



# The Society for Free Radical Research A U S T R A L A S I A

## MINUTES OF 2007 AGM

Held on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> December, 5.30 pm at the Clock Tower of Kyoto University, Japan.

**Present:** SFRR(A) President – Kevin Croft, SFRR(A) Treasurer – David Pattison, and ca. 15 other members.

### 1. Apologies

Clare Hawkins, Des Richardson, David van Reyk.

### 2. Minutes of 2006 AGM

The minutes of the 2006 AGM published in the March 2007 edition of the Society newsletter were passed as a true and accurate record of the meeting. There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.

### 3. Reports from SFRR(A) Executive

#### **President : Kevin Croft**

Kevin thanked everyone present for making the effort to support the Joint Meeting between SFRR(A) and SFRR(J) in Kyoto, and for attending the AGM.

He commented that he was pleased that the annual conference of the Society would be returning to Melbourne in 2008 after several years absence. He added that he hoped it would provide an opportunity to encourage the involvement of a number of Melbourne-based workers in the fields of free radical research and related disciplines, and that they might become regular members of SFRR(A) in the future.

Finally, he thanked the Society and the Executive Committee for an enjoyable period as President of the Society, and particularly thanked Clare Hawkins for all her efforts during her 4 years as Secretary of the Society.

**Treasurer : David Pattison**

## ***Treasurer's Report for the SFRR (Australasia)***

### **Membership Summary**

#### **Current Financial Members as of 28/11/2007:**

**2007:** 80 Australians, 20 New Zealanders and 1 Sri Lankan; TOTAL = 101

Includes 56 Conference Delegates from Perth 2006 and 45 additional applications  
(54 Full members and 47 Student members)

**2006:** 94 Australians and 24 New Zealanders; TOTAL = 118

#### **Comments**

1) Please note that ALL members need to pay their 2008 membership directly this year. Unlike recent years, registration for the conference in Kyoto did not include 2008 SFRR(A) membership.

2) Following the success of recruitment from email reminders in 2007, there will be several reminder emails throughout 2008 to try and maintain membership numbers. I would appreciate it if everyone could pay their membership fees promptly. NB. Membership fees increased in July 2007 (latest membership forms are available at [www.sfrra.org](http://www.sfrra.org)):

|                     |                 |
|---------------------|-----------------|
| Full membership:    | A\$40 or NZ\$45 |
| Student membership: | A\$20 or NZ\$22 |

3) As discussed previously, a large proportion of the membership fees from New Zealand members are lost in bank fees. These losses were minimised this year as Christine Winterbourn collected the fees from the Christchurch School of Medicine members and made one direct transfer. As we now have a New Zealand based member on the Executive Committee (Mark Hampton, Secretary; see below), it may be possible for Mark to collect the NZ fees and transfer them in bulk. The logistics of this option will be discussed further with Mark.

### **Summary of Accounts Activity (as of 3<sup>rd</sup> December, 2007)**

#### **A. Deposits in Cheque Account Bearing Interest**

|                   |                            |            |
|-------------------|----------------------------|------------|
| Membership fees:  | from Perth 2006 conference | \$1,365.00 |
|                   | from recruitment in 2007   | \$1,162.15 |
| Profit from:      | Gold Coast meeting (2005)  | \$3,000    |
|                   | Perth meeting (2006)       | \$4,000    |
| Interest Accrued: | from Cheque Acct           | \$37.88    |
|                   | from Term Deposit          | \$2,320.67 |

**Total Income (17/11/06 – 31/10/07):** **\$11,885.70**

**B. Expenditure from Cheque Account Bearing Interest**

|  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| Affiliate Membership ASMR (July 2007-June 2008)            | \$142.80                 |
| SFRR(I) 2006 Dues (paid January 2007)                      | \$807.00                 |
| 9 SFRR(A) Travel Awards for Perth (\$500/each)             | \$4,500                  |
| Austbrokers Liability Insurance (paid November 2006)       | \$900.00                 |
| Account Service Fees (as of last Bank Statement, 31/10/07) | \$83.20                  |
| <b><u>Total Expenditure (17/11/06 – 31/10/07):</u></b>     | <b><u>\$6,433.00</u></b> |

