

34th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING THE WATERHOUSE CLUB INC

PRESIDENT'S REPORT Financial Year 2020/21 (prepared by Acting President, Tim Tolley)

Members of The Waterhouse Club, Committee Members, the South Australian Museum (the Museum) Director Brian Oldman. It is my pleasure to welcome you to this 34th AGM and the presentation of the President's Report 2020/21.

Following the retirement of our President, Ant Simpson, on the 16th February 2021, it has been my privilege to continue to preside over this most interesting and well-respected Museum Club. The Museum staff, Club members, support staff Natalie Rollinson and the Committee, in particular Margie Heylen as our Secretary, have all been instrumental in the Club resuming and continuing its fund-raising activities to benefit the Museum during the COVID-19 pandemic.

This has been the second year of Covid-19 for the Club and has been frustrating not knowing how COVID-19 would affect our activities. When the Museum closed its doors due to the lockdown in March 2020, we wanted to be on the front-foot when the doors re-opened on a then unknown date. Expedition Leaders and Event Co-ordinators, with the assistance of Professor Steve Donnellan, Head of Science, developed a varied and interesting program featuring some of the Museum's high-profile scientists. We presented the very successful "COMING OUT SERIES" of evening presentations by high profile Museum scientists which continued into 2021. Several postponed expeditions from 2020 were also able to be successfully re-scheduled in 2021.

The deterioration in our cash surplus in the previous year has shown signs of improvement through the hard work of our Committee. You, our members, have given us wonderful support through your attendance at both the "COMING OUT SERIES" and the re-introduction of some shorter expeditions.

The 2020/21 program has been varied and popular - our biggest problem has been over-subscribed expeditions. To balance this dilemma, some priority is proffered to new members or members who have not been on previous similar expeditions in the past, and we introduced a ballot system when expeditions were over-subscribed to allocate places fairly. We held waiting lists and made a commitment to plan a re-run of some expeditions in the future where possible, with booking priority to those who had missed out.

Our Activities 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021

Expeditions

Members would appreciate the vast amount of voluntary work that goes into planning and organising expeditions, and then the disappointment of cancelling. The effort of Expedition Leaders in sorting out the arrangements with participating scientists and contractors is appreciated. The expeditions which proceeded were as follows.

- *Saving the Western Pygmy Possum* with Professor Steve Donnellan (Expedition Leaders, Gaye and Tim Fischer). Expeditions to Mannum and Burra;
- *Bilbies, Bettongs, BHP and Bling* – Roxby Downs and Andamooka (Expedition Leaders, Tony & Anne Williams) with Dr Erin Fagan-Jeffries; and
- *Nukunu, People of the Southern Flinders Ranges* with Dr Jared Thomas (Expedition Leaders, Tim & Jen Tolley).

Events of the "COMING OUT SERIES" were as follows, the first being shortly after the Museum re-opened its doors. The aim was to get people back into the Museum for good science and hands on experiences. All events were sold out, being a sure indicator of success.

- *What did insects ever do for us? The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly*, with Professor Phil Weinstein and Dr Matthew Shaw (30 June 2020)
- *The Hidden Treasures of the Australian Aboriginal Collection - An Excursion to the Museum's Netley Store*, with Professor John Carty, Dr Jared Thomas, and Ms Tara Collier
- *The Great Oceanic Genesis - Behind the Scenes of the Museum's Pacific Cultures Gallery*, with Professor Steve Donnellan and Dr Stephen Zagala
- *Love at First Cave*, with Dr Liz Reed
- *Surviving Climate Extremes*, with Dr Mark Stevens
- *George French Angus* with Dr Philip Jones
- Kangaroo Island After the Fires: all organised by Alastair and Rose Dow
 - *Fascinating Fungi* with Pam Catcheside
 - *'Lost' Plants* with Dan Duval, Seed Conversation Bank at the Botanic Gardens and *Microbats* with Dr Terry Reardon
 - *"Saving Endangered Bees and Vanished Spiders"* with Dr Remko Lejis and Dr Jess Marsh

Collaboration with the Museum:

I was invited to a presentation by The Museum's Director, Mr Brian Oldman, of the "2021-2025 Strategic Plan: Re-imaging and Transforming the Museum for the 21st Century". Brian will speak to this Plan later this evening.

I also acknowledge and thank the Director for enabling the Club to have privileged access to the Museum's on-line programs. The Club Office distributed updates as they were received from the Museum - all well received by members.

The Museum's two support groups

- The Waterhouse Club, whose members are generally those entering their second age, with time to be intrigued by the science of the natural world, a taste for adventurous scientific expeditions, enjoy meeting like-minded people and working with scientists in the field.
- Secondly, the Museum Members support group, that caters primarily for families and young people and offers a diverse program largely offered from within the Museum's spaces.

