

Minutes of the 34th Annual General Meeting of the New Zealand Limnological Society Inc.

The AGM was held at Massey University, Palmerston North. The meeting opened at 12.10 p.m., 21st November 2001.

Present: Jon Harding, President
Brian Sorrell, Secretary-treasurer
and 75 members

1. Apologies:

Carolyn Burns, Kit Rutherford, Mike Winterbourn, John Stark, Kevin Collier
Motion: That apologies be accepted.
(Jon Harding/Jonet Ward carried).

2. Minutes of the 33rd AGM:

Matters arising from minutes:

- These were dealt with under general business.

3. President's report:

Presidents Report 2001

This year the Society was saddened by the death of Dr Stuart Mitchell. Stuart was a long-term member of the Society, serving as the Newsletter Editor for some time and active for many years. Stuart will be missed by colleagues and students alike.

The Executive has had reasonably busy year, and we have instituted several new initiatives.

At the request of members we have instituted new rights for our Honorary members. As from this year Honorary members, of which we currently have 11, will have their Conference registration and Conference dinner cost paid for by the Society. The Executive agreed that attendance of Honorary members at the Annual Conference is something we should actively encourage, and we hope that this is one way of helping to achieve that aim.

This year we have revamped student reimbursement for LimSoc Conference attendance. From this year approx. 50% of the interest from the Society's term deposit investments will be used to provide awards for students to attend our annual Conference. These will be up to the value of \$100. This year there will be 5 awards.

From this year we will institute a "Limnological Society Research Grant" scheme. This grant will be up to the value of \$500, and will be available to student and unwaged members to assist with small research projects. Preference will be given to those not receiving funding from other sources.

As I mentioned in the newsletter there are a number of other issues facing our Society, some of which are potentially controversial. You will see a few of these listed in the "General

Business” for this meeting. I do not expect that we will necessarily reach consensus on these issues today. I hope that we can at least begin a dialogue. Above all I hope that whatever decisions we make are clearly those that serve the best interests of promoting Limnology in New Zealand, while still maintaining the impartial and friendly nature of our Society.

In closing I want draw attention to several members who have worked very hard for you over the last year. Brian Sorrell has put in a great deal of effort managing our Society finances, a job which is becoming an increasingly more time-consuming. Thanks also to Roger Young who has edited yet another excellent newsletter, and thanks to Kevin Collier who continues to distribute and manage the stream invertebrate book, another time-consuming task. Despite my comments at the Opening Ceremony, I do want to sincerely thank Russell Death and his team here at Massey who have spent more than a few long and stressful hours organising this Conference. Thanks also to the other members of the Executive many of whom have been called on to take on additional tasks this year.

I move from the Chair that this report be accepted.

Motion: That the President’s report be accepted.
(*Jon Harding/Jonet Ward carried*).

4. Secretary/Treasurer’s report:

Membership

Total membership at November 2001 was 369, compared with 335 in October 2000. Membership figures for the last four years are shown in Table 1 & 2. The steady rise seen over recent years continues, with an increase in numbers of both ordinary and student/unwaged members during this financial year.

An effort has been made to reduce membership-in-arrears and unpaid membership, with an arrears amnesty this financial year, hence the absence of arrears for 2001 in Table 1. The policy of deleting members who have not paid subs for the past 3 years remains in place. Happily, the number of paid-up members is higher than at the same time in the previous three years. However, many members still wait until the Conference, more than half way through the financial year, to pay their subscription.

Finances

- The accounts were audited by Stephen Dine of Richardson Epplett & Partners, Hastings.
- The Society ended the financial year with an operating surplus of \$25,225. Most of this surplus is represented by the stock on hand of invertebrate books. As indicated in the Auditors statement the Auditor is unable to offer an opinion on the financial statements of the Society. The need to provide audited accounts for the conferences, as passed by the 33rd A.G.M., will partially rectify this in future, although this resolution was not passed in time for the accounts for the Wairakei and Christchurch conferences. The timing of the conference so late in our financial year further exacerbates the problem.

Table 1. Financial status of membership

| | 2001 | 2000 | 1999 | 1998 | 1997 |
|----------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Members current: | | | | | |
| Paid | 219 | 144 | 120 | 175 | 179 |
| Unpaid | 127 | 48 | 145 | | |
| Members in arrears: | | | | | |
| 1 yr | - | 80 | 20 | 65 | 39 |
| 2 yr | - | 24 | 18 | 33 | 29 |
| 3 yr | - | 18 | 3 | 6 | 36 |
| Other: | | | | | |
| Honorary | 11 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 8 |
| Legal req.* | 1 | 1 | (1) | (1) | (1) |
| Societies | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| Libraries | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 |
| Total | 369 | 335 | 326 | 301 | 303 |

* Not a member

Table 2. Type of membership

| | 2001 | 2000 | 1999 | 1998 | 1997 |
|-------------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Ordinary | 247 | 228 | 228 | 219 | 214 |
| Corporate | 27 | 25 | 25 | 25 | 26 |
| Honorary | 11 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 8 |
| Unwaged/student | 82 | 71 | 62 | 47 | 52 |
| Other (Societies) | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 |

