



ACN: 099 357 454

19th Annual General Meeting Minutes

Meeting opened: 7.25 pm Thursday 29th October 2020.

Item 1: Apologies, Minutes of previous meeting

Present: Bryan Johnston, Richard Daugherty, Steve Harvey, Peter Metcalfe, Helen Stokes, Karen Zirkler, Beatrice Bashford, Peter McNeill, Bill Perrottet, Struan Ferguson, Jill Moore-Kashima, Bev Stubberfield, Peter Barkley, Susan McPhee, Arleen Packer, Des Andersen, Alex Hunter, Trish Rasmussen, Gordon & Wendy Williams, Tim Wright, Margaret England, Jill Middleton, Dirk Drieberg, Bruce Whan, Frank Bell.

Apologies: Chris Duncan, Brian Ferris, Alicia Cooper, Rebecca Smith, Lucie Street, Shane Andrews, Sara Schmude, Cherie Pethard, David Mailler, Eric Noakes, Michael Taylor, David Henderson, Gordon Edmonds, Helen Webb, Kate Boyd, Tom Fisher, Jordie Muller, Neville Henry, Helen Stokes, Ray South.

Minutes of the previous meeting

Minutes of previous meeting were taken as read.

Motion: that the minutes of the meeting held 27th November 2019 AGM be accepted as a true and accurate record. Moved: Bev Stubberfield. Seconded: Jill Moore-Kashima. Carried.

Item 2: President's Report

Presented by Acting President, Steve Harvey.

Good evening and welcome to the 19th Annual General Meeting of Southern New England Landcare Ltd. 2020 – what a year!

*Our **mission** is to lead, connect and enable our communities to meet their sustainability goals in a changing environment.*

With drought, fires and COVID-19, it's certainly been a changing environment, but we've adapted and continued to deliver on this mission statement, despite it all.

Some of our field days and workshops have been delayed but we have adapted well to the circumstances which we have been given.

This year has seen our organisation achieve against all four of our strategic plan objectives, that is, to build and service our networks, provide innovative agriculture and NRM initiatives for communities, provide financial security for our organisation, and build and maintain team capacity.

Karen Zirkler will provide more detail on these achievements in her presentation.

The Financial Report is before you. It shows the company to be in a sound financial position and our auditors, Michelle Paull and Carolyn Cooper of Roberts and Morrow, have commended Karen and Amanda for high-standard bookkeeping and prudent financial management.

I'd like to thank our staff, Karen Zirkler, Sara Schmude, Struan Ferguson, Rachel Lawrence and Amanda Fenwicke for a big year of achievements working with our communities.

March 2020 saw Sara Schmude move on to other endeavours, and we wish her well. I feel that Sara will be best remembered for her dedication to children's education organising and running the Frog Dreaming events over many years. More recently we've welcomed two new staff members, Alex Hunter (Admin Assistant) and Des Andersen (Koala Conservation Project Officer).

I give special thanks to our outgoing Chair for the previous 4 years, David Henderson for his commitment and dedication to Southern New England Landcare and his passion for the environment and the planet as a whole.

I also thank the board in this challenging year, all learning to come to terms with zoom meetings: Jill Moore Kashima, Beveley Stubberfield, Rebecca Smith, Bill Perrottet, Peter Metcalfe, Bryan Johnston and Richard Daugherty.

I would like to extend very best wishes for a Happy and Peaceful Christmas and a New Year, 2021, that brings renewed hope. Thank you.

Steve Harvey
Vice President and Acting Chair

Item 3: Financial Report

The audited financial statements were tabled at the meeting. Individual group financials were presented to group representatives. Karen Zirkler guided the meeting through key aspects of the financials.

Motion: that the audited financial report for year ending 30 June 2020 be accepted. Moved: Gordon Williams. Seconded: Peter McNeill. Carried.

Appointment of auditors.

