



EMBL's Open House day...page 3



Ireland joins EMBL



EBI celebration...page 7

Ireland becomes EMBL's 17th member state

The Laboratory welcomed Ireland as its seventeenth member state during the summer meeting of the EMBL Council. "We feel like this is a very timely, important step for Ireland to take," says Martin Shanagher, Director of the Irish Office of Science and Technology, who made the formal application for membership to the Council. "It follows a decade in which there has been an enormous increase in investment in high technology and research in Ireland."

Joining means that Ireland will help support EMBL – most of whose funding comes from contributions from the member states. It entitles Ireland to a say in the development and future directions of the Laboratory and gives the country wide access to EMBL services and programmes.

The decision to join follows a Technology Foresight exercise launched by the Irish Council for Science Technology and Innovation four years ago. "The report from that exercise stated very clearly that government must invest now to develop a knowledge society and that we have to make choices – since we are a small economy, we can't achieve world-class excellence in all areas." Biotechnology was chosen as a key focus area, and the Irish development plan comprises 2.5 billion Euros to be invested in basic research, education, the development of infrastructures in universities and industry, and attracting research and development activities from abroad.

BMBF pledges one million Euro for purchase of new electron microscope

The German Research (BMBF) will give EMBL one million Euros for the purchase of a new electron microscope. Parliamentary Secretary Christoph Matschie made the announcement on June 28, during the celebration marking the 25th anniversary of EMBL's move into the Heidelberg laboratory.

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EMBL's first LearningLAB

EMBL's new education facility, the European Learning Laboratory for the Life Sciences, held its first practical laboratory for teachers and scientists in early July. The facility has been created under a grant from the European Union called "Continuing Education for Biology Teachers," coordinated by EMBO. The grant assures funding for the first two years of operation; a regular series of activities will put teachers into the lab and give scientists some experience in teaching.

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EMBL establishes Endowment Fund

At the summer Council meeting in June, delegates from EMBL's member states approved plans to establish an EMBL Endowment Fund. The goal of the fund will be to provide the laboratory with a source of support for projects beyond EMBL's regular budget. The fund will be a valuable mechanism through which the Laboratory can support emerging projects not covered in the five-year Scientific Programme. Who will contribute to the fund? Foundations, private philanthropists, and individuals linked to EMBL in the past and present. The fund was officially registered as a charitable organization in July.

For more, read the interview with EMBL's new Endowment Officer, Heidi Noack, which appears on page 8 of this issue of *EMBL&cetera*.

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Celebrating twenty-five years of EMBL Heidelberg

The toasts began at 11pm, when former Director General Lennart Philipson rose to his feet, raised his glass, and spoke in German. "My relationship to the German language is like that to my wife," he said. "I love her, but I do not master her." He ought to be speaking German, he continued, because the subject of the day was the 25-year anniversary celebration of EMBL's move into the Heidelberg facility. More toasts rounded off a day of congratulatory speeches from Eerio Vuorio, President of the EMBL Council, Erwin Teufel, Minister President of the state of Baden-Württemberg, Christopher Matschie, of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research, Beate Weber, Lady Mayor of Heidelberg, Peter Hommelhoff, Rector of the University of Heidelberg, Peter Gruss, President of the Max Planck Society, Director General Fotis C. Kafatos, and Philippe Busquin, Europe's Commissioner for Research. There was a cake-cutting, a champagne reception, a photo gallery of scenes from the history of the Lab, and a dinner attended by many who have played a key role in that history. The toasts carried the festivities over into the next morning. Everyone finally made it home... getting up bright and early for the Open House on the following day.



photos: EMBL Photolab

Over 150 people attended the celebration



photos: EMBL Photolab

The celebration included EMBL's own birthday cake

A birthday gift for EMBL

The German Research Ministry (BMBF) has pledged one million Euros for the purchase of a new electron microscope at EMBL. The gift was announced by Parliamentary Secretary Christoph Matschie, on Saturday 28 June, at a festival honoring the 25th anniversary of the opening of EMBL's main laboratory in Heidelberg, Germany. "Now that the human genome has been decoded, genomic research will have to piece together single pieces of information into a holistic understanding of living processes," Matschie said. The new microscope should help biologists, engineers, mathematicians, physicists, and informaticists to work out physiological processes in cells.

The German government sees its support of cutting-edge research as a prerequisite for a competitive economy. "Political support for innovation is therefore a central goal of this government," Matschie said. EMBL's establishment 25 years ago was an important cornerstone in the development of European basic research. He added that EMBL has played a leading role in the current revolution in the molecular life sciences – conceptually, methodologically, and technically.



Erwin Teufel
Minister President, Baden-Württemberg

"Engineers and scientists have traditionally been highly regarded Baden-Württemberg. They are seen as the pioneers of progress. It is their discoveries and ideas that have brought our economy to the fore..."



