

Minutes of the 41st Annual General Meeting of the New Zealand Limnological Society Inc. (Trading as NZ Freshwater Sciences Society)

The AGM was held at the Quality Hotel Plymouth International, New Plymouth. The meeting opened at 12:50 pm, Thursday 27th November 2008.

Present: Kevin Collier, President; Marc Schallenberg, Elected Member; Neil Deans, Immediate Past President; Janine Wech, assistant Secretary-Treasurer; and 46 members.

1. Apologies: Adrian Meredith, Brian Sorrell, Trevor James, Gerry Closs, Ngaire Phillips, Chris Arbuckle.

2. Minutes of the 40th AGM:

Matters arising from minutes: Dealt with under general business.

Motion: That minutes be accepted as a true and correct record of the 40th AGM (David Spiers/Amy McMillan carried).

3. President's Report:

First up a highlight. It is my pleasure to announce on behalf of the Awards Committee that the NZFSS medal has been awarded to Graham McBride. Graham has had a long and distinguished career in freshwater science extending over 30 years. His work has bridged several disciplines ranging from pollutant transport modelling, to statistical analysis and design of water quality monitoring networks, through to human health issues related to waterborne pathogens. Graham is recognised internationally as a specialist in the philosophy and procedures of water quality management, and has been a tireless teacher and statistical advisor to generations of New Zealand water quality scientists, and more recently ecologists brave enough to go there. Congratulations to Graham. He is not able to make it to this conference, but hopefully will be available next year to present a plenary address and receive his medal.

In the latest newsletter I published an open letter on work-related stress outlining the results of the recent survey on this matter. Although, the response rate to this survey wasn't high as a percentage of total membership, many of the issues highlighted provided, in my view, important insights into causes of and potential solutions for stress that needed to be shared. If this letter is helpful to only one person then it will, from my perspective, have been worth the effort, so thank you to all those who took the time to pass on their thoughts. I encourage you to draw this letter to the attention of anyone who you think might benefit from reading it. Alternatively, if you provide me with contact details I am happy to forward the letter on.

This letter reinforces some of the issues highlighted in the recent science manifesto for the recovery of New Zealand science put together by the National Science Panel through the Royal Society. It is unclear whether any follow-up strategy for that document is planned, but at a recent Constituent's Society meeting that I attended on behalf of NZFSS, this issue was highlighted in the context of including the findings in the Royal Society briefing to the new minister of science. At that meeting, we were informed that the Royal Society has abandoned plans to merge the science journals into a single publication, so the New Zealand Journal of Marine and Freshwater Research will live on for the meantime although the long-term future

is still not clear. I like to think that the two submissions made by NZFSS on this matter had some influence.

Moving on to Society matters, some of you may have heard that Brian Sorrell has moved to Denmark for the next two years. Thankfully, Brian is happy to continue in his Secretary-Treasurer role from afar. However, some things can't be done electronically and Janine Wech has kindly agreed to be Brian's "stunt-double" when required. David Burger is retiring from the web master role this year; he has done a lot of work developing a new-look and more informative format which we hope will soon be up and running. Thanks are also due to some committee members who are retiring. John Stark is stepping down after having served 15 years on the Awards Committee, so thank you John for this extended period of service. Mike Scarsbrook has also resigned from the Awards Committee and from his role in co-ordinating sales of the NZ Stream Invertebrates book which has now been remaindered. One box of books has been given to each university to pass on to deserving students studying stream invertebrates. This remaindering will result in a paper loss that may affect the Society's accounts next year.

Ngaire Phillips has shown a lot of energy in editing the newsletter over the last few years, increasing it from an annual publication to two issues per year. We have certainly appreciated these efforts, but understand her decision to move on from this role. As Ngaire mentioned in the latest newsletter, it is becoming increasingly difficult to get material from members for inclusion in the newsletter which we are required to produce under the constitution. Personally I look forward to catching up on the activities of groups and individuals, trolling through publication lists to see what I've missed, and reading members' anecdotes. I'm not sure how many share this view (maybe I should get out more), but perhaps it is time to discuss whether we need to change the focus to re-engage with our membership and make it more relevant? I look forward to some discussion on this matter.

Earlier this year, the Society received funding from the Lotteries Commission towards an oral history project in recognition of the 40th Anniversary of the Society. Neil Deans received training in oral history and undertook interviews over the past 5 months with the following long-serving members of the Society, several of whom were founder members. Neil would like to thank those who were interviewed, including (in alphabetical order) Carolyn Burns, Vivienne Cassie-Cooper, Ann Chapman, Geoff Fish, Betty Flint, Rob McColl, Bob McDowall, Ian McLellan, Mike Patrick, Donald Scott and Mike Winterbourn. Their recordings are now being transcribed, with copies being made for those persons interviewed and made available for inclusion in any Society records and/or history. These will ultimately be lodged with the Oral History centre of the National Library, with permission of those interviewed. Neil would also like to thank the Royal Society of New Zealand (Wellington Branch) for assistance with a recorder and transcription, the National Library Oral History Centre, and the Lotteries Commission for their support and encouragement in this interesting exercise. Contact Neil if you would like to know more about the project, and I would like to thank him for these efforts.

