

IBBS World



Newsletter of the International Biodeterioration & Biodegradation Society
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IBBS-14, 2008

Hotel Capo dei Greci
Riviera di Taormina - Sant'Alessio
Messina Italy

6-11 October 2008

www.ibbs-14.org

also www.biodeterioration.org, under meetings and events.
Organiser, Prof Clara Urzi, University of Messina, Italy

IBBS-14: Message from Clara Urzi, Organiser

Forty years after the first International Biodeterioration Symposium held in Southampton UK, the 14th Symposium will take place in Italy (IBBS-14, Sant'Alessio Siculo, Messina, 6 - 11 October 2008).

As per tradition, the Symposium brings together scientists from different countries involved in research on biodegradation and biodeterioration of a wide variety of materials and compounds, and thus addressing aspects of microbial contamination in different areas: industry, cultural heritage, environment. In recent years, different molecular tools for the study of microbial communities were developed, as well as application of nanotechnologies and the use of microorganisms for biofuels production: indeed, well established and new approaches will be discussed in 13 sessions during IBBS-14, with almost 200 colleagues already pre-registered.

In 2006, I was contacted by Cesareo Saiz Jimenez and then by the President, Joanna Verran and the Scientific Programme Secretary, Jimmy Walker, who asked me to organise IBBS-14. My first reaction was to answer 'no', because I was aware of the difficulties, responsibilities and dedication that such an event requires. On the other hand, I was pleased to be considered for this position, and the thought that for the first time the Symposium could be organised in Italy made me proud. So here we are!

We offer delegates a Symposium focused on new trends and sound results. We welcome participants to a friendly environment supported by our traditional Sicilian warm hospitality. See you soon!

Full information on www.ibbs-14.org

Editor's Notes

I hope that summer is more apparent where you are than it is in the UK! Yet another reason to be looking forward to IBBS-14. Clara Urzi and her team have been working hard to develop an exciting programme encompassing all the activities of IBBS members. Remember to register, and enjoy being stimulated and updated by experts and researchers - and attend the AGM of course! active in their areas of interest. This newsletter also contains information on several other meetings of interest to IBBS members, particularly an early announcement for our 2009 meeting on fungal deterioration.

IBBS-14 will mark the end of my first year as President - although I have been a member of Council for rather longer! I was so excited to join Council for an international Society that focused on important areas of applied microbiology, that was so active in conference organisation, and so close to its membership. Although none of these attributes have changed, I do feel that more participation from the membership is essential for the continuing development and health of the Society. We are happy to use Manchester as a geographical focus for Council, and for many of our conferences, but we should not rely on the ideas and commitment of a small number of individuals to maintain a robust and active Society.

In this newsletter, a new initiative is proposed, whereby IBBS utilises its expertise to produce learning materials to promote our activities. I do hope that some of you - or your colleagues (members or not!) - will be able to help get this idea off the ground! The Society belongs to its members, not to its Council. We look forward to hearing from you. Best wishes,
Jo (j.verran@mmu.ac.uk)

7LABS - the Seventh Latin American Biodeterioration and Biodegradation Symposium (<http://7labs.uisek.edu.ec>) May 5 - 10, 2009

The Latin American Biodegradation and Biodeterioration Symposia, LABS, have been organised every 3 years since 1992. The objective of the event is to bring together specialists from Latin America and other countries to discuss the scientific and technological advances that contribute to understanding the mechanisms of microbial degradation of materials. 6LABS, in Bogota, Coombia, was attended by over 500 delegates from Latin America, Europe, India and North Ameica.

The next symposium, 7LABS, will take place in the city of Quito, capital of Ecuador, from May 5 - May 10, 2009. It is hosted by the International University, SEK. Quito is a lovely city, located 2,800m above sea level in the Andes, surrounded by volcanoes. Temperatures vary between 10C and 25C, with large climatic changes occurring within a single day. Quito was declared a UNESCO Cultural Heritage site in 1978.

Particular topics that have been selected by the 7LABS Scientific Committee are:

1. *Biodeterioration of cultural heritage*

Archaeological and historic monuments and othe cultural heritage objects; libraries.

