

From the President

It has been a good first half of the year on the haemostasis front. I was delighted in January when I picked up the latest issue of Blood, to see that a manuscript by Shaun Jackson's research group from Monash University had captured the front cover page photo: an evocative microscopic image of platelet thrombus formation in a rat model injured arteriole. The manuscript provided an artful and eloquent visual demonstration of the teathering process whereby discoid platelets "throw out the anchor" to damaged endothelium, overcoming the shear stress of flow, and literally sliding into the endothelial surface during platelet plug formation. The paper also provides us with mechanistic evidence for the importance of adequate platelet numbers in primary haemostasis (refer Maxwell MJ et al. Blood 2007;109(2):566-576).

Those with a thrombosis interest will be well aware of the often quoted "three-to-six month" treatment duration for first presentation of DVT; it is somewhat surprising, given the prevalence of this problem that more precise evidence based guidance has not been forthcoming long before now. A significant advance in this area came in

March, with publication by Campbell et al in the British Medical Journal (ref Brit Med J 2007;334:674). Anticoagulation duration of either 3 or 6 months for DVT or PE was prospectively assessed, concluding that 6 months treatment duration provided "little if any" additional benefit over 3 months, with increased risk of bleeding adverse events associated with the longer duration of treatment with warfarin. This publication, as well as the accompanying editorial comment, provides anticoagulation services across our international region with reason to review current practise in this area.

June saw an excellent one day educational symposium and dinner in Adelaide to acknowledge the life work and mark the retirement of John Lloyd. No doubt John will retain his infectious interest in Coagulation Medicine, and will continue to guide younger colleagues. We look forward to October when John will deliver the 2007 Barry Firkin Oration at the Gold Coast Annual Scientific Meeting.

The newly built ASTH website is ready to launch, and hopefully will be live on the internet by the time this newsletter goes out. Our Project Officer Vicky Mrowinski

From the President cont... p2

ASTH COUNCIL 2005-2007

Dr Mark Smith
Dr Chris Ward
Dr Paul Coughlin
Dr Claire McLintock
Dr Murray Adams
Mrs Emma Jones-Perrin
Dr Ali Bianchi
Dr Paul Harper
Dr Douglas Coghlan
Dr Tim Brighton
Professor Hatem Salem

President
Vice-President & Treasurer
Secretary
Chair, Scientific Programme Committee
Chair, New & Emerging Technologies Group
Newsletter Editor
Vice-Chair, Scientific Programme Committee
Web Master, Discussion Group
Clinical Trials Liaison
Chair, Clinical Trials Group
Executive Director

mark.smith@cdhb.govt.nz
cward@med.usyd.edu.au
paul.coughlin@med.monash.edu.au
claire.mclintock@dml.co.nz
m.adams@curtin.edu.au
emma_perrin@health.qld.gov.au
alessandra.bianchi@email.cs.nsw.gov.au
paulh@adhb.govt.nz
douglas.coghlan@flinders.edu.au
brightont@sesahs.nsw.gov.au
hatem.salem@med.monash.edu.au

Printed with the support of

GSL Bioplasma
Biotherapies for Life™

Wyeth®


novo nordisk®

FROM THE PRESIDENT CONT...

has done an excellent job coordinating the building of the site. The site is simple, elegant and relatively uncluttered. What it develops into will depend entirely on the way members use it, so do make time to visit the site, update your membership profile, and help build it into a useful regional haemostasis platform.

Finally, this is ASTH Council election year. I can personally say that interaction on council level is a good tonic to life in the haemostasis community. The requests for active participation will come out soon. I encourage members to consider standing for council in your region, and invite you to contact me or other councillors if you have questions.

Mark Smith.



This year's annual scientific meeting will be an ideal opportunity to review the clinical and research highlights of the haematology year, and will feature a strong program in coagulation. The ASTH international guest speakers: Professor Claude Negrier from Edouard Herriot University Hospital, Lyon, will be speaking on inhibitors and surgery in haemophilia and separately on new and revisited assays to assess haemostasis; Dr Ian Mackie from the University College, London will provide a review of all forms of ADAMTS-13 assays and associated clinical data in a combined session with the ANZSBT. Dr Mackie will also feature in an oral anticoagulant control session highlighting problems with lupus anticoagulant patients. Dr Alan Nurden from the University of Bordeaux will focus on diagnosis and management of platelet disorders, speaking separately on inherited platelet disorders and thrombocytopenia. Several expert local speakers will compliment our international guests.

Please also note that there are six ASTH travel grants to be awarded, each worth \$1000 and there will be two poster awards this year, best poster clinical and best poster laboratory. The preliminary program, travel grant and ASTH scientific award details are available online at www.fcconventions.com.au/HAA2007/.

