



# Society for Reproductive Biology

Newsletter No 57 Feb / Mar 2007

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## A Message From the President: *Michael Holland*

Recent months have proved an exciting time for those of us interested in reproductive biology. The recent legislative changes with regard to stem cells have opened new possibilities for research and will see this field move forward to begin to deliver on its promise. This will impact many members of SRB active in assisted reproductive technologies and embryology research.

The end of March sees an important occasion - the FASTS sponsored Science meets Parliament. This is a unique opportunity to meet and talk with Federal parliamentarians of all parties. You have their undivided attention for a brief period and thus an opportunity to explain to them the importance that reproductive biology plays in human health, animal biotechnology etc. We need to impress upon them that, for example, the opportunities that stem cells offer are the direct consequence of research in reproductive biology which led to the identification and isolation of these cells. There are many other examples of how our discipline contributes to the health, well being and industrial wealth of our nation.

I imagine that many of you, like me, have spent the last months preparing grant applications and I wish you all the best for success. I am considering the merits of obtaining some data from members of the Society on grants submitted, their success and dollars received. I would like to have some metrics to use with politicians and bureaucrats to illustrate the impact of our discipline. More on that later in the year.

Finally, this edition contains the Call for Abstracts for the 2007 SRB meeting in September in Christchurch. I urge you all to attend and to present your research. This is an excellent program with key speakers such as Marty Matzuk and our own Iain Clarke featured. It is being held in a delightful place with lots of opportunity for pre or post conference activities. Support your Society by attending and presenting!



**LATEST NEWS**  
**BY CAROLINE GARGETT, SRB COUNCIL SECRETARY**

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**2<sup>nd</sup> Call for Nominations for  
Symposium Convener and Theme:  
4<sup>th</sup> Australian Health and Medical  
Research Congress 2008**

Now that the major grant writing time is over, SRB Council is sending out a second call for nominations for AHMRC Symposium convener and theme.

We have registered an Expression of Interest to sponsor a 1 day symposium at the AHMRC to be held in Brisbane, November 16-21, 2008. Planning for the next AHMRC in Brisbane in 2008 is now underway. This will be the 4th Symposium SRB has organized at these Congresses. Each has been highly successful and well supported by the SRB membership and wider research community. This provides a unique opportunity for SRB members to build on the momentum generated in previous years, by suggesting and organising a symposium that might be hosted by the SRB at this important and prestigious national meeting.

*Purpose*

This biennial symposium is a fantastic opportunity to showcase Reproductive Biology Research to the Medical Research Community and to facilitate cross discipline exchange and collaboration.

Council is calling for nominations for a Symposium Convener to develop a theme for a full day symposium, to organise speakers and sponsorship, and to work on the AHMRC

POC, which will commence meeting early in 2007. Nominations are open to SRB members anywhere in Australasia as POC meetings are teleconferenced.

Themes of interest to the general Australian medical research community and that highlight reproductive research in terms of

the National Research Priorities are encouraged.

*Format*

It is expected that the 2006 AHMRC symposium format will be adopted for 2008 (2hr, 4 speaker ½ day symposium), comprising one International speaker and 3 National speakers. SRB conducts 2 symposia on the one day and in the past there has been a single theme to cover both symposia. In the past, poster presentations have not been included as SRB holds its annual meeting separately. However, the 2008 Convener may wish to organise posters and have a member of the symposium committee involved with the AHMRC LOC. (please note that abstracts have previously been submitted via ASMR.)

*Submissions*

Nominees are requested to provide no more than a single page document detailing

1. the theme of the their proposed Symposium. It is possible to have an overarching theme for the day and subdivide the 2 symposia into 2 topics.
2. suggested speakers, 2 international and 6 national.
3. strategies for acquiring sponsorship and possible sponsorship sources, which will be done in consultation with Mike Pickford at ASN (SRB does underwrite, but sponsorship is expected)
4. names of people that will comprise the SRB AHMRC 2008 Program Committee
5. indicate whether poster abstracts will be invited.
6. indicate a person who will sit on AHMRC LOC if necessary.

Council is offering the option for nominees to consult with Darryl Russell ([Darryl.russell@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:Darryl.russell@adelaide.edu.au)) about their proposal prior to submission.

Please submit your proposal for council consideration by email to the secretary ([caroline.gargett@med.monash.edu.au](mailto:caroline.gargett@med.monash.edu.au)) by Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 2007.

## 2007 Founders Lecturer

Several nominations were received for this lecture at the 2007 meeting and we are pleased to announce that **Professor Martin Matzuk** the Stuart A Wallace Chair of Pathology from Molecular and Cellular Biology, Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, Texas will present this plenary lecture on "Insights into Oocyte Biology".

## 2007 Meat and Livestock Plenary Lecturer

We are pleased to announce that the new Head of Physiology at Monash University, Clayton, Victoria; **Professor Iain Clarke** will present the plenary lecture this year.

