

**Minutes of the 39th Annual General Meeting
of the
New Zealand Limnological Society Inc.**

The AGM was held at the Park Heritage Hotel, Rotorua. The meeting opened at 16.40 hrs, 28th November 2006.

Present: Neil Deans, President
Brian Sorrell, Secretary-treasurer
and 43 members

1. Apologies:
Ann Chapman, Mike Winterbourn.

Motion: That apologies be accepted. *(Neil Deans/ Ian Boothroyd carried).*

2. Minutes of the 38th AGM:

Matters arising from minutes:

These were dealt with under general business.

Motion: That minutes be accepted as a true and correct record of the 38th A.G.M. *(B. Sorrell/Maureen Lewis carried)*

3. President's report:

I am pleased to present my fourth report to the 39th Annual General Meeting at the conference of the New Zealand Freshwater Sciences Society, held in Rotorua on the 22nd of November 2006.

Finances and Membership

The Society is in a sound state. The report by our diligent Secretary Treasurer, Brian Sorrell, shows our finances to be healthy, with assets of around \$70 000 and a small profit largely from sales of the 'Freshwaters of New Zealand'. Most of our turnover is related to conferences which last year returned a modest profit, similar to the recent years. Our membership of 370 is relatively stable, having had a modest increase over 5 years ago but similar to last year. We have noted that there is some turnover of members, but many are relatively long term in their commitment to the Society. Regrettably, once again, about a quarter of current members are behind in their renewal of subscriptions although apparently this is better progress than in recent years. It would greatly assist Brian to have more members' process their renewals on first receipt without needing to be reminded.

Preparations for the 40th Anniversary

Our 40th Anniversary is now only a year away. Some progress has been made towards preparation for this event, largely led by Ian Boothroyd, although more assistance would be gratefully received. Preparations have been made for interviews with Society members who may recount the Society's history and comment on its role and future.

Publications

“Freshwaters of New Zealand” sales have remained strong during the year, contributing some \$3800 to the bottom line profit, after major expenditure on printing the previous year.

Advice from the Entomological Society indicates that sales of the latest edition of the jointly produced standard macroinvertebrate identification text (Winterbourn, Gregson and Dolphin) have been brisk.

Ann Chapman and her colleagues have completed their revision of the Crustacean book which is shortly to be printed. I recommend thanks to Ann for her efforts in expediting this work.

Posters

Printing of the next of the series of posters on aquatic macrophytes is shortly to occur. This has been produced with contributions from the NIWA Hamilton aquatic plants team and coordinated by Dave Spiers. As I suggested last year, 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

There have not been any applications for Society Awards this year. The Royal Society has also reviewed its requirements for awards, and has joined its Bronze and Silver Awards together. Members are reminded that nominations for any of these awards may be made by anyone, not just from members of the Society’s executive committee. I am sure there are many members of the Society whose work is worthy of consideration for awards. Enquiries with several bodies which have their own Society Medals such as the ASL and Royal Society have narrowed the field of potential producers of our own medal, but this has yet to be undertaken.

Conferences

The 2006 Conference is held in Rotorua, a topical location given the prominence of freshwaters and freshwater issues in the area. David Hamilton has led a dedicated local committee which has produced a varied programme with a great deal of interesting speakers, especially the plenary presentations.

Chris Arbuckle is leading the committee for the proposed joint conference with ASL in Queenstown for 3rd - 7th December 2007. The venue of the Copthorne and Millennium Hotels has been booked, which can accommodate up to more than 500 if necessary. I wish to thank the Society for their support for my travel to the ASL conference in Albury in September to entice their members to join us in Queenstown. A few photos were sufficient to achieve the objective; the only complaints were that the conference was outside the ski season, which is probably a good thing!

No specific location has been confirmed for the 2008 conference which would usually be once again in the North Island. Members of the committee of the Hydrological Society have suggested a joint conference with that Society in 2009, perhaps in Wellington. Any offers or suggestions for these conference locations would be gratefully received.

Newsletter

Ngairé Phillips has most competently managed the production of two Newsletters in the last year once again, with support and copy provided (sometimes with some coercion) from fellow Society members. My comments in the Newsletter have elicited some responses on what issues the Society should engage in publicly, as has some of the material expressing views on freshwater management in the most recent edition. This certainly raises questions of the role of the Society as a forum for ideas, not all of which would necessarily represent the views of the Society as a whole. As always, any material provided which meets with editorial requirements will be gratefully received.

