Dear IRA members and friends,

It is a great pleasure to welcome you to the Inflammation Research Association’s latest Newsletter. Your board has been busy planning the program for the 2005-2006 term, following a very successful meeting in San Francisco that helped to solidify the IRA’s presence on the West Coast. The board thanks Tony Manning and Roche for providing the conference center and support for this meeting. We will be holding meetings across the country as we expand from our traditional base in the Northeast to other regions.

Those of you who attended our 12th International Conference know that we feature a great mixture of basic and applied research that appeals to biologists, chemists, academics, pharmaceutical researchers, and young investigators. In addition to the science presented at the meetings, a key feature of our conferences is the opportunity to network with fellow researchers interested in the role of inflammation in disease. Our web site (www.inflammationresearch.org) allows you to continue this networking by searching for the contact details of a fellow member and receiving information about upcoming meetings. Of course, this feature only works if people register and update their contact details, and I encourage everyone to do this—it is simple and only takes a few minutes. We do not give members’ contact information to outside organizations, and you can be assured that you will only receive relevant information. You can also use the web site to send us ideas for how the organization can better serve you.

The board recently met in New York City (many thanks to John Somerville and our hosts at BMS for providing the conference facilities) to discuss the strategic direction of the organization and to solidify plans for the 14th International Conference to be held October 15-19, 2006 at the Hyatt Regency Chesapeake Bay, Cambridge, Maryland.

The IRA was first formed in 1970 and, 35 years later, the basic goals of the organization as articulated in the mission statement have not changed:

The Inflammation Research Association is a nonprofit organization instituted to bring together scientists of all degree and experience levels with an interest in inflammation research to encourage communication and discussion of scientific and technological advances that can be used to develop new therapeutic agents for the wide diversity of serious diseases with inflammatory processes.

The board reviewed the funding and management of the organization and agreed on changes that we believe will allow the IRA to continue to thrive in a more challenging fund-raising environment. These include charging a small registration fee for all meetings and adding professional support for some administrative functions—relieving the burden on officers and making the organization more efficient. The board also agreed that we would continue to encourage the participation of young investigators by tailoring a section of the next International Conference to this vital constituency.

The Inflammation Research Association is also a founding member of the International Association of Inflammation Societies (IAIS). The IRA is active in helping to promote Inflammation Research worldwide by its participation in the IAIS. In 2005, the IAIS will hold the 7th World Congress of Inflammation in Melbourne, Australia (August 20-24th), and the IRA will be sponsoring a major symposium on COPD. This will be a great opportunity to meet with scientists “down under” and to hear the latest developments in the field. Further details are available within this Newsletter.

I look forward to working with the board members as we develop a scientific program that already has some very interesting topics. If you have ideas for meetings, please contact Loran Killar, Vice President of the IRA and chair of the program committees. I look forward to meeting you at one of our upcoming meetings.

Sincerely,

Richard J. Griffiths
President, Inflammation Research Association
FOCUSED TOPIC MEETINGS

The Inflammation Research Association encourages half-day through one and one-half day Scientific Meetings. You are invited to contact Loran Killar (loran.killar@pfizer.com), Program Chair 2004-2006, with your ideas for topics, potential presentations, and relevant speakers.

Scheduled Meetings Include:

October 7, 2005

The Inflammatory Basis of Pulmonary Fibrosis
Joint IRA/PRG Meeting – Cambridge, MA
Organizers: Claire Brown, Genzyme (PRG); Jim Ellis, Nitromed (PRG); Lisa Schopp, Millennium (IRA); Bill Selig, Nitromed (IRA)

November 4, 2005

Acne as an Inflammatory Disease
IRA Northeast Regional Meeting – New York, NY
Organizer: Donald Collins, Estee Lauder

December 5-6, 2005

Nitric Oxide 2005: 25 Years Beyond EDRF
IRA Northeast Regional Meeting – Cambridge, MA
Organizer: Jim Ellis, Gordon Lees and Bill Selig, Nitromed