2. *Biological and chemical corrosion*

Pipelines, storage tanks, marine structures, other structure

3. *Biological Control and agriculture*

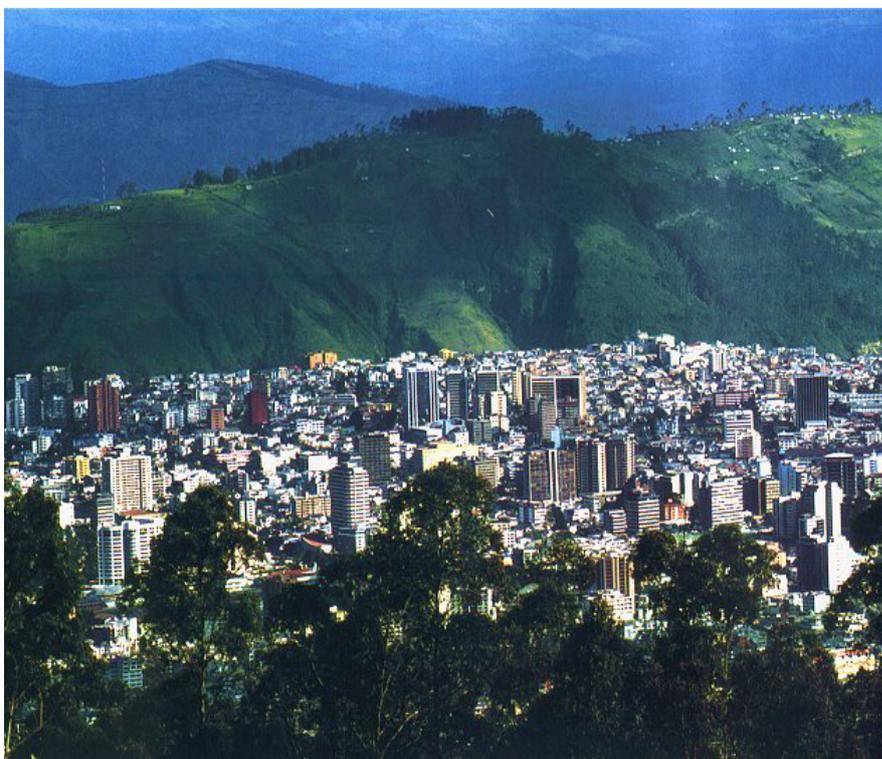
Organic agriculture, biofertilisers, biocontrol

4. *Biotechnology*

biofuels, polymers

5. *Environmental remediation*

Control of soil and water pollution, bioremediation, phytoremediation, biorecuperation



The list is not exhaustive, and anyone wishing to offer a paper or poster in another relevant area is encouraged to send an abstract. Abstracts should be sent in Word (Times New Roman 12, line space 1.5), not exceeding 500 words, to 7LABS@sekmil.com and ambiente@uisek.edu.ec. The Scientific Committee will meet on 31 October 2008, and 10 March 2009 to select papers for presentation at the Symposium. Abstracts should include: title, area, names of authors with institutions and countries, e-mail, telephone and stage if the investigation (initial, in progress, or finalised).

A commercial exhibition will be held during the Symposium and interested firms must register before January 2009.

Chris Gaylarde

Chapters Update

Newsletter devotees will recall the promise of more information on the proposed development of 'chapters', whereby groups of individuals interested in the activities of IBBS can form associated groups in different geographical locations - India and South America are obvious examples.

Chris Gaylarde is working on this, so if anyone wants to contribute to her deliberations, please do get in touch. The topic will be discussed at the next Council meeting, before Christmas

Contributory items for newsletter

I am always looking for interesting images or articles to include in the newsletter, for example, books to review, newsworthy items, members' achievements, cartoons etc etc. All items will be duly acknowledged.

Apology: I am therefore particularly grateful to Biodet Services Ltd, Auckland, New Zealand for allowing Niall Hamilton to provide some of the entertaining agar art that I have used on occasion - although I acknowledged him, I omitted to acknowledge them! Apologies!

