



New Zealand Society of Plant Biologists

## **2016 AGM Minutes New Zealand Society of Plant Biologists**

The Annual General Meeting of the New Zealand Society of Plant Biologists Inc. was held at The Rutherford Hotel, Nelson, at 7:25 am on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2016.

1. Marian McKenzie welcomed the 15 members present (Chris Winefield, Richard Macknight, Donna Bond, Mariann Brennan, Paula Jameson, Will Clayton, Sarah Moss, Nick Albert, Samarth, Matthew Arnet, Paul Dijkwel, Kevin Davies, Andy Allen, Mike Clearwater, Wajid Waheed). Apologies were presented for Rainer Hofmann, Julian Heyes, David Whitehead, Tony Connor, Matthew Turnbull, Erin O'Donoghue, Sebastian Leuzinger, Philippa Barrel, Brian Jordan, Cate Macinnis-Ng, Kathy Schwinn)
2. The **minutes** of the 2015 AGM were accepted (**moved**: Andrew Allen, **seconded** Richard MacKnight, carried).
3. **Matters arising** from 2014 AGM minutes  
There were no matters arising
4. **President's report**

**Marian McKenzie** presented the **President's Report** on behalf of Rainer Hofmann. Highlights included the establishment of the Michael McManus Award for Best Student Paper. The award is considered a fitting memorial to Michael's leading role in NZ science, particularly his outstanding mentorship and support for students. Afsana Islam was recognized as the inaugural recipient. Mention was also made of Cate MacInnes-Ng as recipient of this year's Roger Slack Award. Other Society activities noted included our continued membership and involvement in the Global Plant Council, our contribution the RSNZ Vice-Presidents Committee, the preparation of a white paper on gene editing prepared for the RSNZ by Andrew Allan and others, and recent discussion around the idea of forming a NZ Federation of Biological Sciences. In closing Rainer's report also thanked Marian McKenzie for her long and capable service as Council member since 1999, Secretary since 2008, and that she would now serve as the first female President of the Society in over two decades. Michael Clearwater was also thanked for his 14 years' service as Secretary, Treasurer and President.

**Chris Winefield** moved that the President's report be accepted (seconded **Paula Jameson**, carried).

### **5. Treasurer's Report**

**Michael Clearwater** presented the **Treasurer's report**, noting that subscription income increased this year, but we received no conference surplus so total income was reduced on the previous year. There was a noticeable increase in affiliation fees in the current year,

this was because we paid our first subscription to the Global Plant Council, plus two annual RSNZ subscriptions happened to fall within the one financial year. The next GPC membership fee would be reduced to \$US200 because of our relatively small membership compared to similar societies in other countries. Michael also noted that we have a large number of members who do not pay their subscription each year. During discussion **Paul Djikwel** suggested we put more effort into reminding members to pay, and organise for one member at each campus (Universities and CRIs) to personally approach members and encourage them to pay (in addition to Paul at Massey University, **Andrew Allen, Chris Winefield and Richard Macknight** volunteered to do this for Auckland, Lincoln and Otago respectively). A request was also made for some way that we could make it possible for members to check whether their membership was current, Michael said he would explore this.

**Nick Albert** moved that the Treasurer's report be accepted (seconded **Kevin Davies**, carried).

## 6. Election of officers.

**Marian McKenzie** declared all positions vacant and nominations opened. She outlined those standing for council in 2016 (President, Marian McKenzie; Vice-President, David Burritt; Immediate Past President, Rainer Hofmann; Treasurer, David Burritt; Council, Philippa Barrell, Nick Albert, Chris Winefield and Richard Macknight).

No nomination had yet been received for Secretary, it was agreed that a suitable candidate could be co-opted after the meeting.

There were no further nominations. **Marian McKenzie** declared the nominations closed. **Paula Jameson** moved the nominations be accepted, seconded **Andrew Allen**. **Marian McKenzie** declared all those nominated as elected unopposed.

## 7. Conference Venues, 2017 and beyond

**Marian McKenzie** reported that next year's annual meeting was planned as a joint meeting with NZIAHS and the NZ Plant Biotechnology Society in Palmerston North, with the timing in the first week of July. The 2018 meeting was expected to be with COMBIO in Sydney, following our usual rotation of every 3 years in Australia with COMBIO.

A discussion was held after it was noted that we appeared to have slipped off the usual cycle of holding COMBIO in NZ every 9 years, with the last such meeting being held in Christchurch in 2009. Paul Jameson suggested that there were NZ Inc. type organisations that could be called upon to assist in any attempts to pitch for the rights to host such a large meeting.

Other upcoming meetings noted were the International Photosynthesis meeting, to be held in Rotorua in 2020 (Julian Eaton-Rye as the NZ organiser and host), and a February 2017 International Anthocyanin workshop to be held in Auckland.

## 8. Website update. **Michael Clearwater** asked for any comment concerning the website. Feedback was received that the new website (launched last year) looked professional and was a good improvement over the previous site. A request was made to make the

subscription fees more visible on the membership page. **Jessica Roche** was thanked for her effort in establishing the Society Facebook page, and **Samarth** was also acknowledged for agreeing to take over curation of this as Jessica was completing her postgraduate study.

#### **9. Global Plant Council**

Marian noted that our involvement with the GPC over the past year is summarized in the President's Report. It was also noted that Barry Pogson had been elected chair of GPC, and that Barry was present here at this year's conference. Rainer Hofmann will attend this year's GPC AGM in Brisbane.

#### **10. Roger Slack Award**

**Marian McKenzie** congratulated Cate MacInnes-Ng on receiving the award this year, and noted that Cate would be arriving today to present her address. Marian then reminded members that the Roger Slack Award would be open next year to all researchers, regardless of the time since gaining their PhD, and encouraged members to consider other members who could be nominated.

#### **11. Michael McManus Award**

**Marian McKenzie** congratulated Afsana Islam on receiving the inaugural Michael McManus award, noting that it was particularly fitting that Afsana was receiving the award because Michael was in fact one of her supervisors during her PhD. Marian then reminded members to consider student members who might be eligible for the award, if they submit a paper arising primarily from their PhD work, within four years of completing their degree.

#### **12. Annals of Botany Lecture 2017**

**Marian McKenzie** gave an overview of the Annals of Botany Lecture, which gives NZSPB the chance to nominate an international invited speaker to speak at our annual meeting. If in agreement the Annals of Botany provides the travel funds to allow this to take place, provided the recipient was willing to submit a manuscript to the journal. Members were encouraged to consider appropriate speakers for our next annual meeting.

#### **13. Any other business**

**Andrew Allan** announced that next year's International Fascination of Plants Day would be held on May 18, 2017, and asked whether the NZSPB could be involved, a request that was met with general agreement. The Auckland Botanic Gardens had offered to host next year's event in Auckland, and it was suggested that in other centres botanic gardens, regional societies and University Graduate schools could be canvassed for their support. **Paul Dijkwel** suggested that a request be sent to all members to start discussion about what we can do in 2017

**Marian McKenzie** thanked all the members for attending and closed the meeting at 8:16am.

Minutes taken by Mike Clearwater