March 17, 2006

The Macrophage Lineage as a Mediator of Remodeling Disease
IRA Northeast Regional Meeting – New Brunswick, NJ
Organizer: Bruce Tomeczek and Carl Manthey, Johnson & Johnson

TWELFTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE INFLAMMATION RESEARCH ASSOCIATION
THE SAGAMORE, BOLTON LANDING, NY
OCTOBER 3-7, 2004

It was almost as if the organizing committee of the 12th IRA International Conference had received some sort of premonition guiding them to invite Garret FitzGerald as the opening speaker. Still recovering from jet lag after flying in the night before from a reunion of his old school in Ireland, Dr. FitzGerald embarked on a fascinating explanation—based on his own research—of why the COX-2 inhibitor, refecoxib, had had to be withdrawn from the market only days previously. Talk about topical science, this was really hot stuff! While beginning to understand why inhibition of endothelial COX-2 but not platelet COX-1 can lead to long-term treatment problems, we were left wondering whether the whole concept of COX-2 inhibition is under threat. The coming months will no doubt give us greater clarity, though it remains to be seen whether the whole process of new drug approval may be changed as a result of the events of the Fall of 2004.

The hot topics were continued with a consideration of nuclear receptors, as we learned from Margherita Cantorna (Penn State University) that vitamin D does a lot more than provide for healthy skin and strong bones. Vitamin D receptors also regulate the TH1/TH2 ratio in mice, opening up new approaches to therapy of allergy and inflammatory bowel disease. David Ray (Manchester University UK) showed how mutation studies are contributing to the separation of transrepression and transactivation effects mediated by signaling through the glucocorticoid receptor, and Antonio Castrillo (UCLA)
demonstrated that liver X receptors not only regulate metabolism in the liver, but also modify the atherosclerotic process and inhibit the expression of a variety of inflammatory genes.

Other surprises were lying in store for us during the conference as a variety of speakers uncovered unusual connections between the inflammatory process and other physiological functions. Jim Mohley (Pfizer) stretched our imagination by proposing that susceptibility to rheumatoid arthritis may have been induced by the selective genetic pressure exerted by exposure over many centuries to widespread tuberculosis infection. Also in relation to products of bacterial infection, Ji Ming Wang (NIH) surprised those of us who thought that agonists at formyl receptors were just neutrophil chemotactic and activating factors, by showing that these agonists stimulate production of angiogenic factors, including VEGF, and are involved in attraction of macrophages in Alzheimer’s disease. Formyl receptors are not just stimulated by bacterial fragments, but a novel human endogenous ligand, humanin, has also been identified. In a session on pulmonary inflammation, A.E. Berson (Roche) demonstrated—using siRNA transfection—that sphingosine kinase is a novel target for inhibition of neutrophil activation, and Kathryn Wang (sanofi-aventis) characterized an orphan GPCR gene (AVE 1389) that appears to be important in the regulation of macrophage activation.

Perhaps the most surprising discovery was presented by Ron Magolda (Wyeth) in the closing session on new drugs. During studies on estrogen ERβ receptor agonists for menopausal therapy, it was found that several compounds lost their effects on estrogen-sensitive systems and gained potent inhibitory activity in rat adjuvant arthritis, in association with inhibitory effects on inflammatory gene expression and on hyperalgesia responses. A lead compound, ERβ 041, is undergoing clinical trials for rheumatoid arthritis and is devoid of hormonal effects. It will be interesting to see what pathway is affected by this novel therapeutic approach.

As usual, the final session managed to keep most of us on the Sagamore island till the very end of the conference as we learned that the prostaglandin D1 antagonist, L-888 839, is a promising inhibitor of allergic responses (T.R. Jones, Merck Sharp), that VX 765 is a safer IGE inhibitor than palivizumab for therapy of rheumatoid arthritis (John Randle, Vertex), and that inhibition of costimulation through CD 28 (Scott Barry, BMS) and inhibition of α4 integrin (Tony Aseman, BiogenIdec) are both promising approaches to the therapy of lymphocyte-mediated tissue injury in organ transplantation and autoimmune diseases.

