environment and reflect on the year that has passed, and there was a great amount of discussion occurring over the courses which we were happy to see. This was also an opportunity for our members to meet and network with new people they may have not met otherwise. The ASM Vic Branch would like to thank all our members for the year that has been, and we hope you are all looking forward to the upcoming year.

We would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



Contributed by Lauren Zavan



Call for Abstracts

Apply NOW to participate in

ASM Nancy Millis Student Awards 2020

It's a great way to attend next year's ASM Annual Scientific Meeting in Melbourne
(5 – 8 July 2020)

Where: to be confirmed

When: Tuesday 25 February 2020, commencing at 6.00pm

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 7 February 2020

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

Karena Waller (klwaller@unimelb.edu.au)

asm2020 VICTORIA



July 5-8

Melbourne
Convention
& Exhibition
Centre

www.theasm.org.au

The Australian Society
for Microbiology



bringing Microbiologists together



Visit Victoria #130894

Join us in Melbourne for good food, great coffee and amazing science!



Confirmed speakers:

Laureate Professor Peter Doherty
Professor Elizabeth Grohmann
Professor Denise Monack

Professor Jill Banfield
Professor Graham Hatfull
Professor David Murdoch

Professor Ferric Fang
Professor Anne Helso
Professor Sue Thomas

Visiting Speakers Program

Do you know of an outstanding speaker coming to Australia?

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

This program is now coordinated by the ASM Executive standing committee and the National Office in consultation with State branches.

**For more information, please contact Lauren Zavan
(l.zavan@latrobe.edu.au),**

who is the VSP Coordinator for the ASM VIC Branch.

Attention Microbiologists!

Are you organising a microbiology-focussed event?

The main objective of the Australian Society for Microbiology is to advance the science of microbiology in Australia. The ASM Victorian Branch is keen to support local initiatives, with the potential to advertise or co-organise events. If you are organising a microbiology-focussed event or have an idea for a type of event that would appeal to the broader microbiology, please contact us to discuss the ASM Vic Branch may be able to assist.

Please contact Catherine Satzke (catherine.satzke@mcri.edu.au) for more information

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

<https://www.theasm.org.au/member-rewards>

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

Teaching and Learning

- ASM David White Excellence in Teaching Award
- ASM Teachers' Travel Award
- ASM USA Teachers' Travel Award

Diagnostic and Clinical Microbiology

- ASM Lyn Gilbert Award
- ASM Clinical Microbiology Travel Award

Research

- ASM Frank Fenner Award
- ASM Jim Pittard Early Career Award

Post-graduate and Student Awards

- Millis-Colwell Postgraduate Research Travel Award
- NZMS Postgraduate Research Travel Award
- ASM Nancy Millis Student Travel Awards

Contribution and Service

- ASM Distinguished Service Award
- ASM Honorary Life Membership Award



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 <https://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:
Christine Seers, Treasurer VIC Branch caseers@unimelb.edu.au
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.

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 Catherine Satzke
(catherine.satzke@mcri.edu.au)

ASM VIC CALENDAR 2019

When planning meetings, please book dates with Catherine Satzke
(Email: catherine.satzke@mcri.edu.au)

- **ASM Nancy Millis Student Awards 25th February 6pm 2020, Venue TBC**
- **ASM Annual Scientific Meeting 2020 5th – 8th July, Melbourne VIC**
- **ASM Clinicon Meeting– 8th-9th July 2020, Melbourne VIC**



July 5-8

Melbourne
Convention
& Exhibition
Centre

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

**Submission Deadline for February
ASM Victorian News:
January 17th 2019**

Email submissions to: l.sonneveld@alfred.org.au