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SOCIETY FOR FREE RADICAL  
RESEARCH  
(Australasia)



NEWSLETTER January, 2002

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The Executive would like to thank all those who have contributed to this first issue of the Newsletter for 2002. Special mention should be made to the efforts of the out-going President Tony Kettle: we thank him for contributing his time and effort over the last two years. The Executive will continue to keep members informed of recent and up-coming events in Australasia and elsewhere around the globe via the 2002 "Diary". Please feel free to submit relevant articles to the Secretary if you wish the information to be made available to the members of SFRR(A). A membership form for 2002-2003 is attached to the back of this Newsletter. Membership fees are due by July 31, 2002. Attendees of the recent SFRR(A) Meeting in Sydney that renewed membership are exempt from this subscription deadline. **We also urge eligible members of SFRR(A) to apply for one of the two travel awards (valued at A\$2000) to attend the biennial Meeting of SFRR to be held in PARIS, July, 2002 (details in this Newsletter).**

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**Final word from the out-going President:*****Dear Fellow Radicals***

It is a pleasure to report on the fortunes of our society. Our financial position is strong and this is likely to be the case in the long term. Also, the attendance at this year's conference indicates there is still much interest throughout Australasia in free radicals and reactive oxidants. However, we must continue to strive to increase our membership and attract more people with diverse interests into the society. Our annual conferences are the main focus of our grouping. For these to remain vital we need new people with the energy to organize meetings and to ensure that novel and exciting developments in related areas of research are promoted at our meetings. I strongly believe that nutritional aspects of free radical biology is an area where there is potential for much scientific growth. We should try to foster collaborations between nutritionists and scientists with a strong background in free radical biology. It was disappointing to see a lack of nutritional papers at this years meeting.

Our schedule for conferences over the next few years looks good, with likely locations being Wollongong (2002), Japan (2002) and Queenstown (NZ 2004).

I would like to extend my thanks to Roland Stocker, Mike Davies, Paul Witting, and Nick Hunt for organizing this years meeting. They have put in a commendable effort and all aspects of the conference from programming, to venue and accommodation were excellent. Roland's original idea of running a joint conference with SFRR (Japan) has proved to be good one and let's hope that we can continue meeting with our Japanese colleagues on a regular basis.

Overall, some 170 delegates attended and contributed to the success of the meeting. A special mention should be made to all the sponsors however, I would particularly like to acknowledge the financial support of the major sponsors Chugai Pharmaceutical Co. Ltd, Unilever, The Linus Pauling Institute and Shimadzu, together with a host of other commercial sponsors.

Finally, I would like to thank our membership for giving me the privilege of being President of our society. It is clear that Paul Witting and Des Richardson do most of the real work for the society and I thank them very much for their continued efforts. Particularly, Paul who has worked extremely hard for the society for number of years. My one recommendation on leaving office is that where possible the President and the secretariat are located in the same city. At times I have felt a bit isolated from the workers across the ditch. I wish Mike Davies all the best for his term as President.

Tony Kettle

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**A few words from the hot seat ....**

Firstly, I'd like to express my gratitude to Tony Kettle and the rest of the executive for all their hard work over the last two years, and for making my induction into the higher echelons of SFRR(A) a relatively

painless experience. Under Tony's guidance the Society has gone from strength to strength and hopefully this will continue over the next few years.

At the AGM of the Society which was held on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> December during our recent, very successful, joint meeting with SFRR(Japan) in Sydney, a number of important decisions were taken which will hopefully bring additional benefits to the Society and its members over the next few years.

The first of these decisions was a unanimous vote of the members present to accept an offer from the Sydney Free Radical Group (SFRG) to merge with them to create a new incorporated organisation which will be called SFRR(A) Inc. To the outside world, little difference will be apparent, but internally it will make life a lot easier. The merged organisation, which is still subject to regulatory approval by the Office of Fair Trading NSW, will be an incorporated body with public liability insurance and a written constitution. The written constitution will be of considerable benefit to the Society and this is something that the international umbrella organisation - SFRR(International) - has been pushing us to adopt for a couple of years. The public liability insurance will be of immense benefit to future conference organisers, as they will no longer be personally liable for financial losses should they be sued, or some other disaster befall them. One only has to look at previous conference organisers to see what not having this insurance has done to them! In addition, the merger will be beneficial to SFRR(A) and its members, as the new organisation will have much larger financial reserves, due to the considerable sum of money which the SFRG is bringing to the merged body as a result of the careful financial management of SFRG's assets carried out by Peter Southwell-Keely over the last few years. These reserves should allow the Society greater flexibility in the organisation of meetings, and the promotion of the field, as well as allowing us to be more generous in giving out travel awards. Exact details will be worked out once we have jumped through all the regulatory hoops.

