

**PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS TO THE
49TH NEW ZEALAND PLANT PROTECTION CONFERENCE
Quality Hotel Rutherford, Nelson, 14 August 1996**

R.E. FALLOON

I wish to cover several points in my report to this annual general meeting, including observations on the current state and changing face of our Society, activities of the Society, and observations as we approach a very important milestone in the Society's history, the 50th NZ Plant Protection Conference. I am conscious at the outset that Presidential Reports, while religiously printed in Conference Proceedings, are probably very rarely cited, read or referred to. Nevertheless, I make the following observation because I believe they are important. I hasten to add that records of previous Presidents' comments make very interesting reading, and will be important sources of information as we move toward celebrations of 50 years as a scientific society.

NZ Plant Protection Conferences

The main object of this Society is "to pool and exchange information on the biology of weeds, invertebrate and vertebrate pests, pathogens and beneficial organisms and methods for modifying their effects". Our Annual Conferences continue to present the latest findings from plant protection research in New Zealand. The pre-publication of the full Conference Proceedings, as refereed scientific papers, is a tradition rarely emulated elsewhere, either in this country or internationally. This process releases the latest information into the public arena, making transfer of new technology immediately possible. The importance of this function, as part of the quest to develop and maintain a healthy, prosperous Society through highly relevant assistance to the primary production sectors, can not be over-emphasised. Those who work to publish the Proceedings must be recognised for the very important outcome they achieve. I therefore strongly commend all authors, Technical Editorial Committee members and our printing contractors for the work they do. I particularly commend the efforts of Dr Maureen O'Callaghan, who has this year taken over the tasks of Editor from Mrs Alison Popay. Maureen has maintained the excellent standards of quality and timely production that have become the accepted norm for our annual Proceedings.

The NZ Plant Protection Society's changing face

There have been several recent changes in the activities and face of our Society, some subtle and others more obvious. A conspicuous one was the change of name in 1992. Last year a new logo was adopted. This encompasses themes of interaction and information exchange (the arrows), plant health resulting from plant protection activities (the protective circle), and lasting plant health beyond the influence of these activities (the plant grows through the circle).

With the demise of discipline-based research institutions, plant protection research became fragmented, making the Society's role of encouraging interaction much more important than previously. We have also become more active in lobbying various agencies on relevant issues through involvement with the Royal Society of New Zealand's Standing Committees on Primary Production Sciences and the Science of the New Zealand Environment. We recently expressed support for the Minister for the Environment on the protection on native plants in the central North Island, and have made a submission on Centres of Excellence for plant protection research to the Minister of Research Science and Technology.

The Society has recently subscribed to HortNET on a trial basis. This has allowed our Conference Proceedings from recent years to be made available to the horticultural industry, and the current Proceedings will be included after this Conference. HortNET also provides computer-based publicity of the Society's activities, including our annual Conferences. This type of system will assist with rapid dissemination of plant protection information to the industries we serve.

This year Dr Mike Butcher has taken over production of the Society's Newsletter. He has already achieved a very high standard of production, and is playing an

important part in improving communication amongst members. Please support Mike's efforts by providing newsworthy material and relevant information.

Symposia

In recent years this Society has hosted two Symposia (on "Plant Protection: Costs, Benefits and Trade Implications" and "Pesticide Resistance: Prevention and Management") and a seminar on Problem Weeds. The publication this year of the papers presented at last year's Symposium on pesticide resistance has provided a very valuable source of the latest information on pest, pathogen and weed resistance to pesticides. Of equal importance is inclusion in the publication of updated pesticide resistance management strategies for fungicides, bactericides, insecticides and herbicides. The publication is extremely comprehensive and is already becoming an important reference work for New Zealand primary production industries. The editors of the publication, Dr Graeme Bourdôt and Dr Max Suckling, have done an excellent job, and I particularly commend Max for his enthusiastic and efficient approach to organising the Symposium.

The NZ Plant Protection Society Research Scholarship

The Executive Committee has taken an initiative to upgrade the Society's Scholarship over the last 2 years. The Scholarship trust fund will eventually be self-sufficient, and will be able to provide a prestigious scholarship for plant protection research in the future. I very strongly support the principle that actively encouraging new research and young scientists is an essential role for the Society. The Scholarship is a very practical demonstration of our commitment in this area. It is gratifying to see that the recipient of the current year's Scholarship, Richard McDowell, is presenting his research findings at this Conference. I suggest that the Society could expand the Scholarship to include grants to assist students to attend the Annual Conference where they can present their research to the wider scientific community. I encourage all members to continue supporting the Scholarship fund by making contributions whenever appropriate.

