

Professor Roger Swift is the President Elect of IUSS. He has had a long record of service to soil science as a University teacher, researcher manager and administrator in universities and research organisations and has worked in several countries. In April 2004, Roger will attend the IUSS Inter-Congress Council Meeting in Philadelphia (April 25-29). He and Associate Professor Neal Menzies, Vice President Elect of IUSS, will report to us regularly in the lead-up to the 19th World Congress of Soil Science to be held in Brisbane, Australia in 2010.



Congratulations Roger, from ASSSI.

Profile

AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY OF SOIL SCIENCE INC.

ARBN 080 783 106

ABN 96 080 783 106

The Australian Society of Soil Science Incorporated (ASSSI) was founded in 1955 to work towards the advancement of soil science in the professional, academic and technical fields. It comprises a Federal Council and seven branches (Qld, NSW, Riverina, ACT, Vic, SA and WA). Liability of members is limited.

The ASSSI is committed to:

Advancing soil science

Providing a link between soil scientists and members of kindred bodies within Australia and other countries.

Specific ASSSI Objectives

- To promote the field of soil science
- To further the expertise in soil science of members
- To be a forum for discussion on soil science
- To increase government and community awareness of soil science
- To liaise and cooperate with other organisations in support of mutual interests
- To encourage research and extension in soil science
- To promote wise management of the soil resource throughout Australia

ASSSI MEMBERSHIP

For all Membership and CPSS Application and renewals, subscriptions, queries and address changes contact Linda Bennison, ASSSI executive officer on telephone 03 5622 0804, facimile 03 5622 0806, email asssi@bigpond.net.au

ASSSI WEBSITE

<http://www.asssi.asn.au>

PROFILE

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Advertisements

Advertisements relevant to some aspects of soil science are welcome. Charges are full page \$220, half page \$110, quarter page \$55 (GST inclusive).

All contributions are welcome, text preferably by email.

Please send to the editor for 2004 Lyn Abbott, School of Earth and Geographical Sciences, M087, The University of Western Australia, Crawley, 6009 Western Australia, Australia.

Phone 08 6488 2499 Fax 08 6488 1050 Email organic@agric.uwa.edu.au

Contents

Page	Contents
4.	SuperSoil Conference, Sydney
5.	IUSS President Elect
6.	IUSS Vice-President Elect
9.	ASSSI Election Form
10.	New Members Welcomed
11.	Letter to the Editor
13.	New Member Profile
14.	News from Vic Branch
15.	Book Review
16.	News from WA Branch
21.	Federal Council 216 Minutes
23.	Federal Council 217 Minutes
24.	AJSR Contents
25.	CPSS Report
26	Public Liability Insurance
27.	ASSSI Contacts



From the President **Cameron Grant**



Earlier this year you will have heard from our Executive Officer, Linda Bennison, that Professor Roger Swift and Dr Neal Menzies are now the 2010 IUSS President- and Vice-President-elect. On behalf of the Society, I convey our congratulations, support and best wishes to Roger and Neal. Their work will begin immediately, with Roger's participation in the IUSS inter-Congress planning meeting for 2006 to be held in Philadelphia next week. We can all be satisfied that the 2010 Congress is in good hands, but there is much to do and I am sure Roger and Neal will be calling on us all to help in some way or another. Please help when the time comes.

The Society's accreditation program (CPSS) continues to move forward under the able Chair-ship of Mr Graham Price, who kindly took up this role as an interim measure to see us through 2004. (In the next issue of *Profile*, I will call for nominations from Branches to elect members to replace retiring Board members – the new Board will then elect its own chair). Graham replaced Professor Bob White, who retired from this position after the 2003 round of accreditations were complete. On behalf of the Society, I would like to thank Bob White for his dedication and hard work as Chair of the CPSS Accreditation Board, and wish him well for the future. I also welcome the AIAST's new Representative on the CPSS Board, Mr Larry White. We look forward to working with the AIAST through Larry in the coming years.

As I mentioned in my last letter, ASSSI's 50th Anniversary is around the corner, and we will mark the occasion in some way. One suggestion was that ASSSI should introduce a special medal for the occasion, and Federal Council will consider this (and other options) at our next meeting. I would ask that each Branch consider holding a Special Meeting in 2005 with the theme of "Building on Strong Foundations" to commemorate the Society's golden anniversary.

Finally, to ensure we have a Federal Council ready to take over after the Sydney Conference, I am opening nominations for all Federal Executive positions now. These include: President, Vice-president, Secretary, Treasurer and Editor of *Profile*. If you wish to nominate for any of these positions, please fill in the nomination form (found later in this issue of *Profile*) and return it to our Executive Officer by June 1st 2004. Where positions are contested an election will be held shortly thereafter – you will be notified by the Federal Secretary.

Cameron Grant.



From the Editor **Lyn Abbott**

Thank you to members who have provided information for this edition of *Profile*. It is a little later than planned as I have taken on a new role unexpectedly at UWA, but next time we should be back on track again. **Please note the earlier deadlines for submission of articles for *Profile* in future (1 June, 1 September, 1 December).** We need more articles such as news about local issues, abstracts of PhD or Masters thesis and photos. If you send them now, I will make good use of them in future editions. Thesis abstracts help to promote research of our junior soil scientists, so please support them in allowing their work to be known widely. Please also consider Letters to the Editor and reports on any soil-related functions from ASSSI Branches, government organisations, universities and funding bodies etc.

My apologies for incorrectly spelling Neal Menzies' name in the last *Profile*. Also, my thanks to Janet Wild for the photos from the Riverina Branch that were included in *Profile* 136. Photos of ASSSI members in the field are always welcome, so please send any you have available NOW, well before the next deadline (1st June).

I would also like to thank the companies who support the production of *Profile* through their regular advertising.

**Please REMEMBER to send abstracts for the
SuperSoil Conference in Sydney by APRIL 30**

18th World Congress of Soil Science July 2006 Philadelphia, USA



Register NOW for SuperSoil 2004

The SuperSoil 2004 Conference is being held at the University of Sydney from 5-9 December 2004. Registrations are open and the committee is looking for a large number of Australian and New Zealand society members at this major biennial event on the soils calendar.

SuperSoil Convenor, Graeme Tupper, said the conference will continue the strong tradition of networking and learning within ASSSI and NZSSI. It is also encouraging innovation within the profession, through the use of an online conference publishing system. This will see all papers uploaded, edited and published in an online system, which will improve accessibility of the conference proceedings, increase their audience and reduce costs and effort for the committee.

Mr Tupper said SuperSoil was also seeking to improve the credibility of the conference by requesting full papers prior to the conference. The deadline for abstract submissions is 30 April 2004 with full papers to be submitted by 15 July.

Both oral and poster presentations & contributions to symposia sessions are welcomed in all areas of soil science. Papers will be published in a refereed Proceedings on CD (available at the conference) and online. The conference handbook will contain abstracts from the papers. Only full papers will be published. Authors can make only one oral or poster presentation at the conference, but can co-author more than one paper.

Abstract and paper submission is via an Author Gateway (www.regional.org.au/au/asssi). Please go to the gateway to download the paper guidelines and register as an author.

The SuperSoil committee has been fortunate to attract several international speakers to the conference, including Prof. Donald L. Sparks (President International Union of Soil Science, USA) and Prof. Johan Bouma (The Netherlands). Other keynote speakers include Prof. Robert J. Gilkes (University of Western Australia), Dr Brent E. Clothier (HortResearch Palmerston North, New Zealand) and Ms Rebecca Lines-Kelly (NSW Agriculture).

There is an extensive social program planned, culminating in the Conference Dinner & Awards Evening on Sydney Harbour on the final evening. Conference participants are encouraged to book early for the cruise and partners are welcome. A wide range of field trips are also planned.

For more information about the conference or to register as a delegate please go to www.icms.com.au/supersoil

SuperSoil 2004 - Key Dates

Abstract submission deadline 30 April 2004
Abstract acceptance deadline 31 May 2004
Submission deadline for papers 15 July 2004
Early bird registration deadline 15 September 2004
Pre-conference tour commences 30 November 2004
Conference commences 5 December 2004
Mid-Conference Field trips 8 December 2004

IUSS PRESIDENT ELECT

Professor Roger Swift

Executive Dean, Faculty of Natural Resources, Agriculture and Veterinary Science, University of Queensland

Email: deannravs@uqg.uq.edu.au

Roger Swift has had a long record of service to soil science as a University teacher, researcher manager and administrator in universities and research organisations and has worked in several countries. In the UK, he graduated from Birmingham University (in Chemistry) and has worked at Manchester, Edinburgh Universities and at Reading University where he was Professor of Soil Science and Dean of Agriculture and Food. In New Zealand, he was Professor of Soil Science and Vice-Principal at Lincoln University. In Australia, he commenced his soil science career as Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Western Australia (with Jim Quirk and Alan Posner) before returning to the UK. He came back to Australia in the early 90's to join CSIRO as Chief of Division of Soils and subsequently as the Land and Water Sector Coordinator. In 2000, he moved to his current position as Executive Dean of the Faculty of Natural Resources, Agriculture and Veterinary Science at the University of Queensland. Through the occupancy of these leading positions through service on national policy and research committees and through involvement in various projects in Africa and the Middle East, he has made a considerable contribution to the progress of soil science and the development of soil management practices and policies in several countries.

