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**Australian and New Zealand  
FORENSIC SCIENCE SOCIETY**



**Welcome to the 24th International Symposium**

## **Presidents Message - Research & Impact**

Contributed by Adrian Linacre.

Research into the forensic sciences has been a common theme recently. There was the US National Academy of Science report of 2009 and the PCAST report of 2016 all calling on the need for science to underpin our professional activities. Here ANZPAA NIFS developed an excellent roadmap to fill gaps in science and address such criticism. Many of us are involved in research in one form or another. Indeed for

those of us who are academic-based, research and publications are key metrics of our performance.

Publications can take a variety of forms: either full length research papers, technical reports, case studies, short reports, or letters to the editor. But publishing is one measure, another is how many times anyone else reads your paper and then cites it in later work (hopefully authors actually read the paper as well as cite!). Publishing in the highest quality journals such as 'Science' or 'Nature' may be the pinnacle for some, but only an aspiration for many. There are however a number of journals that specialise in forensic sciences and/or forensic medicine and will be more familiar to us.

One way in which a journal is measured is the impact factor. In essence this is determined for each science journal by the number of papers cited in any journal compared the total number of papers published by that journal over the past 2 years.

$$2017 \text{ I.F.} = \frac{\text{Number of citations in 2017 to any publication in 2015-2016}}{\text{Number of citable items published in 2015-2016}}$$

A journal that publishes papers in a broad area and, one can argue, a well-funded area, may inevitably gain more citation than subject-specific journals such as those in the forensic sciences. Hence it is not surprising that papers in journals such as Nature are well cited by others and have a very high Impact Factor. Forensic science journals have a much smaller pool of researchers and publishers to call on.

The Impact Factors for each journal have just been released and make interesting reading.

Medical Legal Journals		
Rank	Title	I.F.
1	Forensic Science International-Genetics	5.637
2	Regulatory Toxicology and Pharmacology	2.815
3	International Journal of Legal Medicine	2.316
4	Forensic Science Medicine and Pathology	2.027
5	Forensic Science International	1.974
6	Science & Justice	1.845
7	Legal Medicine	1.254
8	Journal of Forensic Sciences	1.184
9	Journal of Forensic and Legal Medicine	1.103
10	Medical Law Review	1.103

11	Journal of Law Medicine & Ethics	0.986
12	Australian Journal of Forensic Sciences	0.941
13	American Journal of Forensic Medicine and Pathology	0.643
14	Rechtsmedizin	0.642
15	Medicine Science and the Law	0.589
16	Romanian Journal of Legal Medicine	0.320

The official journal of the ANZFSS is the Australian Journal of Forensic Sciences. Professor James Robertson has worked tirelessly to maintain this journal and be a journal for a wide range of research papers. The AJFS has just reached its 50<sup>th</sup> volume and a real testament of the work of James and colleagues at this journal.

Professor Roger Byard is the Editor-in-Chief of Forensic Science Medicine and Pathology, the office of which has recently moved to Forensic Science SA. Roger again puts in much time and effort to ensure that this is a journal of high repute. He is a prolific contributor also!

Forensic Science international: Genetics is the highest ranked journal in the category of Medical Legal by some way and very well supported in terms of papers published by the forensic DNA profiling community in New Zealand and Australia. I am biased perhaps as I am one of the five A/Editors and have the pleasure (or otherwise) of handling submissions from many colleagues in this part of the world. All the editorial work is done in 'spare time' and as one of the handling editors I am particularly thankful for all the reviewers out there as this again is done in spare time and all done for free (thanks for responding to review invites!).

My own opinion, and bore out by such data above, is that there is an active research community here in New Zealand and Australia. We live in times of scare funding to support our research yet manage to publish and be active in forensic research. We punch above our weigh and very much contribute to developments internationally in the forensic sciences and this is something we should acknowledge from time-to-time.

## **ANZFSS at the International Criminal Court**



Contributed by James Curran.

**The President of the ANZFSS is invited to** attend the annual gathering of the Scientific Advisory Board. This is in The Hague and often in the 3<sup>rd</sup> last week of June. The invitees tend to be presidents of Regional or International societies of groups associated with forensic science.

Alas the ANZFSS President was attending a conference in the USA that week and so delighted that James Curran, as one of the Vice Presidents, could take the place of the ANZFSS representative at the 5<sup>th</sup> SAB meeting. Please see the obligatory group photo.

It was excellent that New Zealand through James had a representative but also Australia was well prominent with Dr Linzi Wilson-

Note that Veronica Borrett represented the Scientific Advisory Board of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and also one of the plenary speakers at the next ANZFSS symposium.

