

1318th Ordinary General Meeting of The Royal Society of NSW

Minutes

The 1318th Ordinary General Meeting of The Royal Society of NSW took place in the Gallery Room, State Library of NSW on Wednesday, 29 November 2023 commencing at 6:30 pm. There were 50 Members, Fellows and guests in attendance in person. The meeting was recorded for those who could not attend in person.

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The President, Dr Susan Pond AM FRSN presided at the meeting. She welcomed Members and guests. Apologies were noted from Professor Les Copeland, Prof Catharine Colbourne and Mr Jayden McKinnon

2. MINUTES OF THE 1316th ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING

Minutes of the 1317th Ordinary General Meeting was reviewed and approved. There were no matters arising.

3. ANNOUNCEMENT OF NAMES OF CANDIDATES FOR FELLOWSHIP AND MEMBERSHIP

At its meeting 15 November 2023 the Council, upon recommendation of the Fellows and Members Assessment Committee, resolved to propose the following candidates for admission as Fellows and Members.

FELLOWSHIP

Professor Aduli Enoch Othniel Malau-Aduli

Laudation – Aduli Malau-Aduli has made a significant contribution to the field of Veterinary Science through his leadership in the study of animal genetics and nutrition.

Professor Nicholas Charles H Reid

Laudation – Charles Reid has made a significant contribution to the field of ecosystem management, applied ecology and natural resource management.

Professor Craig Trevor Simmons

Laudation – Craig Simmons has made a significant contribution to the field of groundwater science working across the public and private sectors.

Professor Nicholas Joseph Talley

Laudation – Nicholas Talley has made a substantial international contribution to the field of gastroenterology.

Professor Christopher Morice Ward

Laudation – Christopher Ward is an international leader in coagulation medicine.

Professor Sally Ann Cripps

Laudation – Sally Cripps is a recognized leader and researcher in methods and applications of Bayesian machine learning.

Professor Yingjie Jay Guo

Laudation – Jay Guo has made a significant contribution to the field of wireless communications and telecommunications and through technology commercialisation.

Professor Stephanie Louise Watson

Laudation – Stephanie Watson is a clinician scientist known for her ground-breaking stem cell research in corneal therapies and for leadership in the academic, not-for-profit and business sectors.

Professor Deo Karan Prasad

Laudation – Deo Prasad is a globally recognized leader and researcher in sustainability of buildings and the built environment.

Professor Richard Holden

Laudation – Richard Holden has made a substantial contribution to the field of economics with a focus on contract theory, political economy, law and economics, and organizational economics.

Dr Jiao Jiao Li

Laudation – Jiao Li has made a substantial contribution to the field of tissue engineering and regenerative medicine that focuses on new therapies for chronic diseases.

Professor Amir Karton

Laudation – Amir Karton has made a significant contribution to chemistry in the area of high-level quantum chemical theories.

Professor David Philip Miller

Laudation – David Miller is a social historian of science who has made significant contribution to the understanding of the history and philosophy of science since the industrial revolution.

Professor Robert Eric Wood

Laudation – Robert Woods is an internationally recognized leader and researcher in organizational psychology.

MEMBERSHIP

Professor Alister Derek Baker
Associate Professor Temitope Egbelakin
Garry Owen Crockett
Julia (Ting Ting) Gong
Dr Lamia Nakhil
Sandra Woodward

ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

Dr Daniel Josef Lindegger
Felicity Nelson
Sue Loucks

4. CONFIRMATION OF FELLOWSHIP AND MEMBERSHIP AND PRESENTATION OF CERTIFICATES

One certificate was presented at this meeting.

5. ANNOUNCEMENT OF 2023 AWARDS

The President announced the recipients of the Society's awards for 2023, approved by Council at its meeting held on Wednesday, 15 November 2023.

Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Scholars Medal – *Aunty Francis Bodkin*, WSU

Ida Browne Early Career Medal – **Brendon Neuen**, The George UNSW, but also Royal North Shore USyd affiliation

Edgeworth David Medal – **Qilin Wang**, UTS

James Cook Medal – **Helen Christensen**, The Black Dog Institute, UNSW

Clarke Medal and Lecture in Earth Sciences – **Mohinya Roughan**, UNSW

Walter Burfitt Award in Medical and Veterinary Sciences and Technology – **Maria Kavallaris**, Children's Cancer Institute Australia, UNSW

Award in the Social and Behavioural Sciences – **Kaarin Anstey**, NeuRA, UNSW

History and Philosophy of Science – **Hans Pol**, USyd.

Royal Society of NSW Bicentennial Postgraduate Scholarships

Sasha Bailey (University of Sydney)

Jaydon McKinnon (University of Wollongong)

Royal Society of NSW Bicentennial Early Career Research and Service Citations

Jacinta Martin (University of Wollongong)

Abhimanu Pandey (Australian National University)

Shoujin Wang (University of Technology Sydney)

Royal Society of NSW Jak Kelly Award (awarded in conjunction with the Australian Institute of Physics)

Jamie Alvarado-Montes (Macquarie University)

The President also announced that the Council had resolved to award both the Royal Society of NSW medal and the Royal Society of NSW Citation in 2023.

The Royal Society of NSW Medal has been awarded to **Judith Wheeldon AM FRSN** for the outstanding contributions she has made to secondary education and to the Society as a Council member and Vice President.

The Royal Society of NSW Citation has been awarded to **Jason Antony MRSN** for the substantial contribution that he made to the publication of the Society's Journal and Proceedings and the Bulletin.