Roger has also given substantial service to the IUSS and to other soil science societies. He has been Chairman (plus Vice- and Past-Chairman) of IUSS Commission II (Soil Chemistry) and has led two IUSS working parties. He is a member of three national soil science societies (Australian, New Zealand and British) and has served on the national council of two of these. He has considerable experience of organising scientific meetings including two international meetings and six national meetings, all with subsequent published proceedings. Roger has also been President of the International Humic Substances Society (IHSS) which grew out of an IUSS Working Group. Roger is a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Technology Science and Engineering and of the Royal Society of Chemistry, and received a Centenary Medal for services to science.

Roger's research interests have focussed on soil chemistry particularly with respect to the properties of soil organic matter, clay and oxide colloids and the behaviour of macro- and micro-nutrients and soil contaminants. He has published more than 150 publications (book, chapters and peer-reviewed papers) as a result of these studies. He has trained many PhD students and post-doctoral fellows who have themselves made significant contributions in soil science in teaching and research.

Roger believes that IUSS needs to be more active on the international scene raising the awareness of global soil issues and that the President should lead these activities rather than being solely concerned with the organisation of the next conference. He plans to take a more proactive role at ICSU and other relevant forums working closely with his former colleague, Stephen Nortcliff, the IUSS Secretary-General.

Roger also believes that the format of the IUSS conference requires some attention particularly providing incentives to ensure the presentation of high quality, recent work and to promote genuine discussion, and encourages greater involvement of younger scientists.

"I look forward to serving as the President of IUSS and to ensuring that soil science is properly represented and recognised in international forums. In addition, the Australian Soil Science community will be responsible for hosting and running the International Congress in Brisbane in 2010. This will require the involvement of many ASSSI members right across the country in all facets of the planning and organisation. Neal Menzies (the new Vice-President Elect) and I plan to start the process of engagement with members later this year" said Roger.

Roger will be attending the IUSS Inter-Congress Council Meeting in Philadelphia (April 25-29) and will report back the outcomes of this meeting to members in a future edition of the 'Profile'.

NZSSS/ASSSI Soils Conference

5-9 December 2004

www.icms.com.au/supersoil

@ The University of Sydney

see details on Page 4

Phone and Fax Numbers for ASSSI

ASSSI Office

phone 03 5622 0804

fax 03 5622 0806

IUSS VICE-PRESIDENT ELECT

Dr Neal Menzies

Associate Professor
School of Land and Food Sciences
University of Queensland
Email: n.menzies@uq.edu.au



Neal has a passion for soil science and has worked hard as a teacher in his role as a supervisor of postgraduate researchers, to bring others into a rewarding field of soil science. Neal also has a strong commitment to the professional organisation, and has served as Secretary, Vice-President and President of the Queensland branch of the Australian Society of Soil Science. Neal is currently Vice-President of the ASSSI Federal Council and is pleased to have the opportunity to serve soil science as Vice-President of IUSS.

Following his PhD, Neal worked as a soil chemist at the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture in Cameroon, and as a lecturer in soil science at the University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, before returning to Australia to take an academic position at the University of Queensland. He believes soil scientists can make a useful contribution to solve a broad range of problems. This is well reflected in the research projects he has been involved in, including projects in agricultural production, water quality, waste disposal, mined-land rehabilitation, conservation biology, and even forensic science. Neal is a well-regarded teacher, and an active researcher with a strong publication record. He assisted in the organisation of the 1998 ASSSI National Conference and the recent International Soil Tillage Research Organisation conference. He is also involved in the organisation of the 2004 International Soil Conservation Organisation Conference.



Call for nominations for ASSSI Awards - 2004

Visit the ASSSI Website for eligibility criteria

CG Stephens Award:

Closing date: June 30th 2004.

Committee: A/Prof Neal Menzies (QLD), Dr Evan Christen (NSW), Dr Adrian Peck (WA)

Honorary Memberships (Life Member and Limited-term Member):

Closing date: September 30th 2004.

Committee: Dr Cameron Grant (President, SA), Prof Lyn Abbott (Past-president, WA), A/Prof Neal Menzies (Vice President, QLD)

ASSSI Publication Medal: Closed

JA Prescott Medal: Closed

JK Taylor Medal: Closed

**ASSSI Website:
www.asssi.asn.au**

Frozen soils in Denmark - a chilly exchange

Australian and European students investigated the state of Danish soils in January this year. The students are part of the LEAFSE masters exchange program between Australia and four European universities in Denmark, The Netherlands, Germany and Wales (see below for details).

The LEAFSE program facilitates student exchange and learning in agricultural and environmental sciences. Students from Europe who are currently on exchange at Australian universities have participated in several soils trips so far. They are also working on projects related to nutrient cycling and organic farming practice, and attending classes in related subjects.

In 2005, about 20 scholarships are available for masters students to spend 6 months exchange in one of the four participating universities in Europe - Wageningen University (The Netherlands, KVL University, Denmark, University of Wales,, Aberystwyth, UK and University of Kassel, Germany).



LEAFSE students and staff from eight participating universities stand on frozen ploughed soil on a Danish farm listening to an explanation of current agricultural practices in that region.

LEAFSE EU-AUSTRALIA 2005 POSTGRADUATE EXCHANGE PROGRAM Call for applications

Here is a great opportunity for 6 months postgraduate study in Europe supported by the Australian Government in a project called LEAFSE (Learning through Exchange - Agriculture, Food Systems and Environment) in 2005. LEAFSE exchange scholarships are available for students enrolled in postgraduate masters study at four universities in Semester 1, 2005.

This Australia - European Union Cooperation in Higher Education provides opportunities for postgraduate Master students in Natural Resource Management, Agriculture, Horticulture, Viticulture, Rural Science, Social Sciences related to agriculture, Environmental Science and other areas related to food and fibre production (see LEAFSE website for full details www.leafse.kvl.dk).

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

This project enables postgraduate (master) students in Australia to study in one of four universities in Europe for 6 months during 2005. Students studying abroad will enrol in a masters program at one of 4 Australian universities and will pay relevant fees at their home institution and will incur no additional payment liabilities to the institution abroad. Units undertaken abroad will be recognised by the home institution as an integral part of the postgraduate program. Living cost stipends of approximately \$A7,500 for six months are available to Australian students for undertaking a semester of full time study in Europe.

This Australian Government (DEST) and EU funded pilot project is an initiative between 4 Australian universities - the University of Western Sydney (the lead institution for the project in Australia), the University of New England, University of Western Australia and the University of Queensland and 4 universities in the European Community - The Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University in Denmark (the lead institution for the project in Europe), University of Wales, Aberystwyth in UK, Wageningen University in the Netherlands, and the University of Kassel in Germany.

The language of instruction is English.

Additional information and the application form can be found on the LEAFSE Website: www.leafse.kvl.dk

Applications are submitted on the LEAFSE website by close of business on June 15th, 2004. Final selection of students will be completed by 15th August.

Students from the EU countries are currently in Australia, and Australian students are now in Europe for the 2004 exchanges.



ASSSI Strategic Plan

2002-2006

website:<http://www.asssi.asn.au>

“ASSSI promotes the field of soil science and its important relationship with wise management of the soil resource throughout Australia.”

What is ASSSI? The Australian Society of Soil Science Incorporated (ASSSI) was founded in 1955 to work towards the advancement of soil science in the professional, academic and technical fields. It currently comprises a Federal Council and seven Branches (Qld, NSW, Riverina, ACT, Vic, SA and WA). Liability of members is limited. Federal Council consists of: Federal Executive: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer Branch Presidents, Newsletter Editor. An Executive Officer is employed by ASSSI to be responsible for dealing with membership issues, promotional material and administration of CPSS.

Accreditation for soil scientists is available: Certified Professional Soil Scientists (CPSS)

What does ASSSI do?

