



Quarterly Comments from the APPS President

My reports seem to be written everywhere but from my office in Tully. This time I'm writing from Ramu Sugar Limited, PNG where I regularly visit as a consultant to their sugarcane industry - I've been coming here for the past 18 years. APPS has members both at Ramu and elsewhere around PNG and it is pleasing to see members providing pivotal disease control advice in this very scenic and resource-rich nation.

I would like to congratulate the ASDS organising committee (Richard Falloon and associates) for staging another very successful soil-borne diseases symposium. The science was good, the scenery was excellent and the hospitality really appreciated! It is amazing what New Zealand has to offer visitors! The next ASDS is likely to be held in New South Wales in 2009.

Your Executive has been busy during 2006, as we pursue a range of APPS-related activities. Recently, several members of the Executive facilitated a teleconference amongst our APPS Councillors, to encourage greater interaction between members in each state, and to gain feedback on new directions the Executive has for the Society. It is hoped such teleconferences may become a regular event for our Councillors. We have also instigated a review by a distinguished APPS member of income and expenditure streams within APPS, with terms of reference dealing with how to financially position ourselves as a professional Society in the longer term. Our aim is to raise financial income, considering other sources of revenue apart from membership fees, so that as a Society we can provide better services to our members. We are

conscious of the need to foster the development of plant pathologists who are just beginning their careers, of providing assistance to graduates / undergraduates to encourage greater participation in our discipline, and to explore options for expanding the financial capability of APPS.

We have also been establishing sub-committees within APPS, using people with specialist skills, to focus on specific strategies related to APPS activities. **I would like to thank those members who responded over the last six months to circular emails we sent regarding future APPS directions.** Your responses were well received by the Executive, and we have attempted to act on these responses. Some of you will hear more from me over the next few weeks regarding such things as Ambassadors to other Societies, and changes in structure to APPS management.

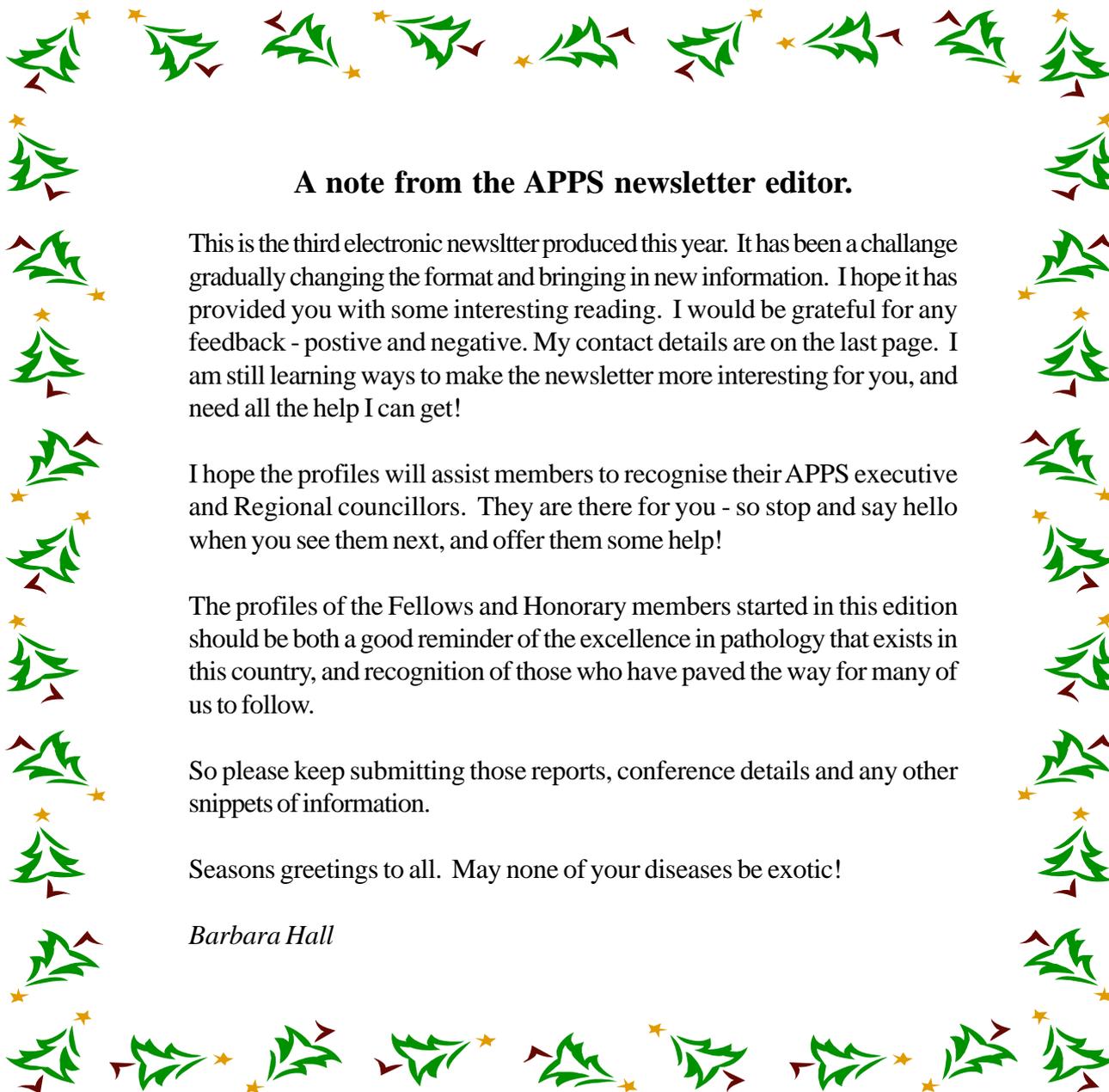
I would like to wish everyone the very best for Christmas and the new year. It seems that 2006 has flown by (I will literally have flown nearly 100 sectors by plane this year), and 2007 will be upon us all too soon. The Adelaide BGM (APPS conference) organising committee are continuing to do a great job and I encourage everyone to come to Adelaide in September 2007 for an excellent professional stimulus, and a great time for renewing friendships.