The quality of the oral presentations and posters throughout the conference was again very high, as those of us who frequent the IRA international conferences have come to expect. It was noticeable that many papers on inhibitors of p38 MAP kinase were presented—it looks as if this will be the next wave of novel anti-inflammatory agents.

Quite apart from this mouth-watering selection of presentations on exciting new therapies and targets that are a characteristic of the IRA international conferences, the aspect that in my opinion sets the IRA international conferences apart from the run-of-the-mill scientific conference is the long tradition of encouraging intense personal and social interaction. The Sagamore, as with past venues from the Needles to The Homestead, provided us with a location of natural beauty that stimulated the senses and motivated us to remain in the vicinity and not wander far. Tuesday’s traditional sports afternoon was again a success, though for those of us who attempted it, the crazy golf course defeated every attempt to employ golfing skill to achieve a reasonable score! The evening cruise and dinner on Lake George afforded an extraordinary view of the starlit sky for those who braved the cold to gaze at it. The close proximity of fellow participants on the boat was good for social intercourse, but the crash at the bar discouraged more intensive drinking! The late night dance gave everyone a chance to stretch a few cramped muscles and Branimir Cvetkovic (PLIVA) generously shared his giant Toblerone, won the night before when he’d cashed in the highest winnings during the casino night. (I don’t suppose many people would have taken the risk if it had been real money!)

On the last night, we had a delicious banquet, after which Steve Stimpson officially handed over the IRA Presidency to Richard Griffiths. Prizes were handed out to the Van Arman scholars and for the best poster (though Ian Adcock had already left!) before we sang out the evening at the Karaoke Night, which Tineke Meijers had restored to the conference program to the delight of both old-timers, such as I, and some of the talented newcomers. In other words there was something for everyone... “something old, something new.” Well done to all involved in this conference, it was a roaring success!

—Mike Parnham
SOCIAL... SCIENCE AT THE 12TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Stewart Wong, former President of the IRA, at the conference dinner.
Imperial College Scientists Win 2004
GE Healthcare Scholarship Competition

"The Most Therapeutic Potential"

The GE Healthcare Scholarship Competition, previously known as the Amersham Biosciences Poster Competition, was held in conjunction with the 12th International Conference in Bolton Landing, NY. All posters describing previously unpublished work are automatically entered into the competition, excluding those presented by the C. Gordon Van Arman Award finalists. A panel of 6 judges selected the posters representing "research with the most therapeutic potential" and cash prizes were awarded.

Dick Dyer (Pfizer Global R & D) chaired the judging team, and Claudia Kassera (Inflazyme), Joseph Menetski (Merck & Co.), David Ray (Manchester University) and Jerry Skotnicki (Wyeth) held the honor of reviewing the posters and judging the competition at the Bolton Landing meeting. Gordon Letts (NitroMed) advised the judges.

The 3 winners were announced at the Conference Banquet on October 6, 2004.

Kazuhiro Ito, Borja Cosio, Misako Ito, Peter Barnes and Ian Adcock of the National Heart and Lung Institute, Imperial College, were awarded the first prize of $2500 for Poster A140 entitled: Histone Deacetylase 2 Controls Glucocorticoid Receptor Acetylation and Suppression of NF-kB Activity: Restoration of Steroid Sensitivity in COPD.

Second prize of $1000 went to A. Savinainen et al of Millennium Pharmaceuticals for their work (Poster A112) entitled: IKK2 Inhibition Protects Against Bone and Cartilage Destruction in Rat Models of Rheumatoid Arthritis. Third place ($500) was presented for Poster A48, authored by M. Ashwell et al, a team of scientists from Wyeth Research, ArQule, and Life Diagnostics, Inc., who collaborated to present: The Inhibition of NF-kB Function by Estrogen Receptor Dependent Ligands.

