

Minutes of the 81st Annual General Meeting of the Ornithological Society of New Zealand (Inc.)

Held at the Thames Civic Centre, Thames on 6th June 2021, commencing at 3.30 pm.

Present: Council members: Bruce McKinlay (President), Ian Armitage, Natalie Forsdick, Colin Miskelly, Keith Woodley, Lynne Anderson. EO: Ingrid Hutzler and about 100 members.

Welcome: from the President

Apologies: Mike & Glenys Glover, Peter Frost, Diane & Michael Lookman, Derry and Isabella Godbert, Eleanor Gunby, Mel Galbraith, Josie Galbraith, Paul Garner-Richards, Bill Cash, John Stewart, Imogen Warren.

Motion: *That the apologies be accepted. Bruce McKinlay / Ian Armitage. Carried*

Recent Deaths: Tribute was given to past members: Dr William ("Bill") Greenwood, Ian Charles Bell, Reg Cotter, Connie Wright, John Douglas, Efys Graham, Reg Cotter, Anthea Goodwin, Julie Fryer, Leslie Gowan, Gwyneth Norman, Frank Austin, Elliot Dawson, Bice Tennyson.

Minutes of the 2019 AGM (N.B. No AGM was held in 2020 due to Covid pandemic government restrictions)

Motion: *That the minutes of the last AGM in 2019, as circulated, be accepted as a true and correct record. Ian Armitage / Michael Szabo Carried.*

Matters Arising: There was an enquiry as to if there were any further developments with the Young Birders. Bruce is sorting out a succession plan to get it up and running again.

Treasurer's Report:

Bruce gave a summary of the Treasurer's (Paul Garner- Richards) Report. The main points:

- It is very concerning that we are running at a deficit and that expenditure is exceeding income.
- The Council is looking at ways to turn this around including working towards having e-copies of *Notornis* and the Birds NZ magazine available to members as an alternative to hard copies.
- 2020 saw some exceptional costs, for example two special editions of *Notornis*.
- The Statement of Financial Performance shows a \$65,525 deficit.
- The Statement of Financial Position shows net assets at \$262,000 – which is considerably down from last year.
- The full Financial Report has been posted on the website.

Comments from the floor:

- Don't stop spending, get more income.
- Do we have a Fundraiser? The money is out there and there are many people wanting to support worthy causes.
- We need to raise Birds NZ to a higher level – need to aim our sights high with worthwhile projects.

- Can we cut costs?
- What do members get from their subscription? – there should be a lower subscription if members get e copies of the publications.
- Birds NZ mission statement should include the word ‘advocacy’: - ‘foster the study, knowledge, enjoyment and advocacy of birds.’ This would increase membership and opportunities for increasing funding.

Bruce replied that Council had recently commissioned Michael Szabo to do a full review on Communications, Membership and Fundraising – this report is very comprehensive and has offered many options which Council will work through in the coming months. Also, that his report will allude to some of these concerns.

Motion: *That the Treasurer's Report and financial statements be accepted.*

Bruce McKinlay / David Lawrie Carried

President's Report: Bruce gave his annual report for 2020 – the main points being:

- The last 3 Council meetings have been via Zoom.
- Health and Safety – there were a few H&S issues of which Council is aware and RRs were asked to keep reporting these.
- Two special editions of *Notornis* – ‘Lost Gold’ (*Ornithology of the Sub-Antarctic Auckland Islands*) and *Wader Studies in New Zealand*. Bruce acknowledged and thanked Craig Symes, Paul Sagar, Colin Miskelly and Keith Woodley
- There was mention of our partners T Gear Charitable Trust and Goodness Kitchen.
- New MOUs have been signed with Forest and Bird and Manaaki Whenua (Landcare Research)
- Our social media platforms of Facebook and Twitter remain strong.
- The new “MembershipWorks” membership management system is up and running – thanks to Imogen Warren (membership secretary), and Roger Sharp (web support).
- The Society’s Strategy has now been revised and finalised.
- Council has received Michael Szabo’s review on Communications, Membership and Fundraising.
- Submissions have been made on conservation matters – anyone making a submission to please send it to Council.
- Bruce noted that the Society was a voluntary society and relied on the energy and enthusiasm of the Society Office Holders. Bruce asked Office Holders to stand and thanked them for all their efforts and work put into the Society, giving everyone present an opportunity to applaud:

Craig Symes – editor of *Notornis*

Michael Szabo – editor *Birds NZ*

WMIL team – Pat Crowe, Dan Burgin, Mike Bell – contributions to Birds Atlas Scheme

Colin Miskelly, Graeme Taylor, Adrian Riegen – Scheme Convenors (other Scheme Convenors were thanked in absentia)

Ingrid – Executive Officer

All Regional Representatives present

All Council Members present

John Cockrem then asked Bruce to stand for an ovation of thanks from all members present.