It's good to know there is more to Christmas than presents and holidays! I hope it is a blessing to you.

Kind regards
Rob Magarey, President, APPS

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A note from the APPS newsletter editor.

This is the third electronic newsletter produced this year. It has been a challenge gradually changing the format and bringing in new information. I hope it has provided you with some interesting reading. I would be grateful for any feedback - positive and negative. My contact details are on the last page. I am still learning ways to make the newsletter more interesting for you, and need all the help I can get!

I hope the profiles will assist members to recognise their APPS executive and Regional councillors. They are there for you - so stop and say hello when you see them next, and offer them some help!

The profiles of the Fellows and Honorary members started in this edition should be both a good reminder of the excellence in pathology that exists in this country, and recognition of those who have paved the way for many of us to follow.

So please keep submitting those reports, conference details and any other snippets of information.

Seasons greetings to all. May none of your diseases be exotic!

Barbara Hall



ADELAIDE 2007

16th Biennial APPS Conference Back to Basics: Managing Plant Disease

Adelaide Convention Centre South Australia
24-27 September 2007

On behalf of the Australasian Plant Pathology Society, the Organising Committee of the 16th Biennial APPS Conference 2007 invites all members of the plant pathology community to join colleagues in Adelaide, South Australia from 24-27 September 2007.

The Plenary sessions will include "Past, Present and Future", "Biosecurity" and "Managing Disease".

If anyone wishes to run a workshop aligned with the conference,
please contact the workshop convenor

Dr Sharyn Taylor (taylor.sharyn@saugov.sa.gov.au)

<http://www.plevin.com.au/apps2007/>

or follow the link from your APPS website



Jottings from the APP Editor-in-chief

This will be my last set of 'jottings' for the year. It has been a year of development with various changes being made to the Editorial Board and to our journal. Andrew Geering decided that it was time to retire as a Senior Editor after several years service and the EB gained the services of Calum Wilson as a replacement editor for virology papers. I again thank Andrew for his enormous contribution and support and to Calum for starting off an illustrious career as a Senior Editor. Calum can be found at the Tasmanian Institute of Agricultural Research at the University of Tasmania, New Town.

Also, Ian Riley has decided to retire from his role as nematology Senior Editor due to increasing work commitments. Ian has also made an enormous contribution and he has had to shoulder the entire weight of work associated with all nematology papers. Ian, like Andrew, has provided strong support and guidance. Ian will be replaced by Kirsty Owen who has just this week started her editorial career. Kirsty hails from the Leslie Research Centre, DPIF, Toowomba.

The main development for 2006 has been the restructuring of Australasian Plant Pathology such that it is now a bi-monthly journal rather than a quarterly journal. This has caused some concern that we would not be able to fill the page quota. To this end I have perhaps trialled more manuscripts than my predecessor by placing them into the peer-review process. I do not believe that the standards of published papers have fallen but some otherwise marginal papers have certainly benefited from the close attention and efforts of members of the Editorial Board.

In 2005 107 manuscripts were entered into the peer-review system including Disease Notes, Quarantine Notes and New Records. Due to the change in E-i-C I cannot report on how many survived during the entirety of 2005. To date in 2006 127 manuscripts were entered into the peer

review system. Another 26 manuscripts did not 'leave this office' for a variety of reasons which include excessively poor presentation, lack of substance, multiple journal submission and even plagiarism.

Of the 127 papers which were handled by the Editorial Board, including myself, the status at 13 November 2006 is:

Accepted papers	49
Rejected manuscripts	23
Manuscripts with authors for revision	17
Manuscripts withdrawn	4
Manuscripts still with editor	33
Authors barred for life (1ms.)	1

In 2005 APP published 113 papers including 30 short publications such as Disease Notes etc. This amounted to some 622 pages in 4 issues with 83 full papers.

In 2006 APP will publish 82 papers including 10 short publications. This will amount to 741 pages in 6 issues.

Thus there appears to be a decrease in the number of papers published in 2006 but an increase in the number of pages by 19%. If we add the pages attributed to Disease Notes etc. then we would have filled 787 pages – a 27% increase over the 2005 figure.

The reduction in the number of papers is due to the fact that Australasian Plant Disease Notes came online at the end of August 2006. Since first appearing it has published 17 papers as 46 pages which used to be included in APP under Disease Notes etc. I hope that this move will enhance the Impact Factor of APP which currently stands at 0.587 for 2005. It is unclear when the Impact Figure for 2006 will become available.

If you have not already done so go to the APPS website and look at APDN. You will note that

some of the more recently presented papers have a remarkably short gestation period and have excellent colour images which are provided at no extra charge. Volume 2 will commence at the start of 2007 and it would be pleasing if more members used APDN for Disease Notes and New Records as the speed with which we can get them presented with compliant authors is impressive. I should like to thank James Cunnington for his very professional assistance in getting APDN papers up and running.

The Australian Soilborne Disease Symposium keynote addresses were scheduled for the February 2007 issue. Unfortunately, due to the time commitments of a couple of the authors these papers will now appear in the next April's issue. Some of you may have noticed the review type paper by Martin Barbetti and colleagues (APP 35[6] 691-706, 2006) which was an invited review regarding the association between necrotrophic pathogens, nematodes and medic pastures. This type of paper allows groups of workers the opportunity to provide a well-considered review which will attract attention and will be well cited. This will enhance the Impact Factor of APP. In February next year another review on *Puccinia psidii* will appear. **If you, singly or as a member**

of a team wish to have a review article considered then please do not hesitate to bring it to my attention. It is well known that such review papers are well cited and improve the Impact Factor.

I would finally like to thank the Editorial Board members who served during the year for their time and efforts. Without their efforts neither APP or APDN would be possible due to the massive workload involved.