Christopher Matschie
Parliamentary State Secretary at the Federal Ministry of Education and Research

"Today the EMBL is a unique institution for research and training with an international reputation. High-level research and development is being conducted not only here in Heidelberg, but also in many other places in Europe. Due to close international cooperation, the EMBL has become an important international centre which is efficiently addressing a broad range of topics and has proven to be competitive with top institutes in the US."



Beate Weber
Lady Mayor of Heidelberg

"Heidelberg relies on and fosters an approach that regards scientific excellence as one of the pivotal resources for a successful future."



Peter Hommelhoff
Rector of the University of Heidelberg

"There are areas in which the standards of excellence generally accorded to the University of Heidelberg are not only a product of its own efforts, but also of its cooperation with outstanding research institutions. The life sciences in Heidelberg are a case in point."



Peter Gruss
President of the Max Planck Society for the Advancement of Science

"Today, progress is being made at a pace probably never seen before in any discipline in human history, and that EMBL has contributed to the enhancement of our knowledge base tremendously. Molecular analysis is the key to understanding higher levels of biological organization but the opposite is also correct: the secret of life can only be understood in the context of functioning cells or even organisms. The EMBL with its integrative approach and with its novel methods, equipment, and large-scale facilities is now as then crucial as this once belittled field becomes 'big science'."

EMBL welcomes 1,200 visitors to its Open House Day

Early in the morning on Sunday, June 29, the Operon opened its doors to the first visitors to EMBL's Open House. As made their way into the Auditorium for an introduction, EMBL scientists were busy back in their labs preparing a full itinerary of activities. For the rest of the day the crowds flowed through the lab and got an insider's look at life and work at EMBL. Activities included hands-on projects, such as extracting DNA from bananas, examining different viruses under a microscope, and a treasure hunt through the lab's bioinformatics databases. After their tours, visitors could discuss scientific themes with EMBL staff over coffee and snacks in the Science Café. Younger visitors enjoyed special science activities in EMBL's Kinderhaus. A good time was had by both staff and visitors. A big thank you goes out to all volunteers who made the day such a success!



photo: M.B. Hansen

Jan Ellenberg and Péter Lénart show visitors how to extract eggs and sperm cells from sea urchins



photo: M. Schupp

Visitors gather in the Operon auditorium for an introduction to EMBL before heading off on their tours



photo: M. Schupp

Posters capture 25-years of EMBL history in the Science Café



photo: M.B. Hansen

Belen Miñana helps guests perfect their pipetting techniques



photo: M.B. Hansen

Future scientists learn all about frog science.

What our visitors had to say...

"A great day. It should happen more often!"

"Helpful people, great coffee, and good food."

"The friendly people in the red t-shirts were always there to help."

"It was really great to see the inside of a real scientific laboratory"

names to faces An EMBL career in installments: the visitor archetype

Brian Storrie likes to say that he's taking his "nine years" – the maximum EMBL contract – in bits and pieces. If there were an award to be given to our most persistent visitor, he'd win hands down, because he's been visiting EMBL regularly for the last 16 years. The era is about to end as Brian, currently professor at the Virginia Polytech, takes up a position at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences.

How many frequent flier miles do you have?

About 460,000 miles. It puts you into a special category of traveler; the airlines know you; I've met people with 600 to 700,000 miles. Once I received an e-mail from the airline suggesting the only way to spend all my miles was to take a trip to the International Space Station.

What brought you to EMBL, and what makes you keep coming back?

The first time was in 1987. I initially came to learn some techniques, on a Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst fellowship for two or three months, intending to do some work with the groups of Jean Gruenberg and Kathryn Howell. What we wanted to do wasn't successful, but that's how it goes in science. What you plan often doesn't pan out, but what counts in the end is the contacts you've made, the other scientific problems that you encounter.

I was working on the molecular systems that govern intracellular transport. I had invented a technique of fusing live cells together – rat cells with mouse cells, or mice with human. When the time approaches for cell division, of course, things go really wrong, and then the cell dies. But for ten to twelve hours in interphase human and mouse pro-

teins intermix, the cell tries to sort them out, and it creates a window of opportunity to study how things get transported through the cell. At different times during the fusion you attach mouse or human-specific antibodies – this was in the days before GFP allowed you to track molecules that way.

That work developed into a long-term collaboration with Thomas Kreis' group.



Thomas was working on an aspect of the Golgi complex. During the process of fusion, each cell is donating its own Golgi apparatus and these merge in a sort of mega-Golgi apparatus. Microtubules reorganize and consequently the Golgi reorganizes. Shortly after these experiments were completed, I did a sabbatical with Thomas to look at protein mobility inside the cell. We did the first intracellular diffusion measurements on an intracellular transmembrane protein and that finally got published. Subsequently I did a second sabbatical here at EMBL; this is an excellent place to do research in this area.

Tracking molecules involved Ernst Stelzer – who was developing confocal microscopy. Then the electron microscopists said, "You want to do quantitative studies of proteins – the resolution that you're using isn't high enough!" So then I started a collaboration with Gareth Griffiths in that area. And microinjection was coming into its own as a novel method, which meant working with Rainer Pepperkok, at that time with Wilhelm Ansorge's group. Finally, in the last several years there has been a very fruitful collaboration with Tommy Nilsson's group, studying traffic through the Golgi, Golgi resident proteins, and developing systems biology methods to work on that.

