

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Australasian Mycological Society

Thursday 21st September 2017, 2.00pm AEST

ZOOM teleconference

Present: John Dearnaley (Chair), Julie Djordjevic (Vice President), Leona Campbell (Secretary), Jeff Powell (Councilor), Bevan Weir (Councilor), Celeste Linde (Treasurer), Peter Buchanan, Laszlo Irinyi, Jemima Wixted, Tom May, Rytas Vilgalys, David Orlovich, Dee Carter

Apologies: Pam Catcheside, David Catcheside, Diana Leemon, Patrick Leonard

1. Welcome and introduction by AMS President

John Dearnaley welcomed the audience to the meeting and thanked them for their attendance.

2. Acceptance of the minutes of the 2016 AGM

Minutes of the previous AGM were approved with the minor modifications below. Correction to the spelling of Sapphire McMullan-Fisher' name, in item 4 of the "Summary of future activities of the Fungal Conservation subcommittee" John as President was asked to send a letter on behalf of the AMS and the Fungal Conservation subcommittee to State and Federal bodies advocating the use of the Mueller & Dahlberg protocols in fungal Red Listing assessments. This was not done, more relevant to the Fungal Conservation subcommittee. Tom May and Fungal Conservation subcommittee to follow up on this.

3. President's report

John Dearnaley presented the president's report to the meeting. He said it had been a quiet year with no scientific meeting and most energy was spent getting the new Fungal Education and Fungal Conservation subcommittees set up and getting the associated websites constructed, putting out monthly newsletters and liaising with the ASM regarding next years joint ASM/AMS scientific meeting in Brisbane. Approximately 90 financial members if you include students included in lab memberships. We had 10 applications for the AMS research award this year, most of high standard. Awarded to Amelia-Grace Boxshall who will be investigating phylogeny of Southern Australian mushroom-like *Agaricus*, providing an evolutionary context for understanding the toxicity across this genus, her supervisor is Teresa Lebel. The 2016 winner was Cecilia Li from Julie Djordjevic's lab at the Westmead Institute for Medical Research. Julie advised the meeting that Cecilia has finished her PhD thesis and that she thanked the committee for her award as the funds allowed her to do work that constituted a chapter of her thesis and will contribute to a book chapter. Jeff commented that it would be nice if we could offer more than one award per year depending on finances. John stressed the difficulty of finding "Fungus of the month" images for the newsletter. Tom commented that many fungi used are unidentified and perhaps a source of images could be recent publications describing fungi from Australia. Tom offered to collate a list and contact people for images. Using images of identified isolates would send a message that we are increasing our knowledge about fungi and may be a good way to engage non-members to join the society. Bevan added this would be good for New Zealand fungi as well and particularly using fungi present in both countries. Must be aware of copyright issues. Tom added he would ask that all images be supplied as creative commons and as such, could also then be used on the website. John thanked Jemima Wixted for running the Facebook page, good number of "likes" especially from non-members. Bevan commented that in the past he's paid

(~\$14) to advertise on FB to increase page views. Possible option to increase membership. New subpages on the website for the Fungal Education and Fungal Conservation subcommittees and associated Google groups. Next year we will have a joint meeting with the ASM in Brisbane at the Exhibition centre at South Bank. Currently there will be combined half day of mycological talks on Wednesday 5th July and a full day of AMS sessions at the University of Queensland on Thursday 6th being organised by James Fraser. Maybe a fungal foray on the afternoon of the 5th. This meeting will be in the week preceding the IMC11 in Puerto Rico, so possible for members to attend both meetings. John thanked the council for their support over the past 3 years. Special thanks to Dee Carter for being web master and Dee and Diana Leemon for providing advice during his tenure. Thanks to David and Pam Catcheside for their steading influence as Society patrons. Jemima Wixted and Susan Nuske for their great work with the student Facebook page and thanks to Sapphire McMullan-Fisher and Tom May for establishing the subcommittees on the Fungal Education and Conservation respectively.

4. Nomination and re-nomination of council positions

The following nominations for council positions had been received by the secretary: President – Leona Campbell, Vice President – Jeff Powell, Treasurer – Celeste Linde (continuing), Secretary – Laszlo Irinyi, Councillor – Genevieve Gates, Councillor – Bevan Weir (continuing). In the absence of any other nominations, David Orlovich assumed the responsibility of announcing the election and re-election of the nominated candidates.

