



Royal Society of NSW

## Address to Annual General Meeting

4 April 2012

Address by the outgoing President, Mr John Hardie.

Five years ago we had a healthy Society but it was a small and rather isolated one. It had limited links to the outside world, a small membership base and a minimal public profile.

When I was elected President in April 2007 I saw my task as trying to:

- Create a new public profile
- Involve members more in the activities of the Society
- Increase membership
- Broaden the Society's range of activities
- Increase the relevance of the Journal and Proceedings
- Extend the Society's reach to regional NSW
- Develop relationships with like-minded organisations such as the Academies and professional and academic associations
- Make the Society's library available to researchers
- Build on the Society's historical achievements and develop a proper record of its illustrious history
- Find ways to obtain philanthropic and other funding
- Find a better home for the Society.

We have done some of these things but we still have a way to go. Our name, our 'brand' if you like, has wider currency now to the extent that arms of government, universities and other organisations have heard of us and know a bit about what we do. We are respected and valued more, still within a limited sphere, but we need to leverage off this to achieve our other aims.

Our *Journal and Proceedings* has seen great improvements, witness our latest issue which I received in hard copy today. This has its own momentum which means we are now generating a healthy body of good quality papers for future issues.

We have established a new Branch based in Orange which is now flourishing, and our Southern Highlands one continues to do so. In the right climate, other Branches should follow.

We have linked in with other like-minded organisations, such as the Australian Institute of Physics, the Geological Society of Australia and the Australian Academy of Science, in order

to hold joint activities and cross-fertilise membership, and this has proved to be beneficial to all concerned.

We have established the designation of 'Fellow' which has enabled the Society to go to a higher level in terms of recognition of excellence and achievement. This has been welcomed at the highest levels of our community.

We have begun the process of entering some of our extensive library holdings on TROVE, the National Library of Australia's online database of Australian and online resources, and we have engaged a historian to write a proper history of the Society.

We have remained active with the Royal Societies of Australia, the national umbrella body for all the Royal Societies in Australia and have taken a leadership role with it, thereby maintaining links with our sister and brother organisations in other states.

There is much more to do to follow through with these initiatives and I thank the Council for its support in the achievements of the past five years. I also wish the incoming President, Dr Donald Hector, all the very best for his time at the helm. It is an exciting place to be.

John Hardie