WINNERS NAMED FOR 2004
C. GORDON VAN ARMAN AWARDS

Always a highlight of the International Conference, the C. Gordon Van Arman Awards recognize the late C. Gordon Van Arman, who had a long and distinguished career as an industrial scientist, publishing over 100 scientific papers. The development of diphenoxylate, disopyramide, sulindac, and diflunisal can be directly attributed to Gordon's work.

The 5 finalists for the 2004 competition were selected from a field of 13 international applicants, each submitting a minipaper describing their research prior to the meeting. Criteria for selection as a finalist include originality of research, interpretation and presentation of data, and methods and techniques. Each finalist received financial support to attend the meeting and was welcomed by members of the Scholarship Committee and representatives of the IRA Board at a reception the evening prior to the conference. The committee met with each of the contestants on the first day of the meeting, and engaged in a spirited scientific discussion of their work as described in a poster presentation.

The final phase of the competition involved a 15-minute oral presentation that was open to all meeting attendees.

The high quality of the entries for the 2004 competition made the Scholarship Committee's task of choosing a winner based on the combined minipaper, poster, and oral presentations very difficult. After lengthy discussion, William O'Connor, Jr., from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, was awarded the first prize of $2,000 for his work entitled: Cryopyrin Regulates Tumor Necrosis Factor Signaling and Cell Death.

Two second prizes of $1,000 each were awarded to Jeffrey R. Scott from the University of Western Ontario, London, ON, for work entitled: Inhaled carbon monoxide reduces the remote intestinal inflammatory response...
WINNERS NAMED FOR 2004
C. GORDON VAN ARMAN AWARDS (continued)

evoked by hindlimb ischemia/reperfusion and to Seema Gor
Trivedi of St. Bartholomew's Medical College, London, for A novel
role for 15 deoxy DAA-14 PGJ, in vivo immunomodulatory activity
in antigen induced arthritis.

Honorable mention awards of $500 went to Anna Manlapat from
the Medical College of Georgia, Augusta, GA and Ruben L.
Smeets, University Medial Center Nijmegen, Nijmegen, The
Netherlands, who described their respective work on Enhanced
Indoleamine 2,3-Dioxygenase (IDO) Expression in Transgenic Mice
Inhibits T Cell-Mediated Allograft Rejection and Identification of a
natural soluble form of the IL-18 receptor accessory protein as an
immunomodulator in experimental arthritis.

The prizes were presented by Van Arman Scholarship Committee
Chairperson, Dennis Schrier at the Conference banquet on the final
day of the meeting. The Scholarship Committee included Dick
Carlton (Carlson Consulting), John Rodiske (Novartis), Carolee
Schaefer (Berlex Biosciences), John Somerville (BMS), and Jim
Trzaskos (BMS), all of whom dedicated many hours both before
and during the Conference to reviewing the minipapers, posters
and presentations and selecting the winners.

2006 CEREP Therapeutic Relevance Competition
“The Most Therapeutic Potential”
CEREP, the preclinical discovery partner for over 400
companies worldwide, will sponsor the CEREP Therapeutic
Relevance Award at the 14th Biennial International
Conference of the Inflammation Research Association. The
meeting is scheduled October 15-19, 2006, at the Hyatt
Regency Chesapeake Bay Golf Resort, Spa and Marina,
Cambridge, Maryland, USA.

The competition, most recently known as the GE Healthcare
Scholarship Competition, and previously as the Amersham
Biosciences Poster Competition, is open to all posters
describing previously unpublished work as presented at the
14th International Conference, excluding those presented by
the C. Gordon Van Arman Award finalists. A panel of 6
judges will select those posters representing “research with the
most therapeutic potential,” and cash prizes will be awarded.