Thank you and cheers

Keith Harrower



Bookmark the APPS web site:

www.australasianplantpathologysociety.org.au/

Check your details in the member list and correct if necessary.

Add information about visiting scientists.

Visit the conference web sites.

It's your web site - make use of it!!

Our new journal, 'Australasian Plant Disease Notes' is now available online and can be accessed via a link on the APPS homepage.

APPS Honorary Members & Fellows

Over the next few editions of the newsletter, profiles of the Fellows and Honorary Members of APPS will be included in the newsletter. Written by colleagues, these profiles are intended to introduce to you the luminaries of our society. The definitions of both are outlined in the constitution, and can be viewed on the web page. Fellows are people who have "rendered distinguished service to the science of plant pathology", and Honorary Members are those who have "made an outstanding contribution to the Society".

Unfortunately, one of our most loved members passed away this year. So it is fitting that the first profile is hers. Gretna Weste will long be remembered for her fascinating talks on Phytophthora.

Gretna Weste AM DSc PhD

1917 - 2006

Honorary Member 1992

Gretna Weste was a member of staff of the School of Botany, University of Melbourne, from 1961 (Senior Demonstrator) to 1982 (Associate Professor). Her responsibilities involved teaching undergraduates in Botany, Agriculture and Forestry and post graduates in Plant Pathology. During her time at the School of Botany Gretna made an outstanding contribution to both teaching and research in plant pathology. She has supervised numerous PhD, Masters and Honours students many of whom have followed in her footsteps and made their own impacts in plant pathology.

Gretna's studies in plant pathology began with wood destroying fungi (Basidiomycetes) in Victorian forests of mountain ash (*Eucalyptus regnans*). Blocks of wood were inoculated with isolates to check for subsequent decay and loss of weight, which defined those fungi that were pathogenic. Her PhD was obtained from studies with take-all disease of cereals when attacked by the Ascomycete, *Gaeumannomyces graminis*. At the time there was confusion among cereal growers and Agricultural Stations between take-all and the disease caused by the barley yellow dwarf virus.



In 1969 forest dieback was reported from seven small shrubs growing beneath stringybark eucalypts (*E. obliqua*, *E. baxteri* and *E. macrorhyncha*) in the open forest of the Brisbane Ranges in Victoria. Dieback was subsequently shown to have invaded open forests of the Grampians, Wilsons Promontory, the Otways and Kinglake. With the assistance of a succession of research students Gretna established the causal pathogen to be the Oomycete, *Phytophthora cinnamomi*, and tested Koch's Postulates within the forest. Gretna measured its pathogenicity to each native species, its rate of spread and assayed restrictive barriers.

Her subsequent research in Victorian vegetation communities led to her exceptional 30+ year study of the disease in open forests and heathlands. Most recently, and prior to her “real” retirement and move to Tasmania to be with her family, Gretna and her students had concentrated on rare endemic species under threat of extinction from this pathogen.

In 1983 Gretna was awarded a DSc for her collected works and her outstanding contribution to plant pathology and mycology. In that year she was Organising Chair of the highly successful 4th International Congress of Plant Pathology which was held in Melbourne. In 1989 she was awarded a Member in the Order of Australia (AM) medal for her research in botany and in 1992 the Australasian Plant Pathology Society made her an Honorary Member (one of only six in the Society). Gretna was made Patron of the Australasian

Mycological Society in 1999.

Gretna’s numerous contributions to plant pathology, botany and mycology and her unflagging energy and enthusiasm made her the obvious choice to deliver the McAlpine Lecture at the 15th Biennial Conference of the Society held in 2005 in Geelong. Gretna’s richly illustrated lecture was entitled ‘A long and varied fungal foray’ and she received a standing ovation at its conclusion.

Gretna passed away in September 2006, and is survived by her three children, six grandchildren and one great grandchild. Her death is a great and sad loss to the Society, but we can continue to celebrate her life through her published works and the knowledge that plant pathology in Australia has grown significantly through her contributions.

*David Cahill,
Associate Professor, Deakin University.*



Bob Dodman, Honorary member 1994



Bob Dodman was made an honorary member of the Society at the NZ conference in recognition of his tireless efforts for APPS. A brief summary of his achievements and contributions follows.

Bob was a Foundation Member and the first Treasurer of the Society. In 1986, he became Mycology Editor of Australasian Plant Pathology and in 1988 he became Editor-in-Chief. In 1992, he introduced the idea of appointing an Assistant Editor-in-Chief to help with the preparation of the journal for publication and an Executive Editor to handle the administrative and promotional aspects of the journal (trying to raise the profile of the journal in the scientific community in Australia and overseas and to increase the level of corporate sponsorship). Both appointments were approved by the Executive at the time. The journal was for a number of years published by Inkata Press in

Melbourne. However, after Inkata was taken over by Butterworths, APPS could no longer afford to use their services. Bob negotiated to have R.G. Richardson, Mt Eliza Victoria who also produces Plant Protection Quarterly, publish the journal and subsequently took over publishing it in Toowoomba through his own company, J&B Desktop Publishing Pty Ltd. In 1994, Bob achieved his long-time goal of producing and distributing all four issues of one volume of the journal within one calendar year. Bob has been the major force behind the journal becoming a more professional-looking publication. He has been involved in trying to have the journal

more widely abstracted and cited and in investigating the possibility of amalgamating with other societies/organisations/ publications to keep the journal viable.

In addition, Bob was the person most responsible for steering the society towards successfully achieving incorporation. He was in frequent contact with a solicitor over all aspects of incorporation, especially in clarifying aspects of the Act in relation to the unique way APPS operates.

Helen Ogle, with additions by Bob Dodman



Allen Kerr, Fellow 1995

Many younger plant pathologists will know of Allen Kerr as an APPS Fellow and via the Allen Kerr prize, which is awarded each year by APPS for the most outstanding PhD research in plant pathology.

