

ANNUAL REPORT

November 2008

The Australian Society for Medical Research
ACN 000 599 235 ABN 18 000 599 235
145 Macquarie Street, Sydney 2000

PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT 2008

The Year in Review

It has been a great honour and privilege to represent ASMR as its President. 2008 has been a busy and challenging year for the society. ASMR has a wonderfully rich history and a highly respected track record in public, political and scientific advocacy in Australia. In that tradition, I am confident ASMR has served its members and the HMR community well this year. We have initiated and continued to build on a number of important projects that have enhanced the profile and progressed the cause of HMR.

The next few years represent a pivotal period for the future of Australian HMR. Over the past decade Australia has enjoyed solid economic growth and the support of HMR by the Federal Government has been strong with a 5-fold increase in NHMRC funding. The recent global economic slowdown presents many challenges for Australia and will almost certainly produce budgetary pressures. The HMR sector will clearly not be immune to these pressures and in light of the impending completion of the current NHMRC funding cycle in 2010/ 11 we need to ensure that the value of HMR is crystallized in the minds of the public, politicians and policy makers. Now more than ever we must campaign for the sustained support of HMR or risk losing the significant investment made to date and the continued health and economic returns to Australia. To this end, ASMR has been campaigning tirelessly this year and in recent months has increased its lobbying efforts with a series of meetings in Canberra with key ministers, advisors and departmental staff.

The recent change of federal government has presented ASMR and the HMR sector with fresh challenges. It is pleasing to see that the planning for the long-term future of health, education, and innovation in Australia is high on the agenda of the new government. Indeed, a suite of reviews to address the future strategic directions across these areas has been initiated. These have included the Australia 2020 Summit, The National Innovation Review, The Bradley Review of Higher Education, the Preventative Health Task-force, and the Inquiry into the Effects of Climate Change on Training and Employment Needs. ASMR has made submissions to many of these reviews and the outcomes will impact directly on how HMR is structured and funded in Australia. This year the NHMRC has also undergone an external review of its strategic directions and funding mechanisms and the ASMR along with other stakeholders had the opportunity to contribute to the discussion process. Although we are waiting on the findings and white papers from many of these reviews, it is clear that the previous arguments for HMR funding based around the Wills and Grant Dr Mark Hulett

Review eras in many cases are now outdated. We need to develop new arguments that will have traction within the vision of the new government.

The economic downturn highlights the need for the HMR sector to secure strategies for long-term sustainable funding. Current funding models in Australia



are cyclical and vulnerable to fluctuation. A well-defined sustainable funding platform would ensure the HMR sector is safeguarded from funding troughs and continues to achieve a high international standard, delivering the necessary health and economic outcomes for Australia. Last year the ASMR held an important forum "The Future of Medical Research: Sustainable Funding Model" and this year we have been following up on the outcomes by researching sustainable funding models for the Australian HMR sector. These have included the innovative Framework 7 reforms of the European Union, where R&D investment in science has been committed to reach 3% of GDP by 2010 (one third of funding from the public sector and two thirds from private sources). Such a model would be attractive for Australia and possibly the Asia-Pacific region. To achieve this goal, the public sector will clearly be required to play a key ongoing funding role, however it will be critical to build better collaborative partnerships with industry and to attract enhanced local and international philanthropic support. The ASMR will be continuing to drive this important initiative forward through focused discussion with government, industry and philanthropic

It is abundantly clear that a strong evidence-based case for continued and increased investment in HMR is essential. This year ASMR has devoted a significant effort to generating and packaging quantitative data for dissemination on: (i) the economic value of investment in HMR, (ii) the perceptions of the HMR workforce on career structure and conditions, and (iii) the implications on careers and research outcomes of the inability to fully fund research in the context of the effect of the monetary gap between host institutions salaries and the NHMRC personnel salary packages/fellowships. A summary of the outcomes of each of these important initiatives is listed below:

(i) Exceptional Returns: The value of investing in Health R&D in Australia.

The ASMR with the kind help of Sir Gustav Nossal launched "Exceptional Returns II" this year during ASMR

President's Report continued

Medical Research Week® at the NPC in Canberra. The ASMR commissioned Access Economics study follows the landmark 2003 report "Exceptional returns I" and estimates the economic value of Australian Investment in HM R&D following the recent funding increases and includes case studies of 4 specific examples of well-being returns to Australia in the important areas of diabetes, dementia, cancer, and indigenous health. I am extremely pleased that the study demonstrates the continued excellent health and economic returns on investment in the Australian HMR sector, and has been well received to date by all stakeholders. The key findings of the report include:

