

NZMS Annual Report, 2005

Meetings of the Society

The 50th Annual Meeting of the Society was held as a joint conference combined with the New Zealand Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (NZSBMB) at Otago University, Dunedin from 22nd-25th November, 2005. The meeting convenors were Greg Cook (Department of Microbiology and Immunology, University of Otago) representing NZMS and Sigurd Wilbanks (Department of Biochemistry, University of Otago) representing NZSBMB.

The 50th AGM of the Society was held on 23rd November, 2005 at 6 pm, in Castle 2 Lecture Theatre, University of Otago. The executive Committee met on the morning of the same day.

Executive Committee

The 2005 Executive Committee of NZMS comprised the following members:

Susan Turner, Auckland (President)

Phil Bremer, Dunedin (Vice-President)

Andrew Hudson, Christchurch (Immediate Past President)

Ralph Jack, Dunedin (Secretary)

Robin Simmonds, Dunedin (Treasurer)

Greg Cook, Dunedin (Newsletter Editor)

Chris Sissons, Wellington (Committee Member)

Steve Flint, Palmerston North (Committee Member)

Adrian Cookson, Palmerston North (Committee Member)

Membership

As at 31. December, 2005 the society comprised 308 ordinary members, 91 student members, 7 retired members and 11 honorary members, making a total membership of 417.

Finance

The 2005 balance sheet will be presented at the 51st annual general meeting, to be held during the 51st annual meeting of the society, Waikato University (21.-24. November, 2006).

Overseas Visitors

Guest speakers for the 50th annual meeting of the society sponsored either fully or in part by NZMS included:

Prof. J. Joseph Ferretti (Department of Microbiology, University of Oklahoma, USA)

Prof. Steve Giovannoni (Department of Microbiology, Oregon State University, Corvallis, USA)

Assoc. Prof. Peter H. Janssen (Department of Microbiology and Immunology, University of Melbourne, Australia)

Prof. Robert K. Poole (Department of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology, The University of Sheffield, United Kingdom)

Prizes and Awards

Student poster prizes at the 50th annual meeting were combined with the New Zealand Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology. Presentation awards were made to Ruth Wirawan (Otago University) and Dana Westphal (Otago University). Poster prizes were awarded to Damien Fleetwood (AgResearch, Palmerston North), Sacha Jordan (Auckland University), Karla Mettrick (Otago University), Richard Muirhead (Otago University) and Pearl Swe (Otago University).

Grants-In-Aid

The costs of attending the annual meeting for many students were offset by the award of grants-in-aid; the total value of awards was \$7 250. These awards aided nineteen student members from across the country to attend the 50th annual meeting.

NZMS Orator

The NZMS Orator at the 50th annual meeting was Prof. John Tagg from Department of Microbiology and Immunology, Otago School of Medical Sciences, University of Otago, Dunedin. The society honoured current and past Orators by handing out framed awards to all society orators (each of whom was present at the 50th annual meeting) and with a portrait of the group taken after the annual meeting participants photographs.

Celebrations to Mark the 50th Anniversary of the Society

Attendance at the conference dinner of the 50th Annual Meeting by all of the honorary members of the society was enabled by the financial assistance of NZMS. During the dinner, life members of the Society were honored in a speech by the president (S. Turner) and a reply was given by Margaret Loutit. In addition, a cake marking the 50th Anniversary was cut in celebration of this milestone.

Magazine and Other Publications

Four issues of *NZ Bioscience* were published in 2005, in February, May, August and November; these appeared as volume 14, issues 1-4.

Thanks primarily to the efforts of four historians (Terry Maguire, Frank Austin, Sandy Smith and John Tagg), the Society published a booklet entitled '*The First 50 Years: a Brief History of the New Zealand Microbiological Society*' outlining some of the milestones of the Society over the past 50 years. The booklet was handed out to all participants at the 50th Annual Meeting and is available to all members from the secretary.

Website

A new and substantially revamped website for the Society (<http://www.nzms.org.nz>) was launched in mid 2005. In addition, the hosting service for the NZMS webpages was moved to the RSNZ server to make use of the free service offered by RSNZ as part of the affiliation this society holds with RSNZ. The updated website contains additional information not previously available on the Society website including a section for student members and pages for each of the current special interest groups, a section advertising jobs in microbiology and a section for advertising studentships and scholarships have also been added. In addition, with the help of several members involved in collating the history of the Society, several pages of historical information on the Society, including photographs and videos have been added.

Ralph W. Jack
Secretary (2005)
New Zealand Microbiological Society, Inc.
24. September, 2006