The second major decision taken at the AGM, which coincided with the 10<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Society, was to instigate a "Distinguished Service" award to be given to someone who has contributed in a major way to the development of the Society. As many of you will know there are already a number of people who admirably fit this description, but after much thought by the selection panel, the inaugural award, which consisted of a inscribed plaque, was given to A.Prof. Jan Gebicki of Macquarie University. Jan was the "founding father" and driving force behind the setting up of SFRR(A) and also served as its first president, so we owe him a great deal in getting us going.

It is intended that this Distinguished Service award become a regular event, and we would welcome any suggestions from the membership as to the names of further deserving cases. Please send any nominations to the current executive for consideration by the judging panel, who consist of all the ex-presidents of the Society.

Finally I'd like to bring to your attention decisions of the AGM with regard to future meetings. In 2002, A.Prof. Roger Truscott has volunteered to organise a meeting at the University of Wollongong, In 2003, we plan to have a return joint meeting with SFRR(Japan) somewhere in Japan (possibly Kyoto), and in 2004, Tony Kettle has volunteered to organise a joint meeting between SFRR(A) and the Mammalian Peroxidase group somewhere in the NZ south island. Further details will appear in future newsletters.

Michael Davies

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Society for Free Radical Research (Australasia) [SFRR(A)]  
*Minutes from the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting (Sunday December 2, 2001)*

*Meeting declared open 4:50 p.m.*

1. **Apologies:** Trevor Mori

2. **Business arising from the minutes of the previous meeting:**

- Tony Kettle indicated to those present that the minutes from the previous AGM were circulated in the March 2001 issue of the Newsletter. No issues were raised and the minutes were accepted as a true account of the meeting.

3. **Presidents Report:**

- The retiring President of SFRR(A) Tony Kettle addressed the members present and thanked all the membership for their contribution over the last two years. In particular he highlighted the efforts of the Secretary Paul Witting in dealing with a variety of issues and he also thanked Des Richardson for stepping into the Treasurer's role after the retirement of Michael Murphy. He also welcomed the opportunity to play a role in the development of SFRR(A) and wished the incoming President Mike Davies every success in his role as the next President of SFRR(A).

- Tony also praised the organising committee for provision of an excellent Joint Meeting of SFRR(A) and SFRR(Japan) (Nov 30-Dec 4, 2001) stating that he always enjoyed these regional meetings and committed to contributing to future meetings of SFRR(A)/SFRR(A+J). He acknowledged SFRR(A) had reached a milestone as this was the 10<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of SFRR(A).

4. **Treasurer's report:**

- Des Richardson indicated that the SFRR(A) had sustained a positive financial position during the last 12 months. Refer to the Financial Statement included as an appendix to this meeting report.

- The recent campaign to increase membership initiated by Tony, combined with the recent meeting, had increased membership subscriptions. A list of paid members (~50) including full-fee paying and students was included in support for this claim.

- He raised the issue that membership fees should be sent as Australian currency as a number of cheques that were made out in NZ\$ cost the society Aus\$7 to convert/deposit. A discussion developed on this issue and the consensus was that all membership fees should be made out to the current Treasurer in Australian dollars. Tony Kettle indicated that in the past the NZ component of the membership had collected membership fees and then submitted list together with a single cheque to the Treasurer on an annual basis.

- Steven Gieseg supported the idea of a single collection site in NZ and suggested that this approach had previously been adopted by the New Zealand contingent and should overcome any problems with the exchange of moneys. Tony Kettle offered to collect the NZ membership subscriptions in the future and send a single cheque to the Treasurer.

5. **Secretary's report:**

- Paul Witting reported that he had managed to maintain contact with the body of members via e-mail throughout the year. E-mail was the preferred medium to disseminate information and the Society has now ceased to offer hardcopies of the Newsletter and or other correspondence to members. Distribution of hardcopy correspondence was a financial burden taken on by The Heart Research Institute and this form of financial support was acknowledged by the Secretary.

