



James Rennie Bequest: Report of Expenditure – John. J. Grant

The sum of £150 was gratefully received from the committee to fund travel to the United States in July 1999.

I first visited *Akkadix Corporation*, a recently established plant biotechnology company located in San Diego. I presented the current work in progress in our lab including my own work on the isolation of a disease resistance *Arabidopsis* mutant using activation tagging in the Pr1-LUC designer background. My seminar was well received and we are now collaborating with the company who have agreed to fund research of a similar nature in a deal worth around \$1 million per annum for the department. I also took the opportunity to visit the prestigious *Salk Institute* also located in the San Diego's 'biotech beach' area.

After this brief visit to San Diego, I went to Baltimore, Maryland to attend the Plant Biology '99, a large conference encompassing a diverse array of topics. I presented a poster "*The Genetic Dissection of Redox Signalling Pathways During the Establishment of Disease Resistance in Arabidopsis*". This seemed to attract a lot of interest among the delegates and I received some useful feedback. On the basis of my poster the editors of Plant Physiology have commissioned us to write a review of redox signalling in plants due to be published in Plant Physiology at the beginning of 2000.

The seminars at Plant Biology '99 were diverse, well presented and informative. Of particular interest to myself were the sessions on plant pathogen interaction and plant insect interactions. However, I also found the phytoremediation, abiotic stress and drought, and functional genomics sessions, amongst many others, very useful in expanding my knowledge of these fast growing areas. Throughout the conference I found the experience of interacting with other delegates of all levels extremely rewarding. In addition I had the opportunity to attend a careers workshop aimed at graduate students and postdocs and spoke to the representatives from *Novartis* and *Pioneer Hybrid* about future job prospects.

I would like to thank the committee again for awarding me this travel grant.

John Grant

PhD student – Dr Gary Loake's Lab