

Minutes of the Annual General meeting of The Australian Society for Biophysics Inc held at the Carrington Resort, Katoomba NSW, at 5.30 p.m. on 6th September 2001.

Apologies

Paul Smith, Jan Anderson, Paul Gooley, Philip Kuchel and Paul Pallaghy.

Present

Christa Chritchley, Joseph Kourie, David Collings, Derek Laver, Cris Dos Remedios, Ray Norton, Karin Ahrling, Raymond Ritchie, Joe Lynch, Cyril Curtain, Brett Hambly, Peter Barry, Hans Coster, Alex Hope, Adelle Coster, Bruce Mainsbridge, David Saint, Frances Separovic, Boris Martinac, Maurits de Langue. The President, Ray Norton, chaired the meeting.

Minutes of previous AGM (Melbourne 2000)

The minutes of the previous AGM were confirmed on the motion of Frances Separovic, seconded Peter Barry. There being no business arising from the minutes the meeting proceeded directly to the President's Report.

President's Report

The President reported that the Society had a successful year. A highlight was the fluorescence workshop held in Sydney in May. He moved a vote of thanks to the organisers, Cris and Brett, which was carried with acclamation. The President remarked that such workshops could be an important activity for the Society. They would differ from the Annual Scientific Meetings in that they would be single topic with a strong didactic approach. Many topics could attract substantial industry support, both by way of provision of equipment and instructors and by way of financial sponsorship. Possible topics suggested were artificial photosynthesis, membrane protein structure and biosensors, but there are many other possibilities. Joint biophysics meetings with our Japanese and German colleagues could also be held. From the floor Cris and Brett said they would be happy to advise anyone interested in organising such a workshop, suggesting potential sources of funding, and to share the experience gained in organising the fluorescence workshop.

The society has also been active behind the scenes, with representatives present at FAST's annual "Scientists meet the Parliament Day" and has had considerable input into the National committee for Biophysics, which is considered to be one of the Australian Academy of Science's most active committees. The President observed, however, that this activity needs the support of a strong membership base. At present the paid up membership of the Society is just under 100 and we need to raise it. If each member could recruit just one new member we could double in size.

Bob Robertson Award

Following a suggestion made a few months ago by Jan Anderson, it is proposed that we would inaugurate an invited lecture at our annual conference in honour of the late Sir Rutherford (Bob) Robertson's contribution to biophysics in Australia, as well as to Australian science generally. Awardees will be presented with a medal and a cheque at the annual conference and will present a lecture at that conference. This proposal was accepted with acclamation by the meeting.

The role of the Immediate Past President.

The President remarked that at present the Society has an Executive consisting of President, Secretary, Treasurer and Vice-President (who is the incoming President-Elect). As the Executive is an informal arrangement not enshrined in the Society's Articles of Association, he suggested that from now on the Council co-opt the Immediate Past President to serve on the Executive in addition to the current members; the Articles permit co-option of up to three additional members to Council in addition to office bearers and state/regional reps. Dr Norton found himself continually calling on Frances Separovic's accumulated knowledge of ASB, and it seemed that it was more efficient to have the Immediate Past President, on the Council and the Executive.

The President's Report was accepted on the motion of Cyril Curtain, seconded Brett Hambly

Dates and Places of Next Meetings

The President reported that the executive had considered several options for these. The most important criteria were that the ASB meeting should not be submerged into a larger meeting and that it be held in an affordable venue to keep registration fees low. In this way we can maintain the intimate atmosphere of the meeting and make it affordable, particularly for younger members. Nevertheless it was considered desirable that the meeting either precede or follow the larger gathering, such as Combio or the Australian Society for Plant Physiology, so that visiting speakers can be shared. With these criteria in mind it was suggested that the 2004 meeting be held in Perth before or after Combio. It was considered to be particularly important to hold a meeting in Perth because of the local interest in biophysics (The University of WA has a biophysics course). For next year's meeting we could either follow APP in Sydney at the beginning of October or the Australian Society for Medical Research meetings at the end of November in Melbourne. The President asked the meeting for an expression of opinion and on a show of hands it was decided that next year's meeting would be held in Melbourne.

General Business

There being no notices of motion, general business was confined to a report by Cris dos Remedios on two matters arising from the proceedings of the National Committee for Biophysics, held the previous evening in conjunction with the ASB committee meeting. Firstly, it was suggested that the Society partly underwrite the expenses of a student to attend the IUPAB Conference in Rio de Janeiro next April and that it approach the Academy for a matching contribution. The cost to the Society was likely to be in the range of \$500-750. The feeling of the meeting was positive and further action was to be left to the Executive. The other item was the proposal that IUPAB publish a Biophysics e-journal. Although Quarterly Reviews of Biophysics was supposed to be its journal, Cambridge University Press had rather left IUPAB out in the cold. An e-journal could also serve as a true World Journal, providing ready access for scholars from second and third world countries. Cris felt that eventually, all journals would become e-journals and it would be a good thing if IUPAB were riding in front of this wave of the future. Practical considerations would be the recruiting of an editor and editorial board to ensure the highest possible standards. As far as the

"impact factor" was concerned Cris had ascertained that ISI employed different criteria in the assessment of e-, compared with print journals. There would still be a need to produce a print version in a limited run for archiving purposes. It was felt that this could be done at low cost in a country such as China. Cris was of the opinion that the journal could eventually make money through advertising. ASB could ensure that it had a voice in the setting up and running the journal by putting up some of the seed money - say \$5,000. The meeting agreed that the proposal needed further consideration and should be canvassed widely among the members. A rather detailed proposal had already been circulated in the e-mail newsletter, but it would be desirable to condense this into a series of points for and against that could be sent out in the next newsletter.

Election of Office Bearers

Executive

The President and Vice-President continue in office by virtue of their election at the 2001 AGM

President

Ray Norton
The Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research,
Pharmacology NMR Laboratory,
381 Royal Parade, Parkville 3052.

Vice-President (President Elect)

Professor Peter Barry
School of Physiology and
The University of New South Wales
Sydney 2052.

Secretary

There being no other candidates the following were elected
Cyril Curtain
School of Physics and Materials Engineering
Monash University
Clayton 3800.

Treasurer

Frances Separovic
School of Chemistry
University of Melbourne
Melbourne VIC 3010.

State/Regional Representatives

One nomination was received for each of these positions and they were as follows.

ACT

Karin Ahrling

Research School of Biological Sciences
Australian National University
ACT 0200.

NSW

Brett Hambly

Pathology Department
University of Sydney NSW 2006.

NZ

Simon Brown

Institute of Fundamental Sciences
Massey University
Palmerston North
New Zealand

Queensland

Christa Critchley

Department of Botany
The University of Queensland 4072

SA

David Saint

Physiology Department
University of Adelaide
Adelaide, SA 5001.

Tasmania

Sergey Shabala

School of Agricultural Science
University of Tasmania
Hobart, Tas 7001.

Victoria

Paul Gooley

School of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
University of Melbourne
Melbourne VIC 3010.

WA

Boris Martinac

Department of Pharmacology
QEII Medical Centre
The University of Western
Australia Crawley, WA 6009.

The President welcomed the new office bearers and members to the Council: Frances Separovic (Treasurer and Immediate Past President), Karin Ahrling (ACT rep) and David Saint (SA rep). He also thanked the retiring members Paul Pallaghy (Treasurer and formerly Victorian rep), Paul Smith and Geoff Findlay, respectively, for their contributions to the Society over the past few years.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 6.30 p.m.