- Promotes soil science to the wider community as essential for natural resource management and production.
- Sets professional standards related to soil science.
- Provides a forum for wide debate of soil science issues.
- Provides opportunities for professional development in soil science.
- Coordinates a national focus on issues related to soil, its use and its management
- Provides leadership opportunities for members, including junior soil scientists
- Provides international links (IUSS) through participation in international meetings and initiatives related to research on soil, policy development and implementation
- Participates in policy development and debate related to soils in all environments in Australia
- Takes a leadership role in discussion on education and training related to soil
- Holds conferences (joint with NZ, national and local)
- Supports the bid for IUSS Conference in 2010
- Initiates seminars, workshops, field days, field trips
- Disseminates information - books, articles, affiliation with the Australian Journal of Soil Research

Enduring Outputs

Nationally recognised accreditation for practicing soil scientists
High profile of soil science in the community
High profile of soil science in environmental decision-making processes
High quality educational opportunities and support for students
Benchmarking with related organizations
Effective communication among members
Effective communication with stakeholders
Effective communication within the community
International links
Affiliation with other related organizations

Areas of strategic initiatives related to 6 key ASSSI objectives

1. To support initiatives which enhance the profile of soil science in Australia

- Accreditation of Soil Scientists (CPSS) • Educational materials • Public presentations
- Discussion with key government and industry sectors

2. To enhance expertise in soil science

- Development opportunities for junior soil scientists
- Seminars, workshops, training, field trips

3. To recognise excellence in soil science

- Medals for excellence • Student prizes and travel awards

4. To provide a forum for discussion

- Website, email, newsletter, seminars, conferences, workshops

5. To increase government and community awareness of soil science

- Media updates • Workshops

Election of ASSSI Federal Executive 2005-2006

ASSSI Election: Nomination Form

We nominate _____
for election to the position of **President / Vice-president / Secretary / Treasurer / Profile Editor** (circle intended position, delete the others) of the Australian Society of Soil Science Inc, ASSSI, for the next Federal Council 2005-07.

Nominator (must be financial member of ASSSI):

Printed name _____

Signature _____

Contact details: _____

Secunder (must be financial member of ASSSI):

Printed name _____

Signature _____

Contact details: _____

Date: _____

I agree to be nominated for the position of _____ of the Australian Society of Soil Science Inc, ASSSI, for the next Federal Council 2005-07.

Nominee (must be financial member of ASSSI):

Printed name _____

Signature _____

Contact details: _____

Date: _____

Submit completed nomination form by COB Friday June 4th 2004 to:
Mrs Linda Bennison, Executive Officer
Australian Society of Soil Science Inc.
PO Box 1349 WARRAGUL, Victoria 3820.

New Members of ASSSI

Welcome to ASSSI

The following new members were approved at Federal Council meetings 216 and 217.

Mr. Sean Harris
Harris Environmental Consulting
WALLABY NSW 2533

Mr Andrew Macleod
Morse McVey & Associates
PICTON NSW 2571

Dr. Riaz Ahmad
AgResearch
Ruakura Research Insititute
HAMILTON NEW ZEALAND

Dr Thomas Baumgartl
CMLR, The University of Queensland
School of Physical Sciences
BRISBANE QLD 4072

Mr Mitchell Furness
Queensland Department of Primary Industries
TOOWOOMBA QLD 4350

Ms Kylie Holmes
University of Queensland
BROWNS PLAINS QLD 4118

Ms. Gillian Kopittke
University of Queensland
Centre for Mined Rehabilitation
SHERWOOD QLD 4075

Ms. Katherine Secombe
University of Queensland
Centre for Mined Rehabilitation
ST LUCIA QLD 4072

Mr Marcal Gusmao
University of Adelaide
Waite Campus C/- Dr. C.D. Grant
GLEN OSMOND SA 5064

Mr. Shahriar Iqbal
The University of Adelaide
Waite Campus: Soil and Land Systems
GLEN OSMOND SA 5064

Ms Therese McBeath
University of Adelaide
Waite Campus, Dept Land Systems
GLEN OSMOND SA 5064

Dr. Tin Aye
University of Melbourne ILFR
School of Resource Management
UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE VIC 3010

Ms. Gemma Hamilton
Monash University
RICHMOND VIC 3121

Mr Philip Wallis
Monash University
Centre for Green Chemistry
OAKLEIGH EAST VIC 3166

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ideas,
information,
conferences etc.**



5-9 December 2004

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**@ The University of Sydney
see page 4**

ASSSI: A Contrarian View

In a Presidential piece in the latest Profile (Issue 136, Dec. 2003), my friend and colleague, Cameron Grant, argues for a national society (ASSSI) that has a major aim to “exert serious influence i.e. control over the professional standards of practice in soil science”. In Cameron’s view, it (ASSSI) should “exert authority over the professional behaviour of associations and bodies that practice soil science”. Cameron draws an analogy with other, more-established, professions, and he mentions accountants, engineers and architects in this context. However, this particular member begs to differ from Cameron’s view regarding this major purpose for our society.

But let’s not begin with the society. Instead, let’s consider what may be missing, or wrong, in the world of soil science in Australia in 2004. Then let’s see how the society can help to correct the problems that we might identify.

One shortcoming I detect in soil science, as elsewhere currently in science, is our virtually complete enslavement to funding sources. Of course, it was always the case that someone funded scientific research – up until the mid-1980’s, Governments i.e. taxpayers, were the major sources of research funds. Governments have greatly scaled down research funding, as they have scaled down much social, intellectual and educational funding, so we must seek funds from private, or, at least, corporate sources, some of which are foreign.

And do these non-governmental sources of funds come with fewer strings attached than those from governments, do they enhance the pursuit of real research i.e. understanding, and do they promote the exchange of data and ideas? Surely it would be foolish to argue that tight milestones allow time to pursue real understanding. It is equally foolish to expect that funding by particular interest groups enables the close examination of hypotheses at variance with their economic (and even environmental) interests. Similarly, confidentiality agreements and patenting, and also competition for scarce funds, inherently work against the free exchange of data and ideas with other scientists.

These drawbacks of the competitive drive for external funds generally work to the detriment of (at least some) researchers, and, I would argue, to the detriment of research over all. The problems are summed up in two statements some would have heard me argue. One is that ‘we have become so focussed on the golden eggs, as the paying products of research, that we have forgotten to tend to the requirements of the poor old goose, which is the scientist as enquiring researcher’. The other is ‘you need to go out on the high wire and risk failure in order to achieve anything very much is research’, and, of course, the risk of failure has become minimised in order to satisfy our paying clients.

Another way of putting it is that we are now subject to the new Golden Rule: ‘he who has the gold, rules’. A consequence of this principle for research is that they who do not have the gold receive none of the products of research. In this case, it is the people at the application end of science who are the losers. Examples would include soil advisers in agriculture who would have had free and easy access in the publicly-funded past to research results and researchers, who would then have had the time and freedom to assist advisors with the application of research results. Courses for technological transfer that were once free and regarded as parts of researchers’ jobs are now charged for, and pity those who cannot pay. The time that researchers once spent on these courses is now subsumed into the very considerable time they spend on lobbying for grants and contracts.

Possible solutions to these problems bring us back to our society (ASSSI). I maintain that this, and other scientific societies, should lay much emphasis on its role as a lobby group to remind the wider community and, through them, politicians, that science has wider possibilities beyond that of handmaiden to the wealthy, for this is the role that we are becoming accustomed to fulfil. We have indeed become like accountants, engineers and architects, who generally work as contractors to other individuals and bodies. However, we can do better than this.

Besides lobbying for recognition of a better role, our society should act like the monasteries that maintained the Christian faith through the Dark Ages in Europe. For someone or some body needs to maintain the faith in fundamental research that leads to truly unknown, unexpected and possibly revolutionary options for the nation and perhaps also mankind in the future, while also providing intellectual and cultural excitement. Scientific conferences are important for this reason, among others. Through their conferences and other activities, scientific societies can help keep alight the flame of enthusiasm for research, open discussions and new ideas. They do not (and should not) serve narrow economic interests and can therefore remain disinterested, in the proper sense of that often-misused word.

Of course we must encourage professionalism in our work. But simple designation as scientists by virtue of particular educational qualifications does not allow us to argue for an exalted status in the community. Even so, we should argue for a special role for scientists beyond that of the spin-doctors and salespeople who continue to infect almost all facets of the wider community. However, this special role has to be earned.

As scientists, our particular role, relative to other professions, is to stride out beyond the concerns of present and to offer new solutions for the unknown challenges and problems of the future. As we are presently operating, we are in danger of several kinds of peril. These include that of being able to offer only incremental advances, that of drawing down - and eventually depleting - the intellectual capital acquired in times when understanding and real advances were encouraged, and even that of repeating past work and duplicating work being done by others behind their particular closed doors.

