

# Minutes of the 31<sup>st</sup>AGM of the Australian Society of Herpetologists Incorporated

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Minutes of the thirty-first Annual General Meeting held at 'Koonjewarre', Queensland, on Friday 11 February 2005. The meeting opened at 12.15 pm with President Jane Melville in the chair

**Members present:** Jane Melville, Nicki Mitchell, Murray Littlejohn, Nick Clemann, John Clarke, Andrew Amey, Tracy Langkilde, Greg Kerr, Jennifer Taylor, Rick Shine, Mike Thompson, Peter Harlow, Harry Hines, Jean-Marc Hero, Andrea Phillott, Simon Blomberg, Yvette Williams, Leonie Valentine, Graeme Gillespie, Mark Hutchinson, Paul Oliver, Paul Doughty, Natalia Atkins, Geoff While, Erik Wapstra, John Roe, Luke Shoo, Melanie Venz, Naomi Doak, Mike Bull, Martin Dziminski, Karen Murphy, Jacquie Herbert, Daniel Van Dyk, Danielle Edwards, Dale Roberts, Phil Byrne, Mitzy Pepper, Kate Hodges, Frank Lemckert, Trent Penman, Simon Clulow, Lorrae McArthur, Michael Wall, Sebastian Iglesias, Eliza Poole, Nunia Thomas, Zoe Hamilton, Ben Phillips, Tamara Osborne, Clare Morrison, David Chapple, Bansi Shah, Leah Delfs, Mick Guinea, Steve Reynolds, Simon Hodgkison, and Chris Gregory

**Non-members present:** Arthur Georges

**Apologies:** Michael Kearney, Scott Keogh, Rick Longmore, Sharon Downes, Mike Mahony, Mike Tyler, John Coventry, Keith McDonald, Ross Sadlier, Simon Hudson, John Parmenter, Gordon Grigg

**Minutes of the 30<sup>st</sup> AGM held at 'Mary River', ACT:**

Minutes of the 29<sup>th</sup> AGM were posted on the ASH webpage in January 2004, and were taken as read and confirmed as a true and accurate record of that meeting.

Moved: Frank Lemckert

Seconded: Danielle Edwards

**Correspondence:**

Nicki Mitchell reported that correspondence had been received from editors of European Herpetological Journals offering free copies to members or subscription exchanges. Given that ASH no longer produce hard copy newsletters, none of the correspondence was considered in need of a reply,

### **Treasurer's Report:**

Nicki Mitchell reported that the audit for 2003/4 was finalized in October 2004, and presented the auditors report and summary of transactions to the meeting. ASH had approximately \$14700 in it's account as of the last bank statement – \$4060 has been paid out as ten student travel grants and four research awards since the last audit. The treasurer asked that the audit be accepted as a true record of the financial dealings of the society so that the auditor's report can be lodged with the ACT Registrar General's Office.

Moved: Erik Wapstra

Seconded: Mark Hutchinson

### **Welcome to new members:**

Sarah Andrewartha, Graeme Armstrong, Carla Avolio, Angela Duffy, Michael Guinea, Kim Hauselberger, Sebastian Iglesias, Nicole Kenyon, Ray Lloyd, Julienne Ng, Richard Reina, John Roe, Rebecca Rose, Amy Scott, Beth Symonds, Daniel Van Dyk, Geoff While, Kevin Woo, Aaron Greenville, Simon Clulow, Christy-Louise Davies, Paul Doughty, Scott Eiper, Darren Fielder, Chris Gregory, Kate Hodges, Simon Hodgkison, Karen Murphy, Amanda Niehaus, Tamara Osborne, Mitzi Pepper, Alex Quinn, Luke Shoo, Lee Skerrat, David Steer, Nunia Thomas, and Melanie Venz

### **Welcome to returning members (lost for more than five years):**

Michael Bamford, Don Bradshaw, David Carter, Bruce Chessman, Gillian Courtice, Gregory Hollis, Dan Lunney, Geoff J. Witten, Elvira Lanham, Steve McAlpin, and Rex Neindorf

The President thanked the Secretary/Treasurer for her efforts in contacting former members of the society and updating the member database.

### **President's Report:**

**Student Research Grant Scheme.** Jane Melville reported that seventeen applications for funding student research were received. The standard of applications was very high, and accordingly four awards were made: three to postgraduate students, and one to an honours student. The President noted that it is a joy to provide funds for student research. Winners were posted onto the ASH webpage in November 2004, and the judges were Jane Melville, Mike Kearney, Nicki Mitchell and Murray Littlejohn.

**Honours** Rebecca Rose, University of Melbourne - \$450  
*'Population genetics and differences in body colouration of the Painted Dragon, Ctenophorus pictus, in north-western Victoria'*

**PhD**

Tracy Langkilde, University of Sydney - \$750

*'Effects of research procedures on stress levels of reptiles'*

Kerry Kriger, Griffith University - \$750

*'Effects of breeding habitat on the prevalence and severity of chytridiomycosis in frogs of southeast Queensland'*

Danielle Edwards, University of Western Australia - \$550

'Historical and current patterns of dispersal and population genetic structure in both wet and semi-arid habitats in a generalist frog species (*Crinia psuedinsignifera*)

**Travel Awards.** The following students were awarded travel grants to attend the joint meeting of ASH/SRARNZ/FiSH

Martin Dziminski, University of Western Australia - \$250

Sabrina Hall, Central Queensland University - \$150

Geoff Heard, La Trobe University - \$150

Sebastian Inglesias, Charles Darwin University - \$200

Lorrae McArthur, Charles Darwin University - \$200

Eridani Mulder, Central Queensland University - \$150

Michael Wall, University of Sydney - \$80

Daniel Warner, University of Sydney - \$80 (declined)