Motion: that SNE Ltd retain Roberts and Morrow as the auditors for 2020/2021 financial year. Moved: Peter Metcalfe, Seconded: Bill Perrottet. Carried.

Item 4: Setting of membership subs

Steve Harvey explained that current membership subscription categories and fees are:

1. Corporate or Government membership \$110/yr
2. Affiliated incorporated organisation \$55/yr
3. Family membership \$55/yr
4. Individual membership \$33/yr
5. Volunteer membership set at \$11/yr

The 2020 Member Survey sought feedback on membership subs. To simplify membership, three main categories were proposed in the survey instead of five, and the following feedback was gained:

1. **Corporate Membership** - 13% of respondents said Corporate Membership at \$110 was too little, while 87% said it was about right.
2. **Affiliated Incorporated Organisation Membership** - 7% of respondents said Affiliated Incorporated Organisation Membership at \$55 was too little, while 93% said it was about right.
3. **Individual Membership** - 20% of respondents said Individual Membership at \$22 was too little, while 80% said it was about right.

If adopted, this model would dispose of *Family Membership* and *Volunteer Membership*, and reduce *Individual Membership* by \$10.

Steve asked for comment or discussion especially from urban Landcare members. Points included:

- May be important for students to have a membership category. A proposal was put that we should retain a volunteer membership at a reasonable price.
- *Motion: that membership subscriptions be reduced from 5 categories to 3, with pricing as follows: Corporate \$XXX, Affiliated Incorporated Association \$XX and Individual \$XX.*
- Suggestion that we leave it for this year and next year, use the same motion with some costed out suggested figures in the above motion where the X's are.
- We need to show the government that Landcare has good membership. Comment that Glenrac's membership is free and they have 1000+ members. AURG has a large circulation list, reflecting this discussion.
- Note that group grants are required to pay some admin fee to SNE Landcare to administer them.
- Suggestion of a gold coin donation at each event attended to help cover some of the basics e.g. catering.

- Encourage more businesses to participate with us and to value-add to people's membership e.g. if you are a member, LLS may give a discount on a soil or water test for example.

Motion – that the membership categories and fees be retained at their current rates. Moved: Peter McNeill, seconded Richard Daugherty. Carried.

Action - The board to discuss membership ideas, categories and prices and make a recommendation to next year's AGM.

Item 5: Election of Directors and Office Bearers

Steve Harvey outlined that each Landcare or similar group in the Southern New England is eligible to become a member of Southern New England Landcare Ltd. To be a current member a group must have nominated a person or persons to represent their group. Only current nominated representatives will be eligible to vote at the AGM. Invitations to nominate were sent to group representatives in early October.

Public Officer, Karen Zirkler took the Chair to run the election of office bearers.

In accordance with the constitution of Southern New England Landcare Ltd, the following nominations were received for directors on the board:

Nominations for Directors:	Proposer	Seconder	All those in favour?
Bevely STUBBERFIELD	Bryan JOHNSTON	Jill MOORE-KASHIMA	
Bryan JOHNSTON	William PERROTTET	Jill MOORE-KASHIMA	
Jill MOORE-KASHIMA	Richard DAUGHERTY	Rebecca SMITH	
Peter METCALFE	Bryan JOHNSTON	Richard DAUGHERTY	
Rebecca SMITH	Peter METCALFE	Richard DAUGHERTY	
Richard DAUGHERTY	William PERROTTET	Jill MOORE-KASHIMA	
Stephen HARVEY	William PERROTTET	Bryan JOHNSTON	
William PERROTTET	Jill MOORE-KASHIMA	Richard DAUGHERTY	

There are two more vacancies on the board, are there any other nominations from those with Member Guarantee Status? Jill nominated Arlene Packer who declined the nomination.

Motion that the nominations for director listed above be accepted. Moved Bruce Whan, seconded Peter McNeill. Carried.

Nominations for President

Richard DAUGHERTY nominated by William PERROTTET seconded by Jill MOORE-KASHIMA. Carried.