It's great to see our first conference in the world's No. 1 city being such a success, and on behalf of the Society I wish to pass on our thanks to Rosemary Miller and her organising committee. In 2009 we will be holding our first conference in Whangarei in association with the New Zealand Hydrological Society (NZHS). I met with the NZHS executive last month to discuss the conference organisation. Rudi Hoetjes has agreed to be NZFSS co-chair of the organising committee with help from local members of the Society. In 2010 the conference will be held in Christchurch, or some exotic location nearby decided by the organising committee.

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

4. Secretary Treasurer's Report:

Membership

Total membership at 11 November 2008 was 395.

Membership figures for the last four years are shown in Table 1 & 2. Total membership is slightly higher than other years, reflecting a healthy number of new members joining over the past 12 months.

There have been 33 new members joining since 1 December 2007 (13 student/unwaged and 20 ordinary).

As reported at the 2007 AGM, we have had a long-running problem with our bank over charges and additional reporting requirements for payments by Visa, preventing us from accepting Visa payments over that time. For this reason a subs renewal was not carried out during 2007/08. Happily, this issue has been resolved thanks to a very helpful BNZ banker who helped us organise an on-line system that removes the problem. It also will mean much faster processing of Visa payments than before, and better itemisation on your bank statement for Visa payments – i.e. better service overall for everyone.

Because of the missing subs renewal, the current membership status figures are not comparable with other years. About 20% are currently paid up reflecting some members who we were able to process by other means. We will shortly be doing a two-year renewal to bring the membership back up to date: we apologise in advance to all members for the inconvenience of this, and assure them that normal service has been resumed!

Table 1. Financial status of membership.

	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004
Members current:					
Paid	89	252	178	237	154
Unpaid	202	44	76	42	100
Members in arrears:					
1 yr	37	37	48	38	47
2 yr	36	2	28	20	24
3 yr	2	-	11	8	8
Other:					
Honorary	11	11	11	11	11
Life	3	3	3	1	1
Legal req.*	1	1	1	1	1
Societies	5	5	5	5	5
Libraries	9	9	9	9	9
Total	395	364	370	372	360

* Not a member

Table 2. Type of membership

	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004
Ordinary	263	235	244	260	252
Corporate	31	32	30	24	23
Honorary	11	11	11	11	11
Life	3	3	3	1	1
Unwaged/student	82	78	77	71	68
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 were \$79,975. Expenditure was low this year and was exceeded by income by \$8596 mainly due to higher interest rates on our term deposits, lower bank charges, and the absence of any significant printing of posters or other publications during 2007/08. Of course the likely forecast given the economic downturn is for lower interest rates and higher bank charges!

Subs income was much lower this year than usual due to the banking problems discussed at last year's AGM, which have been rectified and so this should catch up substantially as we recover the arrears during 2008/09.

We also banked \$877 from sales of our various books. As of 31 October, 105 copies of FoNZ are in stock. The invertebrate book was remaindered after the last conference and the remaining stock is being distributed free to students at Universities, so overall book sales made a loss of \$996.

The Queenstown conference made a net loss of \$3369, mainly due to additional room charges levied by the hotel. This budget was finalised after 30 June 2008, so most of this loss will hit the Society during the 2008/09 financial year.

The other major expenditure items in 2007/08 were \$521 for cakes celebrating the society's 40th anniversary at the 2007 AGM, \$714 for the NZFSS medals, and \$686 for printing of the newsletter.

We have one term deposit, the combined Jolly Fund, with \$46,520.77 at 11 November 2008. The Current Account at 11 November 2008 was at \$15,608.76.

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

Motion: That the Society accounts for 2007/08 be accepted (Janine Wech/Angus McIntosh carried).

5. S.I.L 1987 Trust Fund – Annual Report for 2007-2008 (Prepared by Kit Rutherford, Treasurer; Presented by Jon Harding)

Charities Commission

A change in legislation required the Trust to register with the Charities Commission to retain out tax-free status rather than operating under an agreement with the IRD. This was easier to accomplish than expected and did not cost anything in legal fees.

We are now registered with the Charities Commission.

It requires us to send an Annual Return – due 30th September 2009 – should be no problems there.

Reminder – any individuals making donations to the Trust can claim a tax credit.

Income/Expenditure for 2007-2008

Trust	30th September 2007	28th March 2008	31st March 2008	14th April 2008	17th September 2008
BNZ cheque acc	63				38
International Equity	31,918		25,959		
Strategic Bond	23,194		18,445		
Total	55,112		44,404		40,145
International Equity					
Strategic Bond		-4,800		-4,487	
Adjusted total		44,404		40,678	
		Whitehead		Jellyman	

Notes

We made a net loss of \$5680 in 2007-2008.

The International Equities Trust has taken a beating. Hopefully it will bounce back but that may not happen for 1-2 years.

Sum available for awards in 2009 (based on the Trust's Deed)

Interest	NIL
5% of assets	\$2,000
Total	\$2,000

We are not looking in good shape to make any awards next year!