The 50th NZ Plant Protection Conference

The Executive Committee has taken steps to organise the 50th Conference at Lincoln University. The Conference will be held over four days (18 to 22 August 1997) with the theme "Plant protection in a green oasis; the next 50 years". A local organising committee is already very actively working towards this important milestone for the Society. Pre-Conference publicity has been circulated, and I encourage all members to promptly signal their intention to attend. We are about to approach a number of relevant organisations to sponsor the Conference, mainly to assist with expenses of visiting keynote speakers, most from overseas. Please encourage your employers to support the Conference, which will highlight important plant protection issues for the future of New Zealand's primary industries and society in general. The Conference will also continue the traditional presentation of current research and take historical perspectives on plant protection activities in New Zealand.

Society finances

As you will note from the Treasurer's report, the finances of this Society are in a very sound state. This is largely due to the long-term success of the publication *New Zealand Common Weeds in Colour*. The contribution that this publication has made to the Society was recognised by election of Mr Alan Upritchard as a Life Member in 1986. This little book continues to be a very important resource for weed identification in research, teaching and the plant-based industries. Its continued success prompts me to further acknowledge Alan's contribution and that of the many Society members that assisted him to compile the book. I also acknowledge the importance of the original underwriting of the publication project by Mr Max Moore and Dr Jennifer Hartley in the early 1980's. Other activities, including the two recent Symposia and our Annual Conferences, have also been "fiscally positive", and continued support from Sustaining Members assists with maintaining the Society in healthy financial state.

The Executive Committee has an obligation to manage the Society's finances in a responsible manner. This has, of course, been done meticulously, particularly by our Hon. Treasurer Dr Ron Prestidge. The Executive Committee has begun to think

carefully about the need to retain large cash reserves. I believe that judicious use of accumulated funds to further the Society's objects and principles should be investigated. I urge all members to give direction to future Executive Committees on how these funds should be managed and used as I believe accumulation of money *per se* is not an appropriate activity.

The Society's Executive Committee

On behalf of all Society members, I sincerely thank the following Executive Committee members for their efforts in efficiently managing Society affairs during the last year: Mr George Kerse (Vice President), Dr Anis Rahman (Past President), Dr Maureen O'Callaghan (Editor), Dr Mike Butcher, Dr Richard Hill, Dr Ian Popay, Dr Max Suckling, Mr Roger Welsh and Mr Murray Willocks. In particular, Dr Jerzy Zabkeiwicz (Hon. Secretary) and Dr Ron Prestidge (Hon. Treasurer) have carried heavy workloads with efficiency, providing continued benefit to the Society. The Executive Committee has been an excellent blend of commercial and research interests with very good geographical, science discipline and organisational representation, and has fostered the Society's interests with dedication and skill.

Conclusion

The NZ Plant Protection Society continues to be a vibrant, enthusiastic organisation, in very sound economic condition, and with an excellent membership base. As we look toward the 50th NZ Plant Protection Conference let us remember the ideals of free and comprehensive information exchange, high standards of scientific integrity, and respectful personal interaction that have long been Society traditions. Let us re-affirm these traditions as we look to the future, and the challenges that the new century will bring to plant protection sciences and the plant-based industries of New Zealand.

SECRETARY'S ANNUAL REPORT 1996/97

J.A. ZABKIEWICZ

The 49th annual conference was held in Nelson with 63 papers and 14 poster presentations contributed. The keynote address was by Paul Heywood of Heywood Orchards. There was again an increase in attendance to 149 overall at a very well organised conference and functions.

Our publications continue their sales. "Weeds in Colour" has had a new reprinting of 5000 copies while sales of the "Pesticide Resistance" symposium proceedings continue steadily. The intended productions for the 50th anniversary year should increase the list of titles, so the future is very positive as well.

Membership is static. We still have around 350 on our mailing list, but only 265 of these were fully paid up in the last year. There has been no change in membership fees as the Society account is now healthy due to significant interest and other revenues in the past year. This is very satisfactory as there will be heavy expenditure associated with the 50th anniversary conference celebrations and publications. Additionally, the long-awaited Royal Society affiliation fees are now being imposed and will continue to be an annual charge. However, the Society is also investigating opportunities brought about by the new affiliation process.

The Scholarship account continues to thrive. The target of \$20,000 originally set has been attained and the revised target of \$25,000 will be reached in the 1997 year. The Scholarship itself has been increased in value to \$1,500 annually and a new travel fund to assist students presenting papers at the annual conference has also been introduced.

The committee's efforts have been largely focussed on the 50th conference and its associated commitments. A superb level of sponsorship and list of invited speakers should ensure it is an outstanding event in the 1997 year.