Website

David Burger has willingly stepped up to operate the website, hosted by the Royal Society, found at <http://freshwater.rsnz.org/>. It is particularly pleasing to note that David has offered to continue in this role from cyberspace, since he has now returned to the Netherlands yet with this role is just as able to perform the task from the other side of the world. The website provides not only information about the Society but also upcoming conferences, Society Awards, publications including the newsletter, and useful links to other societies.

What should be on the website? Should we have a blog to deal with personal views on issues, should newsletters be available to non-members? The executive committee would welcome views on this topic.

National Issues

There has been less scope to involve the Society, as such, in national issues over the last 12 months. This is not because of a lack of national issues; quite the contrary, but because of a lack of invitations to engage in the process. Freshwater issues are appearing in the national media with increasing frequency. The latest is the release by the Government of three reports on the 21st of November, mainly produced by Society members, outlining trends in lake and river water quality and the increases in water allocated by regional councils in recent years. The Government announced an ambitious programme in March 2006 as the next stage of its 'Sustainable Development Programme of Action' for Freshwater management. Details of this can be found on the Ministry for the Environment website at <http://www.mfe.govt.nz/issues/water/prog-action/index.html>. A variety of tasks are being undertaken by officials and consultants, with only limited consultation with interested parties due to time constraints, as the Ministers for the Environment and of Agriculture and Forestry are expecting recommendations by early 2007. Some members of the Society are involved in various aspects of this programme, but there is no specific role for the Society in advising how to get the best use from the intellectual capital of the Society or its membership. I had offered to assist officials in ensuring that suitable range of expertise was considered for engagement. Management of freshwaters is to remain in the hands of regional councils. The programme includes, however, the drafting of National Policy Statements or National Environmental Standards on diverse topics such as managing the increasing demand for water; the means of measuring water taken for abstractive use; national environmental standards on the uses and values of waters; establishing criteria for nationally significant water bodies; methods of establishing flow and level regimes; methods of transferring water consents; methods of managing over-allocated catchments; developing methods for identifying and protecting natural character and biodiversity values; and consideration of methods to deal with nutrient, microbial and sediment contamination would be considered. This bold programme is being rushed in part due to the recognition of the significance and urgency of the issues. The question arises as to whether we will have better managed

freshwaters as a result. A further question for the Society is whether we could or should engage differently with this programme.

Public Good Funding for Freshwater Research

Last year in my report I raised the issue of a lack of any increase in public good science funding for freshwater, or indeed, any environmental research. I regret that I cannot advise any particular progress on this issue. It is ironic that the Government appears unable to make the connection between concerns increasingly raised by the public over the environment and the necessity of retaining the capacity to address those issues.

Relationship with other bodies

The Freshwater Sciences Society is but one of some 50 constituent societies of the Royal Society of New Zealand. It is an unusual relationship in that each Society is autonomous, but is represented nationally by the Royal Society. Indeed, our Society is well represented among the Council of the Royal Society, with Carolyn Burns as Academy President and Clive Howard-Williams as the recently elected Biological Sciences Electoral College representative. As President, I have attended gatherings of fellow society presidents called by the Royal Society each year. Chief Executive of the Royal Society, Steve Thompson, noted at the most recent such gathering in Auckland earlier this month that the relationship between the Royal Society and its constituent societies has matured somewhat.

There are several advantages to membership of the Royal Society, but we do pay a capitation fee to belong. My view is that we need to ensure that membership adds value for our Society. The most obvious is the hosting of our website. Our sister society in Australia, the ASL, pays a sum of more than A\$5000 for a commercial website host, many times more than our total capitation fee. We have sought and been granted funds administered by the Royal Society to support visiting speakers at our conferences. The Royal Society has now offered membership to any member of a constituent organisation at half price, without necessarily expecting a reciprocal arrangement from us. I can claim some credit for promoting this idea at last year's meeting of constituent Society Presidents. This represents good value for our members; if one wishes to be a member of the Royal Society anyway, it effectively makes our more modest membership free. We should not forget, however, that the principal value which the Royal Society can add is as advocate for the interests of scientists and science generally, which I believe is being well promoted now by them. If anyone wishes to know more about the Royal Society, their first contact could be with Clive or Carolyn.

Concluding Remarks

I would like to, once again, express my thanks to all the members of the Executive committee, particularly to Brian Sorrell, and to the other members who voluntarily assist to keep the Society functioning and provide services to its members. I am stepping down after four years at the helm. I have been proud to lead the Society and consider it to be in good heart. I wish the Society well and give my best wishes to the incoming President and offer to assist with one or two projects in the future if time permits.