- The auditor has also determined that as the activities of the Society have now increased to greater than \$40,000 p.a., the Society should become G.S.T.-registered. The Executive will need to pursue this immediately.
- We have one term deposit the combined Jolly Fund with \$30,558, a large increase on the figure of \$17,819 at the same time last year due to the profit of the Wairakei conference.
- The Current Account as at 25 October 2001 was at \$20,777.82, having just been inflated by the arrival of \$10,432, profits of the Christchurch conference. \$10,000 will be transferred to the term deposit when it next matures (January 2002).
- We have also received \$1,536 from the Entomological Society from sales of the Guide to Aquatic Insects, against our investment of \$3,959.
- Stream invertebrate book sales – Kevin Collier reports total sales of 239 books as of 9 November 2001 (140 needed to be sold to break even). This represents income of \$14,312 banked from sales with profit of \$13,081.

• Financial Year End

Changes in the operations of the Society suggest that a financial year end of 30th June would be more practical to us than the existing 31st March year end. Most of the organisations we deal with (e.g. R.S.N.Z.) have moved to a 30th June end, and in particular it would resolve one of the on-going problems with conference audits identified by successive auditors.

Motion: That the Society Accounts for 2000-2001 be accepted.
(Brian Sorrell/Chris Richmond carried).

Motion: That Richardson Epplett & Partners, Hastings continues as auditor for the Society.
(Brian Sorrell/John Quinn carried).

5. SIL Trust report

The Secretary/Treasurer presented a report on the status of the SIL Fund, provided by Kit Rutherford prior to the meeting. Changes to the Trust Deed to ensure tax-free status for the Trust have been recommended by Hamilton solicitor John Wiltshire and these recommendations have been sent to the trustees.

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Assets at the start of the year | \$40,000 |
| 2. Donation received | \$20,000 |
| Used to | |
| Purchase new investment | \$17,500 (including fees) |
| 2000 awards | \$2,500 |
| 3. Income on investments (after tax) | \$2,592 |
| 4. Four awards in 2000 totalling | \$2,650 |
| Karen Shearer | |
| Catherine Hall | |
| Summer Warr | |
| Ross Thompson | |
| 5. Assets at end of the year | \$60,000 |

Sums rounded to the nearest \$100

- We are negotiating with IRD for tax exemption. John Wiltshire (Hamilton solicitor) is handling the negotiations. He expresses confidence IRD will relent.
- As part of this process I have had to re-organise the BNZ cheque and Investment Trusts. They are now all in the name of 'SIL 1987 Trust Fund'.

| INVESTMENTS | at 17/4/00 | at 31/3/01 | purchases | net interest |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------|----------------|
| BNZ NZ Blue Chip Equity Trust | \$9,069 | \$9,161 | | \$922 |
| BNZ Aust. Blue Chip Equity Trust | | | | |
| BNZ Int. Equity Trust | \$17,173 | \$28,675 | \$9,900 | \$1,6022 |
| BNZ Strategic Bond Trust | \$13,476 | \$21,798 | \$7,425 | \$8,972 |
| BNZ Cheque acc. | \$477 | \$360 | | |
| total | \$40,195 | \$59,995 | | \$2,592 |
| fees | \$78 | \$255 | | |
| awards | \$2,800 | \$2,650 | | |

6. Future Conferences

- The 2002 Conference will be held on the West Coast, with Shantytown being the likely destination. Phillipe Gerbeaux has volunteered to Chair the Conference committee. The conference is likely to be one week earlier than in 2001.
- The 2003 Conference will be a joint one in Australia with the ASL. Student travel will be supported by sales of the invertebrate book, and there may also be some assistance from A.S.L. for student travel from New Zealand. The location has not been finalised, but Warrnambool on the south coast of Victoria is one possibility.
- The 2004 Conference may be in the Auckland region. John Maxted has volunteered to Chair the Conference Committee.

7. General Business

- A new category of membership, Life Membership, was proposed by the Executive. This would involve the payment of one single sum that would confer life membership on an individual. Potential benefits were discussed, including the ability to recover any lost earnings from the interest generated by large sums paid in advance. It was stressed that Life Membership would be distinct from Honorary Membership, which is a complimentary membership awarded to distinguished members. The proposal will require a constitutional change by postal vote, but an informal poll showed that 73 of the members in attendance were in favour.
- National Wetland Trust - Ian Boothroyd reported on the current activities of the Trust, including progress in establishing an interpretative centre in the Waikato.
- Registration of Freshwater Biologists - A wide-ranging discussion of the benefits and disadvantages of establishing a system for registration of freshwater biologists was held. The rationale for the registration is based around the number of people without strong backgrounds in limnology who are appearing as consultants in tribunals and the environment court. Problems raised included the mechanism and criteria to be used, whether LimSoc is the appropriate organisation for this, and the need to include a wider description than 'freshwater biologists' to include all the skills of limnologists in the Society. There was considerable disagreement over the value of this at the meeting and the Executive undertook to continue the discussion later by email before any decision was made.

Meeting closed 1.10 pm.