5. Financial Report from Treasurer, Celeste Linde

Fewer members compared to 2015-2016. Not including student members (covered via lab memberships) we have 58 members compared to 115 in the previous financial year, higher number was probably due to the conference last year. The society's financial health is not bad. A full outline of the society's finances was presented by Treasurer, Celeste Linde. In summary, total cash assets of the AMS as at 30 June 2017 was \$20,810.45. This year we made a slight profit of \$1,466.60 mainly due to membership fees and a \$250 donation by Pam and David Catcheside for a student prize which was not awarded due to no scientific meeting this year. We can keep this and carry it over for the 2018 scientific meeting or if they wish to donate in 2018 also, we could award 2 prizes. Celeste noted that currently, instituting a second research award is possible but it would begin to deplete the society funds and she would recommend always keeping a \$10,000 buffer in the Society's accounts. Very few expenses this year, including bank and PayPal charges of \$233.4 (\$122.50 CBA, \$110.90 Paypal) and the \$3000 research award. The fee incurred for website hosting and webmaster of \$258.94 occurred during the 2016-2017 financial year, however, due to bank issues payment was not made until August 2017 and hence not included in the 2016-17 budget. Total expenses this year were \$3233.40. Overall, the society is in good financial condition. Jeff Powell moved that the financial report be accepted,. Seconded by Jemima Wixted.

6. Revision of AMS membership costs

Council has discussed changes to the AMS membership subscription rates. 1) abolishing the separate subscription rate for AMS members outside of Australia and New Zealand as there are no longer mailing costs associated with posting the society's journal and 2) a new three year (triennial) subscription rate is also suggested. The current and suggested new three year membership rates are;

Current annual full membership \$75

Suggested three year full membership \$200 (saving of \$25)

Current annual concessional membership \$37.50

Suggested three year concessional membership \$100 (saving of \$12.50)

Current annual laboratory membership \$150

Suggested three year laboratory membership \$400 (saving of \$50)

Current annual sustaining membership \$150

Suggested three year sustaining membership \$400 (saving of \$50)

Celeste is looking into open source software to manage membership subscriptions, which will provide alerts when they are due to be renewed. John commented that triennial payment will also reduce annual administrative activities for the Treasurer. The society's constitution will need to be slightly modified to reflect these changes. This will be done by Dee.

Dee Carter moved that the changes to membership subscriptions be accepted. Seconded by Bevan Weir.

7. Report from Fungal Conservation subcommittee

Tom May reported on the activities of the The Australasian Fungi Conservation Group (AFCG) is a formal subcommittee of the AMS and co-convened by himself and Peter Buchanan. A Google group was set up in June 2017, and is open to anyone who requests to join, it currently has 23 members. Posts are archived so future members can see historical posts. Some exciting posts including a range extension for the rare fungus *Claustula fischeri* from NZ and Tasmania into NSW (isolated from Blackheath in the Blue Mountains). Sequences still needed on this NSW specimen as there are morphological differences. There is a page for the AFCG on the website which contains information about how to join the group. Tom thanked John for his support in getting the AFCG going. Thanks to Dee for the work on the website. Peter Buchanan will be attending the Asian Mycological Congress and speaking on Red Listing of fungi. Commented that there is good work ongoing in Japan around fungal conservation. Tom commented on a threat assessment around fungi which has been happening in China and that it will be good to have Peter present at the Congress to see what is happening in fungal conservation in Asia.

8. Report from Fungal Education subcommittee

John presented this report in the absence of the chair of the subcommittee, Sapphire McMullan-Fisher. The Terms of Reference of this subcommittee were approved by the council. There is a "core" group of people involved which include: Leona Campbell, Dee Carter, John Dearnaley, Julianne Djordjevic, Susan Nuske and Jeff Powell. To facilitate more general discussion amongst anyone who has an interest in education about mycology a Google group has been created. This will be advertised both on the website and via the AMS newsletter. Information on the AMS website also includes a summary of the current courses that include mycological content for Australasia. This working group has had a number of email discussions and a recent electronic meeting in July 2017. In the coming year, we will continue to encourage efforts towards more mycology education by working slowly and surely towards this goal without causing anyone anymore time stress. Tom commented that is was great to have all that information collated and proposed that a list of postgraduate supervisors in mycology would be useful, perhaps with project précis included. This could also encourage non-member supervisors to join the society. John commented it could also be useful for collaboration in research across the society. Will ask Sapphire if she could organise this.

9. Other Business

Regarding the Decadal plan for biosystematics and taxonomy in Australasia - Tom suggested we need an adhoc group to workshop a submission for the Decadal Plan from the AMS. Leona suggested putting out a call via the October newsletter for members to become involved in this adhoc group to hopefully involve a range of parties from diverse mycological fields. Tom offered to manage this group and have interested parties contact him. Suggested that this group spend a few weeks preparing a reasonable submission to submit on the Society's behalf without referring back to the council. Peter asked if there are already fungi topics included in the Decadal Plan and Tom replied that there are currently 5 different contributions. Tom will collate a list of these to be included in the call for member involvement.

The Meeting concluded at 2.48 pm AEST