The judges will announce the 3 winners at the Conference
Banquet on October 18, 2006.

IN RECOGNITION OF SERVICE TO THE IRA
The Inflammation Research Association recently recognized 4 of
its members for their service and contributions as board members.
President Stimpson honored 4 during the banquet at the
association’s 12th International Conference. They are

Dennis Argentieri, Board Member
(2000-2004)

Richard Dyer, President (2000-
2002), VP (1998-2000), Board
Member (1994-2004)

Dennis Schrier, Board Member
(2000-2004)

Jerry Skotnicki, Board Member
(2000-2004)

Stephen also expressed the sincere gratitude of the Inflammation Research
Association to Marcia Bliven, Joan Chapdelaine and Debbie Wolf, for the
many hours of their time each offers to the IRA making our meetings
successful, smooth, and enjoyable.
INTERNATIONAL MEETING ANNOUNCEMENTS

August 20-24, 2005
IAIS 7th World Congress on Inflammation
Melbourne, Australia
Web site: www.inflammation2005.com

August 20-24, 2006
XIV Congress of the Pan American League of Associations for Rheumatology (PANLAR)
Lima, Peru

October 15-19, 2006
14th Biennial International Conference of the Inflammation Research Association
Cambridge, Maryland, USA
Web site: www.inflammationresearch.org

June 16-20, 2007
IAIS 8th World Congress on Inflammation
Copenhagen, Denmark
Web site: www.cso.dk

ANNOUNCEMENT
14TH BIENNIAL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE INFLAMMATION RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

The Inflammation Research Association's 14th Biennial International Conference is scheduled for October 15-19, 2006, at the Hyatt Regency Chesapeake Bay Golf Resort, Spa and Marina, Cambridge, Maryland, USA.

Visit www.inflammationresearch.org/Meet-Natconf.html for updates concerning this and other IRA meetings. Registration materials will be available in February 2006.

Greet old friends and make new ones on the shores of the magnificent Chesapeake Bay! Visit www.chesapeakebay.hyatt.com for information on this spectacular resort.

Meeting highlights will include:

Plenary Lecture: Professor Peter Libby from Harvard University will open the scientific program with the plenary lecture. Professor Libby will discuss the role of Inflammation in cardiovascular disease.

Main Symposia: Featuring invited presentations by thought leaders in inflammation research, including hot targets, breakthroughs elucidating the roles of the inflammatory process in disease, and the latest clinical developments.

Mini-Symposia: Featuring oral presentations as selected by the chairpersons from submitted abstracts covering a range of topics.

Poster Sessions: Providing scientists with the opportunity to present and discuss their latest data and insights.

Plus:
- C. Gordon Van Arman Scholarship Competition
- Poster Competition and Awards
- Breakfast Discussion Groups
- Lunch & Learn Sessions • Exhibits

Please submit suggestions for symposia topics to Loran Killar (loran.killar@pfizer.com)

COMPANY NEWS/PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

Doug Morgan (former IRA board member and officer), reports that he has joined BiogenIdec in Cambridge, MA, as a Program Executive in the Program and Alliance Management Group. Previously, Doug was Assistant Director, Discovery and Assessment at TAP Pharmaceuticals. Contact Doug at (617) 679-3782, or via e-mail at douglas.morgan@biogen.com.

As reported in our September 2004 Newsletter, Loran Killar, IRA Vice President, has joined Pfizer in Ann Arbor as Senior Director, Inflammation Pharmacology. Loran’s new contact information is by e-mail at loran.killar@pfizer.com, and by telephone at (734) 622-2950.

Tineke Meijers has joined TNO Pharma in Zeist, The Netherlands, as Vice President Business Development for North America. Tineke was previously Director of Research & Development at the Canadian Arthritis Network and will continue to work from Toronto. Tineke can be contacted at (416) 837-7500, or via e-mail at tmeijers@tnopharma.com.