



The Royal Society of New South Wales

"for the encouragement of studies and investigations in Science Art Literature and Philosophy"

Minutes of the 1289th Ordinary General Meeting of The Royal Society of New South Wales held by ZOOM Webinar on Wednesday 9 December 2020 at 6.30PM.

There were 50 Members, Fellows and guests in attendance.

1. WELCOME

The President, Emeritus Professor Ian Sloan AO FRSN presided at the meeting and introduced the panel members. He welcomed members and guests and gave an acknowledgement of country. He also referred to the Society's Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

1.1 Minutes of the 1288th Ordinary General Meeting held on 11 November 2020

The Minutes of the previous Ordinary General Meeting, previously circulated, were approved.

2. CONFIRMATION OF MEMBERSHIP

It was noted that as no valid objection had been lodged within two weeks of the November Ordinary General Meeting, that is, by 6.30pm on 25 November 2020, the election of the following new Members and Fellows took effect from the date of that meeting.

2.1 Fellows

Professor Stephen Douglas Bartlett
Professor Bernard Walter Balleine
Professor Lewis Albert Bizo
Professor Andrew William Blakers
Dr Elizabeth Margaret Deane
Dr Catherine Patricia Foley
Emeritus Professor Bruce Ian Henry
Professor Ian Bernard Hickie
Professor Kourosh Kalantar-Zadeh
Professor Geraint Francis Lewis
Professor Jennifer Helen Martin
Mr John McDonald
Professor Mary-Louise McLaws
Associate Professor Jill Maree Newby
Prof Angela Marissa Nickerson
Professor Martina Heide Stenzel
Professor Steven Ronald Weller
Professor Thomas James Whitford
Professor Jeremy Somers Wilson

2.2 Members

Dr Martin Fuechsle
Mr Calvin Manjarres-Wahlberg
Professor Janet Nelson
Dr Rebecca Soffe
Dr Lia Zambetti

3 ANNOUNCEMENT OF NAMES OF CANDIDATES FOR MEMBERSHIP

If no valid objection is lodged within two weeks of this Ordinary General Meeting, that is, by 6.30pm on 23 December 2020, the election of the following new Members and Fellows would take effect from the date of the meeting.

3.1 Fellows

Professor Noel Andrew Campbell Cressie
Professor Jason Peter Evans
Professor John Germov
Dr Saul Thomas Griffith
Professor Andrew Simon Killcross
Professor Johannes Paul Martin le Coutre
Professor Adam McCluskey
Dr David George Nash
Professor Paddy Nixon
Professor Jane Helen Simpson
Professor Dacheng Tao
Professor Franciscus Antonius Josephus Verstraten
Professor Albert Yousif Zomaya

3.2 Members

Mr Clive Baldock
Mr Joshua Bonsing
Mr John Michael Cameron
Mr Anthony Grey
Ms Cecelia Hannah Hibbert
Mr Barrie Hill
Mr Steven Patterson
Associate Professor Qilin Wang

4 REPORT FROM COUNCIL AND COMMITTEES OF COUNCIL

The President brought to members' attention the following matters.

4.1 Executive Officer

He noted that Council had approved the renewal of the contract of the Executive Officer, Ms Wendy Enevoldsen for 2021.

4.2 Distinguished Fellow

He advised that Sir Fraser Stoddart had accepted the invitation to become a Distinguished Fellow of the Society and had agreed to give a lecture when circumstances permitted.

4.3 Announcement of Awards for 2020

The President announced the following recipients of the Society's Awards for 2020.

