

# Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Australasian Mycological Society

Monday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2018, 11am AEST

## ZOOM teleconference

Present: Leona Campell (president), Jeff Powell (vice president), Tracey Steinrucken (treasurer), Laszlo Irinyi (secretary), Bevan Weir (councillor), Genevieve Gates (councillor), Wieland Meyer (IMA president), David Orlovich, Peter Buchanan, Diana Leemon, Alberto Guillen, Yeng Zheng

Apologies: Dee Carter, Tom May, Julie Djordjevic, Susan Nuske, Sheena Chua

### 1. Welcome and introduction by AMS President Leona Campell

Leona Campell welcomed the audience to the meeting and thanked them for their attendance.

### 2. Acceptance of the minutes of the 2017 AGM.

Minutes of the previous AGM (2017) were approved with minor amendment. The dates of this year AMS conference in John Dearnaley's last year report was corrected to 4-5 of July.

**ACTION:** Jeff moved a motion to accept the minutes of the 2017 AGM and David seconded it.

### 3. President's report

Leona Campell presented the president's report to the meeting. She said it had been a quite busy year with organizing the AMS conference in July in Brisbane. Jonathan Plett was nominated to the IMA Daniel McAlpine Medal for the IMC Congress in Puerto Rico. Two research awards were awarded this year. Thanks to Jeff and Laszlo for the reviewing process. The Society found a new Treasurer, Tracey Steinrucken and a new Student Representative, Sheena Chua. The Society has been contacted by the organizers of the WOMAdelaide Festival to provide advice about participants for a mycology-focused discussion panel hopefully to be included in the 2019 Planet Science talks, which are part of the festival. If this panel (Q&A) takes place, it will be fantastic for further raising the profile of fungi in mainstream society. The Society will be updated about the further progress. The decadal plan for taxonomy and biosystematics in Australia and New Zealand 2018-2027 has been moving forward. The Society was asked to nominate a representative for the steering committee for the establishment of "Taxonomy Australia", a federal body that will be responsible for implementing and advocating the Australian side of the decadal plan. The co-chair of the Australasian Fungi Conservation Group subcommittee, Tom May, will represent the AMS on the steering committee. The monthly Newsletters have become quarterly Newsletters including the "Fungi of the Month" provided by Tom May which are now also being archived on the AMS website.

The society's financial health is good. There were some expenditures in the past financial year including allocation of the two 2018 research awards. The only other expenditures were

for website hosting and financial service fees. All expenses for the 2018 ASM/AMS conference fall in the 2018/2019 financial year. There are currently (as of 8/10/18) 72 financial members of the society and 34 student members included in lab membership subscriptions. This combined total membership (106) is an increase on the number from 2017 (91).

There were fewer applications for this year's AMS research award compared to previous years, however, all submissions were of a very high standard. This year the executive committee took the decision to offer two research awards. Our 2018 recipients were Stephanie Watts-Williams and Andrew Urquhart. Stephanie is a Ramsay Fellow from The University of Adelaide and will be using her award to support her project "Identifying the molecular mechanisms behind mycorrhizal fungi-enhanced plant zinc uptake". Andrew is a PhD candidate in Alex Idnurm's group at the University of Melbourne and he will be looking at "Secondary metabolites of *Paecilomyces variotii*, a new genetic and molecular biology model species in the Eurotiales". Our 2017 research award recipient, Amelia-Grace Boxshall, supervised by Teresa Lebel at the University of Melbourne, presented her work looking into the evolutionary relationships and toxicities of yellow-staining *Agaricus* lineages, which was funded by her 2017 award, at the Brisbane conference in July where it was very well received.

The AMS newsletter continues to report on various goings on in the society and broader mycological community as well as prompting membership renewals and encouraging members to become involved in the society's subcommittees. Dee Carter continued to contribute her time to the society to oversee the AMS website and continues to do a great job. Responsibility for the AMS student Facebook page, previously run by Jemima Wixted has been taken on by our new student representative Sheena Chua. The Facebook page currently has 874 followers. We would like to encourage all members to become involved, visit the page and feel free to send any contributions to Sheena for posting.

