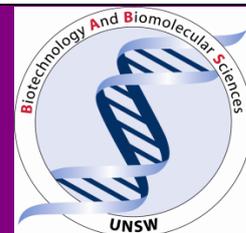


# BABS Quarterly

October 2011 Issue 12



## Message from the Head of School

Dear colleagues,

Here I recognise the contribution made and perspective brought by Associate Professor Alan Wilton to BABS, to Science, and to the community. Alan was well known to walk a fine line between academia and service – perhaps more so than any other person in the School.

Alan joined UNSW in July 1991 as a Lecturer in Genetics and was promoted to Senior Lecturer in 1995 and Associate Professor in October 2011. As an academic he produced over 55 peer-reviewed papers in some of the best journals, including *Nature*.

As a teacher, Alan was well respected for his deep knowledge and commitment to education. He inspired his students.

His commitment and service to the genetics community and the University was well known. It is in his honour that we will organise the Genetics Society of Australia meeting at UNSW in 2013.

Alan's legacy will continue to be recognised by many in the broader community. Certainly, those involved in the conservation of Australian native animals and the purebred dog community will remember him for generations.

Each of us must make an active decision on how we balance our academic portfolio with community engagement. Perhaps this is a good time for us to reflect on the decisions we make and those that Alan made.

Best  
Bill

## RAT News Research

- A/Prof Mike Manefield and his team received coverage on ABC TV news for their bioremediation work at the polluted Orica site at Port Botany. <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2011-07-29/bacteria-bred-to-clean-out-toxic-waste/2816698>
- Dr Torsten Thomas and colleagues in the CMB featured in a news story on the Faculty website highlighting a new study into marine microbes. <http://www.science.unsw.edu.au/news/community-ecology-it-s-not-who-you-are-but-what-you-do/>
- A/Prof Peter White, Dr Rowena Bull, Dr Sean Pham and Kerensa McElroy are part of a team working towards a vaccine for Hepatitis C. Their latest research project has broken new ground, the results reported on the UNSW website: <http://www.unsw.edu.au/news/pad/articles/2011/sep/HepC.html>

## Teaching

Dr Anne Galea hosted a session on Investigating DNA and Forensic Science as part of the UNSW Science Experience event held in



September. Year 9 and 10 students shared ideas about their interests in science. Survey comments indicated that the students enjoyed the "awesome" experience.

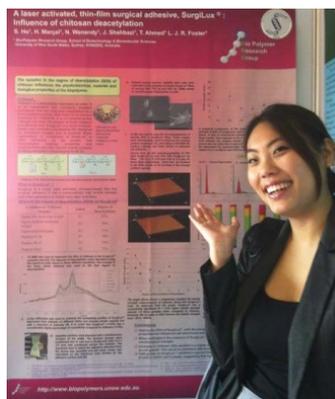
## Admin

- Diary date: The 2011 BARDO – the BABS annual research day out will be held on 26 October at Coogee Beach Surf Club.
- Applications have closed for the Senior Admin Assistant (Finance) role. Interviews are to be scheduled shortly.

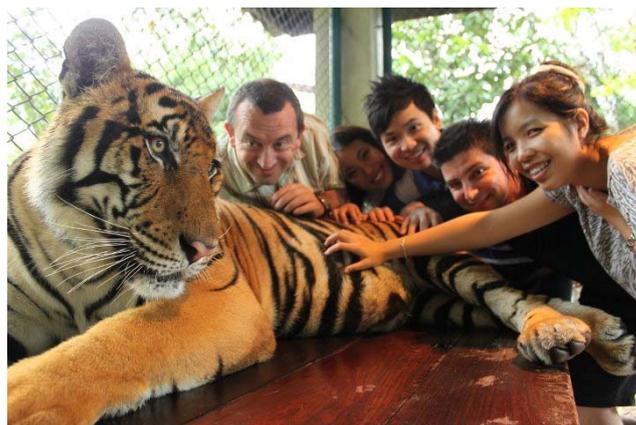
## Faculty of Science Visiting Research Fellowships

Congratulations to Belinda Ferrari and Marc Wilkins on being awarded two of the new Visiting Research Fellowships being offered by the Faculty of Science. Belinda will host Dr Steven Siciliano, an Associate Professor at the University of Saskatchewan in Canada, and Marc will host Dr Moustapha Kassem from the Odense University Hospital, Denmark. Both Fellows will visit during 2012 and will present a seminar on their research as part of their activities in the School.

## Bio/Polymers Research Group Thailand Visit



A/Prof John Foster and members of his research group participated in the Chiang Mai International Conference on Biomaterials and their Applications during August. John delivered a plenary lecture, Dr Helder Marcal was an invited speaker, and Sonia Ho and Rodman



Chan presented posters on their PhD research. Sonia won first prize for her work on the influence of deacetylation on the physicochemical, materials and biological response properties of chitosan biomaterials, and Rodman was runner up for his research concerning techniques to promote cell adhesion to biomaterials. During the visit, Sonia and Rodman conducted some research with collaborators at Chiang Mai University, and the BRG will be hosting a PhD student from CMU for 12 months from November this year.

## BABS PhD Students Excel

Congratulations to Kerensa McElroy, PhD student in Torsten Thomas's lab and James Krycer (PhD student in Andrew Brown's lab) who won prizes in the UNSW competition for Excellence in Postgraduate Research held in September. Kerensa won first prize in the category 'Cutting-edge Discovery Science', and James was the runner-up in the 'Living Well/Ageing Well' category.

<http://www.science.unsw.edu.au/postercomp/>

## 2011 BABS PhD Scholarship Supplement – Inaugural Awards

Congratulations to the following winners of the BABS PhD Scholarship Supplements introduced in 2011. Each package comprises a \$7,500 (per annum) stipend for new and continuing students, and for those commencing their PhD in 2011 it also includes \$5,000 travel support over the duration of their PhD.

### Semester 1 2011

Laura Norton (1st year, supervisor Merlin Crossley)  
David Flannery (1st year, supervisor Malcolm Walter)  
Natalia Castano Rodriguez (1st year, supervisor Hazel Mitchell)  
José Burgos-Portugal (1st year, supervisor Hazel Mitchell)  
Kylie Cairns (2nd year, supervisor Bill Ballard)  
Elizabeth Blaber (2nd year, supervisor Brendan Burns)  
Tania Ahmed (3rd year, supervisor John Foster)  
Pann Pann Chung (3rd year, supervisor Bill Ballard)  
Timothy Couttas (3rd year, supervisor Marc Wilkins)

### Semester 2 2011

Natalie Twine (for 1st year, supervisor Marc Wilkins)  
Connie Lam (for 3rd year, supervisor Ruiting Lan)



## Budding Young Scientists

Noel Whitaker recently arranged for a small group of 4 year-old children and two teachers from UNSW Tigger's Childcare to visit BABS. These important visitors were shown the

various lab areas, an image on the lab microscope and had a quick visit to the Ramaciotti Centre. They also made a necklace out of eppendorfs and a puppet out of a lab glove, and praised the ice-making capabilities of the Deputy Head of School.



If you would like something included in the next BABS Quarterly please email Michele at [m.potter@unsw.edu.au](mailto:m.potter@unsw.edu.au)