Artwork: In this issue, I have again used some of the art that my own undergraduate students have produced for an assignment on the relationship between microbiology and art. Sponsorship from Leica (2007) and Yakult (2008) have enabled the provision of an exhibition of their work, and also the award of prizes for 'creativity and communication in microbiology' - surely something we should all be aiming for!! Thanks to Iqra Ali for the papier mache models of fungi, and Beth Lomiiko for the illustration.

IBBS - An Education Resource and Repository? Call for interest and participation!

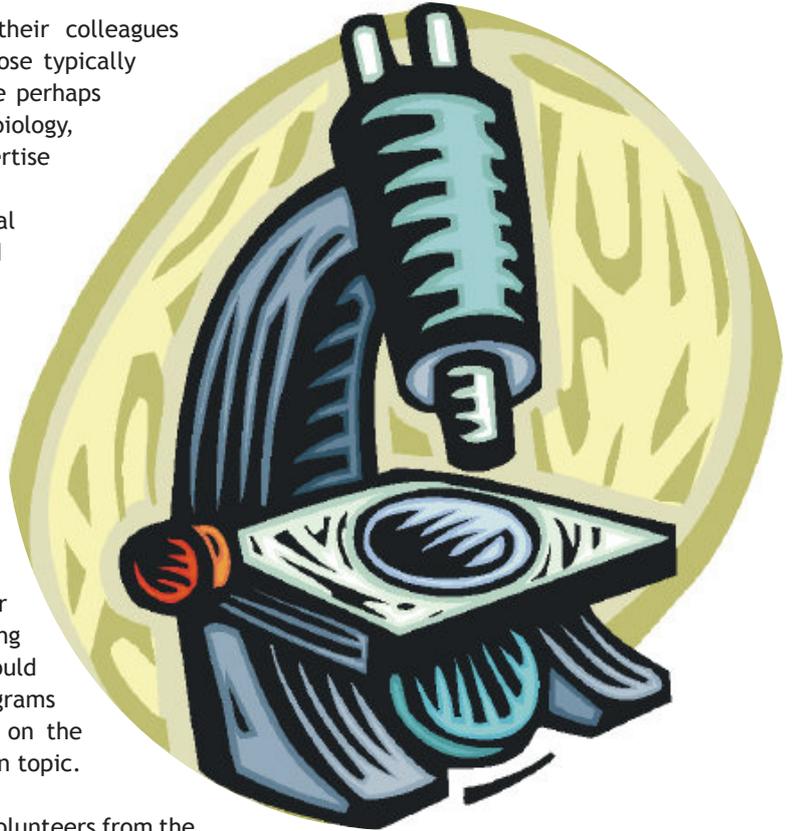
The research topics addressed by IBBS members and their colleagues cover aspects of applied microbiology that differ from those typically encountered in undergraduate courses, where students are perhaps most familiar with medical, food and industrial microbiology, perhaps with a bit of corrosion thrown in, if appropriate expertise exists amongst the academic staff.

In the UK, academic societies such as the Society for General Microbiology (www.sgm.ac.uk), the Society for Applied Microbiology (www.sfam.org.uk) and the British Mycological Society (www.britmycolsoc.org.uk) produce educational and informative materials for schools, colleges and the general public, to help promote microbiology.

IBBS is a small society, but membership is global, and interests are diverse.

Can we produce some educational materials to help disseminate information on our interests?

My idea is to develop a series of A4 sheets, downloadable from the website, each of which would focus on a particular aspect of biodeterioration/biodegradation - perhaps focusing on the substrate (metal, stone, textile, art). These sheets would have a set format, comprising images and text, and diagrams if appropriate. Another suggestion was to provide, again on the website, a series of powerpoint slides - perhaps 4 for a given topic.



Since this is an early idea, I am seeking some feedback and volunteers from the membership, to determine whether this would be a useful activity for the Society. An excellent start would be that each of the keynote speakers at IBBS-14 contribute to the resource on their topic of interest...speakers, please take this as a preliminary warning!

I would like the first resources to be available for launch at the April 2009 meeting. We are an International Society, and this new activity would raise our profile, and also help fulfil our remit as a charity.

Please contact me with comments, suggestions, and particularly offers of help and contributions!

