**ASPS Treasurer’s Report for the Period 1 May 2017 – 30 Apr 2018**

**Prepared by Rosemary White (ASPS Honorary Treasurer)**

**Presented at the AGM on Tuesday 25th September 2018**

**BUDGET**

The financial position of the Society, for the financial year 1 May 2017 - 30 April 2018, remains sound. As in other years, some flexibility is needed as expenses for ASPS activities do not always coincide with annual cycles of income returns. In 2017/2018, this culminated in an end of year operating deficit of $15,346.14, in comparison with a surplus of $12,798.41 in 2016/2017. These differences arise largely from differences in conference income from the two previous years. As of 30 April, 2018 our accumulated funds in the Commonwealth Bank totaled $125,452.71 ($8,827.25 Transaction Account plus $116,625.46 Online Saver Account) and the RN Robertson Fund $90,133.49 (which includes $3,047.99 annual interest). Bank interest from our Commonwealth accounts totaled $653.67. Note that $23,000 of the Commonwealth Bank account belongs to the Robertson Fund based on a previous decision made at the 2009 AGM.

**ASPS INCOME**

ASPS has three main sources of income: 1) a proportion of the profits from conferences we support (i.e. ComBio); 2) ASPS membership subscriptions and web-based advertising and 3) bank interest and donations. We received $10,844.95 in conference proceeds from ComBio 2017 in Adelaide, following $7,236.54 from ComBio 2016 in Brisbane and $17,065.16 from ComBio 2015 in Melbourne. Because the ComBio 2017 profits were received after 1 May 2018, these will appear in the 2018-2019 financial statement.

We received $17,551.00 in membership subscriptions and renewals. The number of paid/updated ASPS members as of 23 May, 2018 was 385 consisting of 132 ordinary members, 201 student members, 31 retired members, 13 corresponding members and 6 life members (see below). The two gratis members are the American Society of Plant Biology and the New Zealand Society of Plant Biologists. We currently have no sustaining members.

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| **Category** | **17/18** | **16/17** | **15/16** | **14/15** | **13/14** | **12/13** | **11/12** | **10/11** | **09/10** | **08/09** | **07/08** |
| Ordinary | 132 | 127 | 237 | 107 | 101 | 153 | 212 | 244 | 238 | 283 | 209 |
| Student | 201 | 224 | 292 | 345 | 229 | 210 | 192 | 164 | 151 | 176 | 151 |
| Retired | 31 | 31 | 35 | 36 | 28 | 14 | 14 |  |  |  |  |
| Corresponding | 13 | 12 | 12 | 6 | 10 | 10 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Life | 6 | 6 | 6 | 7 | 7 | 7 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Gratis | 2 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sustaining | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Total | 385 | 402 | 582 | 502 | 316 | 318 | 418 | 408 | 389 | 459 | 360 |

The current membership fees are ordinary member: 1 year $100.00; 2 years $180.00; 4 years $340.00; student member: 2 years $50.00; sustaining member $300.00.

**EXPENDITURE**

***ComBio 2017***

The society is a strong supporter of the annual ComBio conference as a way to showcase the multidisciplinary aspects of Australian Plant Science and as an important gathering place to meet colleagues and to develop research collaborations. ComBio also allows for the society to attract high-impact plant science researchers to Australia as plenary speakers and mentors to our student and early career members. In 2017/2018, ASPS provided $1,360.00 for ComBio 2017 (Adelaide) speaker registration expenses.

The Society recognises the importance of student participation for its long-term wellbeing. Student membership is encouraged through special awards including the RN Robertson Fund and through subsidising a considerable part of their travel, accommodation, registration costs and the annual ASPS dinner when attending and presenting at ComBio. In 2017/2018, 10 students received support from ASPS to attend the ComBio2017 meeting in Adelaide at a cost of $5,851.00 ($250-$800 per student) to the society. Furthermore, ASPS rewards active participation by students in the ComBio program by recognising outstanding posters with monetary prizes. Last year we provided three student poster prizes at ComBio 2017 ($250 each; $750 in total).

***Research and Conference Travel Support***

The R.N. Robertson Travel Award ($4,000) was awarded to Jesse Beasley in 2016/17 and to Jonathan Dragwidge in 2017/2018, both accrued in the 2017/2018 ASPS budget. A further $1,723.14 was used to underwrite the attendance of students to the annual ASPS dinner during ComBio 2017 in Adelaide.

The Society helps to facilitate scientific meetings and community events that support Australian plant science and its scientists. In 2017/2018, ASPS provided $2,500 to support the screening in Canberra of “Food Evolution” a documentary about genetically modified food, which was tied in with a live Q&A with the director (in the USA) immediately after the screening.

***ASPS Operating costs***

The ASPS website requires continual improvement, data management and web servicing. Since the major update by our previous web-site host (Michael Major Media Pty Ltd), hosting has been transferred to Conetix. Dr Janet Wheeler continues to carry out day-to-day web-site updates as needed. In 2016/2017, ASPS paid $561.00 for on-going web hosting by Conetix. I would like to express particular thanks to Janet Wheeler for prompt updates to the ASPS website and its member database, and who provides rapid responses to enquiries about both.

ASPS representation at government (Science Meets Parliament) events and through global societies (Global Plant Council, FASTS/STA) is important for developing networks and highlighting the importance of the plant science. In the 2017/2018 financial year, ASPS expenses of $2,942.15 accrued for two attendees (Dr Jay Bose (2016) and Dr Florian Busch (2017)) to travel and participate in the annual Science Meets Parliament festivities in Canberra. At the 2018 Science Meets Parliament event, ASPS was represented by Prof Barry Pogson, Dr Mike Hayden and Dr Janet Wheeler (total $6,035.37). ASPS allocated $2028.00 for membership renewal in FASTS (operating as STA).

In 2010-2011 funds ($36,327.87) were identified to support the revision and online preparation of Plants in Action version 2, managed through the University of Queensland. The funds reside within ASPS. In 2017/2018, ASPS allocated a further $5,000 to the University of Queensland for online graphic development, and there is currently $3,656.12 remaining in the ASPS Plants In Action version 2 budget.

The financial transactions have been audited (Clarkson Williams Partners Pty Ltd, Fyshwick, ACT) and the Auditor’s report is available for perusal with the financial summary at the AGM. Following the AGM, the Auditor’s report and financial summary will be submitted to the Registrar General’s Office in the ACT by our Public Officer (Prof. John Evans).

In summary, the society’s finances remain resilient. The society maintained income relative to expenditure in 2017/2018, which will be reflected in the 2018/2019 year with both ComBio 2017 and 2018 returns accruing in the next financial year. Income has been supported by a sustained membership revenue. There is room for improvement, in particular, facilitating long-term commitments by members to Society activities and ensuring we provide a proactive and engaging society to both new and existing plant scientists and supporters in Australia and overseas.

I would like to thank members of the executive (John Evans and Matt Gilliham), previous Hon. Treasurer Brent Kaiser, president Sergey Shabala and president-elect Kathleen Soole for ongoing support during the year.

Rosemary G White

Honorary Treasurer ASPS

ComBio 2018 Sydney

submitted by xx in lieu of RG White