What sets EMBL apart from other places?

EMBL does a lot of things, but it doesn't try to do everything. Within the areas that its research covers, it tries to do them exceptionally well. EMBL hires good people and it expects them to be good; the equipment is necessary but people are more important than the equipment. EMBL is the kind of place where you can interact with other groups in a very free way. Other institutions and universities tend to be a lot more closed. Individual labs make an effort to establish clear, distinct identities. EMBL creates a space where there are overlapping areas; it is relatively easy to do crossover projects between groups. It makes the whole better than just the individual parts. In my new position I will have the possibility to recruit junior scientists who will be independent people, and I am trying to create an environment where that kind of overlap and cross-interaction will be possible.

- interview by Russ Hodge

EMBL Council holds annual summer meeting in Heidelberg

EMBL Council held its annual summer meeting from June 25-27 in Heidelberg; a number of important issues were covered.

Highlights included:

The Council accepted Ireland's application to become the seventeenth member state.

Director General Fotis C. Kafatos presented the "Strategic Forward Look" (SFL), a document which he says will act as a "broad guide to the future" as EMBL seeks its next Director General. The SFL is being prepared by the DG and Scientific Director Iain Mattaj, in consultation with a steering committee appointed by the Council, with input from the scientific community and the member states. It will be voted on in the November Council meeting this year.

Council also confirmed its approval for the creation of an "EMBL Endowment Fund," a charitable fund which will be used to support activities at the Laboratory. The fund will be built through outside support and will be administered by a group of trustees. It will be used to support Laboratory activities which cannot be funded by EMBL's regular budget, which is established in a five-year plan. This will give EMBL more flexibility in taking advantage of scientific opportunities which might need healthy funding.

Council also agreed on adjustments in basic salaries for staff members, ancillaries and supernumeraries, as well as increases in pensions, taking effect from July 1, 2003. Adjustments to pay scales are calculated on the basis of rates for civil servants and changes in the consumer price index in the

country where a staff member is working. Since this varies from country to country, different adjustments are necessary for Heidelberg and the Outstations. Council approved the following increases:

	pay	pensions
Germany	2.7%	0.8%
France	3.3%	1.4%
Italy	5.3%	(no pensioners)
UK	2.9%	1.0%

There was also an agreement to reduce weekly working hours to 39 hours, in principle. The Administrative Director has clarified this point in a letter to staff which can be found on the web at: www.embl-heidelberg.de/~staff/.

The ELLS welcomes its first group of international teachers

On July 7, 2003, 15 participants arrived at EMBL to take part in the LearningLAB course organized by the European Learning Laboratory for the Life Sciences (ELLS), a new facility at EMBL devoted to science education. Teachers came from Portugal, Italy, Germany, United Kingdom, and Switzerland, eager to update their scientific knowledge, do practical experiments at the lab bench, and bring the latest research back to their classrooms. The facility also welcomed the first of its visiting scientists when two San Jose University (CA, USA) professors came to work with the teachers and the ELLS staff.

Teachers explored the behaviour of microtubules at various stages of cell division and throughout early embryonic development in sea urchins, fruit flies, zebrafish, medaka fish and mammalian cells. The function of microtubules in different biological processes represents an important research area for many EMBL scientists.



ELLS Education Officers:
Alexandra Manaia, Alexander Picker and
Trista Dawson



High school biology teachers brush up on their lab skills during the ELLS' first LearningLAB, held at EMBL Heidelberg on July 7-9, 2003.

"We were very pleased with our first course," notes Alexander Picker, who organized the course along with fellow Education Officers Alexandra Manaia and Trista Dawson. "We had a great group of teachers who really enjoyed the course, rating it as 'excellent' overall."

The teachers were especially excited by the chance to interact with EMBL scientists. The Ellenberg, Wittbrodt, Neumann and Ephrussi groups all helped to make the LearningLAB practical activities a great success.

"My group really enjoyed working with the teachers during the LearningLAB course on sea urchin fertilization and mammalian cell division. The teachers were all very enthusiastic to do hands-on experiments and they asked great questions," notes Jan Ellenberg, Group Leader. "Helping to improve how science is taught to our kids in school by work-

ing with their teachers is a really important and fun thing for a scientist to do."

The next LearningLAB course will take place on October 22-24, 2003, at EMBL, Heidelberg. Anyone interested in participating should e-mail: ells@embl.de.

The ELLS is funded through EMBL and a grant from the European Union called "Continuing Education for European Biology Teachers (CeeBT)," which is coordinated by EMBO. Under the CeeBT project, ELLS organizes the LearningLAB courses and will produce an on-line TeachingBASE archive. EMBO coordinates large teachers workshops events throughout Europe. The next EMBO workshop is in Hamburg, Germany, on August 21-23.