## Call for Nominations for Life Membership

SRB council are requesting members to nominate retired or about to retire SRB members for consideration for Life Membership, who have made:

1. Contributions to the Society over a substantial period of time.
2. Major contributions to the Science of our Discipline.
3. Major contributions to our Discipline in other ways.

Please send your nomination to the secretary ([caroline.gargett@med.monash.edu.au](mailto:caroline.gargett@med.monash.edu.au)) including a paragraph addressing the above criteria by Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 2007.

# Call for Abstracts

## 2007 SRB Annual Scientific Conference

to be held in conjunction with the ESA

**2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> September 2007**

at the

**Christchurch Convention Centre, New Zealand**

### HIGHLIGHTS WILL INCLUDE:

Founders Lecture: Martin Matzuk, MLA Plenary Lecture: Iain Clarke  
Workshop: Publishing in Scientific Journals  
SRB RCRH Award for Excellence in Reproductive Biology Research  
SRB New Investigator Award, MLA Award, ANZPRA New Investigator Award  
Five symposia including SRB-ESA joint symposium  
Free Communications from submitted abstracts

### PROVISIONAL SYMPOSIUM TOPICS

Evolution of Reproductive Form and Function.  
Gamete Development and Maturation  
Maternal and Paternal Influences on Fetal Development (SRB/ANZPRA joint Symposium)  
Biotechnology in Animal Industries  
Endocrine Disruptors (SRB/ESA joint symposium)  
Website: <http://www.ESA-SRB.org.au>

### **IMPORTANT DATES 2007**

February 23<sup>rd</sup> 2007 Registration and Accommodation Bookings Open  
**15<sup>th</sup> June 2007 - Closing Date for Abstract Submissions**

## 2007 SRB ANNUAL CONFERENCE AWARDS

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Please be aware that there are several awards that you may be eligible to apply for when you register for this years SRB conference:

- **Student travel grant:** available to aid in attendance to the annual meeting and is open to all students who are Financial Members or who have applied to be members.
- **SRB-Serono New Investigator Award:** open to financial members enrolled as a postgraduate student or within 2 years of the award of PhD for best abstract and subsequent presentation at the annual meeting.
- **MLA Award:** available to financial members up to 10 years from award of PhD for best presentation on livestock animal species in the SRB program.
- **ANZPRA New Investigator Award:** awarded for the best presentation by an ANZPRA student member at the annual conference.
- **\*\*NEW\*\* SRB-RCRH Award for Excellence in Reproductive Biology Research:** see detailed description below.

### **SRB-RCRH Award for Excellence in Reproductive Biology Research**

**Concept:** To recognize an emerging and excellent contributor working in the field of Reproductive Biology who is a member of the SRB.

Recipients must be less than 15 year post-receipt of Doctorate at the time of award and agree to attend and present at the SRB annual meeting if application is successful.

**Criteria:** The successful applicant will have demonstrated a substantial and sustained contribution to research in the field of

Reproductive Biology. Evidence of such contribution to be considered includes:

- Peer-Reviewed Publications
- National and International Awards
- National and International Invited Presentations
- Student Completions
- Grant Awards
- Commercial and/or clinical translation
- Institutional Responsibilities
- Service to profession

**Award:** \$3000 cash prize. Recognition at the SRB Annual Meeting, on the SRB website and in the SRB Annual Meeting Proceedings. Symposium presentation at SRB Annual Meeting.

**Application:** CV of up to 3 pages, 1 page Executive Summary addressing selection criteria, and 2 letters (suggested maximum of 1 page each) of reference (sent from referee directly to Committee Chair).

**Selection process:** The anonymous Selection Committee consists of SRB members and colleagues who have had long-standing and internationally recognized careers in Reproductive Biology research. Both geographical and intellectual (i.e. field of research) breadth is represented across the Committee.

**Committee Chair (contact for queries):**  
[Kate.loveland@med.monash.edu.au](mailto:Kate.loveland@med.monash.edu.au)  
Phone: 03 9594 7418

### **Timeline:**

June 1st – Application and Reference receipt is closed at 5 pm EST.

June 30th – Winner notified.

SRB Annual Conference – Award Winner presents a Symposium length talk (30 min) following arrangement of appropriate time slot with Program Organising Chair.

## **OTHER AWARDS ON OFFER**

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### **2007 Premier's Award for Medical Research**

The Award recognises the contribution made by early stage researchers and is an initiative of the Victorian Government and The Australian Society for Medical Research. Applications are sought from PhD students and recently completed PhD graduates whose research is or has been undertaken in a Victorian research institution. Applicant's research may be in any field of health or medical research including public health, basic, applied or clinical research and health-related technology research.

The Award program provides \$40,000 in prize money: \$16,000 for the winner and \$8,000 each for three commended applicants.