Nominations for Vice President

Stephen HARVEY nominated by William PERROTTET seconded by Bryan JOHNSTON. Carried.

Nominations for Treasurer

Bevely STUBBERFIELD nominated by Bryan JOHNSTON, seconded by Jill MOORE-KASHIMA. Carried.

Appointment of Secretary

Karen Zirkler was confirmed as secretary and public officer for the coming year. Meeting in favour of this appointment.

Item 6: Around Our Groups

Balala-Brushgrove – Tim raised the issue of weeds since the drought. and Richard, had a day with Stuart Andrews last week. Richard Daugherty – aiming to get back to regular meetings and get together to breathe life into the group. Have made applications for small community grants. Stuart Andrews field day last week organised by Rachel Lawrence. Focus on Natural Sequence Farming and looking at rehydrating the Roumalla Creek Catchment at the head of the Gwydir River. Looking at slowing the water down in the top of the landscape. Perched wetlands occurred high in the landscape were very interesting to hear about. These sorts of days are very stimulating. UNE are doing a project on upland wetlands.

Boorolong – Frank Bell noted that the group has been quiet but Susan Newey is back in the region so it may get moving again. Has done a 15 km stock water pipeline project. Where the risers are, is a good place to plant copses of trees so they can be watered.

Soil Health Forum – Jill Moore-Kashima reported the group is lying low and waiting for an interesting project to which we can contribute.

Armidale Urban Rivercare – Bryan Johnston reported that not many current grants but applying for lots. Very busy throughout the year. Bruce Whan – regular monthly working bees. Up to date with weeding. Don't qualify for bushfire and drought recovery money being urban. Lost some plantings in a fire along the creek. Trying to get council to manage fragmites which is out of control in a lot of areas due to changes in climate. Some research shows that the fragmites is changing in the way it colonises new sites. It's actually declared environmental weed in some states. Have a couple of small corporate grants for work along the creek which enables them to continue riparian plantings with very little money. Did a grasses workshop with Wal Whalley early in the year. Robinia had taken over an area so are in the process of controlling and planting. Will also do an area of native grassland in patches under advice from Wal: decorative, lawn and pasture grasses.

Malpas Catchment Group – Bill Perrottet said the group has got back to regular meetings and projects this year. Rachel Lawrence busy as their coordinator. All the neighbours on Urandangie Creek fencing it off between town and the dam. Tree planting almost completed. TSR will be planted by LLS. Good to have everyone working together.

Save the Regent Honeyeater Group – Arlene Packer is the new rep for the group who meet about once a month so very active this year. Had a couple of field days. Struan has been mentoring the group. Started the year with a field day and then had another at Whyworry winery with a special guest speaker on improving their habitat. Visiting small schools and focus on Kingstown who will have a planting for the RHE. Ran a street stall in Uralla to raise some money (\$2500). Would like to do more plantings and some crowd funding to get some habitat areas put aside. This will be next year's big project.

Harnham Landcare Group – Beatrice Bashford reported that the Silvopasture event postponed by a year to 2 May 2021. Damon Telfer and David Hardwick came to the group area for a two day event last month. Very successful. Gordon Williams – hosted one of the days and found it very useful. LLS have signed off a couple of reveg/regeneration projects at Gordon's place. Involved in the new Thunderbolt Project with a mixed site that may eventually become a BCT site in the future.

Dumaresq Landcare – Peter Metcalfe said not much happening but noticing many of their plantings have been wiped out by the drought. Mopping up after the storm last night. Weed control – there are lots of 'strange' herbaceous weeds. Lots happening on individual properties.

Lower Apsley River – Peter McNeill had a get together at Christmas last year after the tornado went through around Walcha. Many groups down there are still trying to cope with the devastation. Trying to get funds to help fence the river and creek to do an off-creek watering system. Ongoing project. Bushfires wiped out fences and country on the eastern side of Walcha. 30 km of dog proof fencing going up along the gorge. Still recovering from the drought.