**C. Term Deposit**

**Opening Balance (as of 28/11/06):** **\$30,000**

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| On 23/01/07: 10 month deposit at 5.45% matured                        |          |
| Interest received \$546.49 (\$253.00 deducted as ABN withholding tax) |          |
| Interest paid into cheque account                                     | \$293.49 |
| Reinvested for 9 months at 6.20%                                      |          |
| On 09/03/07: Reimbursement of interest deducted as withholding tax:   | \$636.00 |
| On 23/7/07: Interest paid into cheque account                         | \$922.35 |
| On 23/10/07: 9 month deposit at 6.20% matured                         |          |
| Interest paid into cheque account                                     | \$468.83 |
| Reinvested for 7 months at 6.70% (matures 23/05/08)                   |          |

**Total Interest Accrued (28/11/06 - 31/10/07):** **\$1,937.67**

**Reimbursement of Withholding Tax (from 2006):** **\$383.00**

**D. Overall Summary of Accounts (16/11/06 – 31/10/07)**

**Opening Balance (16/11/06) of all accounts:** **\$39,558.51**

Cheque Account Bearing Interest: \$9,558.51

Term Deposit \$30,000

Total Income: \$11,885.70

Total Expenditure: \$6,433.00

**Balance (Income – Expenditure):** **+ \$5,452.70**

**Closing Balance (31/10/07) of all accounts:** **\$45,011.21**

Cheque Account Bearing Interest: \$15,011.21

Term Deposit \$30,000

**E. Items outstanding since last bank statement (31/10/07):**

|  |                           |
|--|---------------------------|
| <b>Balance (31/10/07) of all accounts:</b>               | <b><u>\$45,011.21</u></b> |
| Deposits   | None                      |
| Expenditure  |                           |
| Public Liability Insurance – Austbrokers RWA Pty Ltd     | \$570.00                  |
| 6 SFRR(A) Travel Awards, Kyoto (\$800/each)              | \$4,800                   |
| <b><u>Current Balance of all accounts (3/12/07):</u></b> | <b><u>\$39,641.21</u></b> |

**F. Budget Considerations for 2008**

**Estimated Income for 2008:**

|  |                    |
|--|--------------------|
| - membership fees  | \$2,400            |
| (based on an estimated 80 paying members with a 50:50 full:student member ratio) |                    |
| - no profits will be returned to the Society from the Kyoto meeting              |                    |
| - interest from term deposit (assuming ca. 6.5% interest rate)                   | \$2,000            |
| <b>TOTAL</b>   | <b>ca. \$4,400</b> |

**Estimated Expenditure for 2008:**

|   |                    |
|---|--------------------|
| - ASMR affiliate membership(\$1.40 per member)            | \$110.00           |
| - Account service fees                                    | \$80.00            |
| - Public Liability Insurance                              | \$700.00           |
| - SFRR(I) 2007 membership fees (due Jan 2008)             |                    |
| 101 members x _2.50 (ca. A\$6) = _252.50                  | \$600              |
| - student travel awards (propose a maximum of ca. \$2500) |                    |
| for SFRR(I) meeting in Beijing                            | \$???              |
| for SFRR(A) meeting in Melbourne                          | \$???              |
| <b>TOTAL</b>  | <b>ca. \$4,000</b> |

**G. Further Comments**

1) The fees charged by SFRR(I) for international membership of the society will be increased for 2008. These will be payable in Jan 2009, and will be \_3.50 per member (equivalent to ~A\$8.50 at current exchange rates).

End of Treasurer's Report

Following completion of the report, Trevor Mori raised the question as to why none of the profit from the joint meeting would be returned to the Society. Roland Stocker commented that there was general agreement between the two Societies when the first joint meeting was arranged that the visiting Society would not receive any of the profits derived from the meeting. Jiri Neuzil reiterated this fact, stating that the Japanese Society had not expected any profits from the Gold Coast meeting to be returned to them.