The AMS Education subcommittee has been meeting regularly by Zoom teleconference to discuss issues regarding the teaching of mycology in Australasian universities. We have a new chair for our Education subcommittee, Susan Nuske. Thanks to the previous (founding) chair Sapphire McMullan-Fisher for her all her efforts in establishing this subcommittee, and her continuing involvement in this committee. Earlier this year the AMS took over ownership of the "Bugs" website created by Peter McGee. The education subcommittee is in the process of determining how to update the site and make this valuable resource available to the wider community. If you are involved or interested in education in mycology and would like to be involved with this or other mycology education focussed endeavours please consider joining the Google group by contacting Susan via the AMS website. The subcommittee web page also now has an associated "Learning about fungi and teaching tools" page, which has a comprehensive list of tertiary courses run at Australian and New Zealand institutions with mycological content. Thanks to Sapphire McMullan-Fisher and John Dearnaley for their contribution, "Introduction to the biology of fungi" and to Elaine Davison for her contribution to "Mycology teaching tools" both of which can be found on the "Learning about fungi and teaching tools" page. Susan Nuske has submitted a report on the recent activities of the Mycology Education Subcommittee.

The Australasian Fungi Conservation Group (AFCG), is co-chaired by Tom May (RBG Melbourne) and Peter Buchanan (Landcare Research, NZ) and conducts discussions via a

Google Group (this facilitates sending emails to members, while creating an archive of all posts to the group). The AFCG uses Google Drive to store documents, such as biodiversity strategies, legislation, conservation assessments and relevant research literature. If anyone would like to become involved with the AFCG please contact Tom via the AMS website. Tom May has submitted a report on the recent activities of the Australasian Fungi Conservation Group.

There are currently no plans for a 2019 scientific meeting. The committee has discussed options for a meeting in 2020 and it will likely be in Tasmania.

Finally, Leona thanked the AMS Council, Jeff Powell, Laszlo Irinyi, Tracey Steinrucken, Bevan Weir and Genevieve Gates for their support in the past year and thanked them for agreeing to continue in their positions for 2018/19. She also thanked past President John Dearnaley, for his support and advice as well as Pam and David Catcheside for their continued support as AMS Patrons.

The full President's report will be available on the AMS website.

Jeff thanked Leona for her hard work as the President of the Society.

#### **4. Re-nomination of council positions**

The following nominations for council positions had been received by the secretary:

**President:** Leona Campell (continuing)

**Vice President:** Jeff Powell (continuing)

**Treasurer:** Tracey Steinrucken (continuing)

**Secretary:** Laszlo Irinyi (continuing)

**Councillor 1:** Genevieve Gates (continuing)

**Councillor 2:** Bevan Weir (continuing)

In the absence of any other nominations the current members of the council have been re-elected to these positions.

#### **5. Financial report from the Treasurer Tracey Steinrucken**

Tracey presented the financial report in two sections.

Financial year 2017-2018: The total income of the last financial year was \$19255 which includes the membership fees and the income of the conference and conference diner but it does not include the expenses for the conference because they were all paid after the end of the financial year. As results, less income will be expected in the next financial year. The total expenses were about \$6900 which included the AMS Research grants (2 x \$3000). The rest were banking fees and website hosting. The membership fees income was almost \$8000 and conference fees and diner were about \$11000. The net profit for the financial year was \$12329. The auditor David Hartmann in Brisbane completed his audit in the second week of October 2018 which means that the requirement of Associations Incorporation Act was met.

Calendar year 2018: The membership in 2018 calendar year has been 72 that include "Lab Membership" of 33 students representing an increase from last year. The AMS conference this year had 47 delegates and the income from registration was \$8600. The conference diner fee (\$3500) went straight to the restaurant. The final cost of the conference for the Society was \$3900 because the Society owned money to ASM and also paid \$1000 for Speaker Sponsorship (reduced cost). The Society also paid catering at UQ for the second day of the conference. Overall the current bank balance of the Society is \$18271 including all expenses.

**ACTION:** Audit form of 2017-2018 financial year needs to be sent out to the ACT government. Diana moved a motion to accept the Treasurer's report and Bevan seconded it. Diane asked Tracey to make the financial report available for the Members and the Council accepted it.

## **6. Revision of the AMS finance auditing procedures**

Tracey investigated the standing regulations and determined that the Society does not need an official yearly audit as has been done in the past. The Society does not need to have an official Auditor. The audit can be done by a Reviewer having an accountant degree. Currently, the Society's Constitution Rule 11 e) states that the Society has to have an Auditor who cannot be Member of the Society. It was proposed the wording of the Constitution be changed from "Auditor" to "Reviewer" and that the Reviewer cannot be Member of the Council rather than the Society. As a result, a member of the Society but not the Council having an accountant degree can potentially do the required annual review of the Society accounts. That can save money for the Society. Thanks Tracey for investigating the rules regarding the Auditor of the Society.

