
Annual Report

2000-2001

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President's report for 2000-2001

For sixty years now, the New Zealand Association of Scientists has existed to promote science and benefit society through the application of science, to debate science policy and influence government, and to increase public awareness of science and encourage excellence.

The 2001 year has been a very active one for the Council of NZAS with a number of important issues to be dealt with, some ongoing with other new issues arising from the budget. I thank Council members who attended meetings and communicating members from the regions who gave of their time to progress the aims and activities of the Association. In particular, I wish to thank our very active immediate past president, Janet Grieve, who kept key issues upfront, shared the load when time was limiting and also took responsibility for the Awards with the help of Ken Aldous. Louise Ryan kept the finances in order and continued to take responsibility for membership, our mailbox and the distribution of Science Review, and Paul Davis and Fiona McDonald kept us true to our words and commitments with minutes and messages. Many thanks for these core and often thankless tasks.

During the year, Council met 8 times at Science House and thereafter, meetings flowed on at the Backbencher in what has become a time-honored tradition for hardcore Council members. There has been no shortage of issues and an incessant demand by the media for NZAS comment on a variety of topics. This activity alone defines a key difference between the Royal Society of New Zealand and the New Zealand Association of Scientists.

Science Review

Under its new Editor, Dr Ira Beu, Science Review has been transformed from its characteristic yellow and black cover that was introduced in 1988 soon after Brian Shorland took over as Editor to an elegant and eye-catching silver, black and white format that stands up well alongside international publications and is not an embarrassment on the coffee table. However, the transformation is not limited to the cover, as a new presentation format and a number of new features have been added. In addition, a schedule of four publications per year is now being adhered to. This transformation has come at a cost, with production costs now exceeding budget. Council will need to address this issue in the coming year to ensure the financial viability of the Association. It would be timely to revisit the issue of establishing the Science Review Trust for which a Trust Deed has already been drawn up.

Due to ill health, Ira Beu resigned as Honorary Editor earlier this year. In her short period of service, Ira made a major contribution to Science Review and established a bright future for the journal. On behalf of Council, I would like to thank Dr Beu most sincerely for the uncompromising effort she has put into the Review.

In addition, Hilary Pope is standing down as Production Editor after 8 years service to the Association. I wish to express Council's appreciation to Hilary for the enormous effort she has put into the production of many Science Reviews, and also to Frank March for his role in production editing. Theirs will be a hard act to follow.

We have been most fortunate in obtaining the services of a new Honorary Editor, Allen Petrey, who brings extensive experience in government science and management to the position. In conjunction with the newly appointed production editor, Margaret MacDonald, NIWA, we look forward to a new era in Science Review production with the aim being to maintain high production standards and improve financial viability through targeted sponsorship and increased circulation.

Awards and Medals

The Association of Crown Research Institutes and the Foundation for Research Science and Technology continued to sponsor the Science Journalism and Communicator Awards respectively this year. NZAS is grateful to ACRI and FRST for their support. The Awards continue to be well contested, a factor which bodes well for the future of the Awards and indicates the health of New Zealand science. Greater emphasis on science communication through the media, through education programmes and the Royal Society's Science in Society initiative continue to raise the profile of science. This year's Award ceremony was held at the FRST conference venue on 18 October and the awards were presented by Hon Pete Hodgson, Minister for RS&T. The organizers wish to thank the judges for the considerable time and effort put into careful assessment of the entries. Publicity was again handled by Redmer Yska with coverage in a variety of news media. The Awards are subject to an annual evaluation by Council and we welcome input from a variety of sources.

Membership

During the 2000-2001 year, membership increased by 16% from 273 to 316, a legacy of Brian Shorland's badgering, and a direct result of a plan of action hatched by our immediate Past President, Janet Grieve. Forty-four new members were signed up and only 7 resignations or deletions were recorded. This year Massey University was targeted, and ongoing attention to membership drives and public profile should see numbers continue to rise. This is essential if we are to increase the influence of NZAS and to continue to improve the quality of Science Review.

During the year Alan Kirton, Past President and long-term supporter of NZAS died. His very active contribution to the Association is remembered.

Finances

Increased investment in the production of Science Review has resulted in a decline in financial reserves to a point where Science Review costs exceed NZAS income. This position is not sustainable. A 20-30% increase in membership fees has been approved by Council for the coming year and increased membership will help offset rising Science Review costs. Nevertheless, the incoming Council will need to address this serious issue and work towards a sounder financial basis for the journal.

Council Activities

Royal Commission on Genetic Modification

Council of NZAS followed up its written submission to the Royal Commission with oral presentations by Mike Berridge and the witness team, David Penny, David Heath and Fiona McDonald who were cross-examined by the international lawyer, Stephen Druker for GE Free New Zealand (RAGE), Luke Anderson for the Green Party and John Upton QC for the Royal Commission on Genetic Modification. While keeping well informed of GM issues through the Life Sciences Network, NZAS chose to maintain its independence from the network. Through its team, NZAS has made many media statements, conducted radio interviews, and has appeared on national TV programmes, both during the hearings and following release of the Report of the Royal Commission. The NZAS position on GM has been well publicised in Science Review over the past year and is supported by a survey of NZAS members views and responses to the 2000 Survey of Scientists conducted by Professor Jack Sommer.