Uralla Rivercare Group – Bev Stubberfield. Been doing a bit of maintenance around healthy sites. Lots of grass and the bamboo is reshooting so that's been a focus.

Z-Net Uralla – Trish Rassmussen – Covid has restricted their movement. Canvassed the community and presented to council. Public information night with update on the water supply issues. Got a grant for 30K to do community consultation on water security options. (RACHEL – please note). Will have well facilitated workshops with experts etc. Looking at funding from the solar farm to do some tree planting projects. School activities curtailed but did four sites of their biodiversity study they did a few years ago.

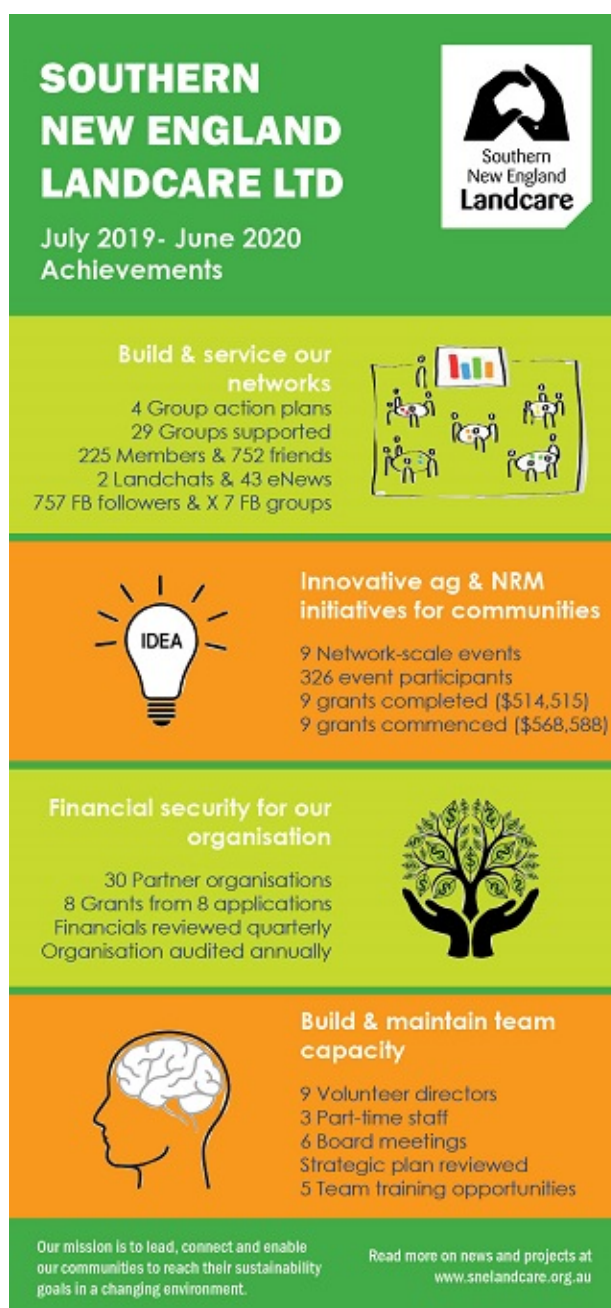
Friends of the Barry Munday Reserve – Peter Barkley is the new group rep for this new group who formed to preserve the reserve which goes back to the 1800s. Lots of 100+ pine trees at the end of their life. Plantings to protect the area from wind. Lots of planning with lots of ideas. Need to find the funds to do the projects e.g. Refurbishing the old tennis courts and sheds.

Koala Conservation Project – Des Andersen is the new project officer for this NSW save our species program funded project. Will be engaging the community in Koala conservation by assisting in citizen science, disease plan, bushfire recovery plan and then some on ground work. SNEL team is all on board and will be beating the drum with the community to get on board.