The SAB of the ICC has important tasks to consider at a packed 2 day meeting. The main items on the agenda were assistance with SOP in regard to medical and scientific matters. The current President of the SAB, Eric Baccard (centre) is stepping down after being a driving force for the ICC and will be sorely missed.

Planning for the next SAB of the ICC is already underway and again it is expected that the ANZFSS will be represented and play a key role.

Please find the press release

Wilde (4<sup>th</sup> from right), Claude Roux (5<sup>th</sup> right)  
and Veronica Borrett (immediate right).

here: [https://www.icc-cpi.int/Pages/item.aspx?  
name=PR1401](https://www.icc-cpi.int/Pages/item.aspx?name=PR1401)

## NEWS FROM ACROSS THE SOCIETY

### ANZFSS - Tasmanian Branch.

Contributed by Charles Connor.

#### **It has been business as usual for**

Tasmanian ANZFSS committee. The stretch of water separating us from the mainland can make it somewhat difficult at times to get speakers, but we continue to make good use of local forensic practitioners and members of the legal profession. Our last AGM saw a changing of the guard with Roberta Julian stepping down as President to become our new Vice President. We thank Roberta very much for her enthusiasm and input into the society during her time as President. Gerard Dutton remains as Treasurer and Mithun Rajshekar as Secretary.

Since our previous AGM we have had a range of very interesting speakers, including local Coroner Simon Cooper who presented case studies relating to forensic evidence that lead him to come to his conclusions, researcher Dr Kathleen Murray who spoke on soil evidence, Sergeant Gerard Dutton from Tasmania Police Ballistics Section and Dr Paul Holloway from Forensic Science Service Tasmania. We have been fortunate to have three of our members selected for a National Scholarship to attend the upcoming ANZFSS symposium and look forward to hearing their presentations in upcoming meetings.

### ANZFSS - Northern Territory Branch.

Contributed by Karen Cavanagh.

**NT Branch members recently had** the chance to tour the Darwin Fire Station and burn house, thanks to committee member A/District Officer Tony Miles. Tony also delivered a presentation

We look forward to watching her presentation on measuring the decomposition rates of buried remains in different soil profiles in the Top End of the Northern Territory at the upcoming Symposium. Bindi's research was also recently

on two separate fires in Katherine.

awarded the First Prize (Educational) in the Australian Police Journal.

Our star Secretary, Senior Constable Bindi Burnell, is the delighted recipient of not only an ANZFSS National Travel Award, but an NT Branch Scholarship as well.

## ANZFSS - South Australian Branch.



Contributed by Natasha Mitchell.

**What makes ANZFSS SA Branch so great?** A dedicated and enthusiastic committee and a diverse and engaged membership. I am now well into my second term as SA Branch President and I am very fortunate to be surrounded by such a fantastic and hard working committee. A big shout out to you all. Thank you all for your commitment and effort. Over the past 18 months I have enjoyed the opportunity to meet and chat to many of our members. SA Branch now boasts 183 active members and we have the 4<sup>th</sup> largest membership across the society. SA does not have a student based forensic society so we are currently looking to increase our exposure at South Australian universities with a view to boosting our student membership. This year we introduced membership packs to welcome all new members. They receive a welcome letter and an ANZFSS pen, key ring and mouse pad. They have been very well received.

The ANZFSS symposium in Perth is fast approaching. We are always keen to see SA strongly represented at the symposium and this year is no exception. The SA Branch is thrilled to announce the

recipients of the 2018 ANZFSS Symposium Awards. In total thirteen members received awards with seven of those receiving both Executive and Branch awards. Our very own Branch Secretary, Danielle Butzbach, received the 2018 Sandy Congdon Award. Dan is a Toxicologist at Forensic Science SA and will present 'A fatality involving a novel cathinone, MMMP, and furanyl fentanyl'. Eliza Moule is the recipient of the Ross Vining Memorial Award and a PhD candidate at Flinders University. She will present her work titled 'Rapid detection of nicotine from breath using direct sample analysis time of flight mass spectrometry'. Congratulations to all our award recipients! Other award winners include Julianne Henry, Duncan Taylor, Denice Higgins, Luke Volgin, Ted Silenieks, Thekla Ganiaris, Janet Dubrich, Peter Stockham, Greg Abroe, Andrew Camilleri and Karen Thai.