As employees we may have become limited in our scientific possibilities. Therefore it behoves our society to offer and promote what has become a contrarian view of our science. According to this view, soil science, as with all true science, is quite simply a different activity from those requiring, for example, accountants, engineers and architects.

Jock Churchman, Visiting Research Fellow, Soil and Land Systems,
School of Earth and Environmental Sciences, University of Adelaide

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NEW MEMBER PROFILE - JANE AIKEN

Completing PhD student j.aiken@uws.edu.au

University of Western Sydney, Richmond campus, Penrith South NSW 1797

During my progression of study at the University of Western Sydney obtaining a Bachelor of Science degree with majors of microbiology and environmental science, then completing an Honours year devoted to a method of characterising soil microbial communities using DNA based techniques and now finalising a PhD thesis, my scientific context has been wastewater reuse. Combining an interest in understanding soil microbiology with soil physical and chemical conditions, I have been able to develop several areas of expertise in my research program. (i) DNA based analysis of soil microbes and their organization as a 'community'; (ii) analysis of soil physical and chemical properties; (iii) understanding regional and local soil type variation, (iv) principles of wastewater management and monitoring – and most importantly, (v) deriving and executing a quantitative analysis using a range of numerical ecology statistical techniques in order to define critical relationships. I have been privileged to work as the first soil researcher for the Richmond Water Reuse Project (RWRP) at the University of Western Sydney (UWS) Hawkesbury, which is a collaborative irrigation project undertaken to reuse sewage treatment plant effluent. This site is the former Hawkesbury Agricultural College (HAC) Farm incorporated in 1892 (Musson, 1907). Although UWS Hawkesbury has a history of agricultural use there seems to have been no passing on of a unified body of soil science data. However, one important piece of work does exist. During a research review of the UWS Hawkesbury soils, I was fortunate to find the comprehensive soil map by Dr. Pat .H. Walker for his survey conducted in December 1954 at the HAC Farm. Collating this and other soil profile detail and analyses, as a documented form useful to future research and teaching, is one interest I would like to pursue. Another aspect of current research includes the development of a basic soil-monitoring model for the RWRP, introducing the new quantitative analysis for clay dispersion as recently described by (Rengasamy, 2002). Dispersive quality is an inherent characteristic of some UWS soil types and this model will be an integrated approach to monitoring dispersive soil structure. The monitoring model, comprising soil salinity with soil dispersion in an assay for a range of soluble salts, is complementary to ground and effluent water quality analysis and also soil profile description. However, back to my interest in soil microbial communities and soils analysis.

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Phone and Fax Numbers for ASSSI Office:

ASSSI Office phone 03 5622 0804
 fax 03 5622 0806



AJSR Website details:

AJSR Webpage
<http://www.publish.csiro.au/nid/84.htm>

AJSR Contents page
<http://www.publish.csiro.au/nid/85.htm>

News from the Victorian Branch of ASSSI

2004 Biennial General Meeting of the Victorian Branch of the Australian Soil Science Society Nominate Now!

The Biennial General Meeting of the Victorian Branch of the Australian Soil Science Society will be held on Friday the 18 June 2004 at 2pm at the Kimpton Lecture Theatre, University of Melbourne. Nominations are called for the office bearing positions of President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and for 3 ordinary members. Nominations should be submitted to the Secretary of the Victorian Branch of ASSSI, Alice Melland, by email to Alice.Melland@dpi.vic.gov.au, or by post to: Alice Melland, DPI Dairy Research Institute RMB 2460 Hazeldean Rd, Ellinbank Vic 3123 by 4 June 2004. Alternatively, nominations will be accepted at the BGM. Lunch beforehand will be at the Redback Hotel, Flemington Road, North Melbourne. Dr Peter May will be the guest speaker at the BGM. His talk has the intriguing title: "The impact of stilettos on the hydraulic properties of soils (and other tales of the city)". Come along for lunch, enjoy the speaker and get active in your society!

\$\$\$\$\$ Victorian Student Conference Support \$\$\$\$\$

Are you an avid soils student who would love to go to a soils conference but can't scrape up the cash? Then read on! The Victorian Branch of the Australian Soil Science Society provides support for post-graduate students, who are Victorian members of the Society, to assist them to attend soils related conferences. Past recipients of this support have attended conferences both in Australia and overseas. With two soils conferences in Australia in the coming year, the Victorian Branch would like to help you with the opportunity to kick start your soils career by presenting to, and mixing with your peers. Applications are now open, so don't miss out. Eligibility criteria are available at: <http://amorphous.agfor.unimelb.edu.au/asssi-vic/index.htm>

The Frank Gibbons Award

The prestigious Frank Gibbons Award is offered annually in recognition of the contribution made to Soil Science by the late Frank Ross Gibbons. Frank Gibbons was a pedologist with the former Victorian Soil Conservation Authority and retired in 1986 as a Principal Research Officer. In 1990, he received an Advance Australia Award for his 'outstanding contribution to the environment and soil conservation' and was made an Honorary Life Member of the Australian Society of Soil Science Incorporated (ASSSI) in 1992. The Victorian Branch of the ASSSI has created the 'Frank Gibbons Award' to commemorate the life and career of this well-liked and well-respected soil scientist. The award, which consists of a certificate, **two years subscription** to the Australian Society of Soil Science Inc. and **\$250 cash**, will be made for an essay assessed on the basis of scientific merit, relevance to soil science and the overall effectiveness in communicating research to a scientific audience. A summary of the essay will be published in *Profile*. Eligibility criteria are available at: <http://amorphous.agfor.unimelb.edu.au/asssi-vic/index.htm>

Leeper Lecture 2004

Victorian Branch of ASSSI announces the Leeper Lecture for 2004

"Learning from the past when facing the future of soil science"

Speaker: Dr Johan Bouma,
Retired Professor of Soil Inventarisation and Land Evaluation at the
Dept. of Soil Science and Geology of the Agric.
University in Wageningen, The Netherlands

Date: 26 November 2004

Venue: The Melbourne University

Book Review

'Soil Fertility Decline in the Tropics. With Case Studies on Plantations'

by Alfred Hartemink (CABI Publishing, 360 pp, A\$176.50)

Review by Dr Paul Nelson, School of Earth Sciences, James Cook University

The title evokes a fascinating and important subject area that will appeal to many who are interested in soils. However, this is not a book for those interested in the riot of social and political factors that are the main drivers of soil fertility change in the tropics or those keen to read about the complex and controversial issues surrounding plantation agriculture.

Hartemink makes it clear from the start that his focus is narrow, concentrating on quantitative soil chemical properties only (mostly pH and nutrient availability). He doesn't cover soil physical and biological properties, livestock, or modelling to any extent, and erosion is only covered briefly. He has left out studies where changes can't be quantified, including the substantial grey literature produced by the plantation sector, and all non-Anglo/Dutch literature.

Having established a narrow focus, the diversion into population growth and the need for more food (and more soil science) in Chap 2 is a little out of place. The links between plantation agriculture in the tropics and alleviation of hunger are tenuous at best, and the coverage of subsistence agriculture in the book is necessarily sparse given the complexity of the systems and the scarcity of data fitting his criteria. What I find interesting here is that plantations are a fascinating meeting point between the commercial values of the global economy and local economies often still heavily reliant on subsistence agriculture.

'The tropics' in the title isn't really defined, which is a bit disappointing considering the many possible interpretations and assumptions possible due to the enormous land area and diversity of 'the tropics'. The simple geographical definition (between the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn) would include arid areas with irrigated plantation crops, which he doesn't discuss to any extent. He also pulls some examples from outside of that zone, from as far north as Egypt and as far south as Swaziland and New Zealand. A simple world map showing latitudes and climate classification would have been a useful addition to the book. On that theme, many readers will probably also wish that the book contained a brief description of the Soil Taxonomy Soil Orders that are discussed.

As for the 'plantation' part of the title, the strength of the book is in the two interesting and high quality case studies that it describes; sugarcane in Papua New Guinea and sisal in Tanzania.

The main weakness of the book is its structure, which is complex and difficult to follow, and gives the reader no clear conceptual framework to follow. As a result, the substantial problems of soil degradation in the tropics are not covered well. For example, there is no clear and comprehensive account of the processes and results of acidification. It's a major hole, because while it might be obvious to soil scientists or chemists, many readers will not know that shifting pH from 5 to 4 requires about 100x more acid than shifting it from 7 to 6, or that soils differ enormously in their capacity to resist changes in pH, or that the water surplus/deficit has an enormous effect on leaching and acidification. Considering that 'the tropics' includes some of the most well-buffered and most poorly pH-buffered soils in the world and has annual rainfalls ranging from around 1,500 to 6,000 mm (not to mention arid irrigated areas), these sorts of issues are critical for readers wanting to understand the subject.