The Waterhouse Club is the principal provider of access to the Museum's scientists with opportunities to mix with, and learn from them, on both local and far-ranging expeditions of discovery. Our web site - <https://waterhouseclub.com> - presents the current program and the benefits of membership and is seamless with that of the Museum and the Museum Members, with cross referrals to clarify the choices.

Administration and Governance - The Club Office

Our Club Secretary, Margie Heylen, administers the Club with great efficiency and the necessarily delicate touch from time to time. She provides reliable and magnificent support to the events and expedition program. Sadly, Margie is relinquishing her position at the 2022 AGM.

The Club's Administrative and Membership Liaison Officer, Natalie Rollinson, provides valuable administrative support in the Club office, assists with arrangements for our evening events and is on hand to meet and greet guests; organises the AGM and Committee meetings and records the minutes for which we thank her. Nat's cheerful character is a wonderful sounding board for all our members.

SA Museum Foundation (the Foundation)

All surplus funds raised by the Club are donated to the Foundation, being very welcome untied funds to the Museum for discretionary spending on Museum priorities. Clearly the impact of Covid-19 has severely restricted the Club's ability to generate a surplus comparable to recent years (refer to the Treasurer's Report).

As reported, in our second full Covid-19 financial year, we have been as active as Covid-19 restrictions have permitted, but some of our Club events have been limited in numbers and our traditional expeditions have been severely curtailed. In particular, our major fundraiser, overseas expeditions, have shuddered to a halt. Notwithstanding this we achieved an operating surplus for the year (prior to donations) of \$55,839.00. While this looks quite impressive in the circumstances, if you remove government Covid-19 subsidies, our net surplus for the financial year would have been a mere \$7,939.

The Club has continued to actively advocate for its members where expeditions have been cancelled, and we have obtained the maximum possible refunds for members.

Since the end of the 2020/21 financial year we have been in a position to donate \$50,000 to the Foundation, leaving us with a sufficient operating balance to comfortably continue. We are working towards a brighter future through an innovative program in 2021, 2022 and beyond. The 20% share of event and expedition surplus fund donated to the scientists this financial year totalled \$6,524.75, shown in Table 1. Donations from members totalling \$2,095.00 were also passed on to the Foundation. The total donation to the Museum/Foundation by the Club since inception stands at \$1,293,159.00

Expedition Leaders

All Expedition Leaders are to be thanked for their enthusiasm and willingness to take on the responsibility to carry out their vision within an approved budget. We have requests for repeat trips and have had waiting lists for all our expeditions - the reward received for organisational efforts. We will be repeating some of the popular expeditions of 2021 in 2022 and beyond. We are continually looking for future Expedition Leaders who will always have the support of the Committee and assistance from our numerous experienced Leaders and the Club office.

Our Expedition and Events Program The 2020/21 organizers who invested considerable time and wit to create expeditions and events are listed below. Very special thanks are due to those members who organized these complex projects, cancelled expeditions and events where necessary due to COVID-19 restrictions. We also thank those who supported them. The Club membership is truly full of miracle workers!

- Alastair and Rose Dow
- Tim and Gaye Fischer
- Tim and Jen Tolley
- Tony and Anne Williams
- Margie Heylen
- Ant Simpson
- Trevor and Carol Ireland
- Mark and Caroline Mussared

Thanks to Alastair Dow and Professor Steve Donnellan, organising a meeting in March 2021 with 11 Museum scientists and 6 Waterhouse Club committee members which allowed for an exchange of ideas for future events and expeditions. One outcome is a novel volunteer project, coordinated by Carol Ireland, has been foreshadowed, with a list of volunteers being collated. The task is to assist Dr Liz Reed with sorting fossil bones from the Naracoorte cave area.

Scientists share in the surplus:

Scientists appreciate the flexibility of the donation of 20% of the surplus as a supplement to their research accounts and generally provide a report on how the funds have benefitted their work. We remain very appreciative of the knowledge and enthusiasm of the scientists who support our adventures. In the 2020/2021 Financial Year our donations to them were as follows:

