



Annual Reports 2004

President's Report

The New Zealand Society of Plant Physiologists has continued to play a distinctive role in promoting the interests of our scientific discipline. Primarily this involves sponsoring students to present their work at international conferences and at meetings of the Society. We have been pleased to continue to find high-quality student applicants competing for our sponsorship and it is appropriate that I recognise the efforts of their supervisors who often are instrumental in bringing the existence of our Society to their student's attention.

It is a pleasure to acknowledge the continuing support we have received from the Annals of Botany. They sponsor the delivery of an annual address at our conference, allowing us to bring in an overseas speaker. This year we met in September 2004 with the NZ and Australian Societies for Horticultural Science in Cooloom, Australia. We ran two symposia at the conference (Plant Stress and Plants and Human Health) and welcomed Dr John Finley from the USDA Grant Forks Human Nutrition Center, North Dakota as our Annals of Botany Speaker. Attendance by our members at this meeting was not high, unlike our September 2003 meeting with the Australian Society for Plant Science in Melbourne. We recognise the need to meet with a range of other societies, because of the breadth of interests of our members, and will welcome discussion on next year's preferred partner organisation.

We have continued to raise the profile of plant physiology in New Zealand through the award of an Outstanding Physiologist medal. This year's recipient has already been announced: Dr Ralph Bungard; and we have heard him speak today on his core interest, the residual photosynthetic machinery in a parasitic plant, *Cuscuta*. Last year the Royal Society of New Zealand (RSNZ) organised the inaugural National Science Honours Dinner, which was held in Auckland last October. We took advantage of RSNZ's invitation and re-presented our Outstanding Physiologist award at the dinner. The recipient at that time was Prof Peter Bannister and the whole occasion was a great success. This year we shall do the same, and Ralph's medal will be re-presented by our incoming President at a dinner in Christchurch. I have made a point of representing our Society at an annual meeting of Society Presidents organised by RSNZ annually in June and I am satisfied that we have gained greater visibility in Wellington through these activities.

We are a small society staffed entirely by volunteers and with a correspondingly low membership fee. We have inherited a bank balance which we put to good use, largely in supporting students. I believe we have continued to play a valuable role for our discipline, while endeavouring to collaborate closely with related science societies. I shall watch with interest the directions our Society follows under the helmsmanship of our new president.

Julian Heyes
President, NZSPP
20th October, 2004

Treasurer's Report 2004

The statement of receipts and payments for the year ended 31 March 2004 is available as a hard copy.

As of 31 March 2004 we had approximately 172 members on our books (124 Full Members, 32 Associate Members and 7 Life Members). This represents essentially no change from last year as numbers fluctuate slightly with resignations and new members joining.

Total income is \$5,698.57 more than last year, with the increase resulting from the receipt of the society's share of \$11,077.07 from the surplus created by the 2002 Microbes and Molecules Conference (net income of \$8,077.07 for the society after accounting for the seed money paid for the conference in the previous year). No payment for an Annals of Botany Speaker was received this year because our conference was held jointly in Melbourne with the Australian Society of Plant Scientists. When we meet jointly with ASPS only one Annals of Botany Speaker is organised between the two societies, and this year the receipt of income and payment of expenses for the speaker was arranged by the Australian society. Income from membership decreased slightly this year, the result of fewer members needing to catch up on arrears payments.

Total expenses decreased for the current financial year by \$4107.46, primarily because no conference seed money was paid in the current year and there were no Annals of Botany Speaker expenses. Outstanding Plant Physiologist Award costs were \$1,245.20 last year, reflecting the extra cost of making the award to Professor Peter Bannister in Melbourne, rather than at a New Zealand conference venue.

We are pleased to report that we managed to increase student travel subsidies again this year, with \$2,500 spent supporting five students traveling to our 2003 annual conference in Melbourne (\$500 each awarded to Jenny Schneiderheinze, Hema Nair, Jan Binnie, Sophie Walker and Jongjin Shang as support to attend our 2003 annual conference in Melbourne), and \$649 awarded to Tina Summerfield to assist with expenses for a conference in Japan. We also awarded two best poster prizes of \$100 each to Sophie Walker and Jongjin Shang for their contributions to the Melbourne Combio conference.

The overall result for this financial year was that income exceeded expenses by \$8947.61, primarily the result of the surplus payment from the 2002 conference. We therefore remain in an exceptionally strong position, able to support conference travel for as many worthy students as we can find. We increased student payments in the financial year reported here, and continue to support students as generously as possible in the current year. However, our limitation remains that not enough students are applying for travel support or attending our conferences. We again strongly encourage members to seek new student and full members, and to identify potential applicants for student travel support.

Our accounts have been reviewed free of charge by Tania Delahunty, a chartered accountant based in Tauranga.

Mike Clearwater
Secretary / Treasurer NZSPP