* Australian Health R&D expenditure between 1992/3 and 2004/5 was estimated to return a net benefit of around \$29.5 billion dollars. For a dollar invested in Australian health R&D, an average of \$2.17 dollars in health benefits is returned, with a minimum of \$0.57 and maximum of \$6. * Comparing the returns on investment with other sectors, health R&D out performs the market, manufacturing and agricultural sectors, and is less only than mining and the retail/wholesale trade sectors

The figures are also impressive for the specific case studies:

- * The development of Gardasil to vaccinate against 70% of cervical cancer has potential returns in wellbeing of 2.5 to 1
- * The prevention or delay of vision loss associated with diabetes will result in \$7.6 billion dollars of savings by 2025
- * Decreasing the incidence of Alzheimer's disease by 5% through Australian R&D will result in estimated savings of \$10.3 billion dollars by 2050 with over half of these savings in the residential care sector.
- * The value of a Group A Streptococci vaccine is predicted to provide health benefits valued at \$319 million per year of which \$78.4 million will be realised by indigenous Australians

Furthermore, the new report indicates that although the greatest burden of disease remains from cancer (19% of Australia's total) and cardiovascular disease (18%), nonfatal diseases also play a significant and increasing role in the burden of disease and the years of healthy life lost due to disability. In particular, the projected cost and impact of the chronic diseases of aging is forecast to present a challenging burden and the greatest hope is new R&D breakthroughs. It is clear that Australia has a comparative advantage in health R&D given the levels of discovery, output and quality of publications, and demonstrated impressive translational outcomes. In addition to the "good international citizen" arguments, the new report provides strong economic reasons for sustaining and enhancing health R&D investment in Australia.

I encourage all ASMR members to read this document and to disseminate the key findings at all opportunities to the public and politicians. I would like to thank Lynne Pezzullo, Henry Cutler and the Access Economics team for their outstanding work on the report, Maria Kavalaris, Moira Clay, Cath West and the ASMR Executive for their valuable input, Sir Gus Nossal for helping to launch the report and sell its key messages around Australia during his ASMR medallist tour, and last but not least the many

supporters in the HMR sector that provided sponsorship to help fund this important study. 'Exceptional Returns II" can be downloaded from the ASMR website.

(ii) The ASMR Workforce Survey

A highly skilled and adaptable workforce has underpinned the success of the Australian HMR sector. Although there has been long-standing anecdotal evidence on a growing dissatisfaction among the Australian HMR workforce in regards to job security and funding opportunities, there is surprisingly very little supporting quantitative data. In May this year the ASMR published a study in the Medical Journal of Australia titled: "Perceptions of Health and Medical Research Careers: The Australian Society for Medical Research Workforce Survey". This result was the culmination of a significant long-term project initiated in 2006 under the Presidency of Prof Levon Khachigian and continued by the 2007 Board headed by A/Prof Maria Kavalaris. The key findings indicate that employment insecurity and perceived lack of a sustainable career structure are causing considerable anxiety among Australian HMRs. It is vital that we continue to attract and retain our best and brightest researchers and these perceptions clearly suggest that a review of current people support policies are required. The quantitative data is being used by the ASMR to press for improved policy and career structures for Australian HMRs. Achieving the correct balance between funding for people versus direct research project support is a critical issue for the future and one of the key objectives of ASMR heading into 2009. Thanks to our collaborators from the UQ (Prof Paul Boreham, A/Prof Warren Laffan, Dr Rachael Pitt, and Ms Jennifer Chester), the ASMR team Prof Levon Khachigian, A/Prof Maria Kavallaris, Dr Sarah Meachem, Cath West, and Dr Mark Hulett; and also Dr Moira Clay, Prof Phillip Robinson and Prof Judith Whitworth for their helpful advice. See the website for the published article http://www.asmr.org.au/ WFSvyMJA08.pdf.

(iii) The ASMR NHMRC Enterprise Bargaining Salary Gap Survey

In response to the concerns of ASMR members regarding the growing salary gap between host institutions and NHMRC Personnel Salary Packages and Fellowships, the ASMR conducted an online survey in April this year to gather quantitative data on the extent and effect of the monetary gap. The results paint a disturbing picture of the negative effect that the gap is having on the HMR sector. A summary of the findings can be found on the ASMR website in the August 2008 ASMR Newsletter. Thanks to Dr Kristen Novak for her great work in driving this project.

ASMR Medical Research Week® showcases HMR to the nation each year. In 2008 the week was another resounding success. A series of state and national scientific, public and political outreach events were conducted including - gala dinners, scientific meetings, community lectures, cinema events, careers and professional development programs, and extensive school tours. All were well attended and very successfully promoted the significant benefits of HMR to Australia. ASMR also published a 2-page spread in the Australian newspaper highlighting the events of the week and the exciting research of some of Australia's leading HMRs. Media monitoring indicated that the HMR message

President's Report continued

generated from the week of activities reached an impressive 12.5 million people.