Staff rep – Struan Ferguson – we said farewell to Sara earlier in the year. Great to be working on the Koala project with Des. Great to have Alex on the team. Great to be working on the RHE project with a group set on ‘world domination’! Great to have a team leader like Karen Zirkler. Thanked the board for their strategic leadership.

Item 7: Achievements against our strategic plan

Karen Zirkler tabled an infographic presentation on the achievements Southern New England landcare has made against its strategic plan during the 2019/2020 financial year, and took participants through key achievements. See image below.



Item 8: 2020 Awards Announcements

John Winter Irving Bequest

Steve Harvey reported that it was with great sadness that Southern New England Landcare experienced the sudden and unexpected loss of our highly esteemed and hard-working Chairman, Mr John Winter-Irving, in September 2011.

John died while working on one of the six properties that he ran with the help of his wife Ona on behalf of the family partnership.

John was in the third year of his Chairmanship of Southern New England Landcare and had been a dedicated volunteer for Landcare and particularly for our organisation for nearly 20 years.

John was involved with Landcare at the group, network and regional levels. In his role as Chairman, he was able to bring a perspective that balanced traditional agricultural with alternative environmental approaches.

In memory of John's ready smile and infectious laugh, his enthusiasm, and his dignified and thoughtful approach to his job as Chair, the Winter- Irving family makes an annual bequest which will be awarded to a Southern New England Landcarer, to further his or her skills and knowledge or to provide leadership opportunities.

In 2020, the bequest is being awarded to **RAY SOUTH**. Congratulations Ray.

Ray's interests include agroforestry, regenerative agriculture, revegetation and soil health, and he is also currently developing locally adapted vegetable varieties and seed saving.

Since completing a Permaculture Design Certificate course in 2006, Ray has worked together with Jane Pickard to develop their knowledge about soils and sustainable food production and have used permaculture design to plan Banded Bee Farm which incorporates agroforestry and regenerative agriculture techniques at Saumarez Ponds.

Ray was a founding member of Sustainable Living Armidale. He was a key driver in the HiCUB Advisory Committee and HiCUB Armidale Working Group. Ray has also been involved in Armidale Urban Rivercare Group and the Soil Health Forum. He was crucial in setting up the Armidale Community Garden and has been involved with The Armidale Tree Group for 15 years, serving on the management committee and as a volunteer in the nursery over a long period of time.

Ray is now doing great work with Jane Pickard at Banded Bee Farm, educating and building on the Silviculture information learned from Rowan Reid's

Master TreeGrower Program. He is very community-minded, very open and encouraging of all those who attempt to nurture the Earth. Congratulations Ray – well-deserved.

The meeting applauded Ray South.

The Coordinators Choice Award

Karen Zirkler reported that the Coordinators Choice Award is made each year in recognition of a member who provides significant assistance or support to Southern New England Landcare staff. The long running joke is that it's the person who keeps us sane.

In 2020, the Coordinator's Choice Award is being made to **DAVID HENDERSON**, our outgoing President of the last four years.

David lives in the Ward's Mistake area north east of Guyra, so getting to Armidale is no small trip, and he made time to call at the office most weeks to check in and lend his ear to what was going on.

David was no stranger to stepping up and helping in Landcare at the regional level, holding down roles as the Secretary and Treasurer of NENW Landcare and Chair of the New England sub-committee of that organisation.

David is interested in pathways to mental wellness awareness-raising and he certainly brought attention to this in the Landcare space.

David's positive, no fuss attitude to his roles and the support he provided has been much appreciated by all our staff, hence our unanimous decision to make this award.

Congratulations David – well-deserved.

Unfortunately, David is unable to be with us tonight, but we intend to make a time for morning tea at the office to present it.

Steve Harvey thanked David Henderson on behalf of the board for his great contributions to the organisation over a very long time, beginning as the first Malpas Catchment Coordinator, but in particular his work over the last four years as President.

The meeting applauded David Henderson.

It was noted that a morning tea will be held at the office before Christmas in honour of the two award recipients.

Meeting closed: 9.10 pm.