Interactive science centre "ExploHeidelberg" opens its doors

Inspired by the "Exploratorium" in San Francisco and interactive science centers in Rehovot, Israel, and elsewhere, ExploHeidelberg has been opened in the technology park in Neuenheimer Feld. The permanent exhibition, which contains hands-on activities and experiments in science, promises to become a popular magnet for young people, families, and schools. Located in building INF 582, the center has been developed as a cooperative project between the city and the Heidelberg teachers college.

Heidelberg Lord Mayor Beate Weber and Dr. Klaus Plate, business director of the Heidelberg Technology Park, officially opened ExploHeidelberg on July 5. The new learning center has a main target audience of children from six to fifteen years of age, but adults who attended the opening ceremony

had just as much fun trying out the interactive displays in the exhibition.

According to Beate Weber, the center is unique in Germany in that the exhibition has direct links to local science and business partners. The Neuenheimer Feld technology park lies next to the teacher's college and the Heidelberg University campus. Another unique feature is that some exhibits have been purchased from other institutions like the San Francisco Exploratorium, the "Phänomenata" in Flensburg and the University of Düsseldorf, while others have been developed on-site, by students of the college or apprentices at cooperating industries.

The center has three activity areas: interactive displays, a media lab, and a "LearnLab". The LearnLab consists of approximately 150 square meters of lab space, permitting life

science experiments such as work with cell cultures and microscopy.

The first program, called "Perceiving with eyes and ears," includes presentations of spectra, optical illusions, light and shadows, a light-and-sound organ, and other phenomena. All schools in the Heidelberg area may visit the facility upon prior registration.

Further information can be obtained from Prof. Charlotte Schulze, the director of ExploHeidelberg (charlotte.schulze@explo-heidelberg.de), or Prof. Manuela Welzel, Prorektorin of the Pädagogischen Hochschule (welzel@ph-heidelberg.de). ExploHeidelberg's website can be found at www.explo-heidelberg.de.

EMBL/EMBO hold summer symposium on the future of science publishing

On Saturday June 7, scientists, publishers, librarians and the public met at the Print Media Academy in downtown Heidelberg for a discussion on the future of science publishing. The aim of this symposium was to promote "reflection and debate on how a wide range of new technologies that are ushering in a new Digital Age across the globe are affecting, and will continue to affect, publishing practices in science."

The two of us, Ph.D. students at EMBL, initiated this particular science and society event. As EMBL and EMBO agreed to jointly sponsor the event, we also helped Halldór Stefánsson (EMBL) and Les Grivell (EMBO) to organize. The initial motivation came from Rune's involvement in Open Source politics, e.g. through the LINUX community, but Federico also saw how Open source and Open access to literature and data are two sides of the same coin.

The symposium was structured around a series of short talks followed by a panel discussion. After Frank Gannon (Executive Director of EMBO) opened the meeting, a science historian, Jean-Claude Guéron (The University of Montreal), delivered a keynote lecture. Professor Guéron set the scene for the audience by summarizing the history of science publishing and by showing how the current situation within that field has its roots in the formation of journals of professional scientific societies. Jean-Claude's historical analysis demonstrated a number of negative effects that have resulted from restricting free and universal access to published scientific information. These range from third world scientists being excluded from scientific advancement for economic reasons, to the "absurdity" of publicly funded science in the industrial world ending up in private databases.

Iain Mattaj (Scientific Director, EMBL) reflected on how the life sciences are getting more and more data-centric and integrative. This means that sampling of literature is more and more needed e.g. as part of data or knowledge mining. Restricting free access to literature is therefore not just a violation of conventional values of the scientific community, but can seriously obstruct scientific advancement. Computational analysis of the full scientific literature corpus is just one example of this. Open access is therefore the only constructive way to avoid pitfalls, Iain concluded.

Michael Eisen (Board of Directors, Public Library of Science) described how dissatisfaction with the current practices and standards in publishing led him and others to found PLoS for the promotion of freely accessible publishing of scientific literature. Mike argued that scientific publications should be viewed as fundamental to the research process, and that the costs should therefore be transferred from library budgets onto research grants. PLoS is launching its flagship journal, *PLoS Biology*, in October to compete directly against the leading commercial journals such as *Nature*, *Cell* and *Science*. This journal will be entirely based on a pay-up-front system where, instead of having users pay a fee per access, the authors/institution will pay a fixed fee per publication (approximately \$1500). Such a system makes access to scientific resources immediate, free and universal, and leaves copyright with the authors. The proponents of open archives claim that the impact factor should on average increase 2-3 fold!

Elsevier's CEO Derk Haank represented the publishing industry. Derk discussed Elsevier's policies on publishing and mentioned that next year, all of Elsevier's

approx. five million articles will be online. Derk concluded that he would change Elsevier's business model to pay-up-front "tomorrow" if the scientific community would demand it! [A week after the symposium Derk Haank left Elsevier to take up a new position at Springer Verlag.]