Allen Kerr's own research career had many significant highlights, including fundamental observations which led to the discovery of the tumour-inducing plasmids (Ti plasmids) in *Agrobacterium*, paving the way for plant genetic engineering, and the discovery and understanding of the most successful example of biological control in plant pathology, the use of strain K84 for control of crown gall disease of stonefruit.

Allen's career began in Edinburgh University where he enrolled in Science, with an interest in bacteriology. His interest in botany and an inspiring mycologist as a teacher led Allen to discover the joy of plant pathology, and his career as a plant pathologist began. In 1950, he was offered a job at the Waite Agricultural Research Institute. He enrolled in a PhD on *Rhizoctonia solani*, then (as now) an important pathogen of cereals in southern Australia. A sabbatical with Dr SD Garrett at Cambridge in 1959 stimulated a lifelong interest in biological control.

After a period in Ceylon in the 1960's studying blister blight of tea (*Exobasidium vexans*), Allen returned to Adelaide at a time when crown gall disease was causing very significant economic losses in the South Australian stonefruit industry. At this time, it was known that, after infection, crown gall tumours could grow without the causal bacterium, and a hypothetical "tumour-inducing principle" had been proposed by Braun, but the discovery of the Ti plasmid was still a decade away.

Allen's research at the Waite focused on the ecology of *Agrobacterium*, and through his use of different selective media, realised that pathogenicity was being transferred from pathogens to non-pathogens. He soon understood that this must be the result of plasmid transfer between strains. The demonstration of pathogenicity transfer led to an international race to locate the "tumour-inducing principle" and in 1975 Eugene Nestor's lab in Seattle published evidence for the Ti plasmid. This created the basis of the revolution in plant genetic engineering.

Allen Kerr's own research re-focused on the biology of *Agrobacterium* studies on non-

pathogenic and pathogenic strains led to the important observation that a non-pathogenic strain of *Agrobacterium* completely inhibited crown gall formation when mixed with a pathogen. Work in the lab then demonstrated that control was dependent on the production of an antibiotic, agrocin 84 by the non-pathogen, strain K84.

As with many effective controls, the seriousness of crown gall disease to stonefruit production is now largely forgotten. Stonefruit growers were supplied with strain K84 on agar slopes from a small incubator in Allen Kerr's lab for many years.

A report from Greece that pathogens could arise which produced agrocin 84 led to a detailed genetic study of the agrocin 84 plasmid. Using transposon mutants supplied by Stephen Farrand (University of Illinois), the genes controlling agrocin synthesis and plasmid transfer were mapped. Dr. David Jones, working with Allen Kerr, constructed a deletion mutant of K84, which was unable to transfer the plasmid.

The deletion mutant, K1026, was shown to be as effective as K84 at controlling crown gall disease and approval was gained to use this genetically modified strain as a commercial control. It was the

first genetically engineered organism in the world to be released for commercial use.

The highlights of Allen's research were undoubtedly the discovery of pathogenicity transfer, the successful biological control of crown gall and the commercial use of the genetically engineered biological control agent. However, Allen and his collaborators also made a wide range of contributions to plant bacteriology with significant impact on the control of crown gall disease of grapevines, on the understanding of conjugation in *Agrobacterium*, and on the role of bacteria and bacteriophage in Annual Ryegrass Toxicity (ARGT).

Allen Kerr's career and achievements were recognised by the award of the inaugural Australia Prize (1990), election as a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Science, Fellow of the Royal Society, Foreign Associate of the National Academy of Sciences, US and Fellow of the American Academy of Microbiology, not to forget the APPS Allen Kerr Prize. The recipients of this award can hope that some of Allen Kerr's intellect and insight will be transferred along with this prize!

Kathy Ophel-Keller
SARDI



Ken Pegg, Fellow 1995

Ken Pegg has had a very distinguished career as a plant pathologist, working his entire career in Queensland. Ken commenced work as a cadet, in the then Queensland Department of Agriculture and Stock in 1956. He continued to work for the same organisation, which has subsequently gone through two name changes, until his retirement in 2001. Over this 45 year period, Ken achieved much for the horticultural industries, for which he worked tirelessly. Since retirement, he has continued to remain actively involved in post-harvest pathology research.

Ken was made a Fellow of the Australasian Plant Pathology Society in 1994. The citation stated: “This nomination is based on the exceptional abilities of Mr K G Pegg to see which plant diseases are limiting production of horticultural crops, to identify appropriate technologies for solving problems, to apply his scientific and interpersonal skills to generate practical solutions, and to persist until the whole job is completed”. His exceptional abilities became apparent soon after his appointment as a plant pathologist to Nambour, a centre for sub-tropical fruit production, just north of Brisbane. One of his first achievements was the management, through local quarantines, of the devastating bacterial wilt disease of ginger. Soon after, he implemented successful management strategies for *Phytophthora*-incited diseases of avocado and pineapple. The repeated pattern to his success was problem recognition and identification of the cause, gaining financial and moral support from industry and government, ceaseless pursuit of practical solutions, helping growers apply the solutions, and publishing the work in scientific and extension journals. Other major successes include Panama Disease of bananas, where Ken led a major international effort into characterising pathogen and host variation for this interaction, funded by ACIAR and INIBAP. These are only some of the diseases Ken has researched and managed.

Mentoring of plant pathology postgraduates has also been another area where Ken has excelled. Plant pathologists whom Ken co-supervised include Drs Vanessa Brake, Suzy Bentley and

Natalie Moore, who all researched aspects of Panama Disease of banana. His infectious enthusiasm and expansive knowledge were a great inspiration to all who worked with Ken. He shared long, happy and productive working relationships with many colleagues, including John Alcorn (he and Ken started as cadets at the same time), Rob O’Brien and many others.

It is not surprising that over such a long, productive and distinguished career, Ken has received significant recognition. In 1993, he was presented with the Graham Gregory Medal by Horticulture Australia Limited, for his research achievements over a range of horticultural crops. In 1997 he was given an Award of Honour for service to the Australian Banana Industry, and in 1998 the Pisang Rajah Award by INIBAP, which was international recognition for his research on Panama Disease. When he retired, Ken held the position of Senior Principal Scientist in DPI&F, the highest level of appointment available to a researcher in that organisation. In his “post-retirement”, Ken is researching induced natural resistance to anthracnose diseases in tropical fruits, principally avocado.

