

The Queenstown Molecular Biology Meeting Society Incorporated



Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 2018

29 August, 12.30pm, Queenstown Room, 5th Floor, Rydges Hotel Queenstown

Present – Peter Shepherd, Martin Kennedy, Julian Eaton-Rye, Peter Mace, Andrew Shelling, Margreet Vissers, Nikki Morland, Rachel Purcell, Debbie Hay, Austen Ganley, Mark Hampton, Donia McCartney-Coxon.

Apologies – Justin O’Sullivan

Minutes of the 2017 AGM were accepted as read. (Kennedy/Shepherd)

Report from Chair (Prof Shepherd):

- Dynamics PCO have again done a stellar job organising the meeting.
- Registrations: this year there were 1700 registrations across all meetings.
- Trades sponsors really good, queue this year so is a competitive but a price sensitive market. A price of \$1200 applied to company delegates who weren’t sponsoring, as the normal (lower) delegate fee is sponsored by other companies, which doesn’t seem fair. Had quite a few of these delegates.
- Need to book Queenstown venues well in advance (two years at least). The **2019 meetings will run from 1-6 Sept.**
- Skyline Restaurant complex is being renovated in 2019 so will be out of action for the conference meal. Possible alternatives could include A.J.Hackett Bungy Base at Kawarau Bridge, although that would require buses. There is also the Convention Centre in the township, or a combined Earnslaw trip to a meal at Walter Peak station. Quite a bit of support for the latter, including drinks on Earnslaw. Peter S. to seek pricing for this package.
- QMB Metabolic Disease Satellite meeting was held at Tātai Oranga Marae, Waiporo Bay, in conjunction with Ngāti Porou Hauora and Maurice Wilkins Centre, 4-6 April this year. The meeting went well, keynote speakers slept in marae. Peter S. is keen to extend this concept, and do one near Cape Reinga.
- QMB Drug Discovery Satellite in Shanghai is still being run annually by Prof Ming Wei, and this attracts several hundred people. He is an enthusiastic supporter of QRW and QMB, and there is no cost to the Society as he does it all. This meeting raises our profile in China, and has helped with Chinese sponsorship of our annual meeting.
- The meeting hosted 11 Summer Internship for Indigenous Genomics – Aotearoa (SING), and four teacher fellowships. Peter S. proposed increasing

the number of SING delegates and teachers, and there was good support from those present (Shepherd/Kennedy).

- Nobel Speaker: this year Prof Elizabeth Blackburn (University of California, San Francisco, USA). Although it is expensive to get them, they have proven good value, are a focus for media, raise the profile of the meeting, and are inspiring for delegates. Prof Blackburn gave two talks including one at the Cancer meeting, and remained for the duration of the QMB mixing and mingling with other delegates. The overflow room for Prof Blackburn's talk also worked very well. Justin O'Sullivan is searching for the next one!
- Dr Nikki Morland (University of Auckland) is happy to run the main QMB meeting in 2019. Several satellites have also been proposed.
- The Fashionomics event was changed to take place after the QMB meeting, with the Conference Dinner on Monday night. Did interrupt the flow a little, but increases possibilities for collaboration.
- Royal Society was keen to be involved and came along this year. RSNZ has also asked whether the RSNZ Journal could be a formal journal of the meeting. This was discussed, but the group felt it wasn't an ideal move; very supportive of RSNZ coming to meeting, but felt the journal may not get much support from our delegates, although perhaps it could be considered as a possibility by individual satellites.
- Space in poster tents was a bit limited, and Trades don't like it drawing people out of the Trades floor. Need money from Trades, so can't take up with poster space, so there is a balancing act here.
- QMB has now debuted on Twitter.

Awards: Martin reported that this year's winners were Dr Htin Lin Aung (University of Otago), for the Illumina Award, and Dr Peter Mace (University of Otago), for the Thermo Fisher Award. There was good depth to the range of entries received and the most competitive of these were encouraged to re-apply in 2019. Austen Ganley indicated he is happy to continue running the awards in future years.

Report from Treasurer:

The financial report was tabled. Points to note:

- large GST refund this year (~\$13K).
- last year made a tiny loss, but backup funds of \$91K offset this
- Net assets today = \$254,000, but will be billed for meeting, and expect to end up back at about \$90K
- Must remain non-profit, but need assets to ensure viability and contingency.
- Each satellite gets about \$10K budget
- Registration fees – seem about right, though ASI was a bit concerned at the cost as theirs is a very student-focussed meeting.

We do need to move to online banking, as proposed last year. It was moved that Julian seek additional authorised signatories, including Peter Mace (located in same department as Julian), then move to online banking (Shepherd/Kennedy).

Election of Officers:

Roles were retained unopposed by all incumbents, with encouragement to others present and willing to get involved to offer their services.

Peter Shepherd - Chair

Julian Eaton-Rye - Treasurer

Martin Kennedy - Secretary

Justin O'Sullivan – Nobel speakers

Rachel Purcell - Communications

Austen Ganley – Major Awards

Andrew Shelling – Fashionomics

Peter Mace – Immediate past meeting convenor

Other business:

Satellite Meetings: several have been proposed: Int. Neuroendocrinology, Webster Centre, Imaging, Debbie Hay signal transduction, Epigenetics/omics (Marg Vissers/Aniruddha/Greg Jones?). Possibly pharmacogenomics? Eight Satellites works well, so ought to stick with that. Having an Australian co-running the meeting with a NZ convenor is a good plan. But also quite full at this venue, so would struggle to cope with several larger satellites.

Website and communications: Martin thanked Rachel Purcell for her efforts on communications and the web site. Web template needs a bit of an update. Rachel and Martin will look into getting the template revamped, with a new header image.

Operational contingency: Peter S. does the lion's share of organisation and puts huge energy into the meeting. The question was raised as to how the meeting would run if for some reason he was unable to perform this task. Peter indicated that Dinamics could run it for us, including sponsorship negotiating. But he emphasised that keeping our Trades sponsors happy is the key to keeping this meeting running, and this tends to be where he focuses his energy. If not managed well, he believe this would be a major risk for the meeting.

Forum discussion on funding for 2019 meeting: Margreet suggested a forum should be arranged along the lines of this year's meeting with the Prime Minister's Science Adviser, involving Marsden/HRC etc, to discuss funding for science. Peter S. also pointed out that Minister's are usually invited, but couldn't come this year.

The assembled multitude offered accolades to Peter S. and this year's organisers for another set of very enjoyable and successful meetings!

The meeting closed 1.20pm