#### 6. **Proposed merger of Sydney Free Radical Group Inc. (SFRG) with SFRR(A):**

Tony Kettle introduced the following proposal:

It is proposed that the membership of SFRR(A) pass the following motion...

*That the membership of SFRR(A) accept the formal request from the membership of the Sydney Free Radical Group (SFRG) Inc. that the latter organisation be renamed the Society for Free Radical Research (Australasia) Inc. (henceforth abbreviated as SFRR(A) Inc.) and automatically accept that all of our members into the new incorporated joint society. The resulting body will be a not-for-profit, tax exempt incorporated association.*

*This merger is subject to the approval of the Office of Fair Trading (Consumer Affairs) of NSW.*

That the objects and Rules of the new Society be:-

**To promote the Scientific Study in Australia and New Zealand of the chemical entities known as free radicals and that of related redox processes.**

It is also proposed that:-

- a) the subscriptions of the new Society due will be those currently in force in SFRR(A)
- b) the office bearers of the new organisation, to be known as the Society for Free Radical Research (Australasia) Inc., (i.e., President, President-Elect, Treasurer and Secretary), with the Secretary in addition becoming the Public Officer of the resulting incorporated body.
- c) The funds currently held by both organisations to be transferred to the new body Society for Free Radical Research (Australasia) Inc.

- The motion was opened to the floor. Paul Witting asked about the legalities of the merger and whether the office bearers were required to commit to more work than had been the normal in the past. Several members intimated that there was a legal requirement to produce Minutes for annual meetings and maintain accounts sufficiently for internal/external audit. These documents may need to be distributed to the Office of Fair Trading however, the amount of extra work was not significant and that in general these duties were part of the portfolio of the office bearers.

- Roger Dean outlined the advantages of this move especially regarding public liability. For example, should the organisers of an SFRR(A) meeting fail to meet financial outlays the burden will not fall on the

organising committee as the incorporated body would be insured for such a public liability. Ian Dawes also commented on the issue of liability and requirements of an incorporated body.

- A question was raised whether we should initiate a regional Constitution. Indeed Roland Stocker pointed out that SFRR(International) had requested that the regional branches of SFRR provide a constitution. Mike Davies indicated that the Australasia regional branch of SFRR could adopt the parent SFRR(I) constitution and this was accepted by all present.
- Having raised the issue Tony Kettle then forwarded a formal proposal to pass the motion. This was seconded by Kevin Croft and put to a vote. The resulting decision was a unanimous acceptance of the motion.

#### 7. **Subscription to Redox Report:**

- Nick Hunt (an editor of the journal Redox Report) took the floor and reported that since the adoption of Redox Report as the Official Journal of SFRR(A) there had been only one added subscription from this region (above the three existing subscriptions, which were all from NZ). Although the Publishers of the Journal wished to continue the association, clearly the support from the Society needed to be addressed. Nick Hunt indicated that the Publishers (Maney) current rate of subscription to Redox Report was US\$86 and that this entitled the subscriber to both on-line and hardcopy versions of the journal.

Kevin Croft asked Nick Hunt what the current impact factor for the journal was presently (~1.6). Steven Gieseg/Ian Dawes questioned the cost of subscription relative to other journals of similar quality. Peter South-well Keely asked whether on-line subscription alone was possible at a reduced cost. Nick Hunt explained that he had passed this request to the Publisher. In response Maney was prepared to offer a three year deal for SFRR(A) members as outlined below:

Year 1 US\$24, Year 2 US\$56, Year 3 US 86\$, where year 1 and 2 allowed the subscriber to on-line access to the journal only, with hard copy + on-line services being made available in the third year.

- Tony Kettle then initiated a discussion on the value of supporting the Journal as the Official Publication for SFRR(A). He indicated that he felt that there were many advantages of the association and suggested that the publication of the mini-papers based on work presented at the regular SFRR(A) meetings as just one of the many positive aspects of the relationship. At a personal level he indicated that a review article he had submitted for publication was fast becoming one of his most-cited publications. However, he noted some concern that the inclusion of subscription fees with membership fees should be limited to members paying full fees as post-docs and students may find it difficult to justify the added costs.

Christine Winterbourn voiced similar concerns and broadened the argument to suggest that the added costs would be a deterrent to the membership and that this would likely result in a decreased in members for the Society. Bob Anderson and Steven Geiseg supported this argument citing that membership of SFRR(Europe) had declined dramatically after that branch had adopted a similar arrangement with a combined membership fee and subscription to the journal Free Radical Research.

