

**Minutes of the 40<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting  
of the  
New Zealand Limnological Society Inc.  
(Trading as NZ Freshwater Sciences Society)**

The AGM was held at the Millennium Hotel, Queenstown. The meeting opened at 12.30 hrs, 5<sup>th</sup> December 2007.

**Present:** Kevin Collier, President  
Brian Sorrell, Secretary-Treasurer  
and 73 members

**1. Apologies:**

Tracey Dean, Steven Moore, Rob Smith, David Speirs.

*Motion:* That apologies be accepted. *(Neil Deans/Carolyn Burns carried)*.

**2. Minutes of the 39<sup>th</sup> AGM:**

*Matters arising from minutes:*

Dealt with under general business.

*Motion:* That minutes be accepted as a true and correct record of the 39<sup>th</sup> A.G.M. *(B. Sorrell/Chris Arbuckle carried)*

**3. President's report:**

This is a special year for the Society. It's our 40<sup>th</sup> birthday. There is something about turning 40 – for many it signifies the onset of middle age and the accompanying receding hairline, fading vision and expanding waistline. While our Society has certainly expanded over the years, from 45 members initially to over 360 now, our vision has broadened enormously and each year our members continue to cultivate vibrant new crops of freshwater science graduates.

Maturity also brings reflection, and now is a good time to ponder what the Society has achieved since 1968, reminisce on how and why things have changed over that time, and above all honour those who have made it possible. The Society was formed at a meeting in Christchurch in January 1968. Vida Stout was "Chairman", Max Burnett was Secretary-Treasurer, Ann Chapman was Newsletter Editor, and the Committee comprised Geoff Fish and Donald Scott. In 1968 the annual subscription was 50c. You can imagine the debate when the fee was doubled only a year or so later. Since then we have had 13 Presidents, 15 Secretary-Treasurers, 12 Newsletter Editors, and many Committee members. Brian Sorell is our longest-serving Secretary-Treasurer at 7 years. Joy Talbot was our longest-serving Newsletter Editor surviving 8 years, and Mike Winterbourn is the only person to have done that job twice! We now have 11 honorary life members, 5 Royal Society Fellows, and 5 recipients of Science and Technology Medals.

Our logo was originally designed by Carolyn Burns and has stood the test of time. We have of course changed our name from the New Zealand Limnological Society, a proposal first mooted back in 1975 – it eventually happened in 2004. In the same year there was also

talk of a joint conference with the Australian Society of Limnology – our first joint meeting was held in 1999. Things may not have moved fast back then, but in my view this was not a sign of inaction but rather contentment of the way we were. The Society was very active academically over this early period – there were discussion groups on a broad range of freshwater topics and much of the scientific groundwork done then laid the foundations for our understanding of aquatic ecosystems now. Many members also played key roles in defining the freshwater policy that drives much of what we do today. Our discussions are no longer restricted to conferences, and we now have the capacity to debate through email or our recently established public forum. Despite easier communication and increased membership, there is perhaps a greater hesitancy to engage in debate. Are we too busy now, or more influenced by commercial and political sensitivities than we were back then?

Over the years, the scientific focus of the Society's membership has shifted from lakes to fish to streams, and now it seems to be fairly evenly distributed across a range of freshwater disciplines with an increasing emphasis on environmental management. Our demographics have changed from a membership initially dominated by university academics, to increased presence of government scientists, consultants and management agencies, reflecting shifts in science funding and statutory responsibilities. These changes are reflected to some extent in our members' publication profile which was dominated initially by scientific papers, and then by reports or popular articles during the days of *Freshwater Catch* and *Water & Soil*, only more recently to become dominated again by scientific papers in response to PSGF contract requirements and PBRF ratings.

Back in 1968 there were two newsletters per year, something we have recently reinstated. It is enlightening to remind ourselves of some of the editorial observations in those first newsletters:

“More workers and considerably greater funds are urgently needed to fill the many gaps in our basic knowledge of freshwater environments before civilisation with its multiplicity of polluting and destructive agencies overtakes them irreparably. It is to be hoped that liberal and enlightened attitudes will prevail”.

Have things changed significantly today? Have we arrested the environmental decline or has the knowledge generated over that last 40 years highlighted different environmental challenges that need equally pressing attention?

This year has been my first as president, and I have greatly appreciated the support and work of your executive committee. Thanks to Ngaire Phillips for her editing of the newsletters, David Burger for managing the web site from afar, and of course Brian Sorell for running the Society. Marc Schallenberg has instituted the new public forum, and Neil Deans has provided valuable input on RSNZ issues. Thanks also to Chris Arbuckle for heading the committee that has organised such a great conference, and of course all those on the organising committee and who helped in other ways. I also appreciate the efforts of Jon Harding, Ian Boothroyd and Carolyn Burns for participating in committees, helping with 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary commemorations, and representing the Society on various matters.

This year we have made submissions to the Royal Society on the future of its journals and on the process for awarding Science and Technology medals. We supported the open-access and free on-line aspects of the journal proposal but opposed the amalgamation of all Royal Society journals into one volume. A New Zealand Freshwater Sciences Society medal has now been minted, and a review of our web site has been initiated. I look forward to seeing some of the changes you want implemented on our web site coming to fruition over the next year. Of course to do this we need to know what you want so please provide feedback to David Burger.