Reflecting on calls for radical changes, Frank Gannon expressed the view that they should ideally be integrated as a part of an evolving process, and that care should be taken to protect the careers of young scientists while reforming publishing standards.

Dr. Diann Rusch-Feja (Director of the Information Resource Centre, International University, Bremen) represented the librarians at the meeting and chaired the panel discussion. She stressed that open access was indeed essential for the creation of archives of scientific literature similar to our open databases (e.g. EMBL, SWISS-PROT).

Concluding remarks:

The EMBL scientific community surprised us thoroughly at this meeting by its relative absence. If ever there was a topic in which scientists have vested interests it is science publishing. It is our impression that many people either are not aware of the ongoing debate about open access publishing or, for whatever reasons, choose to ignore it. Are they afraid of rocking the boat? But what if the boat is leaking? Improving and reshaping publishing standards is a legitimate concern for all scientists and, as an internationally renowned institution, the EMBL should play an active role in that endeavor. Maybe we should insist and organize another follow-up meeting around this topic sometime in the near future?

- Federico De Masi & Rune Linding

BioMed Central now available at EMBL

BioMed Central is, with almost 100 journals, the foremost open access publisher. BioMed Central's journals include the very selective 'Journal of Biology' and 'Genome Biology'. All research published by BioMed Central is 'open access', i.e. freely available to anyone.

There is little discussion any longer about the benefits of open access. However, there is still debate over the economic practicalities of making the transition. After all, publishing does cost real money.

How is open access paid for? At BioMed Central, an article is subjected to peer-review and if accepted, a so-called Article Processing Charge (APC) is levied. In order to alleviate the burden on individual authors, BioMed Central has pioneered an 'institutional membership' scheme, a blanket

arrangement whereby authors belonging to the member institution get an automatic APC-waiver.

Given the real benefits to science, BioMed Central is convinced of the inevitability of open access gaining more and more currency. An increasing number of authors are submitting to open access journals (particularly those who extend the pushing of boundaries – so common in their approach to research – to their publishing practice), and more and more institutions and funding bodies – even politicians – are concluding that open access offers real hope for a major increase in the efficiency of science communication, so sorely lacking in the traditional subscription-based models.

- Jan Velterop, BioMed Central

As of July 1, 2003, **EMBL Heidelberg has joined BioMedCentral** as an institutional member. Membership entitles all scientists in Heidelberg to publish with BMC without having to pay the usual \$500 article processing charge. Other benefits of publishing with BMC include the fact that authors retain copyright of their work and are free to post it elsewhere.

For more details have a look at: www.biomedcentral.com/info/authors/ or contact the Szilard Library (library@embl.de, <http://library.embl-heidelberg.de/>).

the EMBO corner

Publishers perish??

A topic of great importance to all scientists is how their research is published. The awkward part is that there are costs associated with the process of publication. The practical question is how these costs, which are unavoidable, should be met. The current model requires that libraries pay subscriptions for the scientists in the institutes to have access to the publications. The negative side of this is that those who are not lucky enough to be in a location where a subscription is paid do not have rapid access to the results of the scientific community which is funded from the public's purse. The open access models reverse this process by sug-

gesting that all of the material should be freely available to anybody who wishes to read it but that the costs should be met by the authors *i.e.* again from the public purse. The current campaign to shift the business model has many positive elements but it is misleading to suggest that there is an absolute right and an absolute wrong in this discussion.

The involvement of EMBO in this debate is multiple. On the one hand, as a scientific organization, we would wish that all science could be read by all without barriers. But, we are also part of the existing standard model in which access to scientific journals is dependent on subscriptions by or for the readers. Nevertheless, within that restricting context we have *The EMBO Journal* and *EMBO reports* made freely available to all, after a twelve-month delay, via Pub Med Central. We also make them immediately available electronically to the impoverished countries of the world as a component of a WHO brokered agreement between many existing publishers. And given the changes in how publishers work, *The EMBO Journal* and *EMBO reports* will be much more widely available from 2004, through site licenses

that make the publications open to all scientists within a particular site.

This does not mean that we are complacent. EMBO, like all other journal owning scientific societies is indeed looking at the prospect of an open access author funded publication. The cost per author in the open access process has yet to be defined, but it will be at least \$1500 - \$2000. To put these costs in context; an institute subscription price for the combination of *The EMBO Journal* and *EMBO reports* in 2004 will be slightly more than \$2,000. In other words, the cost of one paper in an open access journal is close to the sum that is required for an institution like EMBL to pay for full access for all in the laboratory to all of the articles in journals of the quality of *The EMBO Journal* and *EMBO reports* for a full year.

This topic is indeed complex and there are other aspects that need further discussion. I will address it again in the next issue of the EMBO Corner with particular emphasis on the benefits that flow back into the scientific community from societal journals such as ours.

– Frank Gannon

Triple celebration in July on the EBI and Wellcome campus



The stuff of life. Onlookers come to grips with the structure of DNA.