In response Roland Stocker acknowledged this possibility however, he pointed out that membership of SFRR(Europe) had rebounded in recent times. Margaret Vissers openly opposed a merger of the fee for subscription to Redox Report and the annual fee for SFRR(A) membership indicating that she would no longer support the Society if such a merger were to go ahead.

Jan Gebicki suggested that SFRR(J) be included in this issue of merging the cost of subscription to Redox Report with membership fees. Roland Stocker indicated that the Japanese had been approached on this issue and that they had declined to invite Redox Report to be the Official Journal for their regional branch of SFRR.

Roland Stocker indicated that given the apparent resistance to the merger it was likely that Nick Hunt would not be prepared to stay on as an Editor of the journal and that support for Redox Report to remain as the Official journal of SFRR(A) would be thrown into question.

Tony Kettle finally put the issue to a vote suggesting that the membership adopt an increased fee regimen to include subscription to Redox Report, seconded by Roland Stocker. Count:- 8 in favour, 9 against. Motion was overturned. In view of the fact that the inclusion of subscription to Redox Report in the membership fee for SFRR(A) had been discussed now on several occasions it was decided that this issue should not be tabled at the next AGM.

#### 8. **Election of Office Bearers:**

- President Elect: Nominee Ian Dawes (nominated by Tony Kettle, seconded by Mike Davies). Result:- Elected unopposed.
- Treasurer: Nominee Des Richardson (nominated by Mike Davies, seconded by Tony Kettle). Result:- Elected unopposed.
- Secretary: Nominee Paul Witting (nominated by Mike Davies, seconded by Tony Kettle). Result:- Elected unopposed.

#### 9. **Next Annual Meetings:**

- **2002** – Roger Truscott volunteered to organise a SFRR(A) meeting to be held in Wollongong, likely at the University Campus. He asked that any volunteers to assist in the organisation should contact him at the Department of Chemistry, University of Wollongong.
- **2003** - Option for a second joint meeting of SFRR(A) + SFRR(J).

Roland Stocker indicated to those present that this issue had been raised with Toshi Yoshikawa (current President SFRR(J)). The general feeling was that the joint meeting had been a great success (notwithstanding Steven Gieseg's comments to the contrary). The Japanese delegates had contributed significantly to the meeting at both the level of presentation and in discussions after presentations, while also bringing in considerable sponsorship income. There was also the feeling that the travel and time difference between nations of the Southern Asia-Pacific region was an advantage compared with travel to the USA and Europe.

The result was that the Japanese were enthusiastic about organising and supporting a second meeting (even as early as 2002), and that a tentative date was set for 2003 with Kyoto the likely city. Such a schedule would enable these meetings to be held on alternate years between the International meetings set for 2002 and 2004.

- The issue was tabled to the floor and a discussion opened. A major factor to consider was the cost to SFRR(A) members. Kevin Croft raised the issue of costs directly related to student attendance at the proposed meeting. In response Roland Stocker indicated the possibility that SFRR(J) would offer financial

support for travel although no details had been formalised. Jan Gebicki formally supported a second joint meeting and as a result of further discussion it was agreed that the SFRR(A) accept an offer from SFRR(J) to hold a second joint meeting in Japan in 2003.

**2004** – Tony Kettle offered to organise a combined Peroxidase/SFRR(A) meeting in New Zealand. Kevin Croft also initiated a discussion on the possibility that a meeting be held in Western Australia and that he would be interested in organising this meeting. Further details of these proposed meetings were not discussed, though it was generally agreed that either approach was suitable for a 2004 meeting.

#### 10. **Prize for Distinguished Service:**

- Tony Kettle opened a discussion on the idea of an award for “distinguished Service” to SFRR(A). He noted that in discussions with Mike Davies and Roland Stocker this issue had been raised, particularly in light of the award ceremony that the OxSoc have initiated. Tony suggested that as this was the 10<sup>th</sup> meeting of SFRR(A) it was an appropriate time to initiate an award that would highlight an individuals contribution to the Society. The motion that the SFRR(A) adopt a “distinguished Service” award was put forward by Mike Davies and seconded by Roland Stocker and was passed unanimously. In the future, nominations for this award will be welcomed from the membership, with the decision on the recipient being made by a committee consisting of the current and past presidents of SFRR(A).