ASMR was honoured to have Sir Gustav Nossal as the 2008 Medallist. Sir Gus is one of Australia's most respected scientists and a great champion of HMR. His research accomplishments as a pioneer of modern immunology and as director of the Walter and Eliza Institute for over 30 years are world-renowned. Covering 7 cities in 9 days, Sir Gus gave truly inspiring addresses at each of the state dinners and to a national TV audience at the NPC in Canberra On behalf of ASMR I would like to extend our sincere thanks to Sir Gus for his outstanding efforts in promoting HMR over the week.

ASMR Medical Research Week® would not be possible without the hard work of our state committees, board of directors, members, friends and affiliates. I would especially like to acknowledge each of the State committees, national directors Dr Kristen Novak (MRW convenor), Dr Rosemary Keogh (State convenor), Dr Emma Parkinson-Lawrence (Media convenor), ASN Events for coordinating the dinners, and the tireless ASMR executive-office team of Cath West and Priscilla Diment.

ASMR is dedicated to supporting the careers of HMRs and held the second national Professional Development Program in August. The program built on the successful inaugural event in 2007 and was aimed at providing training for mid-career researchers. The expanded road show included events in Perth and Adelaide in addition to Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne. I am happy to say that the success of the program means it will now become an ASMR fixture in the future. Thanks to the wonderfully talented Dr Moira Clay as facilitator, Sophie Symeou for leading the work/life balance workshops, Dr Andrew Laslett for convening and organising the entire event, Dr Sarah Meachem for her contributions to the speaker program, ASN Events for logistical support, and all the fantastic researchers who generously gave their time to participate.

ASMR has also launched an exciting new initiative, the Career Development Mentor Program. The program has been developed in response to the disturbing statistic highlighted during the professional development program, that over 50% of mid-career researchers do not have a mentor. ASMR members, 5-12 years postdoctoral now have an opportunity to be matched with a career development mentor. Applications are available from the ASMR website. Thanks to Dr Sarah Meachem and Cath West for getting this important program running. I have no doubt that the mentoring scheme will become one of ASMR's flagship programs and represents yet another great service available to ASMR members.

In 2002, ASMR initiated the biennial Australian Health and Medical Research Congress (AHMRC) to promote multidisciplinary interactions and collaborations in HMR. The initiative has grown to become the largest multidisciplinary meeting in Australia with the scene set for another outstanding AHMR. Plenary speakers include international superstars Elaine Fuchs, Josef Penninger, Steve Baylin, Michael Karin, and the recent winner of the Nobel Prize for Chemistry, Roger Tsien. The program

encompasses the annual scientific meetings or sessions by 33 societies and organizations, and includes the ASMR NSC "Epithelial Tissue Dynamics: From Stem Cells to Cancer". A huge amount of work has gone into the organisation of a meeting of this size; our thanks to the convenor Dr Alison Butt, program convenor Dr Greg Anderson and their hard-working committee. Thanks also to the ASN Events team, headed by Dr Maree Overall, for coordinating the Congress - a massive task that ASN perform outstandingly every 2 years.

Each year the ASMR Research Fund Awards are made available for junior researchers to travel to undertake collaborative research. Our winners in 2008 are Dr Louise Dunn of the Heart Research Institute who will travel to the Standford University School of Medicine to work with Prof John Cooke and Mr Abidali Mohamedah of the Children's Medical Research Institute at Westmead who will travel to Melbourne to work in the laboratories of Prof David Thorburn at MCRI and A/Prof Mike Ryan at La Trobe University. Congratulations to the two award winners and all the best to them for their studies.

ASMR has grown significantly over the past decade and is now a complex multi-layered organisation and one of the largest societies in Australian HMR. Having the opportunity to represent the society as its President this year has been a great honour. My thanks to the many people and organisations that contribute to the Society, our members, and affiliate and supporting organisations. ASMR past presidents provided invaluable support and advice throughout the year, and I would particularly like to acknowledge Rob Ramsey, Levon Khachigian, Maria Kavallaris, and Moira Clay. The ASMR state committees are the backbone of the society - thanks to all the talented convenors and their committees for their hard work and achievements this year. ASN Events have been of great support over the year with many ASMR functions - thanks to Maree Overall and Mike Pickford for their professionalism and enthusiasm. We are grateful to the RACP who generously provide office space for the ASMR Exec. Office.

Finally, I would like to thank the ASMR board and executive for their support and unwavering commitment to ASMR throughout the year. The President-Elect, Dr Sarah Meachem, has worked tirelessly this year, and I thank her for her help and dedication. I pass on the Presidency to Sarah with every confidence that ASMR is in great hands. The ASMR executive office of Cath West and Priscilla Diment provide the heartbeat of the society - they are multitalented and handle a demanding workload that takes enormous dedication - often beyond the call of normal duty! I would especially like to thank Cath for her guidance, friendship and support throughout the year.

