



## Annual Report of Council for 2014-2015

20<sup>th</sup> July, 2015

The objective of the Society is to advance and promote science. During 2014-2015 Council has continued its efforts to raise the profile of the Society and bring to its members and the community, through Meetings, Public Forums and the Journal, scientific insights into the major issues facing us locally and globally. We celebrate the role of scientific exchange in making the world a better place.

### Council 2013-2015

The 2013-2015 Council was elected in 2013 for two years. Dr Tony Cockbain retired from Council in late 2013, but saw the Centennial Journal Issue through to publication in June 2014, retiring as Editor-in-Chief in March 2014. Dr Jane Rosser, who was a council member for many years and recently Membership Secretary, and Ms Miira Gallegos who served two terms on Council, resigned from Council in early 2014. Assoc. Prof Alex Bevan, after organising a successful Centenary programme, retired from Council in September 2014. We thank Tony, Jane, Miira and Alex for the major contributions they have made to the Society.

Prof Patrick Armstrong joined Council in late 2013, taking on the position of Editor-in-Chief. We welcomed Cr Elizabeth Re, Dr Desireé Moon and Mr Matteo Vinci to Council in September 2014, and in April 2015, Mr Greg Benjamin, who will take over as the Hon. Treasurer from Phil O'Brien, joined Council.

Retiring from Council at the 2015 AGM are Dr Phil O'Brien, Dr Lynne Milne, Prof Lindsay Collins and Mr Matteo Vinci. Phil has served on Council for 14 years, being Treasurer for most of that time and serving two terms as President (2007-2009, 2011-2013). He has been the driving force to modernise the Society, and was instrumental in securing two Lotterywest Grants to upgrade the website. Lynne has served on Council for 13 years, being Secretary for much of that time and serving one term as President (2009-2011). She was instrumental in securing the recent Lotterywest Grant for the Centenary and a Review and Business Plan, and for the organisation of the Centenary year events. Since 2007, Phil and Lynne, along with the assistance of Council, oversaw many changes in the Society. These included the establishment of an Editorial Board, a modern and interactive website, the electronic distribution of the Newsletter (former Proceedings), a new logo and associated rebranding of the Journal and Newsletter covers, and a Business Plan to take the Society forward. Prof Lindsay Collins, who has served on council for two terms and who was on the Centenary sub-committee, is retiring for 2015- 2017 and may return in the future. Mr Matteo Vinci, our IT expert who manages our Facebook and Twitter accounts, will retire, but will continue to assist with IT matters and social media advertising. We thank the above councillors for their contributions.

### Vice-Patrons

Prof Lyn Beazley AO FTSE has kindly agreed to continue as Vice-Patron of the Society. Council thanks her for her incredible support, for officiating at numerous events, her advice and guidance and her endless enthusiasm for the promotion of science.

The Governor of WA has traditionally been a Vice-Patron of the Society. Her Excellency the Honourable Kerry Sanderson AO, Governor of Western Australia, who took up her appointment in October 2014, has kindly agreed to continue this tradition and has accepted the Society's invitation to be a Vice-Patron.

### **Journal (WA Science: The Journal of the Royal Society of Western Australia)**

We produce a high quality scientific journal that is important for dissemination of the results of WA Research and that is the envy of the other Royal Societies' across Australia. The quality of the Journal is testament to the efforts of a string of past Editors who have given freely of their time and expended great effort to attain this quality. Despite the challenges we face in a rapidly changing publishing environment, the Journal continues to be well-supported by local scientists.

It is now published twice yearly, with the provision for Special Issues, and in line with the direction of other Australian Royal Society journals, it now includes extended abstracts (from the Society's Postgraduate Symposium), obituaries, and book reviews.

The highlight of the year 2014-2015 was the publication of the Centennial Issue (Vol 97, Part 1), under the editorship of the previous Editor-in Chief, Dr Tony Cockbain. This issue ran to 261 pages, and included 17 papers reviewing the history of science in the State of Western Australia over the preceding 100 years. A W R Bevan's paper on the 'History and role of the Royal Society of Western Australia' was of particular interest: other papers described the progress of aspects of Archaeology, Biological Science, Chemistry, Earth Science and Mathematics in the State. The new, colourful cover displaying photographs of a number of distinctive West Australian emblems and iconic scenes was well received.