I move from the Chair that this report be accepted.

Motion: That the President's report be accepted. *(Neil Deans/Carried).*

4. Secretary/Treasurer's report:

Membership

Total membership at 28 November 2006 was 370.

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

Approximately 45% of members have currently not paid 2006/07 subs. Typically, ca. 30% of members have not paid subs at the end of any given financial year.

There have been 31 new members joining since August 2005 (17 student/unwaged, 11 ordinary, and 3 corporate).

Table 1. Financial status of membership.

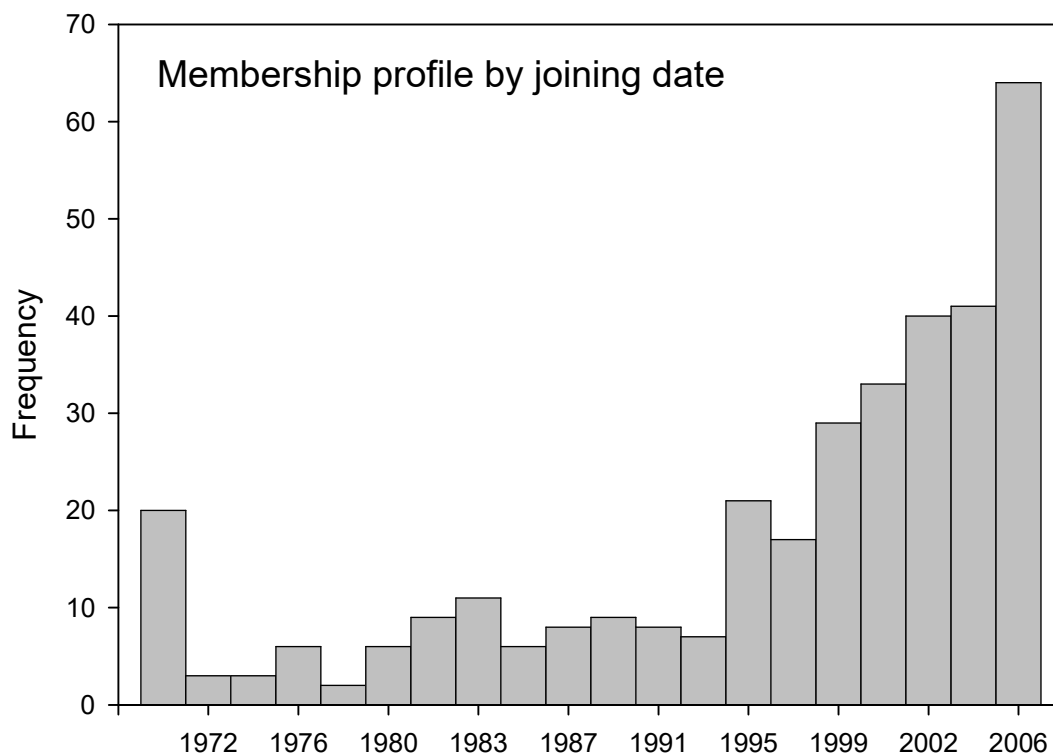
	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
Members current:					
Paid	178	237	154	162	216
Unpaid	76	42	100	109	59
Members in arrears:					
1 yr	48	38	47	34	55
2 yr	28	20	24	12	-
3 yr	11	8	8	15	-
Other:					
Honorary	11	11	11	11	11
Life	3	1	1	-	-
Legal req.*	1	1	1	1	1
Societies	5	5	5	5	5
Libraries	9	9	9	9	9
Total	370	372	360	358	356

* Not a member

Table 2. Type of membership

	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
Ordinary	244	260	252	249	251
Corporate	30	24	23	22	23
Honorary	11	11	11	11	11
Life	3	1	1	-	-
Unwaged/student	77	71	68	71	66
Other (Societies)	5	5	5	5	5

Fig 1. Histogram showing membership profile by joining date..



Finances:

- The accounts were audited by Stephen Dine of Brown Webb 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 2006 was \$72,527.
- As of 30 September 2006, there are < 200 out of 1000 *FoNZ* copies in stock and we banked \$3766 as our share of *FoNZ* sales in 2005/06. Our share of sales of the Bulletin (old edition) was \$242 in 2005/06; sales of the revised edition are strong and our current share since publication is \$839.
- Our share of the profit of the 2005 joint Nelson conference was \$516.
- The main expenditure item was \$3675 for our share of printing of the new edition of the Bulletin. Newsletter printing this year was only \$526 c.f. \$1951 last year, reflecting our move to electronic publishing.
- We have one term deposit, the combined Jolly Fund, with \$41,244.63 at 1 November 2006. The Current Account at 1 November 2006 was at \$14,608.54.