I wish the society and its members all the very best for the future.

Warm Regards

Dr Mark Hulett

President, Australian Society for Medical Research, 2008

PAST PRESIDENTS

1961 1962 1963 1964 1965 1966 1967 1968 1969 1970 1971 1972 1973 1974 1975 1976 1977 1978 1979 1980 1981 1982 1983 1984 1985	BG Firkin AP Skyring RP Shearman G Archer J McRae AWT Edwards MR Playoust PJ Nestel PJ Nestel PA Castaldi JR Turtle TJ Martin WJ O'Sullivan JK Healy JP Chalmers AA Morley NG Ardlie A Basten JW Funder GG Duggin RL Dawkins JK Findlay JA Eisman JA Whitworth BM Hall
1986 1987	GC Farrell RL Sutherland
1988	JG McDougall NH Hunt
1989 1990	JJ Finlay-Jones
1991	MJ Field
1992	PH Hart
1993 1994	WD Tilley CL Clarke
1995	S Clark
1996	G Mann
1997	K Scott
1998 1999	S Wesselingh MT Gillespie
2000	R Ramsay
2001	PD O'Loughlin
2002 2003	PR Schofield MA Clay
2004	AH Sinclair
2005	BA Kingwell
2006	LM Khachigian
2007	M Kavallaris
2008	MDHulett

Agenda - Annual General Meeting

Brisbane Convention Centre 19th November 2008, 12:30-01:30pm

- Item 1. Welcome and Apologies, Dr Mark Hulett.
- Item 2. Confirmation of Minutes, Wednesday 12th November, 2007, Dr Mark Hulett
- Item 3. President's Report, Dr Mark Hulett
- Item 4. Treasurer's Report, Dr Sarah Meachem
- Item 5. ASMR Research Fund. Dr Sarah Meachem
 - i) Announcement of Award Winners 08
 - ii) Award Winner (D) 2007, Adele Lehane
 - iii) Award Winner (I) 2007, Di Yu
- Item 6. Subcommittee Reports
 - a) Research Careers
 - i) Workforce Survey and Mentor Program, Dr Sarah Meachemii) Continuing Professional Develop.
 - Dr Andrew Laslett
 - b) Membership, Dr Paul Dawson
 - c) Newsletter, A/Prof Andrew J Brown
 - d) ASMR MRW Week®, Dr Kristen Nowak
 - e) Media, Dr Emma Parkinson-Lawrence
 - f) State Reports, Dr Rosemary Keogh
 - g) NSC 2008, A/Prof J Alejandro Lopez
 - h) AHMRC 2008, Dr Alison Butt
 - i) NSC 2009, A/Prof Martin Delatycki
- Item 7. Other Business, Dr Mark Hulett
- Item 8. Directors and Office Bearers, 2009, Dr Sarah Meachem

Honorary Secretary, Dr Alison Butt

Board Meetings - Attendance by Directors

November 11, 2007

A/Prof M Kavallaris, Dr M Hulett, Dr S Meachem, Dr A Butt, Dr A Ammitt, Dr S Nicholson, Dr E Parkinson-Lawrence, A/Prof P Eastwood, A/Prof A Lopez, Dr G Tachedjian, Dr A Brown, Dr A Laslett, Dr R Keogh, Dr P Dawson, A/Prof M Delatycki, Prof F Mackay, Dr K Nowak

March 17, 2008

Dr M Hulett, Dr S Meachem, Dr E Parkinson-Lawrence, Dr A Brown, Dr P Dawson, A/Prof M Delatycki, Dr R Keogh, Dr A Laslett, Prof F Mackay, Dr K Nowak Apologies: Dr A Butt

July 25, 2008

Dr M Hulett, Dr S Meachem, Dr A Butt, Dr E Parkinson-Lawrence

September 4, 2008

Dr M Hulett, Dr S Meachem, Dr A Butt, Dr E Parkinson-Lawrence, Prof F Mackay, A/Prof M Delatycki, Dr P Dawson, Dr A Brown, Dr K Nowak, Dr R Keogh, Dr A Laslett

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH, HELD AT THE CARRINGTON HOTEL, KATOOMBA ON NOVEMBER12 2007

Item 1. Welcome & Apologies, A/Prof Maria Kavallaris

A/Prof Kavallaris opened the Meeting in the presence of the required quorum, welcoming all present and tabling apologies from —

Dr Peter O'Loughlin, Prof James Angus, A/Prof A J Lopez, Dr Stella Clark, Dr Merran Smith, A/Prof Wayne Phillips, Dr Kieran Scott, Dr Moira Clay, Dr Ian Davis, A/Prof Brian Dean, Prof Derek Hart, Dr Morag Young, Prof D a v i d B o w t e I I, D r N a t h a n Subramaniam, Dr Robert Cowan, Dr Anthony Hannan, Dr John McDougal, Mrs Ruth Lilian, Dr Debbie Marsh

Item 2. Confirmation of Minutes, Wednesday 29th November 2006, A/Prof Maria Kavallaris

Dr Alison Butt moved that the Minutes of the AGM of November 29 2006 be accepted as a true and accurate reflection of that meeting; seconded by Dr Mark Hulett.