The meeting extended warm congratulations to the recipients of the awards.

6 REPORTS FROM COUNCIL AND COMMITTEES OF COUNCIL

The President reported on the following matters.

At the OGM held on Wednesday 8 November 2023, the President announced that the Council, by unanimous agreement, recommended to the membership that the Royal Society of NSW Collection (Collection) be donated to the State Library of New South Wales (SLNSW).

On Thursday, 9 November, the President wrote to all Royal Society of NSW members eligible to vote in Society elections, to advise that the Council had resolved unanimously to recommend to members that the Society donate its collection of books and archives, currently stored in the State Library of South Wales (SLNSW) and 121 Darlington Road, Darlington, (the RSNSW Collection), to the SLNSW.

The email summarised the reasons for this recommendation and included a link to an Explanatory Memorandum outlining the background to this proposal, the substance of the recommendation to be put before members, and the proposed terms for the agreement between RSNSW and SLNSW.

The membership was invited to vote by electronic ballot on a Resolution to authorise the Royal Society of NSW Council to enter into the agreement with the SLNSW for the donation of the Collection. The electronic ballot was set to close at 5:00 pm, Thursday 30 November (the day after this OGM), to give members the opportunity to consider the matter thoroughly and to ask questions at this meeting before casting their vote.

The President asked if there were any questions from the membership regarding the proposal.

John Hardie AM FRSN read a prepared statement criticising the proposal. He said that the Explanatory Memorandum contained inaccuracies but did not give detail. He moved a motion from the floor to postpone the vote on the issue.

Stephen Hill AM FRSN and Brynn Hibbert AM FRSN spoke in support of the motion.

Donald Hector AM FRSN spoke against the motion, explaining the extent to which the Council had considered the issue before formulating the Explanatory Memorandum and the recommendation to the membership. He also pointed out that there had been sufficient time for those opposed to the motion to have an item to that effect placed on the agenda for this meeting but that no notice had been received prior to the meeting.

The President proposed that the motion be put.

Donald Hector raised a point of order that there was insufficient notice for the motion and that the meeting did not have adequate opportunity to consider it and to understand its implications.

Chris Bertram FRSN said that the motion should be put because of its significance.

Donald Hector objected to the motion because, in his view, it contained factual inaccuracies.

Stephen Hill proposed that the matter be deferred to the next meeting.

There being no objection to this suggestion, the President proposed that the meeting should move to the next item on the agenda, the Open Lecture.

There were no further questions from the floor.

7 OPEN LECTURE

“What do we really know about 20th- and 21st-century sea-level change?”

Emeritus Professor John Church AO FAA FTSE FAMS FAGU

Climate Change Research Centre, University of New South Wales

Accelerating sea-level rise in much of the world will result in growing impacts through the 21st century and beyond. Despite the clear identification of an accelerating rise, many uncertainties remain. Understanding historical sea-level change is a prerequisite for building confidence in useful and accurate predictions of future changes.

For many decades, our limited knowledge of the contributions to sea-level change could not explain the rise measured by coastal tide gauges – the sea level enigma. New and improved in situ and satellite observations of the ocean, improved understanding of the “solid Earth”, and better understanding and improved modelling of the climate system have helped resolve this enigma. Several recent studies have argued that the sum of contributions from both observations and model estimates to sea-level change over the satellite era, the last half century, and since 1900 adequately explains the observed sea-level rise, which means the sea-level budget is closed. The major contributions are from ocean thermal expansion and contributions from glaciers, with an accelerating ice sheet contribution over the recent decades.

Recent work has explored the sensitivity of global and regional sea-level reconstructions to poorly known land motions and the factors causing temporal and regional variations in the rate of rise. With this knowledge, existing reconstructions of global mean sea level are mostly not significantly different from each other from 1900 to the present, both in the time-averaged rate and the temporal variability. However, while the average rate from 1900 to the present is similar to that from the sum of contributions, the rate of reconstructed GMSL rise is significantly smaller/larger than the sum of contributions prior to 1940/after 1970. Why is this? What do we really know? What are potential explanations for this continuing enigma?

And what can we project about future sea levels, both for the 21st century and beyond?
And can we constrain projections for the 21st century and beyond?

Dr John Church is an Emeritus Professor in the Climate Change Research Centre, University of New South Wales. He has published across a broad range of topics in oceanography. His area of expertise is the role of the ocean in climate, particularly anthropogenic climate change, and the oceanic storage of increased heat in the World's oceans. He is recognised as a world leader in understanding historical and projected global and regional sea-level rise, having provided historical estimates of sea-level change since the late 19th century, robust explanations for the rise, its attribution to greenhouse gas emissions and improved projections of global and regional sea-level rise. Professor Church was awarded the Society's 2022 James Cook Medal.

8 VOTE OF THANKS

The vote of thanks was given by Guy Loucks.

9 OTHER BUSINESS

The President returned to the matter of the motion put earlier in the meeting regarding the proposed donation of the Royal Society of NSW Collection to the State Library of NSW. She asked John Hardie to forward to her the full text of the statement he read to the meeting and the wording of the motion.

Dr Pond said that the Council would consider the matter after the result of the electronic ballot is known at 5:00 pm tomorrow (Thursday 30 November 2023).

10 CLOSE

The President closed the meeting at 7:55 pm.

The minutes were recorded by the Secretary, Dr Donald Hector AM FRSN.

Signed as a true record
Dr Susan Pond AM FRSN
President