So what does the future hold? Where will freshwater sciences and the Society be in another 40 years? Already we are seeing the potential of technologies such as GIS, remote

sensing and genetic analyses which, at different ends of the spectrum, offer the capacity for large-scale environmental mapping and prediction, and the promise of one day being able to analyse community data at the species level simply by putting samples on a gel. Although these advances will no doubt profoundly affect the way we do monitoring and management in the future, I can't help keep thinking of one of the first things Mike Winterbourn told me – when painting big picture the key is always in the fine brushwork. Last year Mike told us about the “sense of wonder” that has motivated him over so many years. Let's hope we maintain our close connection with the natural world in the face of new technology and keep up with the fine brushwork.

Maybe by 2047 the competitive business model for ecological science will be abandoned and progress encouraged through interagency collaboration? Already the benefits of interagency teamwork are becoming apparent through projects funded by the Cross-Departmental Research Pool and Envirolink. Perhaps when we refer to someone's “IP” we will mean “intellectual prowess”, and our work will be supported by an organisation called “Friends of Research Science and Technology”. Will the Society be more proactive in supporting freshwater sciences in the South Pacific, and will we be publishing or own journal? You can have your input into the strategic directions of the Society through the public forum.

Of course, no one can predict the future, and back in 1968 our founding members surely could not have envisaged the Society we see today. Another newsletter quote from 1968 is:

“It would however be very dangerous to feel smug at this early stage and we should withhold our congratulations for another two or three years until we are sure that the original enthusiasm has generated a self sustaining body with a continual inflow of members”.

After 40 years I think congratulations are long overdue!

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

#### **4. Fortieth Anniversary**

The occasion of the Society's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary was celebrated by the meeting. In addition to the President's comments in his address, former President Ian Boothroyd reminisced about changes in the nature of the Society from a small group of University academics to a diverse group including many resource managers, and in the type of freshwater science featured at conferences. All members present joined in a performance of a new original song “Forty years a flowing” celebrating the Society and its achievements (written and sung by John Quinn).

Two special awards were made to deserving members with outstanding careers in freshwater science.

- Ian Jowett was the inaugural recipient of the NZ Freshwater Sciences Society Medal. The Award to Mr Jowett recognised his many years of research and consultancy on environmental flows in streams, and in particular his development and application of the IFIM methodology in New Zealand systems. Mr Jowett made a statement to the meeting thanking the Society.
- On the Society's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the President noted the enormous contribution made by Professor Carolyn Burns to the Society and the science of limnology over the 40-year

period of the Society's existence. He recommended to the meeting that the award of an honorary life membership of the Society to Professor Burns was strongly merited and long overdue.

Moved from the Chair that Professor Carolyn Burns be awarded an honorary life membership. *(Kevin Collier/Carried)*.

Professor Burns was duly congratulated on her well-deserved honorary membership (the twelfth in the Society's history), and made a brief gracious reply thanking the Society for its support and declaring her intention to continue her limnological leadership into the future.

A 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary cake was cut by Professor Burns, and the President thanked Chris Arbuckle for organising the sending of anniversary cakes to all the honorary members who were unable to attend the meeting.

## 5. Secretary/Treasurer's report:

### Membership

Total membership at 28 November 2007 was 364.

Membership figures for the last four years are shown in Table 1 & 2. Total membership is similar to other years.

Subs renewals forms for 2007/08 have been delayed due to problems with a dispute with our bank over visa charges – still to be resolved.

There have been 29 new members joining since December 2006 (15 student/unwaged, 12 ordinary, and 2 corporate).

Table 1. Financial status of membership.

	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
<b>Members current:</b>					
Paid	252	178	237	154	162
Unpaid	44	76	42	100	109
<b>Members in arrears:</b>					
1 yr	37	48	38	47	34
2 yr	2	28	20	24	12
3 yr	-	11	8	8	15
<b>Other:</b>					
Honorary	11	11	11	11	11
Life	3	3	1	1	-
Legal req.*	1	1	1	1	1
Societies	5	5	5	5	5
Libraries	9	9	9	9	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>372</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>358</b>

\* Not a member

Table 2. Type of membership

	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
Ordinary	235	244	260	252	249
Corporate	32	30	24	23	22
Honorary	11	11	11	11	11
Life	3	3	1	1	-
Unwaged/student	78	77	71	68	71
Other (Societies)	5	5	5	5	5

**Finances:**

- The accounts were audited by Stephen Dine of Brown Web Richardson, Hastings.
- The Society continues in sound financial condition and is in a good position to continue supporting its aims. Our total assets (including equity in stock of unsold invertebrate and Freshwaters books) at 30 June 2007 was \$71,379. Our 50% discounting of the invertebrate book value has led to a slight decrease (\$1148) in our total assets compared with 2006/07, although our cash flow income exceeded expenditure over the year.
- Book sales continue to be an important source of revenue. As of 30 September 2007, there are 138 out of 1000 *FoNZ* copies in stock and we banked \$2615 as our share of *FoNZ* sales in 2006/07. Sales of the revised Bulletin are strong and our share of 119 sales in 2006/07 was \$839, plus we have banked another \$779 since 1 July 2007. The invertebrate book also continues to make a modest contribution to our income.
- The net profit of the Rotorua conference was \$883.
- Expenditure was low in 2006/07 with the main expenditure items being \$3198 for the macrophyte poster printing and \$1000 for Jolly Travel support.
- We have one term deposit, the combined Jolly Fund, with \$44,914.87 at 28 November 2006. The Current Account at 28 November 2007 was at \$24,041.82.