#### 11. **General Business:**

- Roland Stocker, and others at the meeting, formally indicated their support for Nick Hunt and wished to acknowledge his effort in single handedly initiating acceptance of Redox Report as the journal for SFRR(A). Roland also pointed out Nick’s tireless efforts as an editor of Redox Report and voiced his disappointment at the decision to exclude subscription from the annual SFRR(A) membership fee.
- Mike Davies indicated his intention as the incoming President of the SFRR(A) to commit his efforts to the further development of the Society and work on providing a Constitution for the newly formed SFRR(A) *Inc.* Roger Dean/Roland Stocker pointed out that there was already a Constitution aligned with SFRG and that this together with that of the parent International Society should be used as a starting point for the development of a Constitution for SFRR(A) *Inc.*
- Christine Winterbourn formally thanked Tony Kettle for his contribution as President over the last two years, a sentiment echoed by all present.

*Meeting was closed at 6:10 p.m. and attendees dispersed to attend the Conference Dinner.*

### ***Treasurer’s Report for the SFRR (Australasia)***

***Summary of Accounts as of Tues 8th January, 2002***

**Opening Balance:** (5<sup>th</sup> March 2001) \$15,787.89 AUS

#### **Income:**

Account Deposit: 0.10

Interest: \$23.37

Subscriptions to 8<sup>th</sup> January 2002: \$1896.81

**Expenditure:**

Account Fees and Taxes: \$17.22 + \$6.91 + \$6.90: \$31.03

Cheque dishonoured 28<sup>th</sup> November: \$30 + \$10 bank fee: \$40

**Current Balance** (8<sup>th</sup> Jan,2002) = **\$17,637.14 AUS**

**Comments:**

12. Bank fees of \$7 AUS were charged for each subscription that was in New Zealand dollars (not shown in expenditure above). **To prevent this from occurring in 2002, all NZ members should send their membership fees of NZ \$35 (full member) or NZ \$17 (student member) to Dr. Tony Kettle** (Free Radical Research Group, Department of Pathology, Christchurch School of Medicine, P.O. Box 4345 Christchurch, New Zealand), who will then organise a collective transfer to SFRR(A) that will prevent multiple charges. All Australian members should continue to send their membership of AU \$30 (full member) or AU \$15 (student member) to Dr. Des Richardson (see address below). Please only send cheques or money orders, not cash.

2. The proposed merger of SFRR(A) and the Sydney Free Radical Group Inc (subject to ratification by the Office of Fair Trading) will result in an additional sum of ca. **\$32 k** being added to the current balance.

3. Dues for 2000-2002 will soon need to be paid to SFRR International.

4. All members are encouraged to pay their 2002 subscriptions.

Des R. Richardson

Treasurer, SFRR Australasia

The Heart Research Institute

145 Missenden Rd, Sydney

New South Wales, Australia 2050

***IMPRESSIONS OF THE SFRR(A+J) CONFERENCE, SYDNEY 2000***

*Sarah Baird* (Department of Zoology, University of Canterbury)

There was not enough beer at the opening function. More had to be quickly located and brought in. Scientists are obviously not the sophisticated winos we might have thought! This was the only ripple on the calm, well-organised waters of the SFRR Australasian and Japanese conference that I detected, and I would never have known about it if I had not been told by one of the organising committee. Overall, the quality of the science presented at the conference was very high indeed. The beauty of free radical science is that it applies to many more general areas, so conferences tend to have topics presented from a diverse range of backgrounds. This adds to the interest, since a participant not only learns more about their own area of expertise, but also broadens their horizons, bringing a different perspective to their own topics. I came away buzzing with ideas. Many of the speakers amazed me with their incredible depth of knowledge about their areas. This was especially the case for the keynote speakers, who, with a little more time to speak, provided excellent introductions to each session. The material was presented in a range of effective styles; it was noteworthy how enthusiasm can make even the most unpromising of topics engaging.

I felt the concept of the combined conference with the Japanese branch of the society worked very well. It was a great opportunity to expand our horizons and see first hand what some of the rest of the world are doing, instead of just being locked in our little labs complaining about funding. It is interesting, though perhaps not surprising, that cultural differences can extend into the way science is practised. The research, like ours, was of a high standard, but there was more of an overall emphasis on clinical approaches, using drugs and animal models, perhaps at the forefront of a worldwide trend. The presentations themselves tended to employ different colours, and the posters were of a glossier finish. I found these speakers a little difficult to understand for the first couple of days, getting more out of their talks towards the end of the conference.