Prior to moving onto the next item on the agenda, Mike Davies thanked David Pattison for preparing an estimated budget for 2008, and commented that he could not remember the last time that the Society had had such a budget.

### **Secretary : Clare Hawkins**

Kevin read out the Secretary's report in Clare's absence. The details are given below.

This will be my last report, as my term as Secretary is now coming to a close. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the current and previous members of the SFRR(A) executive I've worked with over the last 4 years, particularly Ian Dawes, Kevin Croft and Des Richardson. I'd also like to thank Mike Davies and David Pattison for taking the minutes for me at the last 3 AGM's, as I have been unable to attend, and Geoff Kornfeld for his continued support in maintaining and updating the SFRR(A) website.

The membership database of financial members of the Society is now largely maintained by the Treasurer, David Pattison, who receives the membership forms. I still maintain a large email database of current and past SFRR(A) members, who receive the newsletters and details of conferences, research positions, travel grants etc. The list of financial members is forwarded to the Secretary General of the International Society for Free Radical Research on a regular basis to ensure that all members of SFRR(A) are able to obtain discounted registration fees for SFRR and SFRBM conferences, can access member only areas of the SFRR(I) website and can vote in SFRR(I) elections.

The newsletters from 1999 onwards have been available to download from the SFRR(A) website for some time now. However, earlier this year, I put together the minutes from all the previous AGM's that I managed to track down (1999 – 2006) in a single document. This is also available for download from the website. I have started a new "minutes book", which will be passed to the new Secretary next year to have available at the AGM each year for reference. A copy of the SFRR(A) constitution still remains elusive, though the general consensus is that SFRR(A) adopted the SFRR(I) constitution, with a modification in regards to the election of office bearers.

SFRR(A) is affiliated to the Australian Society for Medical Research (ASMR). I attended the AGM in Sydney on behalf of SFRR(A). This year, ASMR organised 3 career development days (held in Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney) that were aimed at early-mid career researchers (7-12 years post doc). These workshops covered a range of topics including tips on grant and fellowship writing, recruiting staff, managing a research group, and dealing with conflict in the workplace. ASMR are planning to organise more career development days in 2008, hopefully including Adelaide and Perth this time. Anyone at the stage of developing an independent research group will find one of these development days highly useful.

#### **4. Election of SFRR(A) Executive 2008-2010**

Kevin read out the nominations for the Executive that Clare had received by email prior to the meeting in Kyoto. He asked if there were any further nominations, and then asked that those present ratified the election of the new committee. The motion was passed unanimously, and the new committee is:

**President** : Prof. Des Richardson

**President Elect** : Prof. Chris Easton

**Treasurer** : Dr David Pattison

**Secretary** : Dr Mark Hampton

The position of Public Officer was also discussed, as Clare Hawkins currently holds this position. There was a call for clarification on the need for the position and what it entailed. Mike Davies said that the Public Officer position was a requirement of being an incorporated body. The position is usually held by a committee member, and the Public Officer has to be a resident of New South Wales (as the Society is incorporated through the NSW Office of Fair Trading). It was suggested that David Pattison should take the role. David commented that he was happy to do it, but that Clare was willing to continue in the position as it was essentially the Society's official contact address with the NSW government; it was therefore agreed that Clare Hawkins would continue in this role. Roland Stocker commented that in the past the paperwork had gone astray, thus Clare should check with the NSW Office of Fair Trading that they still had the details on file.

#### **5. Student Travel Awards**

Prior to the meeting the Secretary, Clare Hawkins, received the following motion: *“That the support provided to Students by SFRR(A) endeavours to predominantly support HIGH QUALITY research activity.”*

Kevin Croft commented that he felt the Society should encourage student participation at conferences as it is an important aspect of their PhD training.

Roland Stocker agreed that students should be encouraged to attend the conferences, but he felt that the success rate of the applications was too high, with well over 50% of applicants receiving awards this year. He felt that the Society should only support high quality students to attend the conferences.