Motion: *That the President’s report be accepted. Bruce McKinlay / David Lawrie - Carried*

Matters Arising from the President's Report:

Do we have a formal contract with WMIL for Bird Atlas? Bruce replied that: Yes, we do have a contract, we receive quarterly reports of progress, payments are quarterly and Cornell Lab of Ornithology maintain the portal.

Is Council working on formalising plans for RRs? Bruce explained that we are all volunteers which is respected and appreciated, and it is realised that many RRs feel that they must stick to the role with no one to take over from them. Some regions are without an RR and Council is trying to find a solution to this.

Some regions (without RRs) do not feel a connectedness to the Society and how can this be rectified? Lack of an RR in a region creates a vacuum. Bruce commented that each region is different and again Council was working to resolve the problem. He also mentioned that there is an RR Role Description on the website and encouraged everyone to read it!

Election of Officers:

The Secretary announced that four incumbent Council members were re-elected unopposed: They being: Bruce McKinlay (President), Paul Garner-Richards (Treasurer), Ian Armitage, and Natalie Forsdick. Ian Armitage did not wish to be re-elected as Vice-President.

Bruce announced that the new Vice-President for the Society is Natalie Forsdick. Ian Armitage congratulated Natalie for accepting the role of V.P. and commented what a significant moment in governance this was for the Society as Natalie is the first ever woman V.P. for the entire organisation.

Amendments to the Constitution

A notice of motion had previously been published with regard to the following:

1. Society Name:

'The legally registered name of the Society shall be: 'The Ornithological Society of New Zealand Incorporated'. The popular operating name for the Society shall be: 'Birds New Zealand'. The Te Reo Māori name of the Society shall be: 'Te Kāhui Mātai Manu o Aotearoa'.

2. Subscription date:

6.2 The full annual subscription shall be payable on the anniversary of when a member joined the Society whereupon they shall be entitled to receive any publication of the Society and to exercise all the rights of their class of Membership for one year.

6.3 No Member shall be entitled to receive any publication of the Society or exercise any of the rights of their class of Membership unless an annual subscription has been paid within eight weeks of the anniversary of the Member joining the Society.

6.5 To be repealed.

3. Subscription Rates

A. New Zealand Membership Subscriptions (\$)						
Category	Ordinary	Family	Student	Group	Corporate	Life
Present Rate	70.00	17.50	35.00	140.00	350.00	1,380.00
Proposed Rate	80.00	20.00	40.00	160.00	400.00	1,580.00
% Change	14.3	14.3	14.3	14.3	14.3	14.5

B. Membership Subscriptions for the Rest of the World (\$)						
Category	Ordinary	Family	Student	Group	Corporate	Life
Present Rate	115.00	28.75	57.50	225.00	690.00	2,400.00
Proposed Rate	134.00	33.50	67.00	262.50	805.00	2,800.00
% Change	16.5	16.5	16.5	16.7	16.7	16.7

A background paper with an explanation has been published on the Society's website.

Discussion: It was agreed to debate these three notices as one item of business.

Society Name: Bruce was asked to explain about the name changes. 'The Ornithological Society of New Zealand' is the scientific name and will always be our official and legal name. 'Birds NZ' is the easy and popular name and far more user friendly – many people would shy away from the Society if it was known only as OSNZ. The Maori name recognises correct protocol and can be used with either of the other two names. It was also formalising the rebranding of the Society.

Sub Change date: That this is a good thing and was welcomed.

Motion: *That the meeting accept all constitutional amendments as proposed.*

Bruce McKinlay / Ian Armitage Carried

Awards Bruce announced that Dr. Bruce MacKereth has been awarded a Meritorious Service Award for his significant and sustained services to Ornithology especially in the Coromandel Peninsula. He was not present to receive the award. Bruce also noted Bev Alexander from Canterbury had also been awarded a Meritorious Service Award – this was presented to Bev last year.

General Business

The Fledgling Fund Bruce explained that the fledgling fund had been set up to enable more young people to travel to Conferences, be involved and not have travel expenses as a barrier.

Bird Atlas: There was a comment from the floor with concerns about Bird Atlas: The default name of a bird should be the NZ name; concerns re privacy issues and that using a phone is an onerous thing to do. Bruce and Mike Bell replied – settings can be changed to get the NZ bird name; it is agreed that everyone shares their information and it would not be fair to restrict NZ data, also it is the best way to advocate for birds. Also comments that many others enjoy using it.

The meeting closed at 5pm

Minutes compiled by Lynne Anderson, secretary.

Signed:

Date:

Bruce McKinlay, President