

# Microbiology in the regions – member's report

SGM/SfAM Joint Regional Meeting Grants aim to promote microbiology in the UK at a regional level. Information on the scheme is available at [www.sgm.ac.uk](http://www.sgm.ac.uk)

## Glasgow Virology Workshop, University of Glasgow, 7 February 2004

■ David J. Evans

This one-day annual workshop, now in its 9th year, is designed to encourage scientific interactions between the many virologists based in Scotland. However, as in previous years, members of the virology cognoscenti travelled from much further afield for an enjoyable day of research talks and discussions.

Our tried and trusted formula consists of four scientific sessions, containing an eclectic mix of subjects, with ample time for questions and conversation. The framework for the meeting was provided by three excellent plenary presentations from **Professor Stuart Siddell** (University of Bristol), **Professor Ulrich Koszinowski** (University of Munich) and the SGM/SfAM-sponsored speaker, **Dr Kim Green** (NIH, Bethesda, USA).

Professor Siddell's presentation *SARS: A lesson to be learnt* discussed the history, epidemiology and molecular biology of this novel virus, and emphasized the need for both constant vigilance and scientists versed in conducting fundamental research to help combat future threats. Koszinowski's talk *Evasion, subversion, modulation: functions affecting the virus host interface* illustrated powerful techniques to modify the murine gammaherpesvirus genome, and the insights that can be obtained by combining such *in vitro* approaches with a tractable animal model system. By way of a contrast, Dr Green described the problems encountered in studying replication of certain caliciviruses which cannot be propagated in culture in her presentation entitled *Models for the study of calicivirus replication*.

Interspersed with these were a dozen shorter presentations on subjects as wide-ranging as the epidemiology of Menangle virus in pigs and fruit bats, HIV infection of CD8 lymphocytes and the evolution of the herpesvirus genome. These talks from Glasgow, Edinburgh, St Andrew's and Dundee reflected the broad range of active virology research in Scotland. Many of these presentations were by younger researchers and, thanks to the generosity of the SGM/SfAM, could be considered for the Microbiology Communication Prize. Despite the very high standard of presentation by all eligible speakers, the judges had no hesitation in deciding that **Nicola Stock** should receive the award for her talk *Paramyxovirus V proteins and the interferon response*. Nicola, a final year PhD student with Professor Rick Randall in St Andrew's, completed a memorable day by also winning the prize draw on the Qiagen trade stand.

The 150 registrants continued their socializing at a wine reception, before braving the cold and snow of a raw February Glasgow evening!

■ David Evans is Reader in Virology at the University of Glasgow, UK.



TOP:  
Dr Kim Green, National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, USA.

BOTTOM:  
Nicola Stock receives her SGM/SfAM Microbiology Communication Prize certificate from David Evans.

PHOTOS D. EVANS