Item 3. President's Report, A/Prof Maria Kavallaris

A/Prof Kavallaris advised the meeting that she was proud and honoured to have been the ASMR President in 2007 and to have had the opportunity to represent the members and further the cause of health and medical research in Australia.

2007 has been an exciting and productive year for the Australian Society for Medical Research (ASMR). The Society has launched and continued many important initiatives to build recognition for the social and economic value of health and medical research (HMR).

Australia has seen strong economic growth over recent years and Federal Government support is currently high. This investment in HMR has not happened by chance and ASMR has played a fundamental role in building a ground swell of public and political support over the past decade. The \$905 million injection of funds announced in the 2006 Federal budget were achieved through a tireless grass roots campaign by previous presidents, boards and

supporters. We are acutely aware that current funding models for HMR are cyclical and unpredictable and key investments in research and researchers can lead to economic and knowledge-based loss if funding is not sustained.

History tells us that the trend of support HMR is currently enjoying is unlikely to continue indefinitely. In order to respond to current and emerging health issues we need a well-defined approach to ensure sustainable future funding for health and medical research. This year ASMR spearheaded an important initiative aligned with our strategy to maintain HMR funding, and involves the development and implementation of a Sustainable Funding Strategy for Health and Medical Research. Such a strategy will ensure that Australian research continues to achieve at a high international standard while delivering clear health and economic outcomes for this country.

In April this year we organised a forum entitled "The Future of Medical Research: Sustainable Funding Model", to define and commence developing sustainable funding strategies that incorporate realistic and achievable mechanisms allowing government-dependent and independent investment in HMR to flourish. Participants for this forum were drawn from diverse fields including expertise in medical research, biotechnology, venture capital, tertiary education, policy, public health, government and nongovernment research agencies, and philanthropy. One outcome of the Forum was a clear understanding that the need for future increased funding needs to be clearly articulated and justified. Driving this forward, the ASMR Board has been actively working throughout the year to strategically position HMR and has commissioned Access Economics to model current and future economic benefits of continued investment in HMR. This valuable report to be completed in 2008, will act as a springboard for a focused political and public campaign for sustained support for health and medical research.

In 2006, ASMR commissioned the University of Queensland Social Research Centre to conduct a webbased Workforce Survey, to help understand and improve the career structures and conditions of Australian health and medical researchers in order to obtain data not previously available. Analysis for the ASMR Workforce Survey was completed this year. Interestingly and of no surprise to many of our members, the data supported longstanding anecdotal evidence that lack of financial support and employment insecurity are two of the major issues facing HMR scientists and are the causes of a significant degree of dissatisfaction among the Australian HMR workforce. The quantitative data obtained from the survey is being used by the ASMR to lobby for support and improved policy and career structures for health and medical researchers.

ASMR continued its commitment for the advancement of HMR with the launch of the inaugural ASMR Professional Development Program. The program was conducted in Melbourne. Brisbane and Sydney in August 2007, attracting over 200 attendees. These very effective one-day workshops were specifically aimed at midcareer medical researchers 5-12 years postdoctoral. Highly successful Australian researchers generously gave their time, and shared their knowledge and experience at the workshops, which were professionally facilitated by Dr Moira Clay and convened by Dr Sarah Meachem, Grant funding from the Ramaciotti Foundation facilitated by Perpetual along with the logistical support provided by ASN Events allowed us to launch this Program. The ASMR will continue to run the Professional Development Program in 2008 and beyond.

ASMR Medical Research Week® held in June, is one of the Society's flagship events. Our dynamic series of state and national based activities enabled us to continue our well-attended scientific, public and

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political outreach activities and highlighted the enormous benefits of health and medical research to the community. The extensive activities of the week were published in a 2page feature in The Australian newspaper. Throughout the week it was indeed a privilege to represent our society in six states and talk to over 1350 supporters, politicians and medical researchers about the value and importance of HMR. Media monitoring of the ASMR Medical Research Week® activities revealed that we reached a staggering 11.5 million Australians.