Sarah Andrewartha, La Trobe University - \$150

Julienne Ng, University of Melbourne - \$150

**Newsletter.** The President reported that a newsletter has not been produced for some time, and that the editor, Bryan Fry, had received very few contributions in response to several requests for information. The President asked the members whether they thought it was worth continuing to produce a newsletter, or whether a sum could be paid to a newsletter editor as an incentive (The Society for Research on Reptiles and Amphibians in New Zealand (SRARNZ) currently pay an editor NZ\$1500 for two editions each year). Nicki Mitchell presented data showing that the number of members paying subscriptions averaged a little over one hundred each year (despite more than 300 members on the books), and pointed out that if ASH continue current spending on student grants and travel awards, that either subs would need to increase or savings diminish if funds were to be allocated to a newsletter. Many members, including Mike Thompson, thought that funds were better spent on student research and there was general resistance to the idea of paying for a newsletter. Naomi Doak pointed out that it is not worth paying an editor if no one contributes. Marc Hero suggested that the ASH web page links to lab web pages and called for all those with current web pages

to contact him and request that they are linked. After discussion from the floor there was general agreement that the ASH newsletter be disbanded and replaced by an improved web page that includes state information in the style of past newsletters. Naomi Doak stated that someone needs to call for information on a regular basis. Nicki Mitchell noted that Marc Hero is currently paid \$500 per year to maintain the web page, and that perhaps this contribution is maintained on the condition that a web based 'newsletter' is produced each year.

A formal motion was made by the President to disband the newsletter:

Moved: Naomi Doak

Seconded: Danielle Edwards

The motion was carried with no objections

Melanie Venz asked if we can formalise the \$500 p/a contribution to the web page editor?

Moved: Michael Bull

Seconded: Murray Littlejohn

**Membership Rules.** The treasurer reported that the ASH council decided last year to formalise when members with subscriptions in arrears cease to be called 'members'. It was decided that members who have not paid a subscription in the past four years are removed from the ASH listserver and member page six months after subscriptions are due (July 1 each year). The treasurer asked the meeting if they thought this was a fair decision, and many members commented that this was a generous definition of membership. Murray Littlejohn pointed out that a change would need to be made to the constitution to formalise the arrangement. The treasurer also reported that council had decided to reduce overseas subscription rates from \$25 to \$10 per year, in response to the demise of the hardcopy newsletter. There was no disagreement from members.

**Changing role of Secretary/Treasurer.** The President reported that the workload of the Secretary/Treasurer is large and that the position might be better split into Secretary and Treasurer, as is possible under the ASH constitution. The position of assistant secretary/treasurer would also become redundant. Members took the word of the current secretary/treasurer that the position could work well if split into two roles, and agreed that the meeting would appoint both a secretary and treasurer in a new council.

**Election of council.** The President formally notified the meeting that the current council was standing down, and that nominations had been received for a new council. New council members were elected as follows:

<b>President</b>	Jean-Marc Hero	Moved: Murray Littlejohn Seconded: Rick Shine
<b>Vice President</b>	Jane Melville	(past president automatically becomes vice president)
<b>Treasurer</b>	Erik Wapstra	Moved: Nicki Mitchell Seconded: Dale Roberts
<b>Secretary</b>	Nick Clemann	Moved: Jane Melville Seconded: Mark Hutchinson
<b>Newsletter Editor</b>		(position closed)
<b>Web-page Editor</b>	Jean-Marc Hero	(agreed to stay on)
<b>Public Officer</b>	Rick Longmore	(agreed to stay on)
<b>Ordinary Members</b>	Peter Harlow	Moved: Nicki Mitchell Seconded: Jenny Taylor
	Naomi Doak	Moved: Jean-Marc Hero Seconded: Luke Shoo

Mike Thompson reported that Mike Tyler had asked Gordon Grigg to request that Murray Littlejohn is evicted from the AGM.

Moved: Dale Roberts  
Seconded: Graeme Gillespie

Mike Thompson then requested that Mike Tyler be evicted in absentia

Moved: Dale Roberts  
Seconded: Mark Hutchinson

**State representatives.** The president asked if ASH should keep state representatives if the newsletter was being disbanded. It was agreed that state representatives would be useful contact points for a web based newsletter. The following members agreed to act, or stay on, as state representatives:

**NSW** Frank Lemckert  
**VIC** Graeme Gillespie  
**QLD** Harry Hines  
**SA** Mark Hutchison  
**WA** Nicki Mitchell  
**NT** Paul Horner  
**ACT** Scott Keogh  
**TAS** Erik Wapstra

**Assistant to treasurer.** The President noted that the new Treasurer Erik Wapstra was based in Tasmania and as no other council members were based there, he would need a second signatory for ASH cheques. The President suggested that Sue Jones be asked to act as an assistant to the treasurer, and no objections were raised.

**Thank You.** The President closed her report by thanking Marc Hero, his wife Nerinder, and the 'dream team' for a fantastic meeting, also thanked Naomi Doak for her tremendous effort improving and updating the ASH webpage. Both acknowledgements were followed by acclaim from the floor.

### **Other Business**

*Future Meeting Venue.* Jane Melville stated that the last ASH meeting held in Victoria was at Anglesea in 1982, and that she was prepared to host the next meeting in Victoria around Easter in 2006. Both Western Australia (Paul Doughty) and the University of Sydney (Rick Shine/ Mike Thompson) indicated their willingness to host future meetings.

The meeting closed at approximately 12:45 pm by newly elected President Jean-Marc Hero, who thanked the outgoing President and Secretary/Treasurer for their contributions to the society. Acclaim from the floor!

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