

Minutes of the 38th Annual General Meeting of the New Zealand Limnological Society Inc.

The AGM was held at the Rutherford Hotel, Nelson. The meeting opened at 16.30 hrs, 30th August 2005.

Present: Neil Deans, President
Brian Sorrell, Secretary-Treasurer
and 45 members

1. Apologies:

Barry Biggs, Vivienne Cassie-Cooper, Clive Howard-Williams, Dave Rowe, Mike Winterbourn.

Motion: That apologies be accepted. *(Neil Deans/Vida Stout carried).*

2. Minutes of the 37th AGM:

Matters arising from minutes:

- *Name Change:* The treasurer reported that the adoption of the new trading name “New Zealand Freshwater Sciences Society” as ratified at the 2004 AGM had been completed. The original formal name continues to be used for taxation purposes and for formal communication e.g. with the Companies Office and Registrar for Incorporated Societies (hence its use on AGM minutes!).
- *Fortieth Anniversary:* Ian Boothroyd reported on several initiatives proposed for the Society’s 40th Anniversary. Ian and Ann Chapman are planning a book to document the history of limnology and the Society in New Zealand, and would welcome any material from members. They intend to make applications to the Lotteries Board and Heritage Fund (such Awards can be up to \$20000) to support the book. Another initiative is a series of oral history interviews with long-serving and founding members to capture their recollections for posterity. It is proposed to have the National Library provide training in carrying out these interviews for some members. It was suggested that National Radio may be approached to broadcast some of the information. Another idea is for a special issue of NZJMFR with guest editors from the Society, although some members raised the issue of the high cost of special issues. Finally, a special social event for members is planned. Ian made a call for volunteers to contact him to form a sub-committee for the anniversary.
- *Fish and Invertebrate Posters:* The President reported that copies of the Fish and Invertebrate posters are still in stock at Environment Waikato, and are available from Dave Speirs. Dave has started working on a macrophyte poster with assistance from macrophyte ecologists such as Paul Champion.
- *Newsletter:* The President thanked Ngaire Phillips for taking on the role of Newsletter Editor, and expressed the Society’s appreciation for Mike Winterbourn’s excellent editorship in the preceding years. The meeting was supportive of the current two newsletters per year system, with one relatively informal edition mid-year and an issue following the standard format in November. The Editor reminded the meeting that the success of the Newsletter rested upon members providing requested material on time and that she had already found some difficulty in getting contributions from members.

The advantages and disadvantages of hard copy and pdf format were discussed at some length, and it was agreed that the Editor would ask for email feedback on preferred format. It was also agreed that pdf versions of all future newsletters would be placed on the website, but with any membership lists removed for privacy reasons.

- *Members' achievement awards:* The President thanked Jon Harding for his efforts in preparing the discussion document that was circulated to all members in advance of the AGM. There was considerable discussion about the purpose and scope of the Awards. The Awards are proposed to be distinct from traditional Honorary membership, which is usually conferred on the basis of lifetime achievement on retirement or at the end of a career, instead recognising any significant achievement during the course of a career. It was emphasised that the Awards would not be annual, but made only when an outstanding contribution could be recognised. The cost of issuing medals was raised and would be investigated by the Executive and reported back to the membership.

Motion: That the New Zealand Freshwater Sciences Society Medal be enacted according to the following rules, using the criteria as proposed in the discussion document:

1. There is a New Zealand Freshwater Sciences Society Medal for an outstanding contribution to our understanding and management of freshwaters by a member of the Society, with criteria for consideration of nominations as set out in the document "Honouring members of the NZ Freshwater Sciences Society".
2. That any nominations for Medals are considered by the Awards Committee (currently comprising the President, Secretary-Treasurer, a SIL Trustee and two members elected at an AGM).
3. That it is noted that honorary membership of the Society can be voted at a General Meeting of the Society, for those members who have performed significant service to the Society usually over a long period, on the recommendation of the Executive Committee as set out in the Society rules.