The book's structure makes it difficult to find all the bits and pieces that relate to a particular soil type or process and the text is often a fairly tedious, and often repetitive, list of facts; not a clear synthesis. There are three introduction-type chapters, one 'theoretical' chapter, three chapters on broad groups of crops, one chapter on a particular species (sugarcane), two case study chapters and two conclusion-type chapters. The 'Synthesis' chapter just repeats points made in previous chapters and adds a few more. In the main body chapters, information is presented in the categories of 'Type 1 data' (changes in properties over time), 'Type 2 data' (differences in properties between adjacent contrasting land uses) and 'Semi-quantitative' studies (mainly nutrient budgets).

Given the soil focus of the book, it would have made far more sense to structure the book either in terms of a) Soil Orders and/or climatic zones, or b) soil degradation processes. The Soil Order/Climatic zone approach would have allowed clear description of problems like leaching and acidification in Oxisols of the wet tropics, salt accumulation in irrigated Alfisols and so on. I think that structuring the book around degradation processes would have been most useful. Although Hartemink deliberately stuck to quantitative data only, he could have derived much more value from the data if they were arranged in a conceptual framework of our understanding of the main processes involved.

He has devoted considerable effort and space to quantifying rates of change in various parameters, so I'll make several comments on that. First, the rates of change are not interpreted in any way. For example, if for some parameter an asymptote is being reached with time, does that mean that fertility decline is becoming less serious? When discussing the rate of change in pH (one of the main parameters covered), a conceptual framework based on our current knowledge would lead us to expect pH to change much more quickly in a soil with low pH buffering capacity, high pH, ammonium fertiliser addition, high biomass removal, high rainfall and high infiltration capacity than in other soils. Apart from the nice description of soil type effects in the Tanzanian sisal example, these concepts aren't clear in the book. As for the discussion of nutrient losses, there is more to it than just the amounts being lost. For example, decreases in available P with time may be due to organic matter decline in one soil or acidification and changes in P retention in another soil. Finally, the rates of change are often discussed in percentage terms, which provides less information than the actual values, and means that the rate of change depends on the starting value, which is often arbitrary- whenever the study started.

Continued Page 16

Placing the examples covered into a process-based framework would have led to a more in-depth treatment, and would also help readers to make reasonable guesses of what might happen to soil fertility in the considerable areas where little data is available.

The subject of the book is a large and pressing one. At this very moment there are still large swathes of forest being cut down in the wet tropics, and irrigation schemes are expanding in the dry tropics. Governments of developing countries are stating that commercial agriculture is the way forward for sustainable economic development.

Many readers will come to this book with the question: 'is plantation agriculture good or bad for tropical soils?' I don't think they will come away from the book with a clear idea of what the degradation issues are and how best to manage them, largely for the reasons discussed above.

The book has a fairly optimistic tone. I agree that tropical plantations have a reasonable chance of being sustainable, on the proviso that the managers are obliged to continue production on the same piece of land for the long term. Companies will generally provide the necessary inputs if they are given technical advice that accurately reflects the long-term economic benefits of prudent soil management. The large plantation companies are well aware of, and active in the shift from a simple production focus to an environmental sustainability focus, largely because of consumer pressures. The crux of the matter here is an obligation to keep producing on the same land, and to be accountable for off-site effects. Preventing opportunists from cut-and-run agricultural 'development' schemes will be a very important strategy for preventing soil fertility decline.

Given that many readers will be working in the field covered by the book, the final paragraphs on 'Future research' are disappointingly brief. How are we going to prevent or slow degradation? Hartemink says the way forward is to produce more high quality data to quantify changes in soil fertility. But the inescapable fact is that measuring trends in soil properties will never become routine due to difficulty and expense. And, while we certainly need more data in some situations, I think we know enough to be concentrating now on finding more practical and economic ways of maintaining soil fertility under agriculture. Finally, the way we interact with non-scientific people and groups is likely to have much more significant effects than our actual science, as the scientific and technical issues are barely significant compared to the commercial, social and political forces in action.

In conclusion, for me the book will be of most use as a well-researched compilation of references and data on the topics covered. My review has been fairly negative, but I'd encourage you to read the book and make your own judgement.

News from the WA Branch of ASSSI

The WA Branch of ASSSI is holding a BBQ for undergraduate and postgraduate students on **20th May** at The University of Western Australia. It will also be the occasion on which we congratulate Emeritus Professor Graham Aylmore as a Life Member of ASSSI and Professor Alan Robson's appointment as Vice Chancellor of The University of Western Australia. The WA Branch is also having discussions with the WA Branch of the AIAST to formalise collaboration in the AIAST Student Mentor Program. ASSSI members are already participating in this mentor program which has been running since the early 1990s. Current discussions seek to strengthen the mentoring of undergraduate students and bring more soil scientists into student mentoring roles.

Professor Alan Robson AM - New Vice Chancellor of The University of Western Australia

Professor Alan Robson, a long time member of ASSSI, has recently been appointed as the Vice Chancellor of The University of Western Australia. At a special ceremony to mark the occasion in Winthrop Hall at UWA on 7th March 2004, Alan gave an address and received the Vice Chancellor's robes from the Chancellor, Dr Ken Michael AM.

Alan has been a member of ASSSI for many years. He was awarded a B Agric Science from Melbourne University, and a PhD in Soil Science and Plant Nutrition from The University of Western Australia. He is the first graduate of The University of Western Australia to become full-time Vice Chancellor. Prior to his role as Deputy Vice Chancellor of UWA (1993-2003), Alan held appointments including Foundation Director of the CRC for Legumes in Mediterranean Agriculture (CLIMA) which has retained its status as a very successful research centre since the end of the support it received from the CRC program. Alan has also held positions as Dean and Head of the Faculty of Agriculture and Professor of Agriculture (Soil Science) at The University of Western Australia and has taken a lead role on many government committees and boards. In 2003 he became a member of the Board of CSIRO.

Alan is a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering and a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Agricultural Science and Technology. He has also been awarded the Australian Medal of Agricultural Science by AIAST. In 2003, his achievements were further recognised nationally when he became a Member of the Order of Australia.

Congratulations Alan, from ASSSI.

MP406 Moisture Probe

The MP406 can be used to measure the soil moisture for scientific research or irrigation management. The MP406 can:

- rapidly measure the soil moisture by pushing the needles of the sensor into the soil surface or soil profile;
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MP Case	Aluminum carry case
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NEWLETTER of IUSS Commission on History, Philosophy and Sociology of Soil Science (C4-5)

see it at the IUSS Website www.iuss.org

The editors of the Newsletter of the IUSS Commission on History, Philosophy and Sociology of Soil Science have produced an excellent publication which is on the IUSS website www.iuss.org

Professor Yaalon has asked if we would alert members of ASSSI (who are all members of IUSS) to make comments and possible future contributions to this newsletter. If there is somebody who would care to prepare a brief article on some specific points of the history of soil science in Australia, they would like to hear from him or her.

The Newsletter team is:

Benno Warkentin, Oregon State University (Email: benno.warkentin@orst.edu)

Dan H. Yaalon, Institute of Earth Sciences, Givat Ram, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem (Email: yaalon@vms.huji.ac.il)

Hans van Baren, World Soil Information (ISRIC), The Netherlands. (Email: hans.vanbaren@wur.nl)

9th International Symposium on Soil and Plant Analysis - Mexico

SYMPOSIUM THEME: SOIL, PLANT, AND WATER ANALYSIS: QUALITY ANALYTICAL TOOLS FOR AN ERA OF ECOLOGICAL AWARENESS

PURPOSE OF THE SYMPOSIUM

To convene world leaders on soil and plant analytical tools and agricultural and natural resource scientist, to discuss the state of the art, methodology, metrology, interpretation, as well as, present and future application of soil, plant and water analyses in order to achieve a more efficient soil management, sustainable food and fiber production and environmental protection.

INVITATION TO ATTEND

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Soil and Plant Analysis Council, the Organizing Committee of the 9th ISSPA, the Mexican Society of Soil Science and the Colegio de Postgraduados, the Chair of the Organizing Committee invites you to join us in Cancún, Mexico, the cradle of Americas' culture, to celebrate together the Ninth International Symposium on Soil and Plant Analysis. This is the first time that such symposium will have a Latin-American country as venue. We believe that the Caribbean sun, the white sand of Cancún beaches and the tropical environment provide an ideal scenario for a great scientific event and a relaxed atmosphere for sound and enlightening discussions. In recent years the agricultural industry has been subjected to an increased demand for quality and quality control, as well as to an extremely careful management of the natural resources that are fundamental for its success: soil and water. Analytical tools such as soils, plants, water, fertilizers and organic amendment analyses are a key factor to help sort out the challenges imposed on the farm sector. Agronomists, soil scientists, agricultural chemists, fertilizer dealers and farm managers should be aware of what is new in: analytical tools, instrumentations and tendencies in the use and interpretations of these useful tools in order to have a better grasp on plant nutrition, food quality and environmental impact control. The 9th ISSPA is the ideal scientific opportunity to acquire the knowledge and ideas that can sustain your decisions in the near future. Please let us be your hosts. We offer you access to the best of the new knowledge on soil and plant analysis presented by qualified professionals and one of the best recreational, cultural and sight seeing environments in the world for your comfort and satisfaction.