The Genome Campus, home of the European Bioinformatics Institute, the Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute and the MRC Human Genome Mapping Project Resource Centre, held a series of open days between July 2-4 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the discovery of the structure of DNA, the 10th anniversary of the Sanger Institute and the completion of the sequencing of the human genome. More than 1000 visitors, including school children, local residents and VIPs, came to see the exhibition over three days. Highlights of the event included a 10-foot DNA model, hands-on biological experiments, and an exhibition-wide competition to win a mountain bike.

– Jane Lomax, EMBL-EBI

Photos courtesy of Richard Summers, Graphics Unit, Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute.



It's all stringy! Children at the Genome Campus Open Day precipitate salmon sperm DNA.

Establishing an EMBL Endowment Fund

an interview with Heidi Noack, EMBL's Endowment Officer

Why did EMBL initiate an Endowment Fund?

The lingering idea for an Endowment Fund gained momentum in 2001, when Fotis asked Matthias Hentze to take the lead to establish such a fund. Most EMBL research is funded according to a 5-year spending plan called the Indicative Scheme. This is a plan that sets out the scientific priorities for the lab and its funding, and is approved by Council. EMBL's senior management felt, however, that the lab also needed to have a flexible source of funding with which to finance projects not covered within the Indicative Scheme, which does not provide sufficient flexibility for opportunities that arise at short notice. This is where an Endowment Fund can be an extremely useful mechanism. It can promote innovation in all aspects of EMBL's mission, whether in research, training, development of methods and instrumentation or in the provision of scientific services. Council approved the proposal for the fund at their summer meeting and it was officially registered as a charitable organization on July 1, 2003.

The fund currently contains 200,000 Euros, though we are developing a strategy to approach potential donors with the aim of increasing the fund so that the interest accrued will fund the projects and the core fund will remain intact. Though the financial

climate is not as it was when the idea for the endowment fund was first put forth, we are optimistic that we will achieve these goals within the next years. We plan to approach foundations and private philanthropic organizations or individuals, and people linked to EMBL in the present or past.

How can EMBL staff be involved?

One of the nicest aspects of the Fund is that it gives the entire EMBL community a chance to participate in a very concrete way: they can open doors to their networks. I recently spoke with a group of scientists at one of the Outstations and explained the concept of the Fund. I asked them to think of ways they would find the Fund useful, and the floodgates opened. Ideas came pouring out. It was really fun to watch. My role in this is really just to open the gate door and allow the ideas to come forth, and then to help channel them into something that can be useful to the lab.

Endowment funds are common in the US, but this is not necessarily the case in Europe. Have you encountered many difficulties in gaining support and understanding for this project?

In the US, and in some places in Europe like the UK, endowment funds are a well-established funding mechanism for universities and research institutes. People who have

belonged to a community that has fostered them often feel a sense of duty to give something back to that community. In the rest of Europe, things are a bit different. Generally speaking there is much more emphasis on the State's role in taking care of the social welfare of its people, including support for scientific progress. But the idea is catching on and we hope to see it grow. One advantage that EMBL's fund has is that it will be global in scope. We'll be approaching people across the world who are interested in supporting life sciences research.

If a potential donor were to ask you why he or she should donate to EMBL rather than any other organization, how would you answer?

EMBL is one of the world leaders in modern life science, and truly a unique place. It is difficult to find such a young, dynamic, and vibrant mix of leading scientists anywhere else in the world. EMBL combines several European cultures, it provides a stimulating interdisciplinary environment, it excels at training and educating scientists, it identifies and supports highly talented young scientists, and it achieves major scientific results. It's an equation that works, and hopefully our donors will want to contribute to that.

— interview by Sarah Sherwood

from the Staff Association

Doctor Databank entry form. Staff in Heidelberg can now enter information into a "Doctor Databank" on the quality of care they have received from their doctors, dentists, *etc.* Comments are also welcome on the format of the web site, which is in a trial phase. But we need input! Please visit this web site (<http://194.94.44.65/>) and give your comments (negative or positive) on any health-care practitioner you may have visited.

1,300 Euros collected for Iraqi children. A total of 1,324.09 Euros was collected at EMBL for the SOS Kinderdorf in Jordan, an organization that offers homes, parental care, schooling and love to orphaned children. The donation will be specified for use in supporting Iraqi children made homeless by the war. Thanks to all who donated!

Web page for EMBL pensioners. There is now a separate web page on the Staff Association web site for EMBL pensioners, thanks to Ann Cooper and Kevin Leonard (see sidebar at <http://www.embl-heidelberg.de/~staff/>). The page is accessible only with a password. All pensioners whose address is known to the Personnel office should have received a letter, asking you to contact the Staff Association with your current address. We will then set up our own pensioners' database in order to keep you better informed in the future. Once you return the form to us, you will be given the password to the pensioners' page.

— Ann Thüringer

A taste of Tarzan



Thure and the bananabunch during a visit to Heidelberg's Botanical Gardens.