(Ann Chapman/Ian Boothroyd carried)

Motion: That minutes be accepted as a true and correct record of the 37th A.G.M. *(B. Sorrell/Carolyn Burns carried)*

3. President's report:

It is my pleasure to provide my third report to the Annual Conference of the New Zealand Freshwater Sciences Society in Nelson on the 30th of August 2005. As our joint conference with the Ecological Society this year is occurring earlier than usual, this report is presented less than a full year after the previous one.

Finances and Membership

The Society is in a sound state. The report by our hardworking Secretary Treasurer, Brian Sorrell, shows our finances to be healthy and to be largely similar to the previous year. Elsewhere in this report the various projects we have been undertaking on your behalf are set out. The question arises as to what any additional projects the membership would like us to undertake on behalf of the Society. I would welcome any discussion on this point, as we exist to promote freshwater sciences and facilitate and support research and researchers in this field. Our membership of 372 is relatively stable, being a slight increase on last year. We

have noted that there is some turnover of members, but most are relatively long term in their commitment to the Society. Regrettably about a third of current members are behind in their renewal of subscriptions. It would greatly assist Brian to have memberships enthusiastically renewed without the necessity of reminders.

Preparations for the 40th Anniversary

Ian Boothroyd is leading preparations for our 40th anniversary in two years time, with assistance from Ann Chapman. Ian has proposed a book covering the people and some of the events over the last 40 years and also looking forward to the Society's future. He is keen to interview some of the members who have been involved in the Society from its foundation and has a variety of ideas including a potential special edition of the New Zealand Journal of Freshwater and Marine Research to celebrate the milestone. If you have any suggestions or are prepared to assist please contact Ian at Kingett Mitchell in Auckland.

Publications

Sales of the New Zealand Freshwater Sciences and Hydrological Societies' new book "Freshwaters of New Zealand" have been strong during the year. The initial difficulties with some misbound copies have now been rectified, which has effectively reduced our costs as we have fewer books in stock and Caxton Press have accepted responsibility for their error which has slightly reduced printing costs.

The Entomological Society has approached Mike Winterbourn to update the jointly produced standard macroinvertebrate identification text (Winterbourn, Gregson and Dolphin), which is proceeding swiftly and should soon be available. This should bring all the information up to date and will be a 'must have' for anyone working with stream invertebrates in New Zealand.

Sales of the New Zealand Stream Invertebrate text, (Collier and Winterbourn) have increased on reducing its price.

Posters

Dave Spiers has advised that the two posters of invertebrates and fish have been widely distributed but after reprinting there are plenty still available. Contact Dave at Environment Waikato if you would like copies. Production of the next poster in the series, on aquatic plants, has been unavoidably delayed, but with luck should be under way again soon. Any offers to assist in the production of other possible posters, such as of birds, would be appreciated. Dave Spiers has offered to coordinate the production, but would welcome photos and assistance with the text, which is not an onerous task.

Society Awards

Jon Harding has developed a paper reviewing our Society's Awards, which recommends, amongst other things, that the Society develops a medal to recognise 'an outstanding contribution to freshwater science'. This idea has been discussed among the Executive which supports the proposal for consideration at the AGM.

Conferences

The 2005 Conference is held jointly for the first time with the New Zealand Ecological Society in Nelson. A committee of locals from both societies chaired by Trevor James has been working away at an ambitious programme including a two day field trip option for those wishing to visit Golden Bay. Scheduling this conference required it to be held in late August/early September, which is not ideal, but was the only time when a suitable venue was

available. Some members have been unable to attend a conference at this time which is regrettable, but the opportunity to share ideas with our colleagues from the Ecological Society could only occur at this time. At the time of writing, many members appear to be taking up the opportunity to attend and present papers; certainly more from our Society than from our colleagues.

The 2006 conference is proposed for Rotorua. David Hamilton is chairing the conference committee and promises to have plenty of interest in respect of lake management, especially given the extensive plans to improve water quality of Lakes Rotorua and Rotoiti.

No specific location has been confirmed for the 2007 conference which would be jointly held in New Zealand with the Australian Society of Limnology. This would normally be held in the South Island on rotation. Queenstown has been suggested as a suitable location, being attractive to attendance by Australians who could fly there directly, although it suffers from no Society members being located there to assist with organisation. Otago and Southland members may be able to assist. Alternatives would be Dunedin or Christchurch.