Mark Flock - Chair
mflock@blinc.com

IMPORTANT DATE
Abstract Due 15 July 2004

ISCO CONFERENCE: Check Website for latest details

www.isco2004.org

Continued on Page 21

Australian Journal of Soil Research

8 Issues per year

ISSN 0004-9573

A truly international journal at the forefront of Soil and Environmental Sciences

AJSR, established in 1962, is now in its 40th year of publication, and is a leading international journal of soil sciences published from the southern hemisphere. It publishes research papers, viewpoint articles, and review articles on research that promotes understanding of soils in Australia, New Zealand and the south-west Pacific, as well as those in tropical and Mediterranean environments. Keeping pace with new developments, the journal now publishes papers encompassing environmental pollution and site remediation. The journal enjoys a high ranking (measured by impact factor, immediacy index, and total cites in 2001) amongst its competitors.

Highlights

Now with greater international coverage and readership

Our readership is world-wide; ~60% of subscribing libraries are overseas

Regularly publishes papers from overseas

The journal's focus has been broadened; ~27% of papers published in 2002 are from outside ANZ; the overseas submissions are growing from all the continents

Highly accessed amongst CSIRO journals

18300 downloads in 2001-02, this attests to the journal's popularity among those accessing the CSIRO Publishing website

EBSCO online usage report

One of the top five most accessed journals amongst CSIRO's suite of journals; a reflection of the journals growing audience in Europe/overseas

High citation ranking and impact factor

Current impact factor is 1.055; ranked 11th by ISI within the category of Agriculture, Soil Science amongst 29 journals; more than 10 years cited half-life; high immediacy index

Abstracted by all the major abstracting services

Curr. Contents, Biol. Abstr., Chem. Abstr., CABI, Nuclear Sci. Abstr., GeoRef, etc.

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ASSSI Members were able to subscribe to the Australian Journal of Soil Research via their 2004 ASSSI membership renewal. There is a discounted price for financial members of the society. If you have any queries please contact Linda Bennison ASSSI (Executive Officer).

AJSR Website details:

AJSR Webpage

<http://www.publish.csiro.au/nid/84.htm>

AJSR Contents page

<http://www.publish.csiro.au/nid/85.htm>

Do you know your ASSSI Federal Executive?



ASSSI Federal Executive 2003-2004

President:	Dr Cameron Grant (SA Branch)
Vice President:	A/Prof Neal Menzies (Qld Branch)
Secretary:	Dr Annie McNeill (SA Branch)
Treasurer:	Mr Keith Lindbeck (WA Branch)
Newsletter Editor:	Prof Lyn Abbott (WA Branch)

*See Page 27 for
Contact details*

Branch Presidents are also members of Federal Council

Queensland:	Mr Andrew Biggs
New South Wales:	Mr Greg Chapman
Riverina:	Mr John Thompson
Victoria:	Dr Aravind Surapaneni
South Australia:	Dr Jock Churchman
Western Australia:	Dr Andrew Harley
Tasmania (observer)	Dr Philip Smethurst
AJSR Representative	Dr Andrew Rate

Federal Council Meetings in 2004

FC No 216	Friday February 6th (1pm WST; 3:30pm CDT; 3pm EST; 4pm EDT)	teleconference
FC No 217	Friday March 12th (1pm WST; 3:30pm CDT; 3pm EST; 4pm EDT)	teleconference
FC No 218	Friday May 7th (1pm WST; 2:30pm CST; 3pm EST)	teleconference
FC No 219	Friday July 2nd (1pm WST; 2:30pm CST; 3pm EST)	teleconference
FC No 220	Friday Sept 3rd (1pm WST; 2:30pm CST; 3pm EST)	teleconference
FC No 221	Friday November 5th (1pm WST; 3:30pm CDT; 3pm EST; 4pm EDT)	teleconference
FC No 222	Sunday December 5th (1pm EDT)	in person, Sydney

ASSSI Federal Council Meeting 216

Minutes of the ASSSI Federal Council tele-meeting #216 held on Friday February 13, 2004.

ITEM 1 Welcome

Prior to the meeting opening, President Cam Grant extended a warm welcome to newly elected SA Branch President, Dr G.J. Churchman

ITEM 2 Present

Cameron Grant (President)

(alphabetical order): Linda Bennison (EO), Andrew Biggs (Qld Pres), Greg Chapman (NSW Pres), Jock Churchman (SA Pres), Cam Grant (Pres), Andrew Harley (WA Pres), Keith Lindbeck (Treas), Neal Menzies (Vice Pres), John Thompson (Riv Pres).

ITEM 3: Apologies:

Annie McNeill (Secretary), Lyn Abbott (Profile Editor), Aravind Surapaneni (VIC Pres).

ITEM 4. Approval of Minutes of Federal Council Meeting 215.

Minutes of the Federal Council Meeting held on Friday November 28 2003 were amended as follows, then confirmed on a motion moved by Cameron Grant, seconded by Keith Lindbeck.

Bob White's name to be inserted

"Minutes" replace "Agenda"

Re: Web site, section 11.8 Greg Chapman uncertain about this, & will query Annie.

ITEM 5. Business arising from minutes of Federal Council Meeting 215

5.1 House of Representatives submission.

\$200 plus a letter of thanks has been forwarded to Adrian Webb for his contribution to HoR submission.

5.2 AJSR Link on ASSSI web site

Link to CSIRO on the ASSSI web site will be finalized when more time becomes available

5.3 Strategic Planning

Action plan and costings for the annual/biennial strategic planning to be presented at Federal Council tele-Meeting 217.

5.4 Indemnity insurance for CPSS Board & Federal Council.

Email request to be forwarded to Keith Lindbeck for action then Linda Bennison to obtain quote from Fitzpatrick's.

5.5 Status of CPSS Board membership

Cam Grant to formally invite Graham Price as an ASSSI representative on to the Board. Linda Bennison to table the email from Allan Jones nominating Larry White as the AIAST representative to the Accreditation Board and welcome Larry on to the Board.

5.6 Progress on CG Stephens Award.

Cam Grant and Neal Menzies are establishing the procedure and protocol for the CG Stephens Award Committee. Use of the original examiners report by the Award Committee discussed with the benefit being that it accesses expert knowledge on the thesis from the examiners. Further suggestion on using published papers resulting from the thesis may disadvantage the field researchers due to the time required to publish field research compared with laboratory research.

5.7 Honorary membership plan To be tabled at the meeting 217.

Honorary Life Member information for Profile.

Supporting information on Life Memberships were forwarded to Lyn Abbott for inclusion in Profile.

AIAST-ASSSI agreement re: CPSS

Cam Grant to contact Bob White, Accreditation Board and then Allan Jones, AIAST to determine response to the ASSSI correspondence.

Linda Bennison's contract & duties to be discussed under EO Report

ITEM 6. President's Report

2003 AGM held in Adelaide on December 19 where the 2002 financial statements were adopted by members.

The 2004 AGM will be hosted by the QLD branch in May. Event to coincide with a branch OGM. Branches to provide an expression of interest in hosting the AGM at the December Federal Council meeting each year.

IUSS elections have been held with congratulations to Prof. Roger Swift and Dr. Neal Menzies who were duly elected as President-elect and Vice President-elect for the 2010 IUSS Congress in Brisbane. Neal to present a proposal and budget at the July Federal Council meeting for members to consider. In the interim, funds to be made available for Roger Swift to attend the Philadelphia meeting. Moved by Keith Lindbeck and seconded by Jock Churchman, that Federal Council make up to \$3000 available for an economy airfare for Roger Swift to Philadelphia in the event that the IUSS do not make travel funds available. The motion was carried.

National Soils Conference in 2010. Suggestion that the conference, whether hosted in NZ or Australia, be cancelled in 2010 and funds and effort be diverted to the Soils Congress. Cam Grant to discuss this option with NZSSA President Peter Stevens and SA and Victorian branch Presidents (as the most likely Australian branch hosts of the Soils Conference).

Nominations for Federal Council will be called for in the next edition of Profile. All Federal Council members are asked to consider nominating for an Executive position.