Submissions

In addition to its RCGM activities, NZAS made submissions to IBAC on its Stem cells and Cloning discussion paper, to TEAC on its second position paper and to the Royal Society on the Centres of Excellence proposal.

Budget

NZAS made public comment on the very limited Budget allocation to science this year and in particular, while supporting the need to establish a Seed Capital Fund (VIF), took issue with the funding mechanism proposed by Treasury involving adjusting the gearing of CRIs. Representations were made to the Minister and to MoRST on this issue.

Visits to Ministers

During the year, Janet Grieve met with Hon Pete Hodgson, Minister of RS&T, to further discuss changes in the way that science priority-setting is addressed in New Zealand. Of particular concern is the transition from a transparent process that involved wide input from scientists and science organizations, through the expert person panels, STEP (1992) and SPiR (1995), to a Foresight-based process (1998) with its emphasis on outcomes rather than priorities, and this year, to a Directions Workshop involving a select group of participants, largely managers and science administrators, with little involvement from practicing scientists and no submission process. It is felt that the Public Good aspect of science funding is being eroded as commercially-driven CRIs that contribute to economic growth are favoured over environmental, social and basic science interests that contribute in different ways, often with long-term goals.

Laboratory News and the Media

NZAS continued to provide a bimonthly column for Laboratory News this year with contributions from Mike Berridge, Ken Aldous, Dennis Gordon, and David Penny. In addition, NZAS has on many occasions been asked to comment on topical science issues ranging from the dumbing-down of science at Te Papa to the Budget.

NEW ZEALAND ASSOCIATION OF SCIENTISTS (INC.)

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JULY 2001**

	2001	2000
Income was derived from:		
Subscriptions received	10,224	9,233
Interest Received	924	678
Donations	2	30
Dividends - Brierley Invest. Ltd	0	37
Awards Grants	<u>2,000</u>	<u>0</u>
	<u>\$13,150</u>	<u>\$9,978</u>
 From which Expenses were deducted:		
Accountancy and Audit	450	450
Councillors' Expenses	581	8
Depreciation on Printer	40	49
AGM and Conference Expenses	432	694
Post Box Rent	125	120
Postage and Stationery	316	537
Royal Society Affiliation	563	563
Awards and costs	2,420	636
Memorial Donation	<u>200</u>	<u>0</u>
	<u>\$5,127</u>	<u>\$3,057</u>
 Excess Income over Expenditure	8,023	6,921
Appropriation - Subsidy for NZ Science Review	<u>17,996</u>	<u>7,436</u>
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year:	(\$9,973)	(515)

NEW ZEALAND SCIENCE REVIEW

Expenses of Production and Administration:

Accountancy and Audit	56	56
Printing and Distribution	<u>20,547</u>	<u>10,209</u>
	<u>\$20,603</u>	<u>\$10,265</u>

Expenses Recovered From:

Library Subscriptions & other Revenue	2,607	2,829
Subsidy	<u>17,996</u>	<u>7,436</u>
	<u>\$20,603</u>	<u>\$10,265</u>

SILVER JUBILEE TRUST FUND

	2001	2000
Balance 1 August 2000	14,840	14,103
Interest Received	<u>948</u>	<u>737</u>
Balance 31 July 2001	<u>\$15,788</u>	<u>\$14,840</u>

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT 31 JULY 2001**

ACCUMULATED FUNDS	2001	2000
General Funds:		
Balance 1 August 2000	22,659	23,174
Less Deficit for the year	<u>9,973</u>	<u>515</u>
	12,686	22,659
Investment Reserve		
Accumulated net increase in value of Brierley Shares	391	0
Silver Jubilee Trust Fund		
As per Schedule	<u>15,788</u>	<u>14,840</u>
	<u>\$28,865</u>	<u>\$37,499</u>
REPRESENTED BY:		
Current Assets		
Bank of New Zealand Current Account	4,615	8,717
Subscriptions in Arrear	<u>1,990</u>	<u>1,880</u>
	\$6,605	\$10,597
Less Current Liabilities		
Accounts Payable	563	
Subscriptions in advance	370	715
Awards grants received in advance	0	2,000
Graeme Coote Fund Donations	<u>414</u>	<u>414</u>
	<u>1,347</u>	<u>3,129</u>
	\$5,258	\$7,468
Investments		
BNZ Deposits	6,356	13,911
Westpac Bank (Silver Jubilee Trust Fund)	15,788	14,840
Brierley Investments, 1,236 shares @ \$0.65	<u>803</u>	<u>412</u>
	\$22,947	\$29,163
Fixed Assets		
Printer - Cost	1,639	1,639
- Less depreciation to date	<u>1,479</u>	<u>1,439</u>
	160	200
Stock of medals at cost	<u>500</u>	<u>668</u>
	<u>\$28,865</u>	<u>\$37,499</u>

AUDITOR'S REPORT TO MEMBERS

I have obtained all the information and explanations I have required.

In my opinion:

- * The financial report complies with generally accepted accounting practices;
- * Gives a true and fair view of the financial position of the New Zealand Association of Scientists (Inc) as at 31 July 2001 and the results of its operations for the year ended on that date.

My audit was completed on 8 October 2001 and my unqualified opinion is expressed at that date.

Peter Willis, CA, ACIS
Chartered Accountant, Lower Hutt

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