Abstract submission closes Monday July 16th (consideration of late abstract acceptance may be given to those attending the ISTH)

Finally, you won't want to miss the conference dinner on Tuesday night at Sea World. Spend some time watching the polar bears or the marine life cruising around Shark Bay or perhaps the flume ride and rollercoaster will tempt you and don't forget the kids are welcome.

Emma Perrin

A TRIBUTE TO JOHN LLOYD

The First Adelaide Haemostasis and Thrombosis Symposium. The National Wine Centre, Adelaide June 15, 2007

On Friday June 12, I was fortunate to attend and speak at John Lloyd's farewell. The function was organised by Elizabeth Duncan, Sue Rodgers, Anne Till, Simon McCrae and Ken Davis. There were several speakers on the day including Alison Street, John Rowell, Simon McRae, Ross Baker, and Alex Gallus. All speakers acknowledged John's contribution to haematology and specifically to haemophilia care but more importantly highlighted his wonderful attributes including, his generosity, friendship, mentorship, and commitment to his patients, students and colleagues.

All talks were interesting and reflected the speakers' interest. Perhaps most fascinating was Alison's presentation on the evolution of haemophilia care with a special focus on Australia. Alison took us through the long journey of haemophilia care spanning over a century of research and progress. During that period major changes were witnessed most notable the progress on the life expectancy of haemophiliacs from around 10 years in the 1800's and to a current figure between the high 60's and 70's. Back in 1840, blood transfusions were the only available therapy for patients. In 1965 cryoprecipitate was first introduced and this was rapidly followed by the introduction of intermediate purity factor VIII concentrate. In the 70's we witnessed the beginning of "support for demand" that enabled the planning of safe surgery on haemophiliacs. Around that time haemophilia care units started to spring in different states and progressively grew in sophistication to become truly comprehensive. Alison emphasised the role that John played in the setting of comprehensive haemophilia care in South Australia, and his laboratory interest in the one and two stage factor VIII assays as well as his contributions to the assay of Factor VIII inhibitor levels. Over the ensuing ten years, we saw increasing utilisation of Factor VIII concentrates as home based therapy. It was at this point that non-non-B hepatitis started to rear its ugly head. In those days we had no names for these other viruses. 1984 will always be remembered as a watershed year in the history of haemophilia. This was the year when HIV was first recognised in this population of patients. The introduction of assays for HTLV-3 antibodies identified a large number of infected haemophiliacs. In this context, it is of interest that the management of haemophilia in Adelaide where there was heavy reliance on cryoprecipitate and far less Factor VIII concentrate resulted in far less HIV infection in this population of patients. The HIV epidemic was a major blow to all concerned. It had a major impact on life expectancy of haemophiliacs dropping from the high 60's to the 40's with it we witnessed premature death of a large number of patients. On the positive side it helped

enforce tight regulatory measures in the treatment of blood products including heat and super heat treatment for the prevention of hepatitis C infections.

Another milestone progress occurred in the 90's with the introduction of prophylaxis program to convert the haemophilia phenotype from severe to mild-moderate. That decade also saw a focussed interest in inhibitor suppression programs. By mid'90s we saw the progressive introduction of recombinant factor VIII, and from that day onwards and for the first time, factor VIII consumption in Australia matched other leading countries. Australia can now boast a service for haemophiliacs that is the envy of many other countries and that is driven by demand and not supply.

Alison acknowledged the role played by the State and Federal Governments and learned colleges and societies in facilitating the improvement in haemophilia care in all our States. The Governments played an important role in introducing centralised haemophilia care centres. By the nature of their work, a strong working relation was forged between the various centres, leading to the formation of a board of Directors that John chaired. In this role John played a key part as an enthusiastic senior statesman overseeing the transition of the advisory board to a national blood authority sponsored haemophilia centre Directors'.

In her closing remarks Alison reminded us of how lucky we are in this country with 75% of haemophilic in this world undiagnosed. This was a poignant reminder that the world needs to work together to provide quality care to the unfortunate few that suffer from this terrible

predicament. Australia by virtue of its standing and the progress it has achieved has a critical role to play in helping many of our less fortunate Asian neighbours.

The scientific program was very much appreciated by all. It was a wonderful tribute to John's medical and scientific contribution and the high regards he commands from his peers.

The celebrations continued in the evening with a dinner attended by more than 150 people. The function was held in the National Wine Centre, a delightfully elegant venue. It was wonderful to see so many people; friends, colleagues and patients' of John. Ken Davis presided over the events and took us through John's life and achievements. It was somewhat styled along "John Lloyd; this is your life". Looking around it was clear that all the attendees were enjoying the proceedings, particularly John who seemed very relaxed and happy. It was both entertaining and extremely well done. It certainly made up for missing a great win by Hawthorn over Carlton.

Marking John's retirement with the first Adelaide Haemostasis and Thrombosis Symposium was a great idea. It will be even better to name the symposium after John and to have this as an annual event. It is a great way to get together with colleagues and friends, and will serve to maintain John's achievements and contributions in our minds. The timing of the event mid-year is also great; it is a lovely time of the year in Adelaide and will allow us all to replenish our stocks of wine.