How do little eggs turn into frogs? This spring, a group of Kinderhaus kids observed the different stages of frog development live at the EMBL pond.

But the children soon learned that not all frogs are alike when they visited the

Botanical Gardens in Heidelberg. They got to see some really exotic species. The day started off with a "jungle breakfast": on the menu were fresh pineapple pieces and homegrown bananas. The children also smelled real cocoa beans and tasted some chocolate made from them. As they walked through the junglehouse the kids felt like Tarzan for the day. It took two very strong boys to carry a banana tree branch bursting with fruit. Never had any of them seen palm trees so big, and the leaves of the water lilies looked like you could sit on them! Little fingers could not resist touching and teasing the carnivorous plants... Fortunately all kids returned in one piece, hoping to visit again soon!

— Meike and Anna (Kinderhaus teachers)

EMBLEM holds biotech symposium at Print Media Academy in Heidelberg



photo: M.B. Hansen

From left to right: Keith Williamson (EMBL), Gábor Lamm (EMBLEM), Hugh Goodfellow (Carpmaels & Ransford), Cord Stähler (Febit AG), Bruno Kaesler (BASF-FB), Georgia Kazakidou (CGEY), Ralf Kindervater (Biopro), Klaus Düring (Axara Consulting), Martin Raditsch (EMBLEM) at the closing panel discussion of the EMBLEM-CGEY Symposium *Evolution of the Life Science Revolution: Leverage your IP*

- *New ways for sustainable Growth* on July 10th, 2003, in Heidelberg. The one day symposium brought together over 120 attendees from academia, industry and the financial world. The topics included Intellectual Property (IP) protection and management with tips and tricks of the trade from selected patent attorneys; innovation management and future business development from established pharmaceutical as well as young biotech companies; and a case study on going insolvent. The symposium was followed by the prize award ceremony of the State of Baden-Württemberg's GeneStart biotech award business plan competition. For further information see www.embl-em.de.

– Gábor Lamm

Laboratory Animal Resources move into new facilities

Out of the old and into the new. EMBL Heidelberg's Laboratory Animal Resources (LAR) staff have packed up their equipment and moved entirely into the new animal house.

For several years the LAR had been shuttling back and forth between the two facilities. The new animal house was completed in 1998, but several research groups had continued to occupy the older facilities. They have now been moved, allowing LAR staff to consolidate into one structure.

"The new facilities offer several advantages," says Mike Winnen, EMBL's veteri-

narian. "There is a state-of-the-art infrastructure, and staff can work more efficiently now that their work is no longer split up between the two facilities. With the donation of racks for individually ventilated cages from the Monterotondo campus, the environment is much safer, both for staff and for the animals. And now that we have incorporated our quarantine facility into one building, users no longer have to observe a three-day decontamination delay before going from one facility to the other."

The change in location will mean some changes in LAR working procedures. Please check with Mike Winnen for details.

FAQs from the personnel section

Payment of travel allowances

WHAT IS SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCE?

We pay a daily allowance to cover the cost of incidental expenses, including refreshment, while you are away from the Laboratory on official duties. The amount of the allowance depends on the period of absence from your home or workplace. We do not pay the full allowance when meals are already provided. Examples include lunches at conferences and dinners offered by hosts. Nor can we pay the allowance for days or weekends you take as personal time off work. Please record the start and end times on the form with a statement that you are claiming the subsistence allowance. It

helps us process the claim quickly when you remember to specify the dates covered and the meals received.

AM I PAID FOR USING MY OWN CAR?

Mileage allowance is payable if you have to use your car on official business. For example, when public transport is unavailable or to carry special items like scientific equipment and samples. Otherwise we can only pay the fare by public transport. Please state the kilometres on the reimbursement claim form and the reasons for using your car. There is a separate form to complete if you need EMBL insurance cover for the vehicle during the trip.

For questions about this or any other topic, email Annabel at goulding@embl.de.

news & events

The blank spots on the map of Europe are filling in as the University of Bergen in Norway becomes the 11th institution – and the first in Scandinavia – to sign a partnership agreement with the EMBL's International PhD Programme. EMBL PhD students may now receive a joint degree from the two institutes.

The fall selection for EMBL's International PhD Programme is now underway at the EMBL Hamburg and Grenoble Outstations, and at the Programme in Mouse Biology at Monterotondo. Applications are due by the end of August, and candidates will soon be selected for interviews to take place at the Outstations during the week of September 22. For more see www.embl-heidelberg.de/ExternalInfo/PhdProgramme/.

EMBL-Monterotondo, the Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche (CNR), and the European Mouse Mutant Archives (EMMA) jointly hosted the first colony management course in Monterotondo from 15-18 June. Thirty attendees joined eight speakers from the United States and Europe to learn about, and discuss, numerous issues relating to the effective management of animal research and production colonies.

Szilard Library has added new titles to its growing archive of electronic journals. As well as full-text access to several chemistry journals (Journal of the American Chemical Society back to 1879), or crystallography journals back to 1948 and JBC back to 1980, the entire "Annual Review" series will soon be available (e.g., Annual Review of Biochemistry from vol. 1, 1932 onwards.) As more content becomes available, the library hopes to extend access to even more journals for the benefit of EMBL researchers.