The ASMR Medical Research Week® Medallist for 2007 was Professor Axel Ullrich, an outstanding and highly acclaimed scientist who has effectively translated his laboratory discoveries from the lab to the clinic. Professor Ullrich, Director of the Department of Molecular Biology at the Max-Planck-Institute of Biochemistry in Germany, has made multiple significant discoveries that have impacted on the health outcomes of people with diabetes and cancer. Professor Ullrich, presented at ASMR Medical Week® Research events throughout Australia where he highlighted the need for continued government and corporate funding of HMR and reinforced this key ASMR message. The exciting and diverse outreach activities during ASMR Medical Research Week® would not have been possible without the support of our members, friends and affiliate supporters, and of course, our tireless ASMR State Committees, ASMR State Committee Convenor and Public Liason Officer, Dr Emma Parkinson-Lawrence and ASMR Medical Research Week® Convenor, A/Prof Peter Eastwood.

In keeping with our specialised themes for the ASMR National Scientific Conference (NSC) in the intervening years between the biennial Australian Health and Medical Research Congress, the 2007 meeting on "Tissue Remodelling: Current Understanding and Future Therapeutic Targets" here in Katoomba, is hosting an excellent program of speakers and has

generated a cross disciplinary scientific environment. Special thanks to the meeting co-convenors Dr Alaina Ammit and Prof Alistair Stewart for putting such an excellent program together.

An important initiative of our society is to encourage and foster multidisciplinary interactions and collaborations. The highly successful biennial Australian Health and Medical Research Congress (AHMRC) has become the largest multidisciplinary meeting in Australia. The 4th AHMRC to be held in Brisbane 16-21 November 2008 is already shaping up to be another outstanding success. ASMR Director Dr Alison Butt is Convenor and A/Prof Greg Anderson, is the Scientific Program Convenor. Programming is well underway and the Congress will continue to deliver high caliber presentations and offer extensive opportunity for inter-disciplinary discussion. The theme of the 2008 ASMR NSC is "Epithelial Tissue Dynamics: From Stem Cells to Cancer". I am looking forward to seeing you all at the meeting.

The ASMR has a new updated user friendly web site. I encourage you to visit the site if you have not done so already. It contains valuable resources including a searchable member based directory launched last year. Special thanks to Cath West for getting that up and running.

The standard of the ASMR Research Fund Award applications was once again, of a very high caliber making judging extremely difficult. ASMR has this year made two awards for travel and research collaboration by junior researchers. These awards are prestigious and I ask that you promote the award and encourage researchers from your institution to apply.

Looking back over the past twelve months and all that we have achieved and instigated, it is clear that ASMR continues its leadership role for the advancement of health and medical research. Long-term sustainable funding without cyclical highs and lows, is critical to a dynamic and innovative health and medical research community. Our Workforce Survey has provided us with current quantitative data vital in influencing decision makers, and our sustainable funding strategy will maintain and build on the

support that HMR currently enjoys. We do not have the luxury of time and therefore we are acting now! I urge you to maintain a sense of urgency (despite our current increases in funding) and use every opportunity available to you to promote the importance of long-term sustainable funding models not tied to the cycles of government or support of individual Government ministers. The ASMR will also continue to do this on our members' behalf.

In closing I would like to thank the RACP for providing space for our Executive Office and acknowledge the ASMR members, affiliate and supporting organisations for their continued support. There are many people who have provided support and advice throughout the year including recent ASMR past-Presidents. Thanks to the ASMR State Convenors and their Committees for their enthusiasm and achievements throughout ASMR Medical Research Week®. Special thanks to Mike Pickford and Maree Overall from ASN Events for their advice and professionalism. The ASMR relies on the commitment of many individuals and I would particularly like to thank the ASMR Board and Executive for their support throughout the year. I am confident that as I pass on the Presidency to Dr Mark Hulett, I leave ASMR in very capable and competent hands.

The ASMR functions as a well-oiled machine because of the enormous organisational skills of Cath West and Priscilla Dement from the ASMR Executive Office. Cath's in depth knowledge and commitment to the ASMR are unquestionable and I thank her for her friendship and quidance.

It has been my privilege to serve a forward thinking Society such as ASMR.

Item 4. Treasurer's Report, Dr Mark Hulett

Dr Hulett referred to the financial statements contained in the Annual Report and advised that the audit has been conducted by St Clair Partners. He noted that the operating surplus for the year was \$88,586 with expenditure of \$419,012. The operating surplus is slightly more than last year. Event management

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by ASN Events Pty Ltd has resulted in a net income of \$61,476. Income for the financial year was boosted by the successful 2006 AHMRC.