Hatem Salem



Pictured from left Bik To, Alison Street, John Lloyd and John Rowell

NEW & EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES GROUP REPORT

The highlight of the 2007 haemostasis calendar will undoubtedly be the 3rd ASTH Scientific Workshop to be held on the Gold Coast, Queensland. Again, this event will be held in conjunction with, and the day before the 9th Joint Scientific Meeting of the HSAZ, ANZBT and ASTH (HAA) on Saturday 13th October at the Centre for Medicine and Oral Health Lecture Theatre, Griffith University, Gold Coast.

The provisional program of speakers and talks, registration form and tax invoice have been included in this edition of the ASTH newsletter. They are also available from Vicky Mrowinski at the ASTH office (asth@bigpond.com.au) and the newly redesigned ASTH website (<http://www.asth.org.au>). Please note that the Workshop registration fee for non-members of the ASTH is more expensive than the combined ASTH membership fee and ASTH member Workshop registration fee. If you are not a member of the ASTH, then it is worth joining the ASTH as a member if you are attending the Workshop.

As well as local Australasian speakers, we will have the privilege of welcoming Dr Ian Mackie, Reader in Thrombosis and Haemostasis at University College London to present several case study presentations related to laboratory haemostasis. Dr Mackie is one of the invited international speakers for the HAA meeting held 14th - 17th October and we will welcome his expertise at both the Workshop and HAA meeting. We have also arranged to finish the day with a Sundowner so that everyone can wind down after an invigorating day of haemostasis and interact with colleagues over a beverage or two. The Sundowner has been kindly sponsored by Siemens Medical Solutions Diagnostics.

I would like to acknowledge the following for their kind sponsorship of the Workshop; Immuno, Siemens Medical Solutions Diagnostics, Medtel, Dade Behring and Sapphire Bioscience.

For further information or queries about the ASTH Scientific Workshop on the Gold Coast please contact Vicky Mrowinski [(+61 3) 9886 9208, asth@bigpond.com.au], Murray Adams [(+61 3) 6324 5483, Murray.Adams@utas.edu.au] or Emma Perrin [(+61 7) 3240 2053, Emma_Perrin@health.qld.gov.au].

Murray Adams

SECRETARIAT NEWS

My first 6 months with ASTH have been busy, to say the least. I have learnt a great deal about the Society and the field in general, and have spent the majority of my time finalizing the design and content of the new ASTH website. Very soon (if you haven't already), you will receive an email with your username and password to enter the members only area of the site. This area gives you access to minutes and reports from the Annual General Meeting, and a member search function, where you can search for other ASTH members based on skills, interests, and memberships. The member's area also has a discussion forum, where you are free to discuss cases and other issues with your colleagues. The forum has been organised into categories, including ASTH announcements, Upcoming Events, Case Studies, and Member Exchange. You are able to subscribe to any of the forum topics in order to receive emails whenever

someone has posted something new, in order to keep up to date without having to always check back.

We hope that the new ASTH website grows over time and becomes a useful resource for you. If you have any ideas, articles or information for the site, please do not hesitate the ASTH office (asth@bigpond.com or + 61 3 9886 9208).

On another note, renewal notices for the 2007 - 2008 financial year will be distributed shortly. Please watch out for this notice via email soon.

Finally, a reminder that preparations for the ASTH Scientific Workshop, held the day before HAA2007 on the sunny Gold Coast is well underway. Registration is now open, and the preliminary program and registration form were sent via email in early May. Additional forms can be obtained on the website once it is launched, or by contacting the ASTH office.

Vicky Mrowinski

UPCOMING MEETINGS IN 2007

MEETING

XXIth Congress of the International Society on Thrombosis and Haemostasis

WHERE/DATES

Geneva
6-12 July 2007

CONTACT

www.isth2007.com/

South Pacific Congress

(New Zealand Institute of Medical Laboratory Science (Inc), Australian Institute of Medical Science & New Zealand Cytology Society)

Auckland
21-24 August 2007

www.aims.org.au

British Society for Haemostasis and Thrombosis Annual Meeting

Bath
26-28 September 2007

www.bsht.bham.ac.uk

ASTH Scientific Workshop

Gold Coast
13 October 2007

m.adams@curtin.edu.au
emma_perrin@health.qld.gov.au

HAA2007

9th HSAZ/ANZBT/ASTH Annual Scientific Meeting

Gold Coast
14-17 October 2007

www.fcconventions.com.au/HAA2007/
Abstract submission closes July 2007

4th International Conference on Thrombosis and Hemostasis Issues in Cancer

Bergamo, Italy
26-28 October 2007

info@bergamoconference.com

The American Society of Haematology 49th Annual Meeting

Atlanta
8-11 December 2007

www.hematology.org