Kevin noted that he felt that the awards were aimed at providing travel support, rather than rewarding students for the scientific merit and that other prizes would be awarded at the conference based on the quality of the student presentations.

Jiri Neuzil suggested that it may be appropriate to consider the geographical distance that students were travelling rather than their CVs when considering who should receive travel awards.

Chris Easton commented that it was very hard to assess a PhD on scientific merit alone, as in many cases the work that they are presenting more often than not reflects on the supervisors more than the student themselves. Steve Bottle also noted that assessing the awards on merit favours those students that have undertaken research positions (e.g. as a research assistant) before becoming a PhD student later in their career. David Pattison also raised the point that assessing scientific merit is very subjective, and that there had been a large variation in the rankings of the student applicants this year.

In conclusion, it was felt that the Society should continue to provide travel awards on merit to support students to attend the conferences where possible.

Following this debate, the numbers and monetary values of travel awards for the 2008 SFRR(I) Beijing and 2008 SFRR(A) Melbourne meetings were discussed. As the Treasurer, David Pattison, had suggested in the Treasurer's Report that a maximum budget of \$2,500 was available for travel awards in 2008, Mike Davies suggested that 2 awards of \$750 each (a total of \$1500) should be given for the International meeting in Beijing.

Trevor Mori questioned whether the remaining \$1,000 was enough to fund travel awards to the Melbourne meeting. Anne Barden suggested this may be not be too much of a problem as the cost of attending the meeting in Melbourne would generally be much less than over the last few years in Perth and Kyoto.

Kevin Croft suggested that Carl Schiesser had a number of industrial sponsors that might be willing to contribute to the cost of travel awards for Melbourne, while Steve Bottle suggested that the ARC Centre of Excellence for Free Radical Chemistry and Biotechnology should be approached as well.

It was agreed that Mike's proposal for 2 awards of \$750 each for the SFRR(I) meeting in Beijing should go ahead, and further funds for the Melbourne meeting could probably be obtained from other sources.

## **6. Future Meetings**

### 2008 SFRR(I) meeting in Beijing

Mike Davies reported that the organisation of the next SFRR(I) meeting was progressing well, and that it would be held in October 2008 (shortly after the Olympics) in a spa resort on the outskirts of Beijing. The website should be available shortly.

### 2008 SFRR(A) meeting in Melbourne

Unfortunately Carl Schiesser, who is now organising the Melbourne meeting together with Courtney Judkins, could not make it the AGM due to prior commitments, but was available for discussion later during the conference.

Kevin commented that the opportunity of a Melbourne meeting was long overdue, as it had not been in Melbourne since 1998. He noted that at a recent meeting he had attended that some researchers in the field of free radical pharmacology had suggested that it may be possible to share part of the meeting between ASCEPT and SFRR(A), possibly with a joint day of programming.

Kevin also suggested that it may be appropriate to run "Free Radical School" type sessions to assist participants that were less familiar with the field of free radical research. He confirmed that the Bio21 building would be the venue, and should be available for minimal costs through Carl Schiesser. He also noted that there would be a range of accommodation available. He reported that Carl plans to use a commercial conference planner, probably "Meetings First" to do the majority of organisation for the meeting.

It was proposed that a Scientific Advisory Panel should be setup to help Carl with the program for the meeting, as Carl's involvement in the Society only began quite recently. It was suggested that Alfons Lawen would be a good choice as a local of Melbourne and a long-standing Society member, and that the Executive Committee of the Society should also be involved. Kevin also offered his assistance. This suggestion was accepted by all present.

Jiri Neuzil asked Kevin if a date for the meeting had yet been decided, as he was concerned that it might be getting a bit late to approach industrial sponsors, as many of these companies will have finalised their budgets for 2008. He also commented that the dates needed to be confirmed so that others can assist in the organisation of the meeting where necessary. Both Kevin and Jiri mentioned that they may be able to help source some industrial sponsors through contacts made organising recent meetings.

Carl subsequently confirmed that the 2008 conference would run from Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> November to Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December, and the Bio21 building was already booked for these dates.