- **The James Cook Medal** - for outstanding contributions to science and human welfare in and for the Southern Hemisphere. This medal is the Society's most prestigious award. The 2020 James Cook Medal is awarded to Professor Richard Bryant from the School of Psychology, University of New South Wales, Sydney.
- **The W B Clarke Medal** – for distinguished research in the natural sciences conducted in Australia and its territories. The 2020 award is in the field of botany. The 2020 W B Clarke Medal is awarded to Distinguished Professor Michelle Leishman, Department of Biological Sciences, Macquarie University.
- **The Edgeworth David Medal** – for distinguished contributions by a young scientist under the age of thirty-five years, for work done mainly in Australia or its territories; or contributing to the advancement of Australian science. The 2020 Edgeworth David Medal is awarded to Associate Professor Brett Hallam, Scientia Fellow in the School of Photovoltaic and Renewable Energy Engineering, University of New South Wales, Sydney
- **The History and Philosophy of Science Medal** - in recognition of outstanding achievement in the History and Philosophy of Science with preference being given to the study of ideas, institutions, and individuals of significance to the practice of the natural sciences in Australia. The 2020 History and Philosophy of Science Medal is awarded to Professor Alison Bashford, Research Professor in History and Director of the New Earth Histories Research Program, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, University of New South Wales, Sydney.
- **The Royal Society of New South Wales Medal** – awarded to a member of the Society who has made meritorious contributions to the Society's administration, organisation, and endeavours. The Royal Society of New South Wales Medal for 2020 is awarded to Emerita Professor Mary O'Kane, former NSW Chief Scientist and Engineer.
- **The Royal Society of New South Wales Citation** – awarded to a Member or Fellow of the Society who has made significant contributions to the Society, but who has not been recognised in any other way. The Royal Society of New South Wales Citation for 2020 is awarded to Emeritus Professor Heinrich Hora, University of New South Wales, Sydney.
- **The Poggendorff Lectureship** – awarded for research in plant biology and, more broadly, agriculture. The 2020 Poggendorff Lectureship is awarded to Professor Angela Moles, School of Biological, Earth and Environmental Sciences, University of New South Wales, Sydney.
- **The Liversidge Lectureship** - awarded biennially for research in chemistry. The lecture is presented in conjunction with the Royal Australian Chemical Institute (RACI). The 2020 Liversidge Lectureship is awarded to Professor Richard Payne, Professor of Organic Chemistry and Chemical Biology, University of Sydney.
- **The Jak Kelly Award** - created in honour of Professor Jak Kelly (1928 – 2012) who was President of the Royal Society of NSW in 2005 and 2006. The Award encourages excellence in postgraduate research in physics. It is supported by the Royal Society of NSW and the Australian Institute of Physics, NSW branch. The winner is selected from a short list of candidates who made presentations at the most recent Australian Institute of Physics, NSW branch postgraduate awards event. The winner of the Jak Kelly Award for 2020 is Mr Matthew Donnelly, University of New South Wales.
- **The Royal Society of NSW Scholarships for 2020** - awarded each year to acknowledge outstanding achievements by young researchers in any field of science. The winners of the 2020 Royal Society of NSW Scholarships are

Mr Sajad Razavi Bazaz, University of Technology Sydney
Mr Daniel Fox, Australian National University
Ms Philippa Specker, University of New South Wales

5 GENERAL BUSINESS

5.1 Revised Rules

The President said as previously advised Council had undertaken a major revision of the Society's current Rules and By-laws in order to modernise them. This major exercise had been greatly assisted by The Hon John Dowd FRSN, a former NSW Attorney-General. He said that under the current Rules and By-laws, the revised Rules require the approval of members.

He said that voting on the revised Rules had commenced on Monday 26 October and had closed on Monday 7 December allowing 6 weeks for members to vote. Reminders had been sent on 16 November, 30 November and 6 December. Members had been asked to vote on the following motion by selecting exactly one of two options or choosing 'abstain' to vote for none of the options.

MOTION:

The Royal Society of NSW adopts the revised Rules, as published on the Society's website.

He said that the current Rule 27(c) states *inter alia* "The vote shall be valid if at least twenty (20) valid votes are received. The proposed alteration or addition shall be adopted if at least seventy-five percent (75%) of the valid votes support the motion."

The President announced that 33% of members had voted as follows: 167 members voted in favour of the above motion, 5 members voted against the motion, and 2 members abstained from voting. The motion was therefore carried.

The new Rules apply from the date of the meeting.

6 THIS EVENING'S PRESENTATION

DISPELLING CLIMATE CHANGE MYTHS—HOW OCEAN PHYSICS CAN HELP EXPLAIN SURPRISES IN THE MODERN-DAY CLIMATE RECORD

Professor Matthew England FRSN FAA, Climate Change Research Centre, UNSW Sydney

Professor Matthew England is Scientia Professor of Ocean & Climate Dynamics at the University of New South Wales who has previously held ARC Laureate and Federation Fellowships. He was the founding Director of the UNSW Climate Change Research Centre (CCRC) during 2006-2013. In 2014 he was elected a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Science, and in 2016 as a Fellow of the American Geophysical Union. He is also a Fellow of the Royal Society of NSW and was the winner of the Society's most prestigious award, the James Cook Medal, in 2019.

Certain aspects of the climate record are often seized upon in an attempt to disprove the threat of human-caused climate change. Notable examples include the decade-long slowdown in global surface warming that occurred in the early 2000s, as well as recent surface cooling and sea-ice expansion around Antarctica. The talk described how ocean and climate dynamics can explain these behaviours of the coupled climate system, and how the threat of anthropogenic climate change remains as real as ever.

There followed a question and answer session moderated by Professor Elizabeth Deane, Secretary, Events Committee.

7 VOTE OF THANKS AND CLOSE

The vote of thanks to Professor England was given by Emeritus Professor Christina Slade, Chair, Events Committee. She also acknowledged the contributions made to the 2020 events program made by Emeritus Professor Lindsay Botten, Emeritus Professor Elizabeth Deane, Mr Stuart Midgley and Ms Judith Wheeldon.

The meeting closed at 8.10pm.