*Motion:* That the Society Accounts for 2006/07 be accepted. (*Brian Sorrell/Colin Townsend–carried*).

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

**6. SIL Trust report**

The Treasurer was unable to attend and provide a report. A report will be provided for the next newsletter.

Following the strong support for the Trust and its activities declared at previous AGMs, the Secretary/Treasurer reported correspondence between the Executive and the Trustees endorsing the continuation of the Trust, and the recognition of the need to elect a new trustee by the Society at the AGM as specified in the Trust Deed. Nominations for a new trustee were duly called for.

Nomination: Jon Harding (*Neil Deans/Carolyn Burns*).

*Motion:* Nominations close (*Angus McIntosh/Colin Townsend carried*)

Jon Harding elected as a new SIL Trustee unopposed.

## **7. Publications**

Posters: The President reported correspondence from Dave Speirs on continued high demand for the posters and that Environment Waikato had funded a reprinting of the Fish and Invertebrate posters. Volunteers are required to provide copy for a wildlife poster as the next poster initiative.

Invertebrate book: Mike Scarsbrook noted that the invertebrate book was now on sale at \$24.95 a copy and that sales at this price had plateaued with 150 copies remaining. He suggested that remaindering the book at \$10 per copy may be necessary to sell the remaining copies.

Ann Chapman and Maureen Lewis are continuing to work on the revised Crustacean book – the President promised to keep the members informed on progress.

## **8. Future Conferences**

The President thanked the Queenstown committee lead by Chris Arbuckle for organising a highly successful 2007 conference.

Rosemary Miller has generously volunteered to chair a committee organising the 2008 Taranaki conference, also including Kimberly Hope, Chris Fowles, Bart Jansma, Logan Brown, Allen Stancliff, Mike Joy, along with Julie Baxendine from OnCue. She presented an account of progress for the conference, and confirmed that the dates would be 24 – 28 November 2008. The Plymouth International Hotel in New Plymouth is the likely venue. Rosemary invited members to contact her with nominations of themes for the conference.

The President noted that he has been approached by members of the Hydrological Society, with whom we have not had a meeting since 2001, about a possible joint conference in Whangarei in 2009, and has begun discussions with HydroSoc President Tim Davie. Ian Boothroyd noted the NZ Geochemistry Society as another potential partner with whom we have some common interests and who could be a third party. It was noted that there may be logistic issues with size for an appropriate venue in Whangarei if the conference is too big. Colin Townsend expressed a note of caution in having multiple joint partners with only limited common interests.

Angus McIntosh noted the cost issues for South Island students and the need to support their attendance, given the limited and expensive air connections into Whangarei. Richard Allibone also noted the logistic difficulties in attending remote conferences, pointing out the cost of the Queenstown conference for North Island delegates. John Quinn suggested that these problems were not insurmountable and could for example be addressed by providing bus transport from Auckland, which has cheap air connections with South Island centres. The Secretary reminded the meeting that bus transport from Auckland was used successfully to move large numbers of delegates from Auckland for the 1999 Wairakei conference.

Tanya Gray (Northland Regional Council) kindly offered to investigate the suitability of venues in Whangarei and to liaise with the President and HydroSoc exploring the possibility of a 2009 joint conference with HydroSoc.

## 9. General Business

- RSNZ Journals: The President outlined the Society's submission to the committee being chaired by Bob McDowell, which supported the development of the NZ Journals (particularly NZJMFR) as on-line only journals without page charges, but opposed the notion of combining the journals into a single journal covering all disciplines. Carolyn Burns reported that she had attended the RSNZ Constituent Societies meeting in November on NZFSS's behalf, where it was announced that RSNZ now has a new proposal which retains the original journals (except that the "Agricultural" and "Crop and Horticulture" journals will be combined). The President thanked Professor Burns for attending the meeting and representing the Society.
- Website: The President reminded the members about David Burger's proposals for enhancing the website. Costs for a professional redesign of the website would be ca. \$2000 plus software. The meeting thanked David for continuing to manage the website from afar and thanked Wendy Paul for her offer of additional help. The President invited members to continue to provide feedback and suggestions to David on the Yuku bulletin board or by email. There was general support for re-developing of the website and the meeting endorsed that the Executive move ahead with the website redesign. A number of members opposed any development of a log-in, members-only area of the website, citing problems caused by these for other organisations. The issue of the posting of the spring newsletters on the website with the member addresses included was re-canvassed.

Meeting closed 14.05 hrs.