

MONTHLY UPDATE

DEPARTMENT OF BIOCHEMISTRY

October 2015

It's been a very busy month, with the end of semester fast approaching for staff and students – including the Honours students who have now finalised and submitted their dissertations. I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their dedication, and the energy they have put in to making the Bioc courses a success. From my corner of the building it has been a great team effort, but special thanks to Nurit and the prep room staff, without whom we would not be able to function. Thanks also to Annika and the many helpers who once again organised a very successful day of Info Sessions for prospective 200- and 300-level students. We now have a month of exam marking to look forward to!

The renovations to the second floor are well under way. The IT staff will be moving to their new premises next week, clearing the decks for work on the laboratory spaces to begin. There will be dust and noise, and limitations to the use of some equipment. Research continues regardless, so patience will be required, but it will be rewarded in February when we have new, clean, modern labs to work in. Despite the dishevelled state of the building we had a very good MPI audit last week – thanks to Chris Hart for all her hard work.

Peter Dearden's Lab in a Box launches at noon next Tuesday at Kaikorai Primary school. This is an excellent initiative that will bring practical science education to schools in remote areas that currently miss out.

Finally, I would like to welcome Charity and Lynn, who start full time in the accounts office next week. It is great to have them on board.



Catherine

Conferences

Recent attendances

Charlotte Pushparajan (Dearden Lab): BioProcessing Network Annual Conference 2015, Te Papa in Wellington, 21st-22nd September. (Charlotte won the Poster prize at this conference)

Congratulations to **Ben Peters** from the Brownfield lab on winning the Best Student Presentation from the New Zealand Society of Plant Biologists at the ComBio meeting in Melbourne last week (and also for his winning Schuhplattler performance!)

Upcoming

Professor Kurt Krause: Infectious Diseases Society of America, San Diego, California, USA, 7-11 October

Sally McCormick, Australian Atherosclerosis Society, Fremantle, Australia, 21-23 October 2015

Tony Merriman MAPNet 2015, Rotorua 28 - 30 October

Funding

Congratulations to:

Peter Dearden, Biological Heritage National Science Challenges "Developmeing RNAi as a new technology for wasp control" \$150,000

Parry Guilford, Priming Partnerships "New drugs for the treatment of breast and gastric cancer molecular subtypes" \$30,000

PhD/MSc completions

Congratulations to the following students who have recently completed all the requirements of their theses:

September

Minh Hai Ha (Carne Lab) - PhD

Humaira Rasheed (Merriman Lab) - PhD

Minh has gone to do a Post-Doc at the University of Melbourne, and Humaira is beginning one at the Lillehei Heart Institute, USA very soon.

New arrivals



Charity Upoko-Winchcombe, new Finance Assistant



Donna Bond, Postdoctoral Fellow working with Richard Macknight



Lynn Slobbe, new Purchasing & Finance Administrator



Greg Redpath, ARF working with Sally McCormick

Health and Safety

Thanks to all those who assisted with the MPI audit.

Purchasing

Marilyn Merriman says: "Re-useable freezable transport bottles can be purchased through the Purchasing Office. The manufacturer states they can keep samples cold (minus 40 degrees Celcius) for 100 hours. They have one for viewing."

IT

Most people will be aware that all staff get access to free Microsoft Office for use on University owned computers. Some people may not be aware however that all students are also eligible for free Microsoft Office 365 on their computers. To download please visit www.otago.ac.nz/office/

Equipment

New

The LiCor Odyssey Fc imager to replace the Fuji imager will be installed next week. It will be initially located in the Mace/Ledgerwood Lab (203) while the 2nd floor renovations are occurring. You will need to see Liz if you want to have after hours access to Lab 203 to use the LiCor.

Moved and/or restricted

Renovations in the building mean dust, so a number of items of equipment will have restricted use over the next few months. The CD will be out of commission while the renovations of Room 205 take place. Equipment in Rm 211 is to be kept covered while work is underway but can be used in the interim. Ensure covers are well clear of any instrument when operating and switch equipment off before re-covering

Building

The Reading Room is going to be refurbished. A committee headed by Debbie Acreman is looking for suggestions so please forward any to her.

The following table shows expected timecourse for the renovations over the next few weeks.

Date	What's Happening
Tuesday 6th October	Brown lab begin moving items to room G05 Gel Doc moved to 1st floor foyer Dark Room UV Transilluminators moving to Tate Lab room 111a
Wednesday 7th October	Lamont lab begins moving to Lab 129
Friday 9th October	Day Lab begins moving to Lab 129
Week beginning 12th October	Animal room 220a and Tissue Culture 217 start decommissioning IT start moving to new office area Construction starts in Chris Brown Lab and IT area
Week beginning 19th October	Construction begins in Hughes write-up area, 215 and 217 (tissue culture)
Tuesday 27th October	Construction begins Lamont, Day, Dark room and animal room