I request that the Secretary-Treasurer's report be accepted.

Motion: That the Society Accounts for 2005/06 be accepted. (*Brian Sorrell/Mike Scarsbrook-carried*).

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

5. SIL Trust report

The Treasurer reported on the large funds remaining in the Trust and the need to use these funds for the purpose intended. The Society's position that members overwhelmingly support the continuation of the Trust was re-iterated by the meeting and several members suggested continuing to augment the Trust funds with Society funds when revenue allowed it. The Executive and Trustees reminded members of the benefits of the fund and encouraged members to apply.

6. Publications

Posters: Dave Speirs thanked Tracey Edwards for providing text for the macrophyte poster and which has now been produced. He invited any members to volunteer to help on producing a new poster- suggesting birds or wetlands as a potential topic.

Invertebrate book: Mike Scarsbrook reported on sales of 20 copies over the last 12 months and that there are 120 copies remaining.

Freshwaters of NZ may possibly go into a re-printing.

The revised Entomological Bulletin has gone on sale and will contribute to future income.

Ann Chapman & Maureen Lewis have been working on the revised Crustacean book – this has been delayed because of Ann's illness but will ultimately be published through Manaaki Whenua Press.

7. Future Conferences

The President thanked David Hamilton and his team for organising a highly successful 2006 conference.

Chris Arbuckle reported on the 2007 Conference which will be held in Queenstown, jointly with the ASL on our four-year cycle. He reported on the composition of the conference committee, the venue (Millennium Hotel), dinner venue, and numerous field trip options.

A 2008 venue, scheduled for the North Island according to the Society's usual plan, has not been finalised but Taranaki has been suggested as a possibility.

8. Election of Limnological Society Officers

The following officers were nominated and duly elected:

- *President:* Nominations Kevin Collier (*Jon Harding/Chris Arbuckle*).
Motion: Nominations close (Ian Boothroyd/Angus McIntosh carried)

Kevin Collier elected President unopposed.

- *Secretary/Treasurer:* Nominations Brian Sorrell (*Ngairie Phillips/Ian Boothroyd*).
Motion: Nominations close (Greg Burrell/Steph Parkyn carried)

Brian Sorrell elected Secretary/Treasurer unopposed.

- *Committee Officers:* Nominations Chris Arbuckle (*Carolyn Burns/Marc Schallenberg*); Marc Schallenberg(*Jon Harding/Mike Scarsbrook*)
Motion: Nominations close (Carolyn Burns/Greg Burrell carried)

Chris Arbuckle and Marc Schallenberg elected Committee Officers unopposed.

- *Newsletter editor:* Ngaire Phillips (*David Hamilton/Roger Young*).
Motion: Nominations close (John Quinn/Kay Etheredge carried)

Ngaire Phillips elected Newsletter Editor unopposed.

- *S.I.L. Trust Fund Awards Committee:* Nominations John Stark (*Paddy Ryan/Colin Townsend*); Mike Scarsbrook (*Steph Parkyn/Carolyn Burns*)
Motion: Nominations close (Ngaire Phillips/David Hamilton carried)

John Stark and Mike Scarsbrook elected S.I.L. Trust Fund Awards Committee unopposed.

David Burger continues as a co-opted member as website manager.

Motion: That Neil Deans be thanked for his period as President. (*Kevin Collier - carried*).

9. General Business

- **Members' Achievement Awards/Medal:** Neil Deans reported that production of the medals is underway.
- **40th Anniversary:** Ian Boothroyd called for reports and anecdotes for a members' book on the Society. Neil Deans reported that development of the oral history project is underway.
- **Society Policy on Freshwater Issues:** Questions were raised on what is appropriate to be expressed as opinions or in discussions. It was suggested that items in the newsletter that are opinions need to be identified as such and right of reply sought on controversial issues. It was noted that the Society needs to value its members opinions but that these need to be distinguished from material presented as facts. Several members' noted the Society's role to publicise matters of science fact, but suggested the Society should be avoiding commenting on legal and policy matters, especially individual cases. The broader issue of producing policy statements and who would produce and vet them was also discussed. The Editor was asked to develop guidelines for the newsletter and the Executive to consider guidelines for wider policy statements.
- Bob McDowell asked the Society to make appropriate expressions of condolences to Ann Chapman and Vida Stout in their illness.

Meeting closed 18.25 hrs.