John Irwin



Lester Burgess, Fellow 1998

Lester was only the third person to be made a fellow of the Australasian Plant Pathology Society and this honour was a fitting reward for his contributions to, not only the field of plant pathology, but also to APPS. During his working career Lester managed to fill most of the positions on the APPS Executive most recently as President during 2001-2003 and was instrumental in the establishment of the APPS Newsletter, the precursor to Australasian Plant Pathology. Lester is also a fellow of the American Phytopathological Society.

Most of Lester's career was spent at the University of Sydney, initially as an undergraduate and postgraduate student and then as a member of academic staff. In between this he had several post-doctoral positions in the US. He was awarded a personal chair in Applied Mycology in 2000 and retired from "formal" employment in July of this year. He does of course remain very active in research and teaching despite having retired. At various points in his career he also held adjunct positions at Pennsylvania State University and Kansas State University.

A large proportion of Lester's scientific work has focused on the diseases caused by *Fusarium* species, especially crown rot of wheat caused by *Fusarium pseudograminearum*. To date he has written over 100 scientific papers, a number of book chapters and several books, mostly on *Fusarium*. He has also described a number of new species of *Fusarium*, was one of the few researchers internationally interested in the ecology

and biology of the genus and worked to understand the methods for controlling diseases caused by *Fusarium*. He has been recognized for two decades as one of the authorities on *Fusarium* which has resulted in a multitude of requests for guidance and advice and a number of international research collaborations.

The other component of his work which will leave a lasting legacy is his role as a mentor of students (both formally and informally) and other researchers. His list of students who did projects and degrees under his supervision is one of both quantity and quality and his infectious enthusiasm for plant pathology was responsible for many students choosing to study plant pathology and mycology. His recent work in Vietnam and Indonesia has had an enormous impact on plant pathology in those countries greatly enhancing the capacity of those countries and enabling a number of researchers to deal with the variety of plant pathological problems they face in those environments.

An APPS Symposium day (see page 14) was held recently at the Botanic Gardens Trust to celebrate Lester's career and featured talks by a number of Lester's former students and post-docs, emphasising the impact that he has had. While Lester has now formally retired no-one really expects him to slow down too much, maybe some time for fishing now and then, and we can expect many additional achievements to be added to those above!

Brett Summerell, Botanic Gardens Trust



*Lester Burgess (L)
with Brett
Summerell (R)*

BOOK REVIEW

Phytobacteriology - Principles and Practice

Janse JD

CABI Publishing, Wallingford (2005).

ISBN 1 84593 025 8. Price 65 pounds.

This text is a welcome addition to the limited library servicing plant bacteriologists. It makes excellent use of text boxes, colour text and photographs. While appearing to be aimed at the student level, it contains much information of use to those plant pathologists who are not fully conversant with bacteriology techniques. The introductory chapter which sets the context of bacterial disease in plants is followed by a chapter devoted to nomenclature, isolation and identification. The steps in generic isolation and purification are well described and illustrated diagrammatically. The many identification methods available are discussed with cautionary statements highlighted as to the limitations, if any, of the method. This is particularly useful for pathologists who only occasionally encounter bacteria and want a rapid 'quick-fix' identification. The importance of Koch's postulates is reinforced frequently throughout the book. Induction of disease is dealt with in detail in Chapter Three, again with considerable use of graphics. Chapter Four covers epidemiology of plant bacterial diseases with

schematic examples of many common diseases. Chapters Five and Six cover losses (briefly) and prevention and control. Fifty three pathogens and the various diseases they cause are covered in Chapter Seven, each (usually) with photographs of high quality displaying typical symptoms. The book concludes with several annexes including a listing of pathogens and their main hosts, and pathogens of quarantine importance to many countries. The book concludes with a high quality index, typical of many CABI publications.

A single criticism of this text might be that it does not cover in sufficient detail some of the basic laboratory techniques for isolating bacteria from plant tissue, and those techniques given are very generic. Information on isolation of the individual pathogens described in Chapter Seven would have been a considerable bonus. Nevertheless, this book is not only an excellent student text but it is highly recommended to any pathologist who encounters bacterial diseases. It should be present on the shelf of every diagnostic laboratory.

Eric Cother and Dorothy Noble
NSW Department of Primary Industries

Conference announcements:

3 - 4 May 2007

International Congress: Novel approaches for the control of postharvest diseases and disorders, Bologna, Italy.

For details contact the Convener: Paolo Bertolini,
University of Bologna, paolo.bertolini@unibo.it

20 - 23 August 2007

3rd Asian Conference on plant pathology, Gadjah Mada University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

<http://www.3rdacpp.com>

Important notice from the Business Manager

Many organizations have recently upgraded their email SPAM detection systems which now see all external mail servers (APPS included) as SPAM generators. As a result, APPS email is deleted or diverted to the junk mail folder. If you wish to receive APPS email in the future, each member will need to add the following addresses,

peter.williamson@australasianplantpathologysociety.org.au and

businessmanager@australasianplantpathologysociety.org.au and

appsmembers1@australasianplantpathologysociety.org.au, to their "safe sender" list. Instructions on how to do this are available from your ISP help desk.

Because of this recent change, some members may not have received their 2007 subscription renewal notice, sent out in October. If you have not received your reminder, please go to the APPS web site and use the online forms for membership renewal. Renewal is required to receive the first volume of APP in early 2007.

Peter Williamson



The APPS Business Manager – Peter Williamson

Plant Science, DPI&F, Toowoomba,
Queensland.

Favourite Disease: Phomopsis Stem Blight
of Lupins/Lupinosis of sheep - *Diaporthe
toxica*.