I was impressed by the smooth fashion in which the sessions were managed. There was not a hitch in the very efficient way all the equipment available was run, in spite of the fact that some speakers found the technological heights nerve-wracking. The chairpersons did a good job of introducing the speakers and running the question times, though I did feel that if the speakers had been made to keep to time, either through their own efforts or those of the chairpersons, the experience would have been much enhanced, both for the listeners and the speakers to follow.

This conference had a good balance of scientific and social events. The transformation of the poster sessions into an at times hilarious mixture of the two was really quite inspired, although perhaps not intentional. Weariness after a whole day of concentration combined with a short supply of food and a plentiful supply of drink to ensure a degree of camaraderie on everyone's part which meant the sessions were not only very informative (the standard of the posters, science and presentation-wise, was very high) but very friendly as well. I, for one, found myself asking more questions than I might otherwise have done.

The conference dinner was quite a highlight. A beautiful venue by the harbour had been chosen, and the food, service, and so on were excellent. The entertainment was also of a high standard. We were warmed up by an accomplished group of singers vaguely resembling the Comedian Harmonists. Afterwards, different 'cultural groups' performed, such as Japanese Karaoke performers, Dutch dancers and Tony Kettle (representing New Zealand). Judging by the noise we created, it seemed everyone else enjoyed themselves too. Certainly it was obvious why, during the presentations, we only had one person speaking at once!

Overall, I enjoyed the conference and got a lot out of it, in many different ways. I would like to congratulate the organisers, as well as the participants, for what was surely a work of art as well as science.

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### **Conference Report:** Bio-iron 2001 World Congress on Iron Metabolism

Combined Meetings of – 8<sup>th</sup> Conference of The International Association for the Study of Disorders of Iron Metabolism; 15<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Proteins of Iron Metabolism.  
Cairns, Queensland, Australia. 18<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2001

After leaving Sydney early in the morning and arriving in Cairns at midday, the first thing noticeable was the warm winter's day. The weather was perfect for the whole period of the conference with a pleasant, sunny 24° - 27°C daytime temperature and nice warm evenings. The location of the conference was at the 5 star Cairns International Hotel. It was an impressive hotel, boasting a large ball room in which half of the seminar sessions were held. The other half of the seminar sessions were parallel in another smaller room. The organisers appeared to try and hold the seminars they thought would hold the most interest in the ball room, but there were a few seminars in the other room that packed the room out and had people crowding around the doors to listen. The seminars ranged from disorders in iron (Fe) metabolism, to Fe chelators used in experimental work or clinical trials, to Fe in the disease state. Some of the notable names that were there were Erica Baker, Matthais Hentze, Lukas Kuhn, Prem Ponka, Des Richardson and Tracey Ruoault.

The days were divided so that related topics were discussed on the same day, with Sunday focussing on Fe transport, with the late afternoon sessions and Monday morning focussing on Fe in disease and toxicity of Fe. Tuesday was the excursion day with the option of The Great Barrier Reef or a train ride up into the mountains and a sky rail down through the rain forest. Needless to say, with the overseas visitors, the Great Barrier Reef excursion was the favourite. In fact 2 boats had to be hired to get everyone out to the reef. Wednesday's seminars focussed on familial haemochromatosis with a special conference dinner held at Tjapukai, an Aboriginal Cultural Park. Besides dinner, the guests were treated to Aboriginal dancing and folklore. The final day's seminars were miscellaneous seminars on non-familial haemochromatosis, and Fe metabolism. In the business meeting held on the Thursday, the venue for the 2005 Bioiron conference was decided on. The choice was between Prague in the Czech Republic, a university campus in Brussels and a resort in Japan. Prague came out the definite favourite. The next Bioiron conference was decided in the 1999 Bioiron conference and will be held in Washington 2003. All in all, it was a good experience and there was plenty of informative seminars and posters.