Part 2 contained eleven papers (comprising 151 pages) from the Inaugural Western Australian Freshwater Fish Symposium, held at the University of Western Australia late in 2013. This meeting was supported by the WA Government Department of Fisheries, the Australian Society for Fish Biology and the Freshwater Fish Group & Fish Health Unit at Murdoch University: the Society is indebted to these organisations. The issue was guest-edited by members of the organising committee of the symposium.

The Journal continues to receive a regular flow of papers. It is planned that the next issue (98/1) will have something of an Indian Ocean Focus. Seven papers, and two book reviews have been accepted for this. The issue will also include three extended abstracts from the Postgraduate Symposium held in October 2014.

Approximately six papers have been accepted for future issues, are currently under review, or being revised following review. Every paper is refereed, and the Editor-in-Chief is greatly indebted to those on the Editorial Board, and others, who assist in the process of reviewing papers. It is only through careful refereeing of papers submitted to the Journal that the traditional high standards of the Society can be maintained.

Council appreciates Prof Patrick Armstrong agreeing to take over the position of Editor-in-Chief, and acknowledges and thanks all members of the Editorial Board, the reviewers and contributors for their support of the Society and its Journal.

### **Newsletter (former Proceedings)**

A hard copy of the Proceedings, published monthly, was for many years how members were informed of upcoming events and received news of past events. As we have now moved to largely electronic notifications of events, news and delivery of the RSWA Newsletter, the Newsletter is published less frequently and delivered electronically to almost all members, and mailed to the few members who opt to pay (currently \$10/ann) for hard copies. As events are also advertised on the website ([www.rswa.org.au](http://www.rswa.org.au)), members without emails have been notified of events by mail.

### **Centenary**

The RSWA received Royal assent to assume the name The Royal Society of Western Australia on 18<sup>th</sup> November 1913, and the name was formally adopted in 10<sup>th</sup> March 1914 when a new Constitution was approved. Planning for the 2014 Centenary celebrations began in early 2013 under the guidance of A/Prof Alex Bevan and assisted by Dr Lynne Milne. In early 2014 a formal Centenary sub-committee of Dr Phil Playford, Prof Lyn Beazley, A/Prof Kate Trinajstic, Prof Lindsay Collins, Ms Sandra Toby, Dr Lynne Milne and Dr Helen Stace, headed by A/Prof Alex Bevan, was formed to bring the programme to

fruition. Council provided seed funding and, to contribute to the cost of venue hire and catering, entry fees were charged.

The latter part of the Centenary year programme again highlighted the wealth of scientific excellence in Western Australia, with presentations by eminent WA scientists. All Centenary events were exceptionally well-attended by members and the public, with attendee numbers ranging from 50 – 120. The provision of refreshments prior to and after each event was a great success, providing opportunities for networking and discussion.

### **Website**

The updating of the new and interactive website, funded by two Lotterywest grants, has been a great success. Using their email and membership number and password, Members can now login to change and update their details and access the most recent journal issues online.

All events are now advertised on the website, with links to information on the speakers. Members and the public can register for events online either via Eventbrite, or by downloading a registration form with payment details and emailing it to the Secretary.

### **Postgraduate Symposium**

The 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Postgraduate Symposium was held on 3<sup>rd</sup> October at the University of Western Australia, and co-hosted by the School of Earth and Environment. It was once again a resounding success with 14 oral presentations and five posters. The quality of the presentations was excellent and the topics diverse, from the Theory of ion-Atom Collisions for Proton Therapy, geomorphology and other aspects of Kimberley coral reefs, the response of reptiles to urbanization, to development of solar selective surfaces for photothermal applications and the seasonality and distributions of macro-algae *Sargassum* beds at Point Peron. Lively discussions during the tea and lunch breaks saw students exchanging contact details for collaboration. Students were given the opportunity to have an extended abstract published in the RSWA Journal, three of which will be published in the Vol 98 Part 1.

### **Lotterywest Grant**

Due to the changing way science is disseminated, and because of the changing expectations of the public and scientists, RSWA applied for and was successful in being awarded a Lotterywest grant of \$42,100 to commission a strategic review and a plan for the future, and to fund the latter part of the Centenary advertising and marketing, venue hire, and coordination and project management. The review was conducted by Mike Donnelly of OBH Consulting in consultation with Council, members and other not-for-profit societies. The Society's governance, operations and its place and purpose in the wider and scientific communities were reviewed.