Plant Pathology:

- **Likes:** airborne diseases, being a creative
scientist.

- **Dislikes:** soilborne diseases, the demise of
scientists and the rise of managers.



REGIONAL NEWS

This edition includes profiles of some of the Regional councillors. They do wonderful work for the society in their home state, and should be recognised for their efforts. Support the events organised in your state, and be an active member - it is your society!

New South Wales

On October 27 NSW APPS celebrated the career of Professor Lester Burgess with a myco-symposium at the Royal Botanic Gardens-Sydney. Presentations were given by past and present members of Lester's Fusarium Research Lab representing each decade of Lester's plant pathology career.

Colin Wellings (PBI, USyd) began proceedings with "*Plant Pathology in a Global Context – The Challenges and the Opportunities*" with a focus on the global, regional and local movement, mutation and selection of wheat rusts. He highlighted a need for plant pathology to be at the forefront in order to contain disease threats, and the importance of engaging plant pathology at the political level.

Nerida Donovan (EMAI) discussed the nature, distribution and threat of citrus canker and the responses to previous outbreaks in Australia. Dang Luu Hoa (FAFNR, USyd) presented results from her current Masters project "Pineapple Heartrot in Vietnam". Her work has included disease surveys, pathogenicity tests and comparing chemical and biological methods for disease control of *Phytophthora*. Jillian Walsh (AQIS) submitted her PhD thesis examining Fusarium endophyte populations of savannah ecosystems on the day of the myco-symposium. Her research found that Fusarium endophytes of savannah grasses have a host preference and also exhibit niche differentiation.

Ameera Yousef (PhD student, USyd) is researching Fusarium wilt of snowpea. Her work examines diversity of Fusarium isolates from snowpea and

pea in eastern Australia using DNA fingerprinting, VCG and race typing. She will also examine control strategies including the effect of crop rotation on saprophytic survival. Len Tesoriero (EMAI) is studying root rot and wilt in glasshouse cucumber crops caused by *Fusarium oxysporum* fsp *cucumerinum* and *Fo. radicis-cumerinum*. The pathogens also cause disease on rockmelon and watermelon, and cause symptomless infection of tomato.

David Backhouse (UNE) worked with Lester in the early 1980's to conduct myco-geographic surveys along environmental gradients and correlate distribution of *Fusarium* with climatic factors. His current work looks at predicting crown rot based on the environmental factors that affect disease incidence, pathogen activity and microevolution of *Fusarium*.

Brett Summerell (RBG-Sydney) brought the research presentations to a close, with an overview of the genus *Fusarium*, the status of *Fusarium* taxonomy, its host range and the importance of mycotoxins as a trade issue.

Following the presentations, participants enjoyed a few beverages to congratulate Lester on his career achievements. Thank you to Sheryl Saban and Brett for helping to organise the catering and providing a fabulous venue. It was a fabulous day with real coffee and fantastic presentations which stimulated interesting discussion. And if nothing else, we learnt that *Fusarium* (arguably) is "a remarkable organism".

Rosalie Daniel

Northern Territory

Rex Pitkethley, NT's senior most plant pathologist retired on August 31, 2006. Here are a few events from Rex's long and successful career, kindly compiled by Mr Barry Conde, one of Rex's long time colleagues.

An era in Plant Pathology in the Northern Territory has passed. Rex Pitkethley left active work in Plant Pathology on 31 August 2006 after a long career in Australia's Northern Territory. Rex came to the NT on holidays from Sydney at the end of 1968, and while here he secured a position with the Animal Industry & Agriculture Branch in January 1969 as the Territory's fourth Plant Pathologist. After a short break in 1971 back in NSW, he recommenced in 1972, making him the longest serving Plant Pathologist in the NT's history with a career of 36 years 8 months in the NT. During Rex's time as head of Plant Pathology from 1976 staff in Darwin increased from 2 to 5, and Plant Pathology was established in Katherine in 1998. He worked on all aspects of Plant Pathology with a speciality in Plant Bacteriology and vesicular-arbuscular mycorrhizas (VAM). When Rex first came up he had a lot to do with rice spending a lot of time wading through rice fields at Humpty Doo and Tortilla Flats (near Adelaide River), mainly working on rice blast caused by *Pyricularia grisea* and *Rhizoctonia sheath blight*. Rex has

been a member of the Australasian Plant Pathology Society (APPS) since 1972. He has held the position of regional counsellor for the Northern Territory from late 1976 until 2006 with the exception of two to three years.

Some of his notable achievements have been publishing the first Host Index for the NT in 1970, recording *Drechslera maydis* on Maize, Peanut Rust, *Cercospora sorghi* on Sorghum, *Cylindrocladium quinqueseptatum* on Myrtaceous Tree seedlings for the first time in Australia. Following the discovery of Citrus canker in the NT for the second time in 1991, Rex led a small team to successfully eradicate the disease from the NT once again in 1995. He pioneered work on bacterial wilt and blossom end rot in the NT. During Rex's time as leader of Plant Pathology, four Fusarium wilt diseases were researched, including the severe banana Tropical race 4, new to Australia. Rex also worked on sorghum head moulds in the 1970s. Rex passed on his knowledge and skills that he has built up over the thirty plus years to his colleagues. During his time in leadership Rex has seen Plant Pathology in the NT develop from a pioneering phase to a solid foundation. His knowledge and presence will be sorely missed by the group.

Shamsul Bhuiyan

NT State Councillor – Shamsul Bhuiyan

Department of Primary Industry, Fisheries and Mines (DPIFM), Katherine Research Station, Katherine NT.

Favorite Disease:

Stem end rot caused by *Botryosphaeria* spp.

What you love about plant pathology: Able to help local industry. Working on biology and epidemiology of plant diseases.

Your pet hate: Admin work, reporting, attending meetings etc.