Ralph Watts (Iron Group, The Heart Research Institute, Sydney)

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**Conference Report:** November 2001, Free Radicals and Oxidative Stress in Plants, NICE, France

A conference on the Oxygen, Free Radicals and Oxidative Stress in Plants was held under the auspices of the S.F.F.R. (European Region) in Nice from 19th - 21st November, 2001. Proceedings were held in the Acropolis Convention Centre and the prime organizers were Alain Puppò from the University of Nice and George Hendry from Ross Science, U.K. Helene Le Bris who handled registrations amongst other conference tasks, broke her ankle several weeks before the actual conference, but gamely continued to deal with organizing the conference from a wheelchair.

There were 247 registered participants from 26 countries (including 3 from Australia). The events of 11th September reduced the number of those originally expected from the U.S. There were 45 oral presentations and 112 posters. Being smaller than many international conferences, it was relatively easy to find individual participants for informal discussions. The food was outstanding especially the 3 course lunches produced by the conference centre kitchen.

The usual conference dinner was replaced by an end of conference lunch in one of the best known restaurants in Nice overlooking the Mediterranean. Lunch was followed by a tour of Monaco, fortunately by bus, leaving participants to view the scenery rather than having to concentrate on negotiating the narrow and twisting roads (as I had been doing for the previous 10 days in France).

At the start of the conference, the point was made that unlike animals, plants cannot escape from oxidative stress by moving away, and that therefore, they needed to have strong antioxidant defence systems.

Oral sessions included the following topics: Plant Antioxidants, Pollutants and Oxidative Damage, ROS in Plant-Microbe Interactions, Oxygen and Natural Environmental Stress, and ROS in Cell Metabolism and Development. Whereas in mammalian systems, we tend to link ROS with oxidative damage, the session on ROS in cell metabolism and development showed the useful side of ROS, particularly in signal transduction.

Here are a few excerpts from the oral presentations. The role of Lipoic acid found in the stroma of wheat leaves, and its interactions with ascorbate and glutathione in ROS detoxification were discussed. Lipoic acid is unusual because it possesses antioxidant properties in both its oxidized and reduced forms.

Ozone damage was a 'hot topic'. Whereas SFRR members from the southern hemisphere are conscious of a 'hole' in the ozone layer in their region, members in Europe are more concerned with the actual damage

caused by ozone as an atmospheric pollutant. This conference showed that chronic exposure of trees to ozone causes a decrease in photosynthesis and an increase in dark respiration. A link was found between ozone and decreased salicylic acid. Also, it was shown that in birch trees, a blockage of the ethylene signal delayed ozone damage.

The role of NO in plant defence systems was discussed using Arabidopsis as a model. NO shuts down Cytochrome *c* and activates the alternative respiration pathway through induction of AOX genes. Two presentations (one paper and one poster) discussed the use of Arabidopsis mutants to examine the regulation of ascorbate peroxidase. Another poster examined the paradox of the presence of ascorbate and ascorbate oxidase within the same compartment (apoplast) of tobacco leaves and concluded that production of each is regulated by diurnal rhythms.

All in all, it was a very enthusiastic and interesting conference.

Dr. Adrienne Grant, Research Fellow,  
Marine Symbiosis Laboratory,  
University of Sydney

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### **SFRR Conference Travel Grants**

- Two Travel Grants will be provided, on a competitive basis, of A\$2000 each for attendance at the International SFRR meeting to be held in Paris, July 2001. Deadline for submissions is 5 p.m. February 14, 2001.
  - All financial members of SFRR (A) ( 35 years of age) are eligible to apply and we welcome applications from Australia and New Zealand. A committee will review all applications, with these being judged on merit relative to opportunity. The decision of the committee will be final and no correspondence will be entered into with any individual applicant. The winners will be notified in person, and transfer of the Travel Award is dependent on proof of acceptance for the abstract submitted.
  - To apply submit a copy of the abstract for the conference, a full Curriculum Vitae including a complete list of publications, and two reprints to: Dr Paul K. Witting, Secretary, Society For Free Radical Research (Australasia) Inc., C/- The Heart Research Institute, 145 Missenden Road, Camperdown, Sydney, NSW 2050, AUSTRALIA
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### **For Your Diary - 2002 -**

- *February 10-15.* Gordon Research Conference on oxygen radicals in biology. Ventura, CA, USA. The 12<sup>th</sup> Gordon Conference on the topic of free radicals in biology and medicine. Contact. Christine Winterbourn ([christine.winterbourn@chmeds.ac.nz](mailto:christine.winterbourn@chmeds.ac.nz)) or Ann Aust (aust@cc.usu.edu) or go to the webpage: [www.grc.uri.edu](http://www.grc.uri.edu)
- *March 6-9* Oxygen Club of California 2002 World Congress, IXth Annual Meeting, Fess Parker's Doubletree Resort, Santa Barbara, California. Contact. Dr Enrique Cadenas, Department of Molecular