Item 5. ASMR Research Fund, Dr Mark Hulett

Dr Hulett referred again to the audited accounts and advised that the Fund assets remain fairly static at around \$25,000 to \$27,000. It is hoped to improve the level of donations to the Fund through the increasing profile of the annual awards.

i) Announcement of Research Award Winners 2007

Dr Hulett announced Mr Di Yu from the JCSMR as the winner of the 2007 International Award of \$5,000 and Ms Adele Lehane from ANU as the winner of the 2007 Domestic Award of \$2,000. Di Yu will visit the laboratory of Chang-Zheng Chen, Dept of Microbiology and Immunology at the Stanford University School of Medicine and Adele Lehane will attend the laboratory of Prof Geoff McFadden at the School of Botany, University of Melbourne.

ii)ResearchAward Winner(Domestic) 2006, Elissa Sutcliffe

Dr Mark Hulett advised that the International Award Winner for 2006, Dr Elke Hacker was unable to be at the NSC. Dr Hacker from QIMR attended the laboratory of Dr Colin Goding at Marie Curie Research Institute in the United Kingdom. Her report appears in the ASMR Newsletter. Dr Hulett introduced Elissa Sutcliffe who reported briefly on her time with Agilent Technologies in Melbourne where she learned how to apply ChIP-on-Chip microarray technology. Ms Sutcliffe concluded by expressing her thanks to the Society and to Agilent Technologies.

Item 6. Subcommittee Reports

- a) Research Careers, Dr Sarah Meachem
- i) Workforce Survey, Dr Sarah Meachem

Analysis of the Workforce Survey was completed this year. Dr Meachem referred to the the comments of A/ Prof Maria Kavallaris in her

President's Report.

ii)ContinuingProfessional Development, Dr Sarah Meachem Dr Meachem reported that 2007 marked the inaugural 'executive' style career development program. The one day interactive workshops held in Melbourne, Brisbane and Sydney attracted 216 mid career researchers. The program addressed issues such as obtaining funding, mentoring, leadership versus management, translating results to clinical and commercial outcomes, etc., A survey of delegates has shown the workshops to be extremely well received and successful. Talented speakers and an excellent facilitator in Dr Moira Clay all contributed to the success of the events. The Program will continue in 2008 and ASMR will be making every effort to expand into one or two more states.

b)Membership, A/Prof J Alejandro Lopez

In the absence of A/Prof Lopez, Dr Mark Hulett advised that membership numbers are slightly up on previous years with around 1300 members. ASMR will continue to seek to improve member numbers with particular emphasis in the coming year on Queensland where there is an opportunity to raise profile with the AHMRC in Brisbane in 2008.

c) Newsletter, Dr Gilda Tachedijan Dr Tachedjiian referred to the Newsletter as an important communication tool and advised that the new look graphics continued throughout 2006/7 with the July editions being bumper issues containing information on ASMR MRW® activities and events. The November Newsletter includes articles on the Professional Development Program (Dr Sarah Meachem), Mentoring (Dr Moira Clay) and the Australian Code for Responsible Conduct of Research (Prof Warwick Anderson). Dr Elizabeth Gregeci has won the \$100.00 for the best "Letter to the Editor". Dr Tachedjian thanked all contributors to the Newsletter and said it has been an honour and privilege to serve on the ASMR Board. She extended her best wishes to the 2008 Board of Directors.

d) ASMR MRW Week®, A/Prof Peter Eastwood

A/Prof Eastwood advised that ASMR

MRW® 2007 was a great success with the Medallist Prof Axel Ullrich being an outstanding example and champion of translational research. Professor Ullrich gave presentations in all state capitals and at the National Press Club in Canberra. Activities during the week include scientific meetings, schools and career seminars, schools quiz, cinema events and dinners. A/Prof Eastwood spoke of the State Committee Co-ordinator role, a fairly new initiative which has been very successful in facilitating the liaison between State Committees and the MRW Convenor. He thanked Past President Prof Levon Khachigian, A/ Prof Maria Kavallaris and Cath West. A/Prof Eastwood advised the meeting that his time on the board had been a great experience and concluded by extending his best wishes to the 2008 Board of Directors.

e) Media, Dr Emma Parkinson-Lawrence

Dr Parkinson-Lawrence reported that this year the HMR message reached 11.5M Australians during ASMR MRW® with the campaign generating between 150 and 160 media hits. There was also a lift out feature in The Australian which generated extremely positive feedback and it is planned to continue this feature to coincide with the week in 2008. Dr Parkinson-Lawrence thanked A/Prof Maria Kavallaris, Dr Sarah Meachem and Cath West.

f)State Reports, Dr Emma Parkinson-Lawrence

Dr Parkinson-Lawrence reported that the role of State Committee Coordinator is to facilitate communication and liaison between the states branches and the Directors of the Society, particularly the MRW Convenor. committees are in place in Victoria, South Australia and the ACT with other states in the process of finalizing their groups. The committees are working well and we look forward to another successful vear.