Australia on the international stage The **Adelaide Medal** was first awarded at the 12th Meeting of International Association of Forensic Sciences (IAFS) in 1990 in Adelaide, Australia. The award was instigated by Dr. Bill Tilstone, the then-IAFS President, and the South Australian Branch of the Australian and New Zealand Forensic Science Society. The medal is awarded for significant scientific achievement that advances forensic sciences from an international perspective. It recognizes work that resulted in a change of direction, new thinking or significant improvement in current methodologies in forensic sciences.

The 2017 Adelaide Medal was awarded to **Professor Cristina Cattaneo**, University of Milan, Italy. Congratulations! Professor Cattaneo is a forensic pathologist and anthropologist at the University of Milan. She is Professor of Legal Medicine and runs the Laboratory of Anthropology and Forensic Odontology. She is extensively published and is author and co-author of several books and scientific articles on forensic anthropology, forensic pathology and clinical forensic medicine. Professor Cattaneo provides expert evidence for courts in Milan and throughout Europe. In Milan, she coordinates medicolegal services for child abuse, sexual violence, victims of torture and unaccompanied minors. Since 2007, Professor Cattaneo has worked with the Italian Government to create a national database for unidentified human remains. Since 2014, she has been the forensic coordinator for Italy's High Commissioner for Missing Persons on unidentified deceased migrants. She is President of Forensic Anthropology Society of Europe and Co-Editor-in-Chief of the journal Forensic Science International. The 10<sup>th</sup> Adelaide Medal was awarded at the 21<sup>st</sup> IAFS meeting in Toronto, Canada in 2017 and was presented by Professor Claude Roux. Unfortunately, Professor Cattaneo was unable to attend the meeting so the award was presented to her colleague on her behalf and she provided her presentation via video link.

In 2020 Sydney will host a joint IAFS/ANZFSS meeting and the 11<sup>th</sup> Adelaide Medal will be presented. ANZFSS will be invited to submit a nomination for the medal. Who will it be? Start thinking now and if you

have any suggestions please forward them to ANZFSS Executive when the call for nominations is announced.

The ANZFSS SA Branch were delighted to host the 2017 Annual General Meeting of the ANZFSS on October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at the Adelaide Pavilion. Following the formalities of the evening we heard from Professor Roger Byard AO PSM who provided us with an interesting insight as to how current forensic practice might assist with potential miscarriages of justice and perhaps re-write some of the 'bush ranger' history of Australia. A delicious three course dinner was served, glasses were filled and we all enjoyed the musical talents of Grace and Arthur Mezak (son and daughter of long-standing SA Branch member Janet Mezak). Our committee did a fantastic job organising the event and special thanks go to Cheryl Brown, Lenara Scandrett and Emily Rowe. It was a very enjoyable evening and a fantastic and rare opportunity for many of our members to meet both Executive and Council members in a relaxed atmosphere. If you ever get the chance to host the Society AGM I certainly recommend it.

The SA Branch have had a fantastic start to the year with two interstate speakers. Despite being the last Friday night of the Fringe Festival, 140 people attended Domenic Raneri's presentation titled 'Reconstructing the Lindt Café Siege'. Dom is from the NSW Police Forensic Imaging Section and this incident was Australia's first experience of a terrorist campaign. The reconstruction of the crime scene using 3D imaging technology was instrumental in answering the many questions raised during the inquest. Dom had us all fascinated!

For our April meeting we switched venues to the Rob Roy Hotel. It was a relaxed and inviting venue and allowed our members to grab a quick dinner or drink prior to Tim Watson-Munro's presentation on psychological resilience for the forensic expert. The presentation was sold out with 125 attendees gathering to hear Tim talk about his life as a Criminal Psychologist, assessing and treating notorious criminals such as Julian Knight (Hoddle Street massacre) and Alan Bond. Tim has written about his experiences in a book titled 'Dancing with Demons' and it is well worth a read.

See <http://timwatsonmunro.com.au/> The SA Branch is making a concerted effort to advertise our presentations beyond our membership to increase attendee numbers and to encourage new membership applications. This is working well with an average of 60% non-member attendees at the past two presentations. We have an exciting year ahead and we are planning presentations designed to further encourage new membership. Don't forget to check out the video recordings of our past presentations here <https://members.anzfss.org/videos.php>.





## Next Time...

Next time in the ANZFSS Newsletter expect to see more excellent updates from our Branches about what they are achieving, a run down on the European Academy of Forensic Science (EAFS) conference in Lyon the results of the wonderful Symposium that the Perth Branch have in store for us this week and much MUCH more.

Have a great ANZFSS 2018 everyone, and a big thank you to Perth for hosting us!

## Want to Contribute to the Next Newsletter?

Let us know what you are doing around our great society.

Send submissions to: [executive@anzfss.org](mailto:executive@anzfss.org)

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