Pharmacology & Toxicology, School of Pharmacy, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA 90089-9121. Tel. 1-323-442-1418, Fax. 1-323-224-7473, E-mail. [Cadenas@hsc.usc.edu](mailto:Cadenas@hsc.usc.edu)

- *July 7-11.* 7<sup>th</sup> International Symposia on Spin Trapping (Spin traps, nitroxides and nitric oxide), The Carolina Inn, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, USA. Contact: Ms Barbara Morse, Laboratory of Pharmacology and Chemistry, NIEHS/NIH, PO Box 12233, MD-F1-03, Research Triangle Park, NC 27709. Fax. 1-919-541-5737, E-mail. [Morse@niehs.nih.gov](mailto:Morse@niehs.nih.gov)

- *July 21-25.* Organic Free Radicals – EUCHEM 2002, Meeting of the Federation of European Chemical Societies (Perkin Division). Contact: Dr John F. Gibson, Royal Society of Chemistry, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1J 0BA UK Tel. 44-(0) 20-7437-8656, Fax. 44-(0) 20-7734-1227, E-mail. [Conferences@rsc.org](mailto:Conferences@rsc.org) or visit [www.rsc.org/lap/conf/EUCHEM.htm](http://www.rsc.org/lap/conf/EUCHEM.htm)

- *June 16-20.* Meeting of the International Nitric Oxide Society, Prague, Czech Republic: Second International Meeting on the biology, chemistry, and therapeutic applications of Nitric Oxide. Contact: Steven Gross, PhD-Department of Pharmacology, Cornell University Medical College, 1300 York Ave., Rm. LC-218, New Yprk, NY 10021. Tel. 1-2120746-6257, Fax. 1-212-746-8258, E-mail. [Ssgross@med.cornell.edu](mailto:Ssgross@med.cornell.edu) Abstract deadline: February 15.

- *July 13-15.* First International Meeting of the NHE-Club (“4 hydroxynonenal and related lipid peroxidation products”), Faculty of Natural Scienc, University of Salzburg, Austria. Contact: R. J. Schaur, Institute for Molecular Biology and Microbiology, University of Graz, Austria e-mail: [r\(udolf.schaur@kfunigraz.ac.at\)](mailto:r(udolf.schaur@kfunigraz.ac.at)).

- *July 17-21.* XIth Biennial Meeting of the International Society for Free Radical Research Paris, France Contact: Catherine Pasquier Tel. 33 01 44 85 62 11 Fax. 33 0144 85 62 07 E-mail [pasquier@bichat.inserm.fr](mailto:pasquier@bichat.inserm.fr)

- *September 8-11.* Second International Conference on Metal Toxicity and Carcinogenicity. National Institute for Occupational Health and Safety and Health, Morgantown, USA. Contact. Kianglin Shi, PhD, Tel. 1-304-285-6158, Fax. 1-304-285-5938, E-mail. [Xshi@cdc.gov](mailto:Xshi@cdc.gov)

- *November 20-24.* 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Oxygen Society. Marriott Rivercentre, San Antonio, TX, USA. Contact. The Oxygen Society at [info@oxygensociety.org](mailto:info@oxygensociety.org) or Tel. 1-925-472-5904.

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**Society for Free Radical Research (Australasia)**  
**2002 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL FORM: (Due date 31 July 2002)**

**Title:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Fax:** \_\_\_\_\_

**e-mail:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Research Interests** (short description for the 2000 membership directory):

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Annual Fees:**

[ ] Full Membership Aus\$30 / NZ\$35    [ ] Student Membership Aus\$15 / NZ\$17

Please tick the appropriate box above and send a cheque payable to "Society for Free Radical Research (Australasia)" in either Australian or New Zealand dollars to:

**Dr Des Richardson, Treasurer, SFRR (Australasia)**  
**The Heart Research Institute**  
**145 Missenden R'd**  
**Camperdown, NSW**  
**Australia**  
**2050**

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

(Student membership only - ask your supervisor to complete the declaration below)

*I confirm that the above applicant is at present a student under my supervision.*

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Institution:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

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