#### 2009 SFRR(A) and SFRR(J) joint meeting

Kevin Croft told the meeting that there were two potential venues being considered for the 2009 meeting – Sydney and Christchurch. Roland Stocker is organising an international CoQ meeting in Sydney around the usual time of the SFRR(A) annual meeting, whereas a COMBIO meeting is being held in Christchurch at a similar time.

The 2009 meeting is scheduled as joint meeting of the Australasian and Japanese Societies. Discussions with the Japanese Executive committee suggested that they were very keen to continue with the joint meetings, and their preference was for a meeting in Christchurch in 2009.

Mike Davies said that he felt Sydney would be a better option, as it has been several years since it was last held in Sydney (2001), and that there are several people based in Sydney who can help with the organisation. Trevor Mori commented that he too felt that Sydney was the better option as it would allow people to go to both the CoQ and SFRR(A) meetings without the costs becoming prohibitive.

Both Kevin and Roland noted that there were few New Zealand representatives at the Kyoto meeting, and that before a decision was made they should be canvassed for their opinions. Kevin concluded discussions by noting that those present at the meeting felt that Sydney was the best venue for the 2009 conference, but given the interest in a New Zealand meeting from the Japanese Society he would contact Tony Kettle for his views before the final decision was made.

Subsequent to the meeting Kevin has contacted Tony Kettle, and Tony stated that he would prefer the 2009 meeting to be in Sydney and linking with the CoQ meeting if possible. He also commented that he felt himself, Margret Vissers and Mark Hampton would prefer a New Zealand based meeting for 2010 or 2011. Thus, the Joint Meeting of SFRR(A) and SFRR(J) in 2009 will be held in Sydney.

#### 2010 Joint SFRBM and SFRR(I) meeting / 2010 SFRR(A) meeting

Mike Davies informed the meeting that the 2010 meeting of SFRR(I) would be held jointly with the SFRBM meeting in Orlando, Florida towards the end of November. He was concerned at the impact this meeting might have on the SFRR(A) meeting in 2010, and suggested that it may be sensible to move the SFRR(A) meeting from its usual time for that year. Kevin suggested that this seemed a good idea, and it might even be worth postponing the SFRR(A) meeting in 2010.

Roland Stocker commented that he was worried that a postponement would have dramatic implications for the number of members of SFRR(A). He noted that the potential for a decline in

membership numbers after the Perth meeting in 2006 had only been avoided by Clare Hawkins and David Pattison doing a great job during 2007 to keep membership at the normal levels. He concluded by saying that he felt moving the 2010 SFRR(A) meeting by a few months would be his preferred option.

Mike Davies suggested that a move forward to September might be a possibility, or alternatively a delay to the following July. Trevor Mori and Kevin were concerned that a move to September would clash with a number of other meetings, including that of the Australian Atherosclerosis Society (AAS). Further discussions will be needed in the future to determine the best course of action for the 2010 SFRR(A) meeting.

## **7. Other Business**

### New Zealand bank account for the Society?

David Pattison mentioned that Mark Hampton had raised the issue of whether it was possible for the Society to open a New Zealand bank account such that New Zealand membership fees could be paid into this account, and whether this account could then be used to pay New Zealand based recipients of travel awards. This is potentially a means of reducing the bank fees that are lost every time the Society makes transactions with New Zealand members. It is unclear at this stage whether the fees required to run a New Zealand bank account would outweigh the benefits of avoiding the transfer fees for foreign currency transactions. Kevin Croft and Mike Davies were unsure of the logistics of this option, but suggested that it might be worth Mark Hampton investigating the possibility further.

### Website upkeep

David Pattison noted that Geoff Kornfeld had been doing a great job of keeping the SFRR(A) website up to date, and that Geoff is happy to continue in his role of keeping it up to date. However, if anyone was keen to take on the role, Geoff was also happy to pass it on. Those present at the meeting were happy with Geoff's efforts over the years, and no offers were forthcoming to take on the job.

Meeting was closed at ca. 6.30 pm.