



## Annual Reports 1997

### President's Report

The NZSPP exists primarily to foster the advancement of plant physiology in New Zealand. In the past year the NZSPP Council has dealt with a number of issues relevant to that cause.

**Conference Planning.** Meeting together and with other related societies on a regular basis is of undoubted value to our members. Ensuring that such meetings continue to happen and are well organised has been a major focus of Council. Thanks this year are due to several NZSPP members who served on the Convention Committee, including Jacqueline Rowarth, Peter Jamieson, and Mike Trought as our Council rep. Special thanks also go to our Secretary/Treasurer Julian Heyes who not only received and formatted most of the abstracts, but also did a great job in grouping them into sessions and devising a workable programme which accommodated all our members' contributions. This was on top of his Secretary/Treasurer responsibilities and the many other extra jobs which we traditionally expect Julian to do, such as producing the quarterly newsletter and administering the student subsidies and grants. No doubt all this took lots of time and energy. Thanks heaps Julian!

Discussion of possible future venues and deciding which other societies we should meet with have been topics of several Council e-mail conferences. Next year we have agreed to join with the ASPP and ASBMB in their September meeting in Adelaide, and in early December 2000 we propose to be joint hosts with the NZSBMB of a meeting in Wellington which will also be attended by members of the ASPP, ASBMB and ANZ Soc. of Cell Biology. That will be a large group, and a challenge to organise, but should prove very exciting and rewarding.

**Selection of Guest Overseas Speaker.** This year for the first time the Society is grateful recipient of a grant from the Annals of Botany covering travel and conference expenses of an overseas guest speaker. Prof. Bruce Schaffer, from the University of Florida, was deemed by Council to be the most appropriate of the nominated candidates, and was pleased to accept our invitation. We look forward to his delivery of the inaugural Annals of Botany Lecture at 8:30 am tomorrow morning. Suggestions as to who we should invite to our joint meeting with the ASPP next year are welcome.

**Nomination for New Zealand Science and Technology Medal.** The Royal Society offers various awards and medals for excellence in science each year. Affiliated societies such as ours are expected to provide nominations for such

awards. This year we made one nomination for a NZ Science and Technology Medal, but have yet to be informed of the outcome.

**NZSPP Web Site.** Council commissioned Don Bond, of HortResearch Ruakura Computer Services, to set up a Web Site for our Society. Don has done a very professional job. The fledgling product can be viewed on the temporary address [www.hort.cri.nz/~hrrdib/private/nzspp](http://www.hort.cri.nz/~hrrdib/private/nzspp) Within the next few days it should also be accessible through the Gateway to New Zealand Science, <http://webtwo.rsnz.govt.nz/contents.html> administered by the Royal Society. Although pretty basic at the moment, I expect our Web Site to become the communications and information backbone of our Society. Members will hopefully get into the habit of regularly perusing it for updates, which will be highlighted on the NZSPP Home Page. When there is an important major update, such as a new newsletter, each member can expect to be notified by e-mail of the new addition to the site. Links to other sites of interest to plant physiologists will also be added.

The issue of what information about our members and their interests should be included on the Web Site needs to be approached carefully, paying full regard to privacy issues. The hard-copy list of members and their interests which Julian produces every couple of years has been commended by several members as particularly useful. An on-line equivalent which is kept up to date and only a few key-strokes away should prove even more useful.

Your ideas as to what else might usefully be included in our Web Site will be most welcome. Now that the basic structure of the site has been established, I hope to learn how to maintain and modify it, so that we are not incurring ongoing site maintenance charges.

**Wonderful Science** If we dare to dream of breaking through the thought barriers that limit our current understanding of the life processes of plants, perhaps we should contemplate:

...we die on the day  
when our lives cease to be illumined  
by the steady radiance  
renewed daily,

To be surprised, to wonder,  
is to begin to understand.

of a wonder,  
the source of which  
is beyond reason.

*Jose Ortega y Gasset*

*Dag Hammarskjöld*

*Keith Sharrock, August 25, 1997*