EXPEDITION/EVENT	SCIENTIST	DONATION AMOUNT
The Hidden Treasures of the Australian Aboriginal Collection – An Excursion to the Museum’s Netley Store	Professor John Carty Dr Jared Thomas Tara Collier	\$224.00
The Great Oceanic Genesis – Behind the Scenes of the Pacific Cultures Gallery	Professor Steve Donnellan Dr Stephen Zagala	\$388.00
Love at First Cave – an Underground Archive of Lost Worlds	Dr Liz Reed	\$365.00
Surviving Climate Extremes: Biodiversity and Evolutionary History	Dr Mark Stevens	\$311.75
Illustrating the Antipodes: George French Angas in South Australia 1844-1845	Dr Philip Jones	\$400.00
Fascinating Fungi – the Unsung Heroes of Fire Recovery	Pam Catcheside	\$360.00
Microbats and ‘Lost’ Plants	Dr Terry Reardon Dan Duval	\$300.00
Nukunu – The People of the Southern Flinders Ranges, Their History and Culture	Dr Jared Thomas Uncle Kym Thomas Anita Nedosyko	\$1,838.00
The Hidden Treasures of the Australian Aboriginal Collection – An Excursion to the Museum’s Netley Store	Professor John Carty Dr Jared Thomas Tara Collier	\$140.00
Bilbies, Bettongs, BHP and Bling – Expedition to Roxby Downs	Dr Erinn Fagan-Jeffries Dr Kath Tuft Dr Kath Moseby	\$1,788.00
Evolution – The Ride of our Lives	Professor John Long	\$410.00
Total in 2020/2021 Financial Year		\$6,524.75

Anthropology

It has been my ambition (as Acting President, Vice President and Expedition Coordinator) to showcase Australian Aboriginal culture in our offerings to Club members. As an Expedition Leader it was gratifying to have Dr Jared Thomas and (his) Uncle Kym Thomas tell us about their attachment to the Nukuna people of the Southern Flinders Ranges. A most rewarding expedition for the Club and for Jared and Uncle Kim, where we had the opportunity to understand the progress the Nukunu people are taking to be involved in the communities of the Southern Flinders Ranges.

Our Membership: As an indicator of the community support for the Museum, Club membership stands at 78 single memberships and 134 family (double) memberships – representing a total of 212 members.

Our Hard-working Committee this year comprised of Tim Tolley, Acting President (February until the 2021 AGM) and Expedition Co-ordinator, John Goldberg Treasurer, Ant Simpson (President 1 July 2020 until February 2021), Gaye Fischer, Rose Dow, Alastair Dow, Carolyn Ireland, Mark Mussared, Phil Weinstein and Brian Oldman, and special thanks to our Secretary and Public Officer Margie Heylen. Particular mention is also made of the professional contributions of John Goldberg of Cowell Clarke. His assistance with negotiating refunds for cancelled overseas events and the preparation of the proposed amendments of The Waterhouse Club Constitution were marvels! We also thank the guiding hand of Committee member Alastair Dow in assisting with draft communications and providing masterly and comprehensive documentation of the Club’s policies and practices, both to guide new contributors and remind others of the secrets of our success. These are readily available to any member.

Special Helpers

Having just experienced another Club collecting trip to the North West of South Australia to Wintinna Station, I give special mention and huge thanks to two of our esteemed Honorary members 'Mal'n'Val' Hansen. Without their wonderful camp management and catering services the Club would not have enjoyed the remote camping experience many of us have enjoyed. Mal is the *go-to* man who can make a dunny, rig up a shower, fix a tyre, supply a cold beer and keep our vehicles going. Val is the *go-to* woman who can always 'fill a stomach', cook up a cake and keep flies away. We thank them both sincerely for their many years of assistance and sustenance. They have been the lifeblood of many remote expeditions. Thanks for all you have done.

Donors

The Club benefits from the provision of goods and services generously provided at 'mates rates'. In particular we thank Rymill Wines of Coonawarra and Zontes Footsteps Wines. Thanks also to other Club members who have made donations of time or money.

Looking forward as we emerge from the most stringent of the Covid-19 restrictions, we have an exciting and varied program planned for 2022 and beyond. These offerings will feature in the Club's *EXPEDITIONS AND EVENTS – ON THE HORIZON January 2022 Issue*. Look out for it in your online inbox or letter box early in 2022. In particular two overseas expeditions scheduled for 2023 are included.

- The Club's cruise on the 32-passenger luxury cruise ship 'True North' from the "Sepik to Bougainville", has been transferred to "The Coral Atoll Expedition" in September 2023 with Ant Simpson, the Expedition Leader and Professor Steve Donnellan on board. It is heavily booked with only a few berths remaining.
- "Morocco and the Canary Islands" with Trevor & Carol Ireland as Expedition Leaders and the Museum's Associate Professor Diego Garcia-Bellido as the lead scientist. Planning is in progress.

In response to the very positive support for and feedback from the *COMING OUT SERIES*, I am pleased to announce the very popular events will continue in 2022. The show starter of wine and canapes is always popular, providing a welcome opportunity to socialise with Waterhouse Club friends and to make new acquaintances.

In conclusion

In my short term as Acting President I have focussed on promoting Anthropological experiences, such as the Nukunu experience with Dr Jared Thomas this year and in early 2022 an imaginative George French Angus expedition and an expedition to Raukkan near Meningie.

I would like to thank all the Committee Members, volunteers and Club members for their enthusiastic support of the Club and extend a thank you to all who have attended the AGM this evening.

Tim Tolley
Acting President
19 October 2021