Newsletter

Ngaire Phillips has taken on the responsibility for the Newsletter, with assistance from Mike Winterbourn. Ngaire has introduced an updated electronic format with two editions of the Newsletter each year, to keep the information more topical and provide a greater opportunity to provide information of interest to Society members. As always, any material provided which meets with editorial requirements will be gratefully received.

Website

Steph Parkyn has continued to operate the website, hosted by the Royal Society, found at <http://freshwater.rsnz.org/>. This provides not only information about the Society but also upcoming conferences, Society Awards, publications including the newsletter, and useful links to other societies. We are now seeking another person to assist with this role, which is not unduly onerous but does need someone who is web-savvy. Thanks for the good work over the last few years, Steph.

National Issues

Rob Davies-Colley and I prepared a submission on behalf of the Society to the Government's Freshwater component of its 'Sustainable Development Programme of Action'. In addition, Jon Harding and I attended some meetings of the 'stakeholder reference group', which was to give advice on freshwater matters from a variety of interested parties, including industry, environmental, recreational and scientific perspectives. This process has stalled until after the election, but, depending on the makeup of the next government, is likely to further develop a framework for future freshwater management. Freshwater scientists will seek to ensure a role for adequate science and research to inform the management of freshwaters in the future.

Public Good Funding for Freshwater Research

Concern amongst the science community is growing about the funding process for environmental research in general and for freshwater science in particular. There has been no increase in funding for environmental research since 1998, which means an effective reduction in funds of at least 10% in 2005 value. The Government has recognised that freshwater issues are both a priority and urgent through its 'Sustainable Development Programme of Action' and freshwaters are now recognised by the public as the most

significant environmental issue in New Zealand today¹. Despite this high profile for freshwaters, and ongoing interest by graduates in the freshwater field, the funding and allocation process appears arbitrary and takes a large proportion of researchers' time to place bids. The recently announced funding round from the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology was oversubscribed by up to 8 times. Such a funding environment leads to frustration and is readily criticised as being opaque, time consuming and wasteful of valuable resources. There is grave risk that in some areas there may be a loss of capacity and intellectual capital which New Zealand can ill afford to lose, particularly as it is not readily replaced. It is unsurprising that there are concerns from young people about the desirability of a research career in science. At least the wider society is aware of the importance of our field. The challenge will be to ensure that adequate resources are provided to support the research, scientists and the institutions necessary to deliver the required high standard. I would appreciate any views on this topic and any suggestions as to the means by which we make our concerns known where they might cause some improvement.

Concluding Remarks

I would like to express my thanks to all the members of the Executive committee and other members who voluntarily assist to keep the Society functioning and provide services to its members. In these days of 'user pays' it is very helpful that so many people are prepared to assist without expectation of financial reward. As the net is cast widely, I consider that none of the duties are too onerous. Any support offered and provided, however, is appreciated.

I move from the Chair that this report be accepted. (*Neil Deans/Carried*).

4. Secretary/Treasurer's report:

Membership

Total membership at 24 August 2005 was 372.

Membership figures for the last four years are shown in Table 1 & 2. Total membership is similar to last year. Due to the timing of this year's conference, the increase in number of paid members reflects those unpaid/in arrears in 2004 that have caught up since December. The 2005/06 mailout will occur shortly after the conference – please pay promptly!

There have been 18 new members joining since December 2004 (9 student/unwaged, 1 corporate and 8 ordinary).

Table 1. Financial status of membership

	2005**	2004	2003	2002	2001
Members current:					
Paid	237	154	162	216	219
Unpaid	42	100	109	59	127
Members in arrears:					
1 yr	38	47	34	55	-
2 yr	20	24	12	-	-
3 yr	8	8	15	-	-
Other:					

¹ Hughey, KFD; GN Kerr; R Cullen (2004) Public Perceptions of New Zealand's Environment: 2004 EOS Ecology, Christchurch. 102 pp ISBN 0-476-01265-1

Honorary	11	11	11	11	11
Life	1	1	-	-	-
Legal req.*	1	1	1	1	1
Societies	5	5	5	5	2
Libraries	9	9	9	9	9
Total	372	360	358	356	369

* Not a member

**Not comparable with other years due to different timing of conference.

Table 2. Type of membership

	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001
Ordinary	260	252	249	251	247
Corporate	24	23	22	23	27
Honorary	11	11	11	11	11
Life	1	1	-	-	-
Unwaged/student	71	68	71	66	82
Other (Societies)	5	5	5	5	2

Table 3. Regional distribution of membership and membership categorised by institution.