*Business Review and Plan.* A draft of the Business Plan was presented to Council by Mike Donnelly at Council's Annual one-day Retreat in February, and the final version was received on 10 April 2015. The 14 major Recommendations from the review have been circulated to members. They include that the Society adopt the mission that *'The Society will be the preferred network for WA scientists'*; that Council should form a Governance Committee and a Marketing and Events Committee; that the Society should complete the process for registration as a charity and apply for Donor Gift Recipient status, and that the Society should organise fewer, but more high profile events, rather than an event every month.

*Centenary advertising.* The Lotterywest grant also provided for the development of advertising material. RSWA councillor Sandra Toby organised and helped design two double sided banners, a DL brochure (2,000 printed), and two TV commercials. We thank Sandra for the enormous amount of time and dedication it took to finalise these.

### **Membership**

Our membership numbers are steady and over the past few years have hovered above or below 200. Over 40 new members have joined in the last 18 months, with many having come from our website which has helped us reach a wider audience. This has been offset by the resignation of a number of very senior and longstanding members, many of whom have gone into assisted accommodation and have written to say how much they have enjoyed their long membership and wishing the Society well.

With the establishment of the Marketing and Events Committee, it is hoped that mechanisms will be put in place to increase our membership.

## **MEETINGS – 2014 - 2015**

### ***Annual General Meeting***

The Royal Society of Western Australia's 2014 Annual General Meeting was held on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> September at Kings Park Administration Centre. It was later in the year than usual due to Centenary events. As the Student Medals were formally presented at the Government House Cocktail Party in July, the meeting was quite informal with most councillors and a few members attending to hear the annual Report, presented by Vice-President Prof Bill Loneragan in the absence of the President Dr Hugo Bekle who was on sabbatical leave. The meeting was followed by refreshments, giving members and councillors time to get to know our three new councillors.

### ***Council Meetings and Annual Retreat.***

Traditionally, Council meetings preceded the monthly Ordinary Meeting presentations on the third Monday of each month, but due to Centenary events in the latter part of 2014, Council met regularly at other convenient times. Following the Review recommendations, it is proposed that the new subcommittees will meet once every two months, and the full Council in the interim months. Membership of the subcommittees is yet to be finalised, but it is envisaged that non- Councillor members with special interest in specific areas may be co-opted on to relevant committees from time to time.

The sixth Annual Council Retreat was held on 14<sup>th</sup> February in the John Glover Meeting Room School of Earth and Environment, The University of WA. The morning was facilitated by James Best, former mayor of South Perth, and Mike Donnelly presented the draft Review and Business Plan in the afternoon.

### ***Centenary Meetings.***

The latter part of the Centenary programme saw Prof Peter Quinn present "*WA on the Threshold – new understanding, new discoveries and new opportunities with the Square Kilometre Array*", in October in the Planetarium at Scitech. The animated demonstration of how Universes form, enthralled the more than 80 attendees.

In November, more than 70 people attended the one-day "*WA's Biodiversity – Past, Present and Future*" symposium at the University Club, UWA. The symposium, opened by Prof Lyn Beazley AO, consisted of three sessions entitled *On the Land, In the Ocean and Our Diverse Flora*, with presentations by three WA scientists in each session. Presenters were: Dr Mikael Siverson, A/Prof Kate Trinjastic, De Jane Fromont, Dr Sarah Martin, Dr Mark Harvey, Mr Keith Morris, Dr Lynne Milne, Dr Kevin Thiele and Dr Margaret Byrne.

### ***Christmas Function***

The Annual RSWA Christmas Party was held on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> Dec at the WA Museum. Refreshments were served in the courtyard amongst the grapevine and meteorites, and Mr Alec Coles, CEO of the WA Museum, gave an interesting talk in the historic Hackett Hall, on the history of the Hall and the vision for the new museum. Prof Alex Bevan took two tours of the Diamonds to Dinosaurs Exhibition which he was responsible for setting up. Council thanks Alec for use of the venue free of charge and his excellent presentation and Alex for the outstanding tours

As RSWA's spares of journal issues are held in the gallery of Hackett Hall, a table of old journals and special issues was displayed for members to take for a donation. A raffle was held with the prizes kindly donated by the Stirling City Council and The Saint Hotel. We thank them for their kind donations, and RSWA councillor Elizabeth Re for sourcing them.