In conjunction with the Premier's Award for Medical Research, the \$30,000 Jack and Robert Smorgon Families Award will be presented to the research institute supporting the work of the 2007 Premier's Award for Medical Research winner.

Application forms and additional information [www.business.vic.gov.au/premiersaward](http://www.business.vic.gov.au/premiersaward)  
APPLICATIONS CLOSE MARCH 13, 2007

## **SRB COUNCIL ITEMS**

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### **Postgraduate Student Rep Report *Tu'uhevaha Kaitu'u-Lino (Aus)***

#### **CALLING OUT TO ALL NEW ZEALAND STUDENTS**

Unfortunately our current New Zealand student rep, Erica Little, will be resigning from SRB council in March. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Erica for her contribution to the SRB. With Erica resigning we are in need of a new NZ rep to join our team. The position of SRB student representative is not a difficult or time consuming one. It involves taking part in teleconference meetings throughout the year to provide student input, and some involvement with student events at the annual conference. Basically you will be giving the student body a voice. It also

makes a fabulous addition to your CV! With the annual conference to be held at Christchurch this year, it will be necessary to get a new NZ student rep on board ASAP.

If you are interested in fulfilling this role or would like any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me; [Tuuhevaha.kaituu@Princehenrys.org](mailto:Tuuhevaha.kaituu@Princehenrys.org).

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### **Membership *Chris Scott***

The annual call for membership renewal went out last December. If you have not done so, please renew on-line via the SRB website (<http://www.srb.org.au/>). Please consider the advantages of paying up 3 years in advance to save having to worry about renewing for a while, and to hedge against increases in dues. We have amended glitches with the system after last year's membership renewal and so far the process appears to be going very well.

Concurrent with the membership renewal process we conducted a membership drive, in which members who had recently let their membership lapse were contacted to encourage them to renew. Those who have presented at recent conferences but who are not currently SRB members were also contacted to invite them to join the Society. Quite a few people have joined or rejoined the society as a result of this action, which has been encouraging.

## **RECENT AWARDS**

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Congratulations to **Robert Gilchrist** from the Research Centre for Reproductive Health, University of Adelaide for winning the **Established Scientist Award** at the 2006 European Society for Human Reproduction and Embryology (ESHRE) Conference in Prague for his abstract on "*Improved embryo development from in vitro matured oocytes by addition of native or recombinant oocyte-secreted growth factors*".

Well done Rob!

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It is also our pleasure to congratulate SRB student member **Natalie Hannan** from the Uterine Biology group at Prince Henry's Institute who has been selected as one of only 20 researchers from around the world to take part in the prestigious **Frontiers in Reproduction** course in Massachusetts, USA in June 2007. Further, she has received full travel support from WHO and NHMRC to support her participation.

Natalie's work on receptivity of the uterus to allow embryo implantation has attracted significant attention for research at Prince Henry's and has positioned Natalie as one of Australia's most promising young researchers. This is really a fantastic achievement. Congratulations Natalie, way to go!

### SUBMISSIONS TO THIS NEWSLETTER

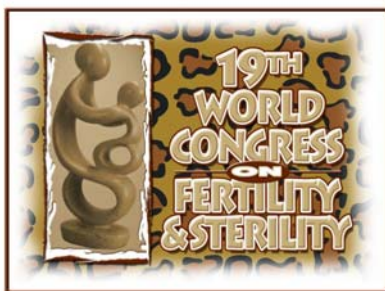
All SRB members are invited to submit articles, news items, awards, conference announcements or other associated information for this newsletter to [lynette.kilpatrick@princehenrys.org](mailto:lynette.kilpatrick@princehenrys.org) anytime. The newsletters are published bi-annually in Feb/Mar and Oct/Nov.

### UPCOMING CONFERENCES



15th - 18th of April, 2007.

[www.jointukfertility.co.uk/joint/delegatecontnt.cfm?siteid=326](http://www.jointukfertility.co.uk/joint/delegatecontnt.cfm?siteid=326)



International Convention Centre  
Durban, South Africa  
April 29 - May 03 2007  
[www.iffs2007.org.za](http://www.iffs2007.org.za)

**4<sup>th</sup> International Conference on the Female Reproductive Tract**  
June 8-11, 2007  
Frauenchiemsee, Germany



**2007 AMS Conference**  
The University of New England,  
Armidale, NSW  
July 2- 5 2007  
[www.australianmammals.org.au](http://www.australianmammals.org.au)

40th Annual Meeting of the  
**Society for the Study of Reproduction**  
21-25 July 2007  
Marriott San Antonio Rivercenter  
San Antonio, Texas.  
[www.ssr.org](http://www.ssr.org)



Hosted by Smithsonian Tropical Research  
Institute Panama, Republic of Panama  
**August 6 to 9, 2007**  
<http://striweb.si.edu/icird/>





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