Continued Page 22

Association of Commercial Soil Surveyors. No reply received. Cam Grant to contact Neal McKenzies and discuss the concept of a ACSS member on the Accreditation Board.

ITEM 7 Executive Officer's Report

Federal office has relocated to Warragul.

The ASSSI CPSS handbook and subs have been forwarded to members in January and subscription payments are being processed.

Accounts have been finalized, the BAS submitted for the last quarter and books ready for the auditor.

The employment contract has expired and needs to be reviewed with CPSS duties outlined. The workload or the time allocated needs to be reviewed. Cam Grant and Keith Lindbeck to collaborate next week and prepare a draft for Linda Bennison to review.

Membership certificate. Draft membership certificate circulated with option of seals indicating financial status. Approval given with the certificate amended to incorporate the membership number.

ITEM 8. Secretary's Report No report tabled.

ITEM 9. Treasurer's Report

9.1 Financial statement for 2003 was circulated. Cost of the merchant fee was queried at 2.5%. EO responded with lowered administration time spent on banking made this fee acceptable. Cost of printing the Handbook was due to two Handbooks being included in the annual fee (2003 and 2004).

9.2 Accounts approved for payment by Federal Council:

\$420 GST refund to NSW branch.

\$79.98 to Justnet

\$500 to Linda Bennison for petty cash

\$286 for Henry Cotton, printer for Profile

\$256.30 to Henry Cotton, printer for subs notes and A4 window envelopes

\$476.74 for IUSS ballot

Moved: John Thompson Seconded Neal Menzies Carried

9.3 Constitutional matters

Keith Lindbeck reported that the cost of using a professional office in Canberra to lodge the annual statement is \$2200 plus GST and disbursements. Option of having an ACT member of ASSSI with an honorarium to lodge the accounts discussed with concern over the accounts not being lodged again. Suggestion that the lodgment of accounts be an agenda item for the first two Federal Council meetings each year. Committee also supported the development of a Handbook outlining the roles of Federal Committee members. Each Council member to provide a list of actions prior to the next meeting.

Constitution. Keith Lindbeck has obtained a quote of between \$5 000 and \$10 000 from the WA solicitors to redraft the constitution. Council agree to allocate additional resources for EO to provide the first draft. Cam Grant and Keith Lindbeck to confirm amount. Timetable as follows:

12 March. First draft to Federal Council members

19 March. Comments back to EO from Federal Council members

26 March. Final draft finalised and copy sent to Branches for comment.

15 April. Comments back from Branches. Draft to then be reviewed by Solicitor. Keith Lindbeck to send Linda Bennison the updated constitution for ASSSI on Monday 16 February.

9.5 Status of FC & CPSS Board in relation to liability & indemnity insurance. Linda to send Keith Lindbeck the email then obtain the quote

ITEM 10. Profile Editor's Report No report.

ITEM 11. Branch President's Reports

11.1 NSW Branch will be having an OGM on March 3 and a field trip from 13 – 15 May. The Branch is running a State Soils Competition.

11.2 Riverina, Western Australia, South Australia and Queensland reported no activity since the last meeting.

ITEM 12. General Business

12.1 ASPAC & quality of soil testing issue in Australia (Andrew Biggs)

Andrew Biggs raised the question whether or not Federal Council should be commenting publicly on the status of soil chemistry in relation to the recent press articles. Council discussion raised the issues of the future capacity in Australia to provide expertise in these fields. Support given for the major role of ASSSI to publicise where potential problems may arise in the future. Andrew Biggs to keep Federal Council informed on the release of papers by George Rayment. Media comment to be provided by President Cam Grant on the subject with Jock Churchman to assist and Andrew Biggs to provide background information. Comment to be a series of quarterly press releases.

12.2 Support of postgrads to attend conferences (Cam Grant)

Funding of students is via the branches and Federal Council does not wish to establish a precedent outside the status quo.

Professional indemnity (plus Public liability) insurance for CPSS (Cam Grant)

12.3 National Soils Conference (Greg Chapman)

Graeme Tupper has been doing an excellent job with the program looking good. Concern raised about the ISCO conference casting a shadow on the Soils Conference and the need for sponsorship. Claire Braun has been appointed to raise sponsorship so please forward details to her of any potential sponsors. Suggestion made that Graeme contact Philippa Tolmie re the ISCO sponsorship list. Suggestion made that Federal Council meetings include a Conference Report at each meeting. Request to be sent to Graeme Tupper asking him to participate in future meetings.

12.4 Web site access/editing (Greg Chapman)

NSW branch would like to get a web page established and a link to the Save Our Soils material. Branch President to notify President Cam Grant when the material is ready for publishing.

Question raised whether or not the WebMaster should be a recognized Council position and that Derek should be invited to participate in the Federal Council meetings. Should the position be part of the FC election?

Comment also made that the web site only provides information on the society and has the potential to provide information on soil.

12.5 GST on Reference Soil of SW WA soon to be reprinted and sold (Andrew Harley)

GST will need to be collected and claimed back. Branch to forward summary each quarter on amount of GST paid and GST collected and Federal Council will lodge it on the society BAS. Linda Bennison to forward a copy of the NSW forms used.

12.6. Is there a separate WA constitution? (Andrew Harley)

Keith Lindbeck advised that in the 20+ years he was involved on the Branch that there was no separate WA constitution.

12.7 Time of future meetings (Greg Chapman)

Could all Federal Council members please advise President Cam Grant of their preferred starting time of Federal Council meetings.

12.8 New members accepted as circulated.

Federal Council members were asked to add to a Calendar of events items related to branch or federal activities and email the page back to the ASSSI office for compiling.

ASSSI Federal Council Meeting 217 (Draft)

Minutes of Federal Council Meeting 217 Teleconference Friday March 12th 2004

WA 12.00pm :SA 2.30pm: Qld 2.00pm: Vic/NSW 3.00pm

Attendance (alphabetical order): Lyn Abbott (WA, Profile Editor), Linda Bennison (Vic, EO), Andrew Biggs (Qld, Branch Pres), Greg Chapman (NSW Branch Pres), Jock Churchman (SA, Branch Pres), Cameron Grant (SA, Fed Pres), Andrew Harley (WA, Branch Pres), Keith Lindbeck (WA, Fed Treasurer), Annie McNeill (SA, Fed Sec), Neal Menzies (Qld, Fed VicePres), Graeme Tupper (NSW, ANZ 2004 Soils conference organiser)

Apologies: John Thompson (Riverina, Branch Pres), Aravind Surapaneni (Vic, Branch Pres).

Minutes of Previous Federal Council Meeting 216 – Approval and business arising other than that already dealt with in submitted reports

Submitted reports for Information only: President's Report, Executive Officer's Report, Secretary's Report (none submitted) Treasurer's Report (not applicable, see FC minutes 216), Profile Editor's Report, Branch President's Reports (NSW only)

Items for discussion

6.3 EO draft contract

FC were in agreement to increase hourly rate for the EO but that further information on CPSS component of the total work load is to be circulated and discussed prior to any decision on increasing the number of hours. Action: Cam Grant

6.2 Frequency of FC meetings

It was agreed that every two months is sufficient and should include all branch presidents involved with FC

Reports for info only are also adequate

Need to circulate reports and agenda at least 24 hours prior to meetings Action: All

6.1 ASSSI 2004 Conference – update and progress report

Graeme Tupper summarised the current progress in organising the ASSSI conference in December (6-10th). Expression of interest to date is low (25). Regional Institute will be responsible for material seeking sponsors. 26th March for next organising committee meeting. President encouraged branches to raise the profile and Graeme mentioned also offering student sponsorships.

Other business

6 new members were proposed.

K.Holmes,Qld (Student) A. Macleod, NSW (Ordinary), T. Baumgartl, Qld (Ordinary), M. Furness, Qld (Ordinary), P.J.Wallis, Vic (Student).

Members accepted. Moved by Fed President and seconded by Fed Vice-pres.