### **2015 Meetings**

**In March** Prof Giff Miller, visiting Curtin from Colorado, Canada, *presented An Arctic Perspective on Contemporary Warming* in the Exhibition Space at Curtin University. **In May**, also at the Exhibition Space at Curtin University, Prof Lindsay Collins of Curtin University, and Mr Patrick Seares, CEO of the Western Australian Marine Science Institution, presented different aspects of Marine Research in WA. **In June**, at the Kings Park Administration Centre, Dr Lynne Milne spoke on *The Forensic Aspects of the Rayney and other cases*. All meetings were well attended, with refreshments provided for attendees to continue discussions and networking after the presentations. Council thanks the above speakers for their time and excellent presentations.

### **OTHER REPORTS**

#### ***Library***

The Society's Library of some 580 books and 983 serial titles continues to be incorporated within the Library of the Western Australian Museum, and is located in the Museum's Collections and Research Centre at Welshpool. Of particular note are the over 84 monographs published prior to 1900 with several rare titles on early voyages to Australia and botanical work. The library is used by Museum staff and, during opening hours (9.00-5.00 Mon-Fri) is open to Society members. It can also be used by other researchers and items are available to users of other libraries, both within Australia and overseas, via the inter-library loans system.

*Decamp of Hackett Hall.* The spare copies of RSWA journal issues, including those from precursor societies, are housed in the galleries of the WA Museum's Hackett Hall, along with the volumes from 144 Journal exchange titles. The renovation of the WA Museum will take four years, so this material needs to be stored or discarded. The WA Museum has room to store 5 m of the spare journal copies (10% of the total) and wishes to *delete 51 exchange titles as they are either available online, duplicates with our collection or such few old unused issues of an item that it's no longer worth storing them*. The Department of Parks and Wildlife will take seven of the titles, and the rest will be stored by the Museum.

### **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

The Society thanks the Western Australian Museum for their housing of the Society's library and storing additional copies of the Journal and acknowledges the support of the State Government for its continuing subsidy, through the Library and Information Service, for publication 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 Faculty of Science at Curtin University for subsidising the lease of a laptop and our office on campus; The School of Earth and Environment at UWA for sponsoring venues and facilities for meetings; and Scitech for partially sponsoring the hire of their venues.

All members of Council are thanked for their work and support throughout the year. However, we particularly acknowledge and thank three members of Council who have shouldered the major tasks associated with the Society's Centenary year: Dr Phil O'Brien as Treasurer, A/Prof Alex Bevan for the design and orchestration of the Centenary Programme and Dr Lynne Milne who has worked tirelessly to ensure not only that the Programme was successfully implemented but that the regular activities of the Society were maintained.

**ROYAL SOCIETY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA INC  
FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS YE 30/06/15**

	This Year	Last Year
<b>► STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS</b>		
<b>REVENUE</b>		
Grants - Dept of Culture and the Arts - subsidy for Journal	\$16,000	\$16,000
Grants - Lotterywest - includes Centenary Grant \$42,100	\$45,242	\$15,040
Membership Subscriptions	\$9,353	\$12,701
Event Income	\$14,699	\$1,938
Journal Income and Copyright	\$4,372	\$10,289
Other Income	\$3,405	\$3,161
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$93,071</b>	<b>\$59,129</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Advertising and Marketing - Toby Creative for TV Ad, Banners, and Centenary	\$10,000	-
Office Lease - Curtin University of Technology B500 Room 1103 - Base \$512/Mth exc GST	\$6,173	\$7,913
Business Plan - paid to OBH Consulting Mike Donnelly	\$19,600	-
Centenary Project Management/Administration Support	\$12,000	\$8,470
Event Expenses	\$22,970	\$5,508
Journal Expenses - includes \$16,365 exc GST paid to Vanguard Press for Centennial issue	\$21,880	\$13,285
Website Expenses - includes \$16,250 expensed in 3 years to 30/06/15 to PM Williamson	\$2,500	\$11,978
Other Expenses	\$6,391	\$9,115
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$101,513</b>	<b>\$56,269</b>
<b>Total Surplus (Deficit)</b>	<b>(\$8,443)</b>	<b>\$2,860</b>
<b>► BALANCE SHEET</b>		
<b>ASSETS (LIABILITIES)</b>		
Cash at Bankwest - Decrease this year \$6,407	\$45,239	\$51,646
GST Receivable (Payable)	(\$1,187)	\$1,058
Receivable from Lotterywest	\$209	-
Investments - 200 Bank of Queensland shares - Value 30/06/15 \$12.77/share = \$2,554	\$1,324	\$1,324
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>\$45,585</b>	<b>\$54,028</b>