Motion: That the S.I.L Trust accounts for 2007/08 be accepted (Bruno David/Colin Townsend carried).

6. Publications:

- **Newsletter:** Ngaire Phillips stepping down as newsletter editor. Kevin Collier proposed that now would be a good time to look at the format of the society newsletter.

- Mike Joy suggested that a forum-type approach might be more appropriate, where people could add their opinion. Jon Harding noted that there had always been difficulties in getting submissions/responses from people and this was the main issue in the difficulties of the newsletter. Other suggestions from members was that an on-line newsletter might have a better submission rate and greater readership; the editor to deal with only one contact person per organisation; and allowing more time (2 to 3 weeks) for contact people to gather information to submit.
 - Newsletter frequency – once a year was preferred by members.
 - May was mooted as the best time to send out the annual newsletter.
 - Discussion on the e-forum as a place for popular articles was discussed. Comment was made as to whether this was the best place to put articles as people reading the forum were more likely to already be in agreement – placing popular articles in other forums would be a better use of effort.
 - Further discussion amongst members regarding the duplication of material in the newsletter with material on the internet (universities, NZFSS, etc.). One suggestion was that the Society could have a co-ordinated approach linking sources of material together, so that information would be comprehensive and up-to-date; whereas the newsletter is out-of-date as soon as it is written.
 - This discussion ended when it was pointed out that a newsletter is required under the NZFSS constitution.
- **Posters:** There has just been a reprint of all posters (3,000 each). They are freely available – just need to pay for shipping. Vivienne Cassie Cooper suggested that a future poster could focus on freshwater algae.
 - **Crustacean book:** Kevin Collier reported that Ann Chapman’s manuscript is with Trevor at Landcare Press. Trevor has made significant progress in assembling the book.
7. **Future Conferences:** The Whangarei conference in 2009 is being co-ordinated by Amy. It is a joint conference with HydroSoc. Transport to Whangarei was discussed at Conference Housekeeping this morning, with the possibility of buses being organised from Auckland to Whangarei (~2 hrs) a suggestion that will be looked into. The Christchurch conference in 2010 is being co-ordinated by Jon and Angus.
8. **Election of Society Officers:**
- **Kevin Collier** was re-nominated for **President**. (*The nomination was proposed by Neil Deans/seconded by Jon Harding*).
 - **Brian Sorrell** was re-nominated for **Secretary/Treasurer**. Currently, Brian is carrying out this role from Denmark with assistance from Janine Wech in Christchurch. (*The nomination was proposed by Shirley Haywood/seconded by Alastair Suren*).
 - **Marc Schallenberg** and **Chris Arbuckle** were re-nominated for the role of **Committee Officers**. (*The nomination for Marc Schallenberg was proposed by Carolyn Burns/seconded by Matt Bruno-Davidson; The nomination for Chris Arbuckle was proposed by Kate McArthur/seconded by John Quinn*).

- **Hannah Rainforth** was nominated as **Newsletter Editor**. (*The nomination was proposed by Kate McArthur/seconded by Alastair Suren*).
- **Mary deWinton** and **David Spears** were nominated for the (two) roles of **S.I.L Representatives**. (*The nominations for each were proposed by Neil Deans/seconded by Vivienne Cassie Cooper*).
- **Wendy Paul** is to take over from David Burger as **Webmaster** (non-elected position).

9. General Business:

- **Proposed changes to New Zealand journals:** RSNZ is continuing with the journals in their present form, however the long-term future of the journals is unclear. Voluntary editorship may happen in the future, so further developments are probable.
- **Website improvements:** David Burger has developed a new-look format which is still to be put on-line. It should be available in the near future. For any further suggestions regarding the website, let Wendy Paul know.
- **NPS Submission:** Carolyn Burns and Colin Townsend have agreed to forward the submissions. As an outcome of the NPS session on Monday, 24 November, nominated people are to develop certain points. These need to be placed onto the online forum for members comments as soon as possible (i.e. within the week). These will be edited by the exec. then forwarded to Carolyn and Colin. The deadlines are tight, so need to get these developed asap. There will be a further right-of-reply after NPS submissions have closed so members should think further about what should be clarified in the statement.
- **e-forum:** Marc Schallenberg reported that there were about 20 regular users of the forum. With the NPS, etc. there should be more opportunity to use the forum. Instructions will be sent out; members can submit anonymously if they wish. There are diverse ways of using the forum so members are encouraged to use it.
- **NZFSS representative on MAF Biosecurity advocacy groups:** NZFSS was approached (as a broker organisation) to identify someone with appropriate qualifications and experience to represent the freshwater perspective. Candidates were nominated at executive meetings. At the executive meeting at the conference on Tuesday, Natasha Grainger was nominated and she has agreed to take up this role. Kevin Collier voiced his appreciation in Natasha accepting the role. The NZFSS has also been approached by DOC to find a representative that can present a viewpoint on NZFSS. Some discussion needs to be made before a list of names can be put forward.

The meeting closed at 1:40 pm