Meeting Closed 3.30 pm

Next Meeting: FC 218: Friday 7 May 2004 (3.00pm EST; 2.30pm CST; 01.00 pm WST)

AJSR CONTENTS

AUSTRALIAN JOURNAL OF SOIL RESEARCH

Contents Volume 42, No. 1 2004

- Determination of water content in drying soils: incorporating transition from liquid phase to vapour phase
F. Konukcu , A. Istanbuluoglu and I. Kocaman pp. 1-8
- Analysis of turbulent flow patterns of soil water under field conditions using Burgers equation and porous suction-cup samplers
Ninghu Su , Jim P. C. Watt , Keith W. Vincent , Murray E. Close and Renzhao Mao pp. 9-16
- Herbicide loss in runoff: effects of herbicide properties, slope, and rainfall intensity
K. Müller , M. Trollove , T. K. James and A. Rahman pp. 17-27
- Comparison of four methods for liberating various aggregate fractions in Vertosols to study their morphology
Damien J. Field , Leigh A. Sullivan , Stephen R. Cattle and Anthony J. Koppi pp. 29-37
- The effects of clay and sand additions on the strength of sandy topsoils
R. J. Harper and R. J. Gilkes pp. 39-44
- Inventories and elemental accumulation in peat soils of forested seabird breeding islands, southern New Zealand
D. J. Hawke and J. Newman pp. 45-48
- Investigation by electro-ultrafiltration on N and P distribution in rhizosphere and bulk soil of field-grown corn
Michele Arienzo , Vincenzo Di Meo , Paola Adamo and Pietro Violante pp. 49-57
- Silver ion desorption kinetics from iron oxides and soil organic matter: effect of adsorption period
Jian Li , Andrew W. Rate and Robert J. Gilkes pp. 59-67
- Chemical characterisation of deep profile Ferrosols under sugarcane in wet tropical northern Queensland
M. J. Donn , N. W. Menzies and V. Rasiah pp. 69-77
- Calibration of the Rothamsted organic carbon turnover model (RothC ver. 26.3), using measurable soil organic carbon pools
J. O. Skjemstad , L. R. Spouncer , B. Cowie and R. S. Swift pp. 79-88
- Phosphorus auditing cannot account for all of the phosphorus applied to different pasture soils
L. L. Burkitt , C. J. P. Gourley and P. W. G. Sale pp. 89-98
- Dairy pasture responses to soil physical properties
J. J. Drewry , R. P. Littlejohn , R. J. Paton , P. L. Singleton , R. M. Monaghan and L. C. Smith pp. 99-105
- Dung decomposition in temperate dairy pastures. I. Changes in soil chemical properties
S. R. Aarons , C. R. O'Connor and C. J. P. Gourley pp. 107-114
- Dung decomposition in temperate dairy pastures. II. Contribution to plant-available soil phosphorus
S. R. Aarons , H. M. Hosseini , L. Dorling and C. J. P. Gourley pp. 115-123
-

AJSR CONTENTS

AUSTRALIAN JOURNAL OF SOIL RESEARCH

Contents Volume 42 , No. 2 2004

- Fate and behaviour of pesticides in the agroecosystem—a review with a New Zealand perspective
Ajit K Sarmah , Karin Müller and Riaz Ahmad pp. 125-154
- FLAG UPNESS and its application for mapping seasonally wet to waterlogged soils
G. K. Summerell , T. I. Dowling , J. A. Wild and G. Beale pp. 155-162
- Wettability of soil aggregates from cultivated and uncultivated Ustolls and Usterts
Anna Eynard , Thomas E. Schumacher , Michael J. Lindstrom , Douglas D. Malo and Robert A. Kohl pp. 163-170
- Water-stable aggregates of flooded Inceptisols from south-eastern Nigeria in relation to mineralogy and chemical properties
Charles A. Igwe and Karl Stahr pp. 171-179
- Quasi-equilibrium of organic carbon in shrink–swell soils of the subhumid tropics in India under forest, horticulture, and agricultural systems
R. Naitam and T. Bhattacharyya pp. 181-188
-

AJSR Contents Volume 42, No. 2 2004 continued

- Mineralisation of soil orthophosphate monoesters under pine seedlings and ryegrass
C. R. Chen , L. M. Condrón , B. L. Turner , N. Mahieu , M. R. Davis , Z. H. Xu and R. R. Sherlock pp. 189-196
- Soil phosphorus enhancement below stormwater outlets in urban bushland: spatial and temporal changes and the relationship with invasive plants
Michelle R. Leishman , Miah T. Hughes and Damian B. Gore pp. 197-202
- Dry season suspended sediment concentration and sedimentation in the Richmond River estuary, northern NSW, Australia
Shahadat Hossain , Bradley D. Eyre and David McConchie pp. 203-211
- Effects of sheep grazing episodes on sediment and nutrient loss in overland flow
A. H. Elliott and W. T. Carlson pp. 213-220
- The role of N transformations in the formation of acidic subsurface layers in stock urine patches
J. R. Condon , A. S. Black and M. K. Conyers pp. 221-230
- A survey of the cation content of piggery effluents and some consequences of their use to irrigate soils
D. E. Smiles and C. J. Smith pp. 231-246
- Pools of selenium in some Indian soils at field capacity and submerged moisture regimes
S. K. Dhillon and K. S. Dhillon pp. 247-257
-



Certified Professional Soil Scientist REPORT

In 2003 the CPSS Accreditation Board commenced random audits of its members. This will become an annual process and involves the scrutiny and confirmation of activities claimed in the Ongoing Professional Development Diary. Twenty per cent of members will be audited annually and those members selected for audit who achieved their 50 hours of OPD through carry-over (from 2002) hours will be audited on the following year's OPD. Auditing ensures that activities claimed are relevant to soil science and increases the rigour of the CPSS accreditation scheme. The Accreditation Board congratulates the following CPSS members on successfully completing the audit.

CPSS Member	Level	2003 Audit
Bond, Warren	Stage 3	Approved
Cogle, Alexander L	Stage 3	Approved
Edwards, David	Stage 3	Approved
Griffiths, Neil	Stage 3	Approved
Lawrie, Roy	Stage 3	Approved
Murphy, Brian	Stage 3	Approved
Powell, Bernard	Stage 3	Approved
Smith, George	Stage 3	Approved
White, Robert	Stage 3	Approved
Newton, Philip	Stage 2	Approved
Tucker, Robyn	Stage 2	Approved
Greene, Richard	Stage 1	Approved

The Accreditation Board will now focus on the 2004 Ongoing Professional Development Diaries and will be distributing the next E-Bulletin later this month advising members of changes to the structure of the OPD Diary. Commencing in 2004, members will have the option of on-line data entry or using the existing system. Access codes will be supplied to members to allow on-line data entry.

At its last meeting, Board members expressed their thanks to the retiring Chair of the Accreditation Board, Prof. Robert White for his dedication and commitment to redeveloping the CPSS scheme under ASSSI administration. Bob was on the original committee convened by the AIAST and has been instrumental in revising and invigorating the scheme for soil scientists. Mr. Graham Price from Queensland has accepted the position of Chairman of the Accreditation Board. The Board also welcomes Mr. Larry White, Victoria who replaces Mr. Dennis Toohey as the AIAST representative on the Board. The other two Board members are Dr. Rob Fitzpatrick (SA) and Mr. Rick Morse (NSW).

CONFERENCES

Send information about upcoming conferences, courses, seminars or workshops to be advertised here

2004	July 4-9	ISCO International Soil Conservation Organization Conference. Brisbane www.isco2004.org
2004	July 15th	Abstracts due- 9th International Symposium on Soil and Plant Analysis (see below)
2004	August 2-5	Salinity Solutions - Working with Science and Society Bendigo, Victoria www.cdesign.com.au/salinity2004
2004	September 20-26	ClayGEMME 2004: Clay Mineralogy & Geophysics for Environmental Management & Mineral Exploration (Workshop sponsored by IUSS, Australian Clay Minerals Society, Australian Society of Exploration Geophysics) Adelaide, South Australia. Contact Dr R.W. Fitzpatrick, CSIRO Land & Water, Adelaide. Email: rob.fitzpatrick@csiro.au
2004	December 5-9	ASSSI/NZSSS Supersoil Conference, University of Sydney www.icms.com.au/supersoil
2005	January 30- February 4	9th International Symposium on Soil and Plant Analysis - Mexico Email: palmmail@convservices.de Abstracts are due at the latest by 15 May 2004
2006	July 9-15	18th World Congress of Soil Science, Philadelphia, USA www.18wcss.org
2010	July	World Congress of Soil Science, Brisbane

Public Liability Insurance

ASSSI - 2004 Members Group Insurance Scheme Information

Public Liability Insurance is available to financial members of the Australian Society of Soil Science Inc. Insurance is arranged by The Australian Society of Soil Science Inc through brokers Fitzpatrick and Co with Liberty International.

Members can apply for insurance at any time during the year. All policies expire on March 31 and members joining during the year pay pro-rata for the calendar months that insurance is provided.

PUBLIC LIABILITY cover is based on;

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- Liability for accidents arising out of the use of machinery and equipment
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- Goods in care, custody and control (\$50,000)
- Liability for accidents as a result of pruning/lopping of trees/shrubs up to 5 metres in height.

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Please contact the ASSSI Executive Officer, Linda Bennison for further information, including current costs.

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