**ACTION:** The wording of the Constitution needs to be changed regarding the Auditor/Reviewer. The Reviewer of the Society cannot be Member of the Council. Amendment reads **"Shall appoint a Reviewer(s) to review the Society accounts; such Reviewer(s) cannot be members of the Council"**

Bevan moved the amendment regarding the changes in the Constitution and Genevieve seconded it. Motion was carried.

## **7. Revision of the AMS membership definitions ie. "Lab Membership" to include all members of lab ie.**

A request from John Dearnaley to define "Lab Member" in regards to the "Lab Membership" Rule 7.2 Part D and 7.3 Part D in the Society's Constitution. Wieland proposed that people working in the lab and not having an income should be considered without mentioning their status. Discussion attendees discussed who will be included and if there should be a cap on it.

**ACTION:** Include an amendment in the Society's Constitution (Rule 7.2 Part D and 7.3 Part D) that Students, Honorary and Adjunct positions being supervised or co-supervised by a Senior Lab Head can be included in "Lab Membership".

Tracey moved the amendment to the Society's Constitution regarding the definition of "Lab Membership" and Laszlo seconded it. Motion was carried.

## **8. Proposal for new AMS Training Support Grant**

One of the applications for the Research Award this year was for Training support. The committee discussed this and came up with a proposal that Jeff developed. Committee proposed a Training Award for Students and Early Career Researchers. They must be Members of the Society and Members of the Council would be ineligible. No deadlines for this Application process. There would be a committee to review these applications. The criteria would include that the skills, techniques learnt must be of value to the Society and these skill must be disseminated to interested members. Jeff suggested to cap the available funds for Training Grant similarly to Research Award. Leona suggested that for the first year the Award should be \$3000 which can be split into two \$1500 awards. Bench fees and consumables should be covered by the Lab Heads.

**ACTION:** A Training Grant of \$3000 will be available for the next financial year. It should be advertised on the Society website. The Committee will work on finalising the criteria. The proposal of the Training Grant was moved by Wieland and seconded by Jeff.

## **9. Report from Fungal Conservation subcommittee (Tom May)**

Tom May sent apologies being absent but submitted a report about the activities of the year. Brief summary of the Australian Fungal Conservation Subcommittee. Peter mentioned that they had got funding from the Mohamed Bin Zayed Conservation Fund for the next Australasian Fungi Red List Workshop which would be held next year in Auckland. Mentioned the publication of a short biography of New Zealand's first female mycologist, Kathleen Maisey Curtis. Google Group has been set up for the subcommittee to facilitate discussion. Anyone interested needs to contact Tom May. The Group open to anyone and currently there are 25 members.

**ACTION:** Leona will ensure the AMCG report is posted on the AMS website. The meeting organised by Tom and Peter in Auckland next year should be advertised in the next Newsletter.

## **10. Report from Fungal Education subcommittee (Susan Nuske)**

The Subcommittee had a change of chair. Former chair Sapphire McMullan-Fisher remains a valuable part of the subcommittee. Susan Nuske has taken over as chair. Only handful of people involved in this subcommittee. Anyone interested is welcome to join. This year there have been two Zoom meeting in April and September as well as discussion at the AMS conference in July. The change of chair was discussed via email correspondence by the Subcommittee and endorsed by Leona as Society President. The main agenda item of the Subcommittee is to determine how to use the content of "Bugs Fungal Biology" website developed by Peter McGee. In September 2017, Iain Young (Dean of Faculty of Science, University of Sydney) gave permission to AMS to take ownership the "Bugs Fungal Biology" website. The plan was to update the content and migrate it to another website to make it available. The Subcommittee agreed that the content needs to be updated and pay someone with understanding of the content to do this. Sapphire drafted a management plan about the process, Susan updated it. There was a meeting in September to discuss the idea to

crowdsource the content of “Bugs Fungal Biology” website. There is an Education Subcommittee Google Group and all the members of the Subcommittee have joined this Group. The website has a list of tertiary courses “Mycology Teaching” which is quite comprehensive put together by Sapphire and John Dearnaley. Tertiary courses from Australia, New Zealand Institution related to mycology can be added to the list in the future.

**ACTION:** Wieland requested that “Infection Immunology Course” of Sydney University should be added to the list because it has a section of “Medical Mycology”. Wieland will send information about the course and Leona will update Susan and Dee about it. Subcommittee need to check if the “Bugs Fungal Biology” website can be crowdsourced under current ownership.

## **11. Other business**

No other business was raised to discuss.

