

MINUTES of the 26th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the MENZIES MEMORIAL SCHOLARS ASSOCIATION

**held at 4.10pm, 26 November 2015
Hotel Hotel, New Acton, Canberra**

Present:

Josephine Barbaro (<i>President</i>)	Joel Gilbourd	William Rawlinson
Oren Bigos	Elizabeth Killen	Kim Rubenstein
Teresa Brown	Adrian McCallum (<i>Sec/Treas</i>)	Emily Rumble
Ricky Campbell-Allen	John O'Neill	Jane Taylor
Colleen Canning	Simone O'Shea	Premala Thiagarajan
Mark Darian-Smith	Peter Parsons	Jamie Vandenberg
Albert Dinelli	Kathryn Peterson	Nicholas Vines

1.0 Welcome

The President, Josephine Barbaro (Josie) welcomed those attending the 26th meeting of the MMSA. Josie introduced Adrian McCallum as the recently elected MMSA Secretary.

Josie thanked the outgoing President Dariel De Sousa for her significant contribution to both the MMSA and the Foundation over the previous four years in her roles as Secretary and then President of the MMSA.

2.0 Incoming Office Bearers

Josie explained the election process for the Secretary position that occurred upon Dariel's resignation.

Motion: That Adrian McCallum's election as the new Secretary of the MMSA be ratified by members.

Moved: Oren Bigos

Seconded: Ricky Campbell-Allen

3.0 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 27 November 2014

The minutes of the previous meeting were distributed for perusal. No apologies were noted.

Motion: That the minutes of the previous meeting be approved.

Moved: Simone O'Shea

Seconded: Mark Darian-Smith

4.0 MMSA Membership: Admission to the Register of Members

The following people were congratulated on their recent award of a Menzies Scholarship and are to be added to the Register of Members as Associate Members:

Allied Health 2016	Teresa Brown	PhD in Nutrition, UQ
International Law 2016	Joel Gilbourd	LLM, Georgetown University, Washington
Engineering 2016	Elizabeth Killen	Science Communication, Imperial College London
Harvard 2015	Patrick Mayoh	Public Policy, Harvard, 2015
Law 2016	Emily Rumble	BCL, Oxford, 2016
Harvard 2015	Andrew Thomas	MBA, Harvard, 2015
Harvard 2015	Matthew Tyler	Public Policy, Harvard, 2015

5.0 MMSA Strategic Plan 2014-2015

Josie described the current status of initiatives contained within the MMSA Strategic Plan 2014-2015.

5.1 Update on Implementation of Initiatives

5.1.1 MMSA Communications & Online Presence

Menzies Brief

Josie outlined that five editions of the Menzies Brief were distributed this year; opening rates were greater than typical for publications of this nature. The need for Scholars to contribute information for future Spotlight articles was highlighted.

Website

Josie stated that the website is experiencing a large volume of traffic, some 21,000 unique visits over a six-month period. She stated that although the MMSA section of the website went live mid-2015, very few Scholars were yet to complete their online profiles.

Josie urged all Scholars to investigate website functionality, ideally completing their details within the MMSA section of the website.

Feedback was sought re the website. No specific feedback was received.

Action: Email to be sent to all Scholars asking them to consider updating their details online.

Social Media

Josie stated that the Foundation was currently using both Twitter and Linked In social media platforms. Facebook was not considered a suitable social media platform for the professional communication/networking envisaged by the Foundation and the MMSA.

The number of Twitter followers for the Foundation had grown from 37 when established in March 2015 to greater than 360 followers.

Josie encouraged all Scholars to follow the Menzies Foundation on Twitter and to join the Menzies Foundation group on Linked In. Additionally, Josie asked all Scholars to please let Foundation staff know of any accomplishments that they have achieved, so that these can be broadcast via Menzies' social media platforms.

William Rawlinson suggested that an email could be sent to Scholars perhaps quarterly, to remind them of the opportunity to pass information on to the Menzies Foundation communications team. It was also discussed that such a reminder could be incorporated into each edition of the Menzies Brief.

It was discussed that the following accomplishments might be worthy of noting: grants, publications, media appearances, awards, performances etc. It was also suggested that community work/projects undertaken by Scholars would also be worthy of noting.

Josie outlined that it was envisaged that a 'light' Menzies Brief would be forwarded to all external stakeholders in 2016. This was generally received very positively.

Josie outlined the possibility of a future Menzies Scholars 'Leadership Blog', a forum whereby Scholars would be asked to write an opinion piece on something topical or of particular interest to them.

Further discussion ensued re maximising exposure for the Menzies brand via social media platforms with Ricky Campbell-Allen adding that 'content drives traffic' and that ideally, any accomplishments etc should be cross-distributed via all available social media channels.

Josie outlined that a 'list of experts' was potentially to be examined. A large amount of discussion ensued primarily regarding three topics:

1. what Scholars might choose to say, given such an outlet,
2. would their opinion be representative of the Foundation's view, and
3. what, if any view/opinion, is the Foundation seeking to espouse other than the promotion of its scholarships and work?

Generally, caution was expressed.

If implemented, it was discussed, that some Foundation-sponsored formal media training might be appropriate upon the return of any scholar from completing their studies. It was suggested that the Alumni could fund this training from its budget, or could be part of a "package" with the Foundation's scholarship.

Elizabeth Killen noted that a Science Media Centre already exists in Adelaide, and that (at least for science/technical communications) further links could be established with them.

5.1.2 MMSA Mentoring Framework

Adrian McCallum gave an update on the rationale for and implementation of the MMSA Mentoring Framework. Adrian explained how the scheme was intended to work and encouraged all Scholars to become involved.

Feedback on the scheme was sought; none was received.

Adrian expressed concern that if the platform was too cumbersome, that Scholars would be dissuaded from signing-up, and that importation of profile information and links to other professional social media platforms such as Linked In/Research Gate etc., may increase uptake of the scheme.

Kathryn Peterson concurred that a Linked In (or similar) presence may be preferable, where a group can be established upon an existing well-trafficked platform.

Kim Rubenstein suggested that the MMSA mentoring system could prove valuable and John O'Neill suggested that changes to the system need to be made such that prospective mentors/mentees can easily see which scholars are able to be contacted via the scheme.

Generally, support was expressed for the intent of the scheme, however, ease of use needs to be addressed.

5.1.3 Menzies Legal Sector Alliance for Thought Leadership & Academic Excellence

Kathryn Peterson gave an update on the Alliance. Four scholars are working on the initiative. The intention of the Alliance is to elevate the law scholars' network from merely a professional network to a strategic thought/policy development network. King & Wood Mallesons are the first in-principle hosts.

Kathryn suggested that she would appreciate any ideas/concerns about the initiative; an invitation for the thought leadership event is expected to be distributed in the new year.

5.1.4 MMSA Advisory Group

Josie outlined the proposed formation of a MMSA Advisory Group, membership to initially comprise those Scholars who recently nominated for the role of MMSA Secretary.

Initial feedback suggested that it was a