

## FIRST MEETING OF THE AUSTRALASIAN MYCOLOGICAL SOCIETY MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY, OCTOBER 1996

The inaugural meeting of the Australasian Mycological Society was held at Melbourne University, 2 October 1996. More than eighty delegates were registered for the Conference. Commerce Theatre 1 was full throughout the day. Delegates came from all States and Territories of Australia (except the Northern Territory), New Zealand, Hong Kong, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. It was wonderful to meet such a diverse group of people, united by their passion for fungi.

Sixteen papers were read and nineteen posters presented. The scientific merit and presentation of papers were of a very high standard and appreciated by the audience. Topics included aspects of mycological history, taxonomy (micro- and macro-fungi, morphological, physiological and molecular), and ecology. Some of these papers are to be published in *Muelleria* while others will be published elsewhere.

Lunchtime, 12.30–13.15, was the occasion for the launching of the *Fungi of Australia*. Short addresses were made by Jack Simpson, President of the Australasian Mycological Society, Dr Peter Bridgewater, Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Nature Conservation Agency, Senator Robert Hill, the Federal Environment Minister, and Professor David Hawksworth, Director of the International Mycological Institute. It was noted by the audience that each speaker pronounced 'fungi' differently. Copies of *Volume 1A. Introduction-Classification* and *Volume 1B. Introduction-Fungi in the Environment* were available for inspection and sale. During the day numerous interviews were conducted with media representatives.

The Annual General Meeting was rather hurried, taking place between the end of the formal paper sessions and a reception at Parliament House, hosted by the Premier of Victoria, Mr Kennett, for attendees of all the Conferences. During the general business session there was discussion of the possibility of an Australasian city hosting an International Mycological Congress, perhaps in 2006. Professor Hawksworth indicated strong support for such a proposal.

During the course of the day there was discussion about how to further develop the Society. One idea that received wide support was the establishment of Special Sub-Committees for Mycological Education, Conservation, Poisonous Mushrooms, and Data Basing. It is also intended to form an International Mycological Congress Sub-Committee.

Later that evening the Society held the Conference Dinner at Melbourne University, with fine food and wines, convivial company and an amusing and reflective after dinner speech from Tom May. The Conference was fruitful and enjoyable, enabling many Australasian mycologists to meet for the first time.

Saturday afternoon saw the real enthusiasts head off to the hills for a few days intensive collecting. Congratulations and our thanks to Dr Tom May, Sapphire McMullan, Mali Moir, and Katrina Syme for their help with the wonderful organisation of the Conference.

J.A. Simpson

## AUSTRALASIAN MYCOLOGICAL SOCIETY CONFERENCE 1997

The concept of several societies co-operating to run concurrent conferences proved very popular at Melbourne. The Executive has therefore decided to participate in a series of conferences at Adelaide University in September 1997. The Societies participating are the Australasian Mycological Society (AMS), the Australian Systematic Botany Society, the Australian Society of Microbiology (ASM) and the Society for Australian Systematic Biologists. The ASM conference is to be very large (more than 1000 attendees) but mostly with medical interests. Dr Robert Samson, Centraal Bureau voor Schimmelcultures is to be the guest speaker at the meeting of the mycology section of the Australian Society of Microbiology Conference which understandably will focus on the Trichocomaceae. On the basis of the papers and posters presented at the last AMS meeting, and on the draft agenda for the ASM meeting, the two proposed mycology days would be rather different but complimentary. The intention is to have separate fees for each conference or, in the case of long conferences or symposia, each day.

The Australasian Plant Pathology Society is having a meeting in Perth the same week. At the Melbourne AMS meeting there were not many plant pathologists present so hopefully we can maintain numbers. However, much of the organisation of the Adelaide Conference may have to be done from interstate rather than by a local person or committee. We should be grateful for volunteers to assist!

The conference items that we think will be of greatest interest to mycologists are as follows:

Sunday 28 September.

*Australasian Mycological Society: A Fungal Foray* in the Adelaide Hills; site, *etc.* to be arranged. David Ellis assures me we should be able to find moist sites with plenty of fungi given average weather conditions.

Monday 29 September.

*Australian Systematic Botany Society: Software in Systematics.*

Tuesday 30 September.

(am) *Australian Systematic Botany Society: Software in Systematics*

(pm) *Joint Symposium: Advancing knowledge and conservation of Australia's biodiversity.* The Symposium to continue through until the afternoon of Friday 3 October. Of particular interest to mycologists are the sessions 'Southern Biogeography' and 'Systematics and conservation biology'.

Wednesday 1 October

*Joint Symposium* continues.

*Australasian Mycological Society: Mycology papers and posters* (hopefully 50–70 people).

*Australasian Mycological Society dinner* that night.

Thursday 2 October

*Joint Symposium* continues.

*Australian Society of Microbiologists Mycology Meeting.*

Friday 3 October

*Joint Symposium* continues.

Joint ASM–AMS **Workshop on Molecular methods in Mycology.** Suggestions on what should be included in this Workshop would be welcomed.

To be decided

The time and place for the annual general meeting of the Australasian Mycological Society.

In the next *Newsletter* we will be inviting papers and posters for the 2nd Australasian Mycological Society Conference in Adelaide. Details of the Australian Systematic Botany and Society for Australian Systematic Biologists meetings can be obtained from Robyn Barker, State Herbarium South Australia. Details of the Australian Society of Microbiology meeting can be obtained from David Ellis, Adelaide Womens' and Childrens' Hospital.

J.A. Simpson