**The AGM 2018 meeting concluded at approximately 12h25 AEST.**

# **Australasian Mycological Society President's Report**

## **Leona Campbell**

### **15<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

The society has had a busy time during my first year as AMS President. With the assistance of the various committees, we organized our conference in Brisbane, selected a nominee for the IMA Daniel McAlpine Medal, chose recipients for two research awards. We found ourselves a new Treasurer, Tracey Steinrucken and a new Student Representative, Sheena Chua. We were also contacted by the organizers of the WOMAdelaide Festival to provide advice about participants for a mycology-focused discussion panel hopefully to be included in the 2019 Planet Science talks, which are part of the festival. If this panel takes place, it will be fantastic for further raising the profile of fungi in mainstream society. The decadal plan for taxonomy and biosystematics in Australia and New Zealand 2018-2027 has been moving forward. Our society was asked to nominate a representative for the steering committee for the establishment of "Taxonomy Australia", a federal body that will be responsible for implementing and advocating the Australian side of the decadal plan. The co-chair of our Australasian Fungi Conservation Group subcommittee, Tom May, will represent us on the steering committee. With all this going on, our monthly newsletters have become quarterly newsletters, hopefully you are all still enjoying them, especially the "Fungi of the Month", (which I guess should be renamed to "Your Quarterly Fungi!"), which have been provided by Tom May and are now also being archived on the AMS website. The following is an overview of the activities of the society since the AGM of September 2017.

#### **Finance and membership**

The society's financial health is good. There were some expenditures in the past financial year including allocation of the two 2018 research awards. The only other expenditures were for website hosting and financial service fees. All expenses for the 2018 ASM/AMS conference fall in the 2018/2019 financial year. There are currently (as of 8/10/18) 72 financial members of the society and 34 student members included in lab membership subscriptions. This combined total membership (106) is an increase on the number from 2017 (91). A full outline of the society's finances has been prepared by the Treasurer, Tracey Steinrucken.

#### **AMS Research Award**

There were fewer applications for this year's AMS research award compared to previous years, however, all submissions were of a very high standard. This year the executive committee took the decision to offer two research awards. Our 2018 recipients were Stephanie Watts-Williams and Andrew Urquhart. Stephanie is a Ramsay Fellow from The University of Adelaide and will be using her award to support her project "Identifying the molecular mechanisms behind mycorrhizal fungi-enhanced plant zinc uptake". Andrew is a PhD candidate in Alex Idnurm's group at the University of Melbourne and he will be looking at "Secondary metabolites of *Paecilomyces variotii*, a new genetic and molecular biology

model species in the Eurotiales”. Our 2017 research award recipient, Amelia-Grace Boxshall, supervised by Teresa Lebel at the University of Melbourne, present her work looking into the evolutionary relationships and toxicities of yellow-staining *Agaricus* lineages, which was funded by her 2017 award, at the Brisbane conference in July where it was very well received.

### **AMS monthly newsletter, website and student Facebook page**

As mentioned the AMS monthly newsletter has become a quarterly newsletter. It continues to report on various goings on in the society and broader mycological community as well as prompting membership renewals and encouraging members to become involved in the society’s subcommittees. Dee Carter continued to contribute her time to the society to oversee the AMS website and continues to do a great job. Responsibility for the AMS student Facebook page, previously run by Jemima Wixted has been taken on by our new student representative Sheena Chua. The Facebook page currently has 874 followers. I would like to encourage all members to become involved, visit the page and feel free to send any contributions to Sheena for posting.

### **AMS subcommittee in Fungal Education**

The AMS Education subcommittee has been meeting regularly by Zoom teleconference to discuss issues regarding the teaching of mycology in Australasian universities. We have a new chair for our Education subcommittee, Susan Nuske. Thanks to the previous (founding) chair Sapphire McMullan-Fisher for her all her efforts in establishing this subcommittee, and her continuing involvement in this committee. Earlier this year the AMS took over ownership of the “Bugs” website created by Peter McGee. The education subcommittee is in the process of determining how to update the site and make this valuable resource available to the wider community. If you are involved or interested in education in mycology and would like to be involved with this or other mycology education focussed endeavours please consider joining the Google group by contacting Susan via the AMS website. The subcommittee web page also now has an associated “Learning about fungi and teaching tools” page, which has a comprehensive list of tertiary courses run at Australian and New Zealand institutions with mycological content. Thanks to Sapphire McMullan-Fisher and John Dearnaley for their contribution, “Introduction to the biology of fungi” and to Elaine Davison for her contribution to “Mycology teaching tools” both of which can be found on the “Learning about fungi and teaching tools” page. Susan Nuske has submitted a report on the recent activities of the Mycology Education Subcommittee.

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May has submitted a report on the recent activities of the Australasian Fungi Conservation Group.

