

Australasian Region

# Newsletter

Issue 5  
August 2009

## From the President, Graham Hepworth



It's now almost a year since I took over as IBS regional president from Melissa Dobbie. Melissa left things in great shape, for which I am very grateful. Her presidency was characterised by dedication, enthusiasm and new initiatives, among them this newsletter and a regional website. She also led the organisation of our last biennial conference at Coffs Harbour, which was a big success. Melissa has continued to contribute to the region, in ways such as chairing the judging panel for the honours scholarships which we offer annually. So thanks heaps Melissa.

I'm enthusiastic about serving the members of this region as president, even if I'm finding it challenging to fit in! I'm grateful that I'm surrounded by regional council members who are capable, willing, and supportive. I'm especially looking forward to our conference "Biometrics on the Lake" in Taupo, which is now not far away (see details on the next page). The conference has a great line-up of speakers, complemented by a superb social program in which to mix with colleagues. Add the wonderful location, and what more could you want in a conference? And that's without the contributed talks which I'm sure you're already thinking about! I look forward to seeing you there.

If you want to correspond on anything related to the society, please [get in touch](#).

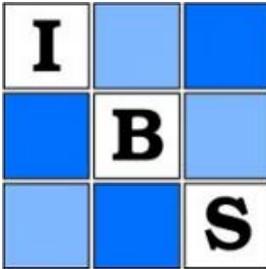
## Regional website news

[www.biometrics.org.au](http://www.biometrics.org.au)

We sincerely thank Kevin Wang for doing a fine job as the inaugural regional website manager. Not an easy task, especially when you're the first one!

We welcome Hans Hockey (Biometrics Matters Limited), who has kindly volunteered to take over this job. Hans has already made some changes, and is also managing the website for the regional conference.

Please have a look at our website, if you haven't done so. If you have any suggestions for improvements, we would welcome [your feedback](#).



**BIOMETRICS ON THE LAKE**  
29 November - 3 December 2009  
Taupo, New Zealand



## The International Biometric Society Australasian Region Conference

### Scientific Program

#### Keynote speakers

Martin Bland    Thomas Lumley    Louise Ryan    Chris Triggs

#### Invited speakers

Kaye Basford    Ross Ihaka    Alison Smith

#### Contributed oral or poster presentations

Abstracts and posters on any biometrical topics are welcome.

#### Pre-conference satellite courses (in Auckland)

Cluster Randomised Trials (25 – 26 November)  
Martin Bland, University of York

An R Workshop (27 November)  
Thomas Lumley, University of Washington

### Social Program

- Welcome reception (Sunday, 29 November)
- Young statisticians gathering and dinner (Monday, 30 November)
- Organised social activities (Tuesday afternoon, 1 December), including a cruise on Lake Taupo, river kayaking, a RiverJet geothermal adventure and an arts, attractions and wine tour.
- Conference dinner (Wednesday, 2 December) at Prawn Park on the Waikato River.

#### Important Dates

31 August	Abstracts due and early bird registration closes
20 November	Registration deadline for satellite courses, presenters and late registrants
25 – 27 November	Satellite courses
29 November – 3 December	Conference

[www.biometrics.org.au/conferences](http://www.biometrics.org.au/conferences)

## Australasian region council

In 2009, the regional council comprises

**President:** Graham Hepworth (Uni of Melbourne) **Past president:** Melissa Dobbie (CSIRO)

**Secretary:** Patrick Graham (Uni of Otago) **IBS vice-president:** Kaye Basford (UQ)

**Treasurers:** Warren Muller (CSIRO); Brian Niven (Uni of Otago)

**IBS council members:** Tony Pettitt (QUT); Alan Welsh (ANU); David Baird (VSN)

**Regional website manager:** Hans Hockey (Biometrics Matters)

**Newsletter correspondent:** Duncan Hedderley (Plant & Food Research)

Contact details for each member are on the regional website. Appointments or reappointments will be made at the next Biennial General Meeting at the regional conference in Taupo. One position we will definitely need to fill is the new vice-president (president-elect), who will serve for one year (2010) as VP, two years (2011-2012) as president, then one year (2013) as past president. This 4-year overlapping cycle enables continuity, support, and a gradual learning curve for the incoming president.

The same 4-year cycle applies to the presidency of the international body. Our region is privileged to have the current IBS vice-president Kaye Basford, who will take over as president from Andrew Mead in 2010. We look forward Kaye to special favours for the region! (only joking)

## Honours Scholarships

Each year our region awards scholarships valued at \$1500 to students doing a fourth or honours year in statistics, mathematical statistics, biostatistics, bioinformatics or biometrics. This year there were 10 applicants, and the winners were:

- Davis McCarthy (University of Melbourne) who has been working at the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute (through the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Programme) on improving statistical methods for the analysis of microarray experiments. His Honours project is on methods for the analysis of NextGen sequencing data.
- Georgina Davies (University of Queensland) who is undertaking the fourth year of a double degree, and has been involved in projects with the School of Animal Studies at UQ modelling the growth of koalas, and with the Australian Defence Science and Technology Organisation.

The panel was able to say to both of these students: "We can see that you are clearly one of the top honours/4th year statistics students in Australia and New Zealand, and your prospects for a career in Biometrics and Biostatistics are strong". We wish Davis and Georgina well in the future.

This newsletter was created by [Graham Hepworth](#) - please forward any feedback on the newsletter to him.