



PRESIDENTS REPORT

During 2006 -07, Council has continued in its attempts to raise the profile of the Society. The Society sees one of its major roles as a venue to reveal science's insights into the major issues facing us locally and globally. We celebrate the role of scientific exchange in making the world a better place.

Eureka Prize

Subject to annual review, the Society continues to support the Eureka Prize for Interdisciplinary Scientific Research. The major contribution to the Prize comes from the Royal Societies of Victoria and New South Wales.

Risk Management

The Royal Society of Western Australia has taken public indemnity insurance for the first time in the past year. Because of the many public events we conduct and the relationships we value with host institutions and supporting organisations we are happy to move into this approach to protecting our visitors and assets.

Joint Royal Societies Meeting – Melbourne

The third Joint Meeting of Royal Societies of Australia, hosted by the Royal Society of Victoria in Melbourne was held in November 2006. No representative from RSWA attended the meeting. Details of the meeting, including the emended constitution were passed onto the RSWA Council. All state Royal Societies except Tasmania have agreed to join the Royal Societies of Australia Inc. to present a more united front federally and for the exchange of ideas for the '*Promotion and Advancement of Science in Society for Society*'. The independence and separate identity of each of the State Societies remains unchanged. Annual meetings in different States will be held.

Appreciation

Finally, I wish to thank the Council for their hard work during what has been a very successful year. Our Council has been active in consolidating the past journal assets into a single collection in the museum. This has been a significant effort involving many volunteer hours and has successfully established a cleared attic of the Murdoch library in time for its recent renovations. Our thanks to those workers. After the AGM, I intend to remain on Council as the Immediate Past President to offer support to the incoming President.

MEETINGS

Annual General Meeting

The 2005-2006 Annual General Meeting was held on Monday 17th July, 2006 in the T.L. Robertson Lecture Theatre, Science and Computing Building at Murdoch University. The RSWA Council for 2006-2007 was announced, and all nominations were accepted. Following the business meeting, Professor Andris Stelbovics, Pro-Vice Chancellor Research, Murdoch University, presented the Society's University Science Medals for 2005. Medals were awarded to Rachel Binks, The University of Western Australia, David Coultas, Curtin University of Technology, Sean Stankowski, Edith Cowan University, and Michael Reid, Murdoch University. Following the medal

presentations Dr Alex Bevan, the retiring President of the RSWA, delivered the RSWA Presidential address titled 'Weathering the past – meteorites and palaeoclimate', after which Professor Stelbovics installed Dr Colin Walker as the new President of the Royal Society of Western Australia.

Monthly meetings

Monthly ordinary meetings, commencing at 7:00 pm, were preceded by a full Council Meeting and included a presentation from an invited speaker. The Publicity Officer organised the speakers for these meetings, drawing on a diverse range of material from coastal limestone, botany, agriculture, to forensic science. Meetings have been well attended following publicity through various email, newspaper, poster, and website outlets. During April, because of the Easter break, an excursion, "*Geology on our doorstep*" was organised by Jenny Bevan and Vic Semeniuk. This was a very informative, well-attended field trip and was enjoyed by all.

Other highlights of the year included well-attended public-oriented events including the National Science Week events in August, the presentation by Professor Barry Marshall, 2005 Nobel Laureate, on his research on *Helicobacter pylori*, held at the Octagon Theatre UWA in September, the presentation by Dr Beard of a *Celebration of a life in Botany* held at Kings Park in October, the Climate Change Seminar held at Scitech in November, and the Yarragadee Forum held at Scitech in May 2007.

For National Science Week 2006, the Royal Society of Western Australia hosted five events. Three events were held in regional centres away from Perth, i.e., Bunbury and Karratha, dealing with some natural history features of the regions. These were so successful that similar events will again be held in Bunbury and Karratha during Science Week 2007. The other two events, held in Perth, had a Forensic Science theme and were partly funded by a National Science Week grant. Both events, one at UWA for high school students and a family evening at Scitech with hands on activities and presentations by experts, were so well received that they were oversubscribed.

Council thanks all the invited speakers for their contributions this past year to the Monthly and special meetings. Thanks are also due Dr Vic Semeniuk for his publicity, organisation of ordinary meetings, special meetings, Science Week events and the field trip; Jenny Bevan for her joint leadership of the field excursion and participation in the Science Week 'Forensic Science in Action for high school students'; Dr Lynne Milne for her organisation of the Science Week Forensic Science events and the staff of the Centre for Forensic Science for their assistance and participation in these events.

Christmas function

The 2006 Christmas Function was a BBQ in association with the staff and families of the Research Group of the Perth Zoo in the gardens of the Perth Zoo. Thanks go to Dr Vic Semeniuk and Margaret Brocx for their organisation, and members of the Perth Zoo Research Group for the guided tour through three of the research facilities and explanation of their projects.

OTHER REPORTS

Journal:

The quality of papers in the Journal of the Royal Society of Western Australia remains at an international standard, reflecting the high quality of articles that are submitted for publication. During the year 2006/2007, 27 papers were received as manuscripts for consideration in the Journal of the Royal Society of Western Australia. In total, 20 papers were published or are in press in the issues 89(2) to 90(2). Volume 89(3) was dedicated to Dr John Beard – as a "*Celebration of a life in Botany*", with a range of papers therein dealing with plant science. Currently, the Journal is received by over 600 subscribers, consisting of some 340 local subscribers, 32 from the Eastern States and 10 Overseas. The Journal is received by over 230 libraries and organisations, consisting of 26 locally, 45 from the Eastern States and 167 overseas. The Journal continues to be typeset and

printed by the Western Australian Museum. The Society thanks the staff of the Publications Section for their help with publishing the Journal.

The collection of all held spare stock of the Journal dating back to the first issue has been moved from the Murdoch University Library, and other areas in which it was housed, to the WA Museum where it has been catalogued and now housed in the upper level of the Museum's Hackett Hall.

The collection of Paul Wycherley journals (1973 to 2007) that was donated to RSWA has been passed on to Notre Dame University, who received them with much appreciation.

Proceedings:

The Proceedings are published every month and posted on the Website. Some 380 Proceedings are received by members of which about 160 are sent by Australia Post within Western Australia, 13 to the Eastern States, and 4 overseas. Over 200 Proceedings are received by email. The Proceedings were also used as a vehicle for notices of interest to the members.

Library:

The Society's Library is incorporated within the Library of the Western Australian Museum, now located at Welshpool. It contains a small but valuable collection of 680 monographs in addition to many scientific journals received on exchange for its own journal. Over 800 journal titles are held, 215 of them current. The library's holdings of all books and journals have now been placed on the national bibliographic database 'Libraries Australia', an online search service which allows users to search for locations across the combined catalogues of Australian libraries with one search.

Archives:

Protocols have been established for the present and future management of the Society's important documents to assist in record-keeping. The archivist collects and stores all important documents relating directly to the Royal Society of Western Australia after they are no longer required for ready reference for current Society business. After several years, a body of the collected documents are taken to be stored with the earlier materials in the Battye Archives at the Alexander Library, where they are available for referral. No new materials have been added to the Battye State Archives this year.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Society thanks the Western Australian Museum for their cooperation in housing the Society's library and storing additional copies of the Journal. The Board of the Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority is thanked for allowing the Society to hold meetings on the Kings Park premises under their jurisdiction and for providing support for Society activities. Council acknowledges the support of the Murdoch University for providing facilities for the 2006 Annual General Meeting. The Society acknowledges the support of the State Government in providing a subsidy (through the Library and Information Service) for publication of the Journal.