**Our next scientific meeting....**

There are currently no plans for a 2019 scientific meeting. The committee is considering options for a meeting in 2020. I invite all members to contact me if you would like to have input into this process.

Finally, I would like to thank the AMS Council, Jeff Powell, Laszlo Irinyi, Tracey Steinrucken, Bevan Weir and Genevieve Gates for their support in the past year and thank them for agreeing to continue in their positions for 2018/19. Thanks also to our immediate past president John Dearnaley, for his support and advice. Thanks also to Pam and David Catcheside for their continued support as AMS Patrons.



Leona Campbell, 15<sup>th</sup> October, 2018

## **The Australasian Fungi Conservation Group (AFCG)**

The Australasian Fungi Conservation Group (AFCG) is a formal subcommittee of the AMS, co-convened by Tom May (RBG Victoria, Melbourne, Australia) and Peter Buchanan (Manaaki Whenua - Landcare Research, Auckland, N.Z.).

There is a page about the AFCG on the AMS website. The page introduces the need for conservation of fungal taxa, provides background on the AFCG and its roles in Australasian fungal conservation and describes several threatened fungal species from the region (including two that are red-listed by the IUCN). There is information on this page about how to join the AFCG.

There is a Google Group “australasian-fungi-conservation”, open to anyone who requests to join. The Group currently has 25 members. Posts to the Group are archived so that people who join the Group in future will have access to all posts.

Posts to the Group during 2017/2018 included discussion of:

- The Australian federal government document *Australia's Strategy for Nature 2018-2030 (Australia's Biodiversity Strategy and Action Inventory)*;
- Review of the Victorian *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act*; and
- Assessment of species under IUCN Red List guidelines as “Least Concern”.

In early 2019, there will be a workshop on “Assessing the conservation status of the most threatened fungi in New Zealand and Australia”, to be held in Auckland, New Zealand, organised by Peter Buchanan, and supported by Manaaki Whenua - Landcare Research, New Zealand and a grant from the Mohamed bin Zayed Conservation Fund. This will be an opportunity to engage members of the Group actively in nominating candidate species for formal assessment under the IUCN criteria, and to bring together those interested for a face to face workshop.

*Tom May & Peter Buchanan*

10 Oct 2018

# AMS Education Working Group Annual Report 2018

Written by the Chair AMS Education Subcommittee, Australasian Mycological Society, Dr Susan Nuske (as of August 2018)

Past Chair: Dr Sapphire McMullan-Fisher

Members of the Education Subcommittee:

Leona Campbell, Dee Carter, John Dearnaley, Julianne Djordjevic and Jeff Powell.

## *Correspondence*

The AMS Education Subcommittee has had two Zoom meetings this year (April and September) as well as email correspondence and discussions at the AMS Scientific Meeting in July. Susan was only present at the September Zoom meeting and in email correspondences).

## *Chair*

In August 2018, due to restraints in time commitments, Sapphire stepped down as Chair. Sapphire nominated Susan Nuske as Chair, which she accepted. This was done by email correspondence with the Subcommittee and endorsed by Leona Campbell (AMS President).

## *Agendas*

The main agenda discussed in detail is the AMS use of the content from the BUGs Fungal Biology website written by Peter McGee.

Other agendas were:

- Invitation to other members:
  - o Sapphire set a Google group. Not all of the members of the Subcommittee have joined the Google group and there are some members of the Google group that aren't members of the Subcommittee. Only a few members participated in the posted discussions.
  - o A notice was posted in the AMS newsletter and invitations were sent out (?) to people we think are already teaching mycology to join the Subcommittee.
- List of Tertiary courses teaching mycology
  - o List was posted on AMS website and discussions were had about how to make students aware of this list. The AMS Student Facebook is one means of disseminating the information, with the help of the student representative.
  - o The list will need to be updated as more courses are formed.

## *BUGs Fungal Biology website*

In September 2017, Iain Young, Head of School for Life and Environmental Sciences, University of Sydney gave permission for the AMS to take ownership of the website. The plan is to take this content and make it into another website (referred to as the 'Fungal Biology website' at the moment). For this to be achieved the Subcommittee agreed that the content will need to be updated with current scientific knowledge and we will need to pay someone to put the updated content onto a website. The AMS committee agreed in principle that funds to pay someone could come from the AMS and requested a Management Plan from the Subcommittee detailing the process of updating the content

and the maintenance of the website. Sapphire drafted a Management Plan and Susan has since updated this.

During the September Zoom meeting, the Subcommittee discussed details of the Management Plan. For instance, the audience of the website, whether this content will be a website in itself or part of wikipedia books (for example), the process of recruiting people for updating the content and budget.