

## Chapter Tidbits · Chapter Tidbits · Chapter Tidbits

**P**rof Michael Baum spoke before a meeting of the IMA British Fellowship to report on a workshop he had organized in Israel in April on the topic: “The science and clinical management of the genetic predisposition to breast cancer”. The workshop was supported by grants from the Israel Cancer Society and the Academic Study Group on Israel and the Middle East, and brought together an invited group of Israeli and British scientists and clinicians to learn from each other. In his talk, Prof. Baum discussed the extraordinary mix of ethnic groups in Israel, with many genetic and cultural distinctions, providing an almost unique natural experiment for the study of the contributions of nature and nurture to the risk of developing breast cancer. For example, Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jews with similar cultures have striking differences in their risk of inheritance of mutations on the BRCA genes; the village and nomadic Arab populations have similar genetic pools but very

different life styles; and there are also Christian Arabs, Coptic Christians, Bahais and Druze. He discussed the unique opportunities and unique problems in Israel regarding screening and management of the disease, and explained how Israeli academics have exploited these opportunities in a way that could inform the rest of the world. He also summarized some of the British presentations from the workshop and highlighted how British academics had contributed to the understanding of the molecular biology of these risk factors, both in the development of strategies for the identification and clinical management of those most at risk and in exploring the ethical issues. He also outlined the linked social program, which provided a unique opportunity to explain to his British colleagues about the “real situation” in Israel and about Israeli medicine.

**Prof. David Katz,**  
Chairman IMA British Fellowship



*Dr. Jacob Urkin, Prof. Frank Oberklaid and Dr. Ronald Sweet*



**T**his year we invited the Jewish Medical Students at the University of Toronto to join our chapter. We had two meetings, including one sponsored by the Wolfond Centre, which is the Centre for Jewish Campus Life at U of Toronto.

The other meeting was an academic meeting, entitled Community Acquired Pneumonias. The Jewish Medical Students are very interested in making links to Israel.

**Dr. Rose Geist,**  
President IMA Canadian Chapter



**D**r. Jacob Urkin, a community pediatrician with a major interest in child health, was the guest of Prof. Frank Oberklaid, Head of the Center for Community Child Health at the Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne, Australia. During his stay, the IMA World Fellowship organized a meeting between him and Dr. Ronald Sweet, President of the Australian Jewish Medical Federation. Urkin also lectured before 50 Jewish doctors and students, members of the AJMF, on a topic they had requested, “Israeli children under stress”.



**F**or some years there has been a desire to merge the British Fellowship and the London Jewish Medical Society, but not enough to overcome the traditions and history of the two societies. Following a series of meetings, Prof. David Katz, currently the Chair of the IMA British Fellowship, will be announced as Chair of the LJMS. A merging of the two constitutions will hopefully complete the process and the new constitution will bring a new face to this group, incorporating other health professionals and students.

**Dr. Alan Naftalin,**  
Secretary, IMA British Fellowship