The Safety office's next first aid course will take place at EMBL Heidelberg on August 25-26. To be a first-aid helper you need to have a contract with EMBL for at least one more year and you must be ready to help when required. To join the course, get your supervisor's approval and register with Corinna (gorny@embl.de).

**Are you an EMBL alumnus?
Register for the
EMBL Alumni Association at
www.embl.de/alumni**



Faculty appointments: Ehmke Pohl has been appointed Team Leader at the Hamburg Outstation.

awards, honours & cetera

Frank Bradke, a predoc in Carlos Dotti's group from 1995 to 1999 was awarded the Human Frontiers Science Programme's Career Development award earlier this year. The HFSP's award is given to foster basic research focused on the complex mechanisms of living organisms. A founding principle of the organization is to support research projects of international and multidisciplinary nature in the life sciences. Frank is now an independent group leader at the Max-Planck Institute for Neurobiology, in Martinsried, Germany. His lab works on axonal growth and regeneration. (For further information see, www.neuro.mpg.de/researchgr/neuroregen/)

...from Intermedex

Intermedex has sent me an Accident Questionnaire. Why?

On receipt of an invoice indicating treatment of an injury (e.g., laceration, broken limb) Intermedex will automatically send you an Accident Questionnaire, irrespective of the cause of the injury. The invoice cannot be paid until the cause of the injury has been established.

Accident at Work: If the injury occurred during the course of duty (including journey to and from work) then the cost is covered by the EMBL Accident at Work Insurance or by the national insurance scheme, depending on your employment status. In all cases you should inform the EMBL Personnel Department of the accident. **Children:** If the injury occurred during school or kindergarten (including journey to and from) then the cost is generally covered by a national insurance scheme in your country. **Car accident:** Medical costs are paid by Intermedex. If a third party is at fault then Intermedex will attempt to recover the cost from the third party insurance. **Sport:** These injuries are covered by the EMBL Health Scheme. **Domestic:** Injuries sustained at home are covered by the EMBL Health Scheme. **Other:** Other injuries, not listed, are generally covered by the EMBL Health Scheme.

On receipt of the completed questionnaire, Intermedex will take care of all the formalities. For more information, please visit www.intermedex.de.

...from Anadys Pharmaceuticals

Due to the current economic environment, Anadys Pharmaceuticals has decided to transfer all research activities that were ongoing in Heidelberg to its research facilities in San Diego where work on the projects will be continued. The successful relationship between Anadys and EMBL and its scientific founders at EMBL will be continued. On behalf of everybody at Anadys we would like to thank EMBL and its staff for their support and contributions during the past two and a half years.

– Silke Schumacher, Managing Director

False Positives

Here are this month's contributions to our continuing search for the "Best of PubMed."
Go to www.ncbi.nih.gov and have a look at these PMID numbers...

1925710

10720343

7877904

2720499

11749017

Send contributions to info@embl.de

Who's new?

Jonathon Blake (Ansorge), Oksana Bershchenko (Nerlov), Julie Cahu (Surrey), Meikel Diepholz (Böttcher), Tetsuhiro Fujimoto (Nerlov), Johanna Höög (EM Core Facility), Ciro Iaccarino (Pasparakis), Michael Keese (Bastiaens), Gäelle Legube (Akhtar), Carmelo Lopez-Portilla (CNG), Sofia Pinto (Kafatos), Celine Pugieux (Ladurner), Jan Rehwinkel (Izaurrealde), Susanne Monschau (OIPA), Linda Sandblad (Hoenger), Malgorzata Schelder (Wilm), Susanne Schneider (Genomics Core Facility), Ekaterina Semenova (Rosenthal), Marianne Uteng (Surrey), Marcelo Viegas (MMPU)

events @EMBL

21-23 August, 2003

EMBL Hamburg

EMBO Practical Workshop for Biology and Chemistry Teachers

1 September, 2003

EMBL Heidelberg, distinguished visitor lecture
David Bartel (Whitehead Institute, MIT)

Tiny regulatory RNAs in animals and plants

10-17 September, 2003

EMBL Heidelberg

EMBO Practical Course on Structure determination of biological macromolecules by solution NMR

24-28 September, 2003

Wellcome Trust Genome Campus, Hinxton
Pharmacogenomics meeting

24 September – 4 October, 2003

EMBL Heidelberg

EMBO Practical Course on Modern Methods in Cell Biology

9 October, 2003

EMBL Heidelberg, distinguished visitor lecture
Robert Young (Whitehead Institute, MIT)

For more events, see

www.embl.de/ExternalInfo/todayAtEmbl/

New CNG newsletter to keep EMBL staff in the know! The Computer and Networking Group now publish their own newsletter. If you want to get the low down on services and projects run by the group, contact Marc Hemberger (hemberge@embl.de).