

**Minutes of SASB Meeting  
Pleiades Room, Esplanade Hotel, Fremantle (7/12/2015)**

**Meeting opened:** 5:00 pm

**Attendance list:** Kym Abrams, Andy Austin, Michael Braby, Lyn Cook, Steve Cooper, Meredith Cosgrove, Mike Crisp, Gaynor Dolman, Danilo Harms, Mark Harvey, Bill Humphreys, Leo Joseph, Penny Mills, Mike Rix, Tom Semple, Jan Strugnell, Nik Tatarnic, Simon Tierney, Alicia Toon, Thomas Wallenius, Nerida Wilson

**Apologies:** Andrew Thornhill, Penny Greenslade, Danielle Stringer, Erinn Fagan-Jeffries, Barbara Langille

**Approval of minutes from previous meeting (held 2013):** proposed by Penny Mills, seconded by Steve Cooper; accepted unanimously.

**Matters arising from the previous meeting:** as below.

**Report from the President (including notes from the Secretary who could not attend):**

Unfortunately the last two years have been disappointing, largely due to a lack of progress on being able to approve and introduce membership fees. The Society needs an income stream to be able to undertake a range of student and other activities, and membership fees and a profit on conferences is the only way to do this. The issue of introducing membership fees has been discussed for the last five years with no expressed opposition, and it is now time to do something about it (see below)

One major positive in the last two years was the funding and award of the Australian Taxonomy Awards (\$5000 from Nature Conservancy) in each of 2014 and 2015, with James Shelley taking out the award in 2014 and Kirilee Chapman in 2015, both from the University of Melbourne. The standard of the applications in both years was extremely high. The Nature Conservancy has agreed to fund another round in 2016.

Finally a huge thank you to the outgoing council, particularly:

- Andrew Thornhill (Secretary since 2007), who was incredibly proactive in informing members. Andrew is standing down having served in the position for nearly eight years, which has become more difficult with him being based in the US
- Simon Tierney, Adelaide University (Treasurer for 2 years) who has agreed to continue in the position
- Rebecca Dew, Flinders University, for assisting the Secretary by scouring the internet for systematics-related content and jobs
- and Lyn Cook, Queensland University for compiling and editing our newsletter 'Banksia'

Membership details: the Society has attracted 42 new members in 2 years.

**Report from the Treasurer – Simon Tierney:**

SASB financial statement (12/2013-12/2015) attached. SASB returned \$7,500 (+ conference deposit of \$2,500) from the *Systematics Without Borders* conference (Sydney, December 2013). A savings account was created (6/05/14) to capitalise on interest: \$325 interest over the intervening two years. Expenditure consisted of domain name rights for the SASB

website (\$44) and \$4,500 in security deposits for the 2015 conference in Fremantle WA (conference organiser and hotel). No student bursaries over the intervening period are reflected in this budget.

There was a net profit for the Society of \$5,700, from November 2013, and the current budget stands at \$11,200 as of 30 November 2015.

In May of 2014, investigations were undertaken into transitioning to an incorporated body. However, the Australian Business Register requires the administration of Change of Registration Details to occur before such enquiries can take place. Because it is unknown who created the original ABN for SASB progress has stalled.

**Acceptance of Council Reports:** proposed by Mike Rix, seconded by Nerida Wilson; accepted unanimously.

**Report from the (new) Webmaster – Kym Abrams:**

Bob Mesibov will no longer continue to maintain the website, and is handing over to Kym. Kym suggested a Facebook focus in future.

**Report from the Newsletter Editor – Lyn Cook:**

‘Banksia’ will be issued twice yearly, however there has been a lack of recent material. All of those attending were encouraged to supply content, with Danielle Stringer (Adelaide University) agreeing to write a report on the Career Development Workshop, and Tom Semple a report on the 2015 conference.

**Nomination and election of Council Members:**

Nerida Wilson, proposed by Andy Austin, seconded by Jan Strugnell;  
Andy Austin, proposed by Nerida Wilson, seconded by Lisa Kirkendale;  
Mike Rix, proposed by Mark Harvey, seconded by Penny Mills;  
Simon Tierney, proposed by Andy Austin, seconded by Kym Abrams;  
All carried unanimously.  
Kym Abrams and Tom Semple also elected as new Councillors; carried unanimously.

The new Council is therefore as follows:

**President:** Nerida Wilson;

**Vice-President:** Andy Austin;

**Secretary:** Mike Rix;

**Treasurer:** Simon Tierney;

**Councillors:** Shane Ahyong (Sydney; not present at AGM);

Lyn Cook (Brisbane);

Steve Cooper (Adelaide);

Bob Mesibov (Launceston; not present at AGM);

Kym Abrams (*Webmaster*, Perth);

Penny Mills (*Ph.D. student Councillor*, Brisbane);

Tom Semple (*Ph.D. student Councillor*, Canberra);

**Stepping down:** Andrew Thornhill;

Andrew Mitchell.

**Any other business:**

*Membership Fees:* Andy provided the rationale for introducing membership fees, not least because the Society is not on a sound financial footing (and is very limited in what it can ‘achieve’ beyond a conference). Penny Mills asked whether the Society needs to be

incorporated first; this is a separate issue and does not affect whether we introduce fees. Nerida asked how many members the Society actually has; ~160 by the best estimate (Andrew T. was not present to clarify). Mike Crisp raised the issue of whether anyone actually had objections to introducing fees in the first instance; there were none. The fee structure was then discussed, and Jan suggested that we should have student fees as an incentive for grant eligibility. Lisa suggested that an annual fee should not be more than \$100, and Steve raised the potential for a two-year membership. Mike Crisp noted that the ASBS has a membership officer specifically and that it is \$50 for a full member. Lisa and Andy also mentioned life memberships and the potential for buying life memberships, and the concept of a Society award system. It was decided that there should be at least six months grace upon the introduction of a fee system, and a \$50 (full members) and \$25 (student members) structure was mooted, but this was to be discussed and a final decision made by the Executive.

*National Postgraduate Training Workshop:* Andy suggested that the National Postgraduate Training Workshop was something the Society could support, but noted that this was something for the new council to decide given his conflict of interest as the organiser. Registration for the upcoming workshop will be \$400, so there is the potential for supporting student attendance. ABRS will no longer be sponsoring the workshops in future.

**Arrangements for the next meeting:** likely to be held in Adelaide at the University of Adelaide in December 2017, the organising committee to be chaired by Andy Austin.

Mike Crisp closed by noting that Andy Austin co-founded the Society, and that he was stepping down after his second stint as President, and thanked him on behalf of the Society for all of the excellent work that he has done. This was carried unanimously!

**Meeting closed:** 6:00 pm.