Regional		Institutions	
Northland	7	Universities	55
Auckland	34	CRIs	76
Waikato	89	Other Res/Env Inst.	33
Bay of Plenty	20	DoC	28
Gisborne/Hawkes Bay	7	Fish & Game	10
Taranaki	3	Loc./Region. Govt	29
Manawatu-Wanganui	21	Central Govt	5
Wellington	27	Companies	3
Tasman-Nelson-Marlborough	15	Private addresses	118
Canterbury	76	Libraries & Societies	15
West Coast	5		
Otago	30		
Southland	4		
Overseas	17		
Unknown	17		

Finances:

- The accounts were audited by Erin Humphrey of Brown Web Richardson, Hastings.
- The Society continued its expenditure programme approved at earlier AGMs. Support for re-printing of the invertebrate and fish posters (\$6050) exceeded the cost of the second printing (\$4784). The balance is going towards printing of the new macrophyte poster.

- As of 22 August 2005, there are ca. 300 out of 1000 *FoNZ* copies in stock and we have just passed the break-even point. The discounting in value of the invertebrate book stock offset against its sales leaves a net loss in book value of \$1100 for the financial year.
- Major income items include interest on our investments (\$2223), and higher total subscription payments (\$8713) than last year, with more arrears having been recovered this year.
- The 2004 Waiheke conference made a total profit of \$771 (\$504 of this banked after 30.6.05).
- We have one term deposit, the combined Jolly Fund, with \$38,345.90 at 26 August 2005. The Current Account at 26 August 2005 was at \$12,054.19.

Motion: That the Society Accounts for 2004/05 be accepted. (*Brian Sorrell/Maureen Lewis–carried*).

Motion: That the Auditor for the next financial year be Brown Webb Richardson Ltd., Hastings. (*Brian Sorrell/Greg Burrell– carried*).

5. SIL Trust report

The Treasurer was unable to attend and provide a report. A report will be provided for the next newsletter and AGM minutes. David Burger thanked the Trust and the Society for his 2004 Award and made a brief report on the conferences he attended.

6. Future Conferences

The President thanked the Nelson committee lead by Trevor James for organising a highly successful 2005 conference.

David Hamilton presented an account of progress for the 2006 conference in Rotorua, and confirmed that the dates would be 26 – 30 November 2006. The Park Heritage Hotel, which successfully hosted recent Lake Water Quality meetings, would be the likely venue. Planning of field trips was also well underway, with trips likely to focus on geothermal waters, and restoration of lakes.

Possible venues for the 40th anniversary 2007 Conference, due to be another joint conference with ASL and in the South Island, were canvassed. Only a few centres were likely to be able to accommodate the size of the conference, and Queenstown was raised as the most suitable given its direct air-links with Australia and its interesting freshwater environments. Key Southland and Otago members will be contacted to form an organising committee.

7. General Business

- The President announced that Steph Parkyn was stepping down as website manager, and thanked her on the Society's behalf for her years of service. Volunteers were called for, and David Burger was duly co-opted as the new webmaster.
- The meeting discussed the many difficulties and limitations in science funding facing the Society, particularly the opaqueness and arbitrary nature of the FRST OBI process, the lack of any real increase in freshwater science funding since 1998, and the bias of the Marsden Fund against non-molecular biology, despite the public identification of healthy freshwater systems as the country's number one environmental problem. Other

problems raised were the Government's presentation of non-science initiatives as 'science', and the low commitment of agencies such as MfE and DoC to freshwater relative to other business.

Motion: That the Executive draft a press release outlining our concern on the lack of resourcing of freshwater science. (*Richard Allibone/Chris Arbuckle - carried*).

Meeting closed 17.45 hrs.