g) NSC 2007, Dr Alaina Ammit Dr Ammit thanked Co-Convenor Prof Alistair Stewart and her programming committee as well as ASN Events Pty Ltd., in particular Dr Maree Overall. She expressed her hope

AGM Minutes

(continued)

that all of the delegates were enjoying the meeting and thanked the Firkin and Edwards Orators Prof Julie Campell and Prof Mina Bissel.

h)AHMRC 2008, Dr Alison Butt Dr Alison Butt advised that the 2008 AHMRC is to be held at the Brisbane Convention Centre from November 16 to 21, 2008. The Congress is an initiative of the Society and it is the largest multi disciplinary meeting in Australia. The 2008 AHMRC will be the first to be held in Queensland. Currently there are 10 full meeting societies and 20 symposium participants. The Program Committee Convenor is Dr Greg Anderson. Planning is well advanced and plenary speakers have been invited. Dr Butt urged members to attend and promote the AHMRC 2008.

i) NSC 2008, A/Prof J Alejandro Lopez

In the absence of A/Prof Lopez, Dr Alison Butt reported that the ASMR NSC 2008 is to be held as a component of the Congress. The Convenor is A/Prof J A Lopez and the theme of the meeting is "Epithelial Tissue Dynamics: From Stem Cells to Cancer". A strong programming committee has been assembled and planning is well underway.

Item 7. Other Business, A/ProfessorMaria Kavallaris

A/Prof Kavallaris asked if there were any questions from the floor and there being no other business, she went on to acknowledge the support and special efforts of Priscilla Diment from the Executive Office, Dr Maree Overall from ASN Events as well as Cath West ASMR's Executive Officer, presenting them with gifts on behalf of the Society. A/Prof Kavallaris handed the conduct of the Meeting to the new President of ASMR, Dr Mark Hulett.

Item 8. Directors and Office Bearers, 2008, Dr Mark Hulett

Dr Hulett thanked A/Prof Kavallaris and the outgoing Directors advising the meeting that A/Prof

Kavallaris has had the utmost dedication to ASMR and achieved an enormous amount during her Presidency and over the full 5 year term of her Directorship. Dr Hulett called the outgoing board members to the podium to accept their "Past Directors" badges. The outgoing board, he advised, have a total of more 20 years of ASMR experience as Directors with Dr Alaina Ammit serving for a period of 6 years in a number of portfolios and most recently as Hon Secretary and Convenor of the NSC. Dr Sandra Nicholson, a Director for 3 years, retiring from the portfolio of Business Development and also convened the 2006 AHMRC. Dr Gilda Tachedjian serving two years as Newsletter Editor, A/Prof Peter Eastwood, one year as State Committee Co-ordinator and one year as ASMR MRW® Convenor, A/Prof Alejandro Lopez, two years as Membership Convenor overseeing a 5% increase in membership. A/Prof Maria Kavallaris, Dr Hulett said, has had a sensational year following on from Prof Levon Khachigian and has done a superb job. She has made a major contribution to the high profile and respect ASMR enjoys and laid the ground work for future projects.He presented A/Prof Kavallaris with the badge of "Past President".

Dr Hulett referred to the challenges and excitement of the year ahead, announcing Office Bearers and Directors for 2008

Dr Sarah Meachem President-elect and Hon Treasurer Dr Alison Butt Honorary Secretary and AHMRC Convenor Dr Emma Parkinson-Lawrence Executive Director and Media Dr Paul Dawson Membership Convenor Dr Andrew Laslett Professional Development Convenor Prof Fabienne Mackay Business Development A/Prof Martin Delatycki Clinical Issues Dr Kristen Nowak

Medical Research Week Convenor

Dr Andrew Brown
Newsletter Editor
Dr Rosemary Keogh
State Committee Convenor

There being no further business Dr Hulett closed the meeting at 10:45am

Monalli

A/Prof Maria Kavallaris



Dr Mark Hulett November, 2008

ASMR Research Awards

There are two ASMR Research Awards, one specifically to conduct research in an overseas laboratory (\$5,000) and one specifically to conduct research in an Australian laboratory (\$2,000) outside the recipient's home city.

Applications available early 2009. Consider donating to the Fund when paying your Membership Subscription.

Award Winners

2000	Miss Raelene Lim
2001	Dr Patricia Mote
2002	Ms Vanessa Murphy
2003	Ms Mary Kavurma
2004	Dr Richard Allen
2005	Dr Gabrielle Todd
2006	Ms Elissa Sutcliffe (D)
	Dr Elke Hacker (I)
2007	Ms Adele Lehane (D)
	Dr Di Yu (I)
2008	A Mohamedali (D)
	Dr Louise Dunn (I)

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