Jo Verran
j.verran@mmu.ac.uk

Bursaries

Don't forget that an additional charitable activity is our Bursary scheme. For financial reasons, we have been unable to promote these in recent years, but we wish to remind members that we offer bursaries of £250 (or Euro equivalent) towards undergraduate student projects. The bursaries may be applied for by any IBBS member. The successful student is also expected to join IBBS. There is no restriction on the country of origin, or the age of the student. Application forms are available from the Treasurer (Kath Whitehead). This year's deadline is December 2008. Awards will be allocated for projects taking place in 2009. Successful recipients are expected to provide a brief report for the newsletter or website with images on completion of the project.

k.a.whitehead@mmu.ac.uk

Congratulations!

Congratulations to Dr Paul Airey, our webmaster, on being awarded his PhD. His work focused on hygienic properties of stainless steel, and he already has 3 full papers published. An interesting aspect is the considerable survival of microorganisms on inert surfaces in the absence of any significant moisture - with implications in cross-infection control. His work has attracted interest from industry and others involved in testing putative antimicrobial surfaces. The contamination of inert objects such as phones, toilet seats, desk surfaces, computer keyboards always attracts attention from the media, and Paul's findings have contributed to the debate on the significance of this contamination.

Paul remains on Council, attending meetings when work allows!

FEMS Congress 2009, June 28 - July 2 Goteborg (www.kenes.com/fems)

The 3rd Congress of European Microbiologists will be held in Goteborg, Sweden on June 28 - July 2, 2009. The overall theme will be 'Microbes and Man - interdependence and future challenges'. Key areas to be addressed include: biodiversity, biofilms in ecology and medicine, clinical microbiology and pathogenesis, eucaryotic microbes, marine microbiology, microbial stress responses, microbes in alternative energy generation, molecular microbiology and genomics and virology. In addition, there will be sessions on microbiology education encompassing postgraduate skills training, innovative teaching practice, and discussions on the way forward for links across Europe for practitioners. A number of travel scholarships will be available for young scientists.

Terms and conditions will soon be available from the congress website

IBBS/BMS conference 2009 First announcement Fungal deteriogens

We are very excited to make a preliminary announcement about our 2009 conference on fungal deteriogens, to be held jointly with the British Mycological Society. This is the first joint meeting between the two societies for a number of years, and will emphasise the importance of fungi in the deterioration of surfaces, preservation, and impact of spores on health. The meeting, which is anticipated to be of 1 - 1.5 days duration, will comprise a number of key speakers from both Societies, representing academia and industry, addressing a broad range of topics related to biodeterioration. Although dates have yet to be confirmed, we are focusing on April, with Manchester as the venue.



More about fungi

For an excellent and timely update on the importance of fungi to all aspects of life, and to emphasise the value of our next conference, the American Academy of Microbiology has just published a Critical Issues Colloquium report entitled 'The Fungal Kingdom: Diverse and essential roles in Earth's ecosystem', prepared by Arturo Casadevall, Joe Heitman and Marry Buckley. The report can be downloaded as a pdf via the American Society for Microbiology website (www.asm.org). A number of related podcasts via MicrobeWorld are also referenced on the website.

Funding to support Cultural Heritage

Many members of IBBS are engaged in research on the deterioration and conservation of cultural heritage across the globe. Indeed, in the forthcoming IBBS-14 meeting, there are 2 sessions dedicated to the topic. Funding to support research in this area is always hard to find, although several EU projects are addressing a range of internationally important aspects.

In the UK, the EPSRC (Engineering and Physical Science Research Council) has joined forces with the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) to help protect the UK's heritage. A five-year Science and Heritage Programme has been set up in response to the House of Lords Science and Technology Committee inquiry into heritage science in 2006. The enquiry concluded that a decline in the heritage science discipline was threatening the UK's cultural legacy.

By supporting multidisciplinary projects, the programme will seek to gain a deeper understanding of both the physical make-up and the historic context of heritage - moveable (artworks and artefacts) and immovable (buildings, sites and landscapes).

The programme specification was published in early June 2008. For further information, go to www.heritagescience.ac.uk.

Other conferences

The Society for General Microbiology is holding a conference on Biofilms, in Dublin, September 8 - 11th (www.sgm.ac.uk)

International Food Microbiology conference, Aberdeen, September 1 - 4th (www.foodmicro2008.org).