Western Australia

The WA branch of the APPS has been very quiet for the past few years. To give the Society a kick start in the west a seminar and sundowner was held at Murdoch University in November 2006. Dr Kerrie Davies (University of Adelaide) and Dr Mike Hodda (CSIRO Entomology) gave presentations on Fergusobia and Practylenchus nematodes respectively. The seminar gave the opportunity for the APPS community to get together, catch up on some exciting nematode research and meet other members from a range of organisations. It is hoped that this will stimulate interest in holding other functions in WA in 2007.

To help facilitate the re-energizing of the WA branch of the APPS a new committee has been formed under the control of the APPS State Councilor. The committee consists of Daniel Huberli from Murdoch University, Aaron Maxwell from the Australian Quarantine Inspection Service WA and Chris Dunne from the Department of Environment & Conservation. The committee will work the WA members to organise some key training sessions, seminars and functions in 2007. The committee will also endeavor to increase APPS membership numbers in WA. If you have any suggestions on possible activities of the Society

for next year, events you want to advertise please feel free to contact me (phone: 08 9368 3862; email: SJCollins@agric.wa.gov.au).

Then details of the other members of the WA Branch committee are listed below:

Chris Dunne
APPS WA Branch Secretary
Department of Environment & Conservation
Phone: 08 9334 0308
Email: chris.dunne@dec.wa.gov.au

Aaron Maxwell
APPS WA Branch Treasurer
Australian Quarantine Inspection Service WA
Phone: 08 9334 1609
Email: Aaron.Maxwell@aqis.gov.au

Daniel Huberli
APPS WA Branch Events Coordinator
Murdoch University
Phone: 08 9360 6486
Email: D.Huberli@murdoch.edu.au

Sarah Collins

WA State Councillor – Sarah Collins

Department of Agriculture & Food
South Perth, Western Australia

I am currently working to achieve quarantine 'area freedom' for Potato Cyst Nematode (PCN) in Western Australia.

Favorite Disease:

Phytophthora cinnamomi (my first love).

What do you love about Plant Pathology?

The fascination of how clever diseases are and in turn how clever plants can be in response.

Pet hates in Plant Pathology:

Flies and wet weather gear.



Queensland

It has been a while since I have written, so I will try to recapture news and events from the last 6 months of the happenings in and around southeast Qld.

June/July: - June saw the official end of the Co-operative Research Centre for Tropical Plant Protection (CRCTPP). Two major events were scheduled to celebrate the life of the CRCTPP. The first event was the cocktail party held at the St. Lucia Golf Links Club. Many employees (current at the time and former) of the CRCTPP attended the event and all enjoyed the night. The second event was a seminar day entitled "The Cooperative Research Centre for Tropical Plant Protection's contributions to plant pathology". There were four speakers for the day that provided a snippet of research performed by members of the CRCTPP. Speakers and topics covered were as follows:
Lindy Coates: Management of *Colletotrichum gloeosporioides* infections in avocado fruit using natural resistance mechanisms
John Thomas: Tospoviruses - an increasing challenge
Anthony James: Viruses and fungi that have soured the sugar industry in recent years
Julie Pattemore: CRCTPP Banana Diagnostics: Helping to protect the industry's skin for 14 years.

The second seminar day for the year was held on Tuesday 18th July, at the DPI&F Maroochy research station, Nambour. The flavour for the day was fruit (with the exception of the gums talk).

Speakers and topics were as follows:

Sharon Hamill: Current projects with a plant tissue culture focus on plant pathology. Featuring banana and rhubarb.

Tony Cooke: Productivity constraints affecting the Pakistan mango industry.

Geoff Pegg: *Quambalaria* shoot blight on spotted gum plantations in subtropical and tropical Australia.

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Natalie Peres: *Colletotrichum* diseases of strawberries in Florida.

Thanks to Apollo Gomez for being a gracious host and for providing us with fresh local grown strawberries for dessert.

September: - September was a busy month for me. I attended the 4th ASDS, Queenstown, New Zealand. The meeting was reasonably small (~70 people) with a strong contingency from New Zealand. The size of the symposium made it quite a valuable meeting and a great opportunity to interact with colleagues. And naturally, the symposium was made even more enjoyable by the amazing location and the great wine!



'Discussing' the next edition of the newsletter with the editor of APPS news!



Queenstown



September also was the month for 'the' event of the year; the QDPI&F plant pathology staff development workshop. The workshop consisted of two sections. The first section was a 2 day hands on workshop divided into four disciplines: virology, bacteriology, mycology and nematology, held at DPI&F Indooroopilly. The second part of the workshop was a pleasant 2-night stay at Cedar Creek Lodges, Mt. Tamborine. This section of the workshop was an opportunity for plant pathology staff from across Queensland to gather and informally discuss plant pathology as well as participate in valuable workshops/activities (e.g. communication, disease scenario, karaoke).

November: - The final DPI/F&APPS seminar day for the year was held on Tuesday 28th November at Gatton Research Station. Speakers and topics covered varied and were as follows:

Tim O'Hare: Functional foods – plant physiology and human health

Christine Horlock: Spotty fruit, holey leaves and dead trees... Temperate fruit research at

Applethorpe Research Station.

Murray Sharman: Tobacco streak virus causes sunflower disease in Queensland

Peter Dueter: Climate Change – Risks and Opportunities for Horticulture

I would like to personally thank the Plant Pathology seminar team (Liz Dann, Andre Drenth, Nikki Seymour, Jay Anderson, Kathy Parmenter and Apollo Gomez) for all of their hard work and effort throughout the year to organise these seminars and I hope that next year will bring many more seminar days!

NEWSFLASH: Joe Kochman has retired after 30+ years of working in plant pathology. Joe accepted a VER (voluntary early retirement) which commenced in October. I have this feeling (if Joe is like previous retirees), that Joe will still remain involved in plant pathology for years to come. We wish Joe all the best for his retirement.

Lisa Guilino

South East QLD Regional Councillor Lisa Guilino

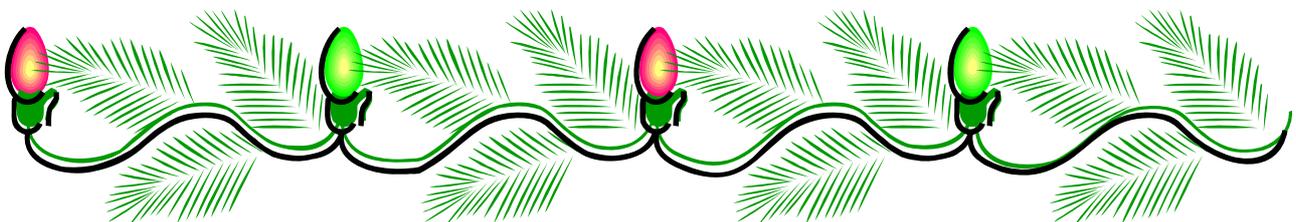
Queensland Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries, Indooroopilly, QLD

Favourite disease: Fusarium wilts

Plant Pathology:

Love:- The different areas of research, the complexity and at times simplicity of finding answers. Conference dinners!

Hate:- Am I allowed to say Fusarium (it's a love/hate relationship)? Paperwork.



South Australia

Since August, South Australian plant pathologists have had the opportunity to discover fungal genomics and its application to cereal pathology through a great presentation by Professor Steve Goodwin (Crop Production and Pest Control Research Unit, USDA-ARS). Steve will join us as one of the plenary speakers at next year's APPS conference so we look forward to that. The conference organisation has been steadily progressing with workshops starting to be organised. These include pulse pathology, grapevine pathology and scientific writing. The Mycological Society will also share some concurrent sessions with us next year meaning that we can have a greater interaction with a discipline integral to plant pathology.

Many of our members were also recently involved in the Waite Festival - a celebration of the science at the Waite campus tempered by some great food, wine and jazz. Over 5000 members of the general public attended the day and viewed displays which also included the opportunity to look under the microscope at various plant pathogens and learn about grapevine powdery mildew. The SA branch also co-sponsored the school competition where students were asked to describe how they would develop an ecologically friendly garden (ie integrated pest management) providing a book on plant pathology to the winning school.

Amanda Able

SA Regional Councillor - Amanda Able

Senior Lecturer in Plant Science, School of Agriculture, Food and Wine, The University of Adelaide.

Favorite disease: At the moment? Net blotch disease of barley. But my favorite pathogen would have to be *Phytophthora* - I spent hours watching zoospores under the microscope during my PhD. Lots of fun watching them zooming around and attaching to plant cells - the wonderment of it!

Plant pathology likes: The multi-disciplinary nature. The plant-pathogen interaction (observing how two organisms interact and trying to decipher that interaction is the best). The people.

Plant pathology dislikes: The declining number of students and perhaps lack of emphasis on field plant pathology as a discipline - a concern. Lack of funding.



Congratulations to Amanda on being named "SA Tall Poppy of the year 2006"

ASDS New Zealand

The 4th Australasian Soil Diseases Symposium was held at the Millennium Hotel in Queenstown, New Zealand, in September 2006. It followed the great tradition of the other 3 symposiums, with good talks, interesting keynote speakers and plenty of time to 'network'. While there were only 72 delegates (no doubt due to the problems some members have with getting permission to travel overseas - shouldn't it be almost interstate??), they represented 11 countries. The five themes for the ASDS were Soil health, Pathogen Detection, Biotechnology/Genetic Resistance, Biocontrol and Disease management. The topics were diverse and presentations of high standard, with time allowed to meet other scientists and discuss work in depth.

On top of that there was the magnificent scenery, all those lovely hills to climb, and for those lucky enough to have a few extra days, a chance to thrill seek or ski. There were a few slightly damaged bodies on the plane the next weekend! Not to mention the heads after the great dinner on the Tuesday night. Though there were a fair number that attended the first session the next day, not all had their eyes open!

The past convenors have formed a loose alliance to ensure the symposium continues every 2-3 years, and embraces changes necessary to meet the needs of those working in the area of soil diseases. At one of the tea breaks the CSU contingent "offered" to hold the next symposium in NSW. Blue Mountains wasn't it Gavin?? Look forward to seeing everyone there!

Barbara Hall



The Millennium Hotel, Queenstown. Top venue!



Great dinner - liquid only?



Bungee, Luge, jetboat and Paragliding. Why go anywhere else?





New Members

On behalf of the Society, the Management Committee would like to welcome the following new members:

NSW: Ms Carolyn Blomley

QLD: Dr Anthony Young

SA: Mr Steve Coventry

WA: Ms Kate Taylor
Mr Peter Scott
Mr Nathan Jardine
Mrs Leila Eshraghi
Ms Trudy Paap
Mrs Michaela King
Mrs Patsy Stasikowski
Ms Monique Sakalidis

New Zealand: Dr Robin Macdiarmid
Ms Kirsty Boyd-Wilson
Ms Anna Hopkins
Dr Janaki Kandula

Don't forget to have your say!

This is your newsletter so be sure to let us know what is going on about:

- * Open days and field days
- * Scholarships and employment opportunities
- * Regional news
- * Special interest groups
- * Requests for information etc.
- * Upcoming events
- * Awards to members
- * Issues of concern
- * Humorous events

and any other interesting information!

APPS NEWS is the official newsletter of the Australasian Plant Pathology Society, quarterly. Items for inclusion should be sent to Mrs B. Hall, Plant Research Centre, SARDI, GPO Box 397, Adelaide, SA. 5001. Ph. 08 8303 9562, Fax 08 8303 9393, Email: hall.barbara@saugov.sa.gov.au. **Next deadline: 16 March 2006.**

Editor-in-Chief APP: Dr Keith Harrower, School of Biological & Environmental Sciences, Central Queensland University, Rockhampton, Qld 4701. Ph 07 4930 6354, Fax 07 4930 9209, E-mail k.harrower@cqu.edu.au

Web Site: <http://www.australasianplantpathologysociety.org.au/>