

**Australasian Mycological Society President's report**  
**Diana Leemon**  
**September 2014**

As my term as President comes to an end I am pleased with the direction and progress of the AMS over the last two years and feel that with a new President and council that momentum will continue with fresh ideas. I thank the current AMS council for their support, and especially thank John and Sandra who have both made my job easy by doing their jobs so efficiently and effectively. I would also like to thank Dee Carter for taking on the job of Webmaster and thankless task of Journal Editor. Dee has given hours of her precious time to re-organising and maintaining our website. The website is critical for communication with a membership spread thinly across two land masses. Over the last year I believe the activities of AMS have successfully promoted research and teaching in all areas of fungal biology, worked to raise the profile of mycology in the Australasian region and facilitated networking and collaboration among mycologists.

**Scientific meetings**

Another successful scientific meeting was held during April, this time in Brisbane on my "home turf" in the Ecosciences Precinct. The meeting was well supported with seven symposia, two plenaries with 32 different presentations on a wide range of mycological topics. The number of students attending and delivering polished presentations or posters augurs well for the future of mycology in Australia. Good scientific meetings don't just happen, I thank the organising committee for their work to ensure the success, with a special big thank-you John Dearnaley, the organising committee chair.

Planning is well underway for the 2015 AMS scientific meeting in Canberra next July. This meeting will be held jointly with The Australian Society for Microbiology. Watch the AMS website for details as they develop.

In August this year I attended the International Mycological Congress (IMC10) in Bangkok, Thailand. It was really great to catch up with so many mycologists, including students, from Australia and New Zealand. International Mycological Congresses provide an excellent opportunity to meet and network with mycologists from around the world and hear the latest exciting research findings on an amazing array of mycological topics. The newly elected President of the International Mycological Association (IMA), Keith Seifert has described International Mycological Congresses as the "the Olympics of the Mycological world", if you were there you would have to agree! I often think that we mycologists are becoming rare and endangered species, but attending IMC10 with 1,000 other enthusiastic scientists passionate about all things mycological, was heartening.....Mycology is alive and prospering.

A highlight of the congress for me was seeing Dr Sandra Abell-Davis receive the Daniel Mcalpine Medal; the young mycologist award for the Australasian region. This award is given to someone who has received their PhD in the last ten years and made a significant contribution to mycology through their research, mentoring and activities in the wider mycological community. AMS is fortunate to have benefited from Sandra's hard work and initiative over the years, especially as Treasurer.

Planning is underway for IMC11 which will be held in Puerto Rico in 2018. This might sound like a long way off, but it isn't really. Put it in your diary and start saving, you won't regret it.



**Sandra Abell-Davis at IMC10 with her students after receiving the Daniel Mcalpine Medal. L-R Claudia Paz; Mel Greenfield; Sandra; Susan Nuske; Kaylene Bransgrove.**

## **Website**

Dee Carter continues to manage our website. Dee has redesigned the website giving it an excellent makeover. It is central to our Australasian Mycological community, please be a regular visitor to it if you aren't already.

## **Journal**

The journal continues to be a stressor for AMS, despite going online for convenience. Support for the journal continues to be low with few manuscripts submitted, it will be difficult for AMS to continue the journal unless support increases.

## **AMS Small Competitive Grant**

This year AMS launched a small competitive grant. Currently the award is a modest \$2,000, however we believe this amount can still provide significant help in providing materials for a project. The inaugural award was won by Susan Nuske who will use the funds to buy equipment to support her research into the role of mycophagous mammals in the distribution and ecology of ectomycorrhizal fungi in the tropics. This award is open to all financial members of AMS, if you are interested please visit the website for further details and consider applying for 2015.

## **Student Chapter of AMS**

A pleasing outcome of IMC10 was the idea proposed by Susan Nuske to start a student chapter of AMS after meeting with students involved in the student chapter of the Mycological Society of America. If you are interested please contact Susan ([susan.nuske@my.jcu.edu.au](mailto:susan.nuske@my.jcu.edu.au)) or watch the website for developments in this area.

I welcome the new AMS council and am confident that under the adept leadership of John Dearnaley they will ensure that AMS continues to grow and serve the Mycological community of Australasia. I also look forward to continuing to be part of that community.

*Diana Leemon*

29<sup>th</sup> September 2014