

# MONTHLY UPDATE

## DEPARTMENT OF BIOCHEMISTRY

February 2017

The academic year of 2017 is almost upon us, with the majority of students back and classes about to begin next week. It has been a busy summer with lots of research activity and preparations for teaching, as well as building upheavals. Well done to the team from Property Services who have been working very hard to ensure that the first stage of the renovations is finished right on time. Last week the Tate, Patrick, and Gerth labs moved into their new laboratory space, there are few things to iron out but we hear that they are mostly happy and we hope that science goes well in their new home. The CPR will be next to move once their area is completed. We expect that will be by the middle of March, but this will depend on the visit from the engineers who will move the mass spectrometers. Sigurd's lab is planned to be converted into offices later on in semester one and then the remainder of the floor refit as lab space in semester two – a busy time! Many thanks to Peter Small for facilitating all the rearrangements of equipment and furniture that are necessary in order to continue working during renovations. I would also like to extend a warm welcome to Peter Fleury, who has arrived at such a very busy time.



I was saddened to hear about the death of Alan Crawford this week, as you will have read in emails sent from Teena. It was very sudden and has come as a great shock. Alan was based in the department for many years, and many have fond memories of him. I also received notification earlier in the month of the death of Roger Shaw. Roger was a graduate, and also a member of staff in the early years of the department (1950 and 1955 photos on the wall). Some of you will have met him and his wife at the 50th Anniversary celebrations in 2000.

Recently the group leaders in the department had a research retreat – this was a very productive half-day session and we will be working at developing initiatives to support research in the department. I am very keen that we take every opportunity to promote the department to endusers, undergraduate and postgraduate students as well as the wider New Zealand Research community. In this regard, I was very pleased to hear that the team led by Peter Dearden has secured ongoing funding to support Lab-in-a Box.

The new store shopping and inventory system should be easier to use and much more efficient than the old one, many thanks to all the people involved in getting it up and running.

As the busy time is upon us I hope everyone has taken opportunities to recharge their batteries over the summer. I was lucky enough to spend several weeks in North Island warm spots.

*Catherine*

### PhD/MSc completions:

Congratulations to the following who have recently completed their degrees:

Michael Fairhurst, MSc (Day Lab). Mike will be working for Monica Gerth as an ARF for the next year.

Jacob Monash, PhD (Macknight Lab) is currently working at Plant & Food Research.

### Health & Safety

There is an IBSC audit in February and ORS (Office of Radiation safety) and MPI audits in March.

There is an IBSC meeting on the 28th Feb, the submissions cut off is noon, Monday 20th Feb.

### Purchasing

The new store system is up and running. Everyone needs to be trained in it, so the first time you use it make sure Tim or Sandra show you how.

If you wish to see what stock is held in the store before going shopping, there is an online stocklist at

[http://hsdb.otago.ac.nz/fmi/iwp/res/iwp\\_home.html](http://hsdb.otago.ac.nz/fmi/iwp/res/iwp_home.html)

Log into the BIO\_Store database using the username/password combination that will be supplied to you by Lynn. Hit the minuscule “down arrow” at the top left of the browser window to uncover search and browse tools. Any problems, see Lynn or Bronwyn.

## Specials

Lab Supply have a sale on Greiner serological pipettes

Global Science have a sale on some Falcon products – tissue culture & pipettes.

Please note the University has renegotiated the contract it has with its main suppliers, this has resulted in some price changes with many products increased in price.

## Inaugural Professorial Lecture

Tony Merriman: 5.30 pm, 4th April, 2017

## Promotion

Congratulations to Associate Professor Alan Carne (as from 1st February 2017)

## Conferences

### Recent attendance

**Monica Gerth:** BLAST (Bacterial Locomotion and Signal Transduction (XIV), 15-20 January 2017 New Orleans

## Building & Equipment

As Catherine has described in her introduction, the first floor Tate/Patrick/Gerth lab is done, and the occupants move back during week of 13th Feb. The CPR is due to move into their new rooms in mid-March, conversion of the current Wilbanks lab into offices will follow that.



*The brand new Tate/Gerth/Patrick laboratory on the first floor.*

## New arrivals

Justine Murrell has returned to us to do some teaching during the first semester, it's great to have her back, even if only for a short time. Justine can be found in the BIOC 192 external office.



Sreya Taraknath is a PhD student supervised by Sally McCormick



Maria Selmar, from Uppsala University, Sweden, is visiting Wayne Patrick for three months.



Peter Fleury has joined Peter Small in the workshops.



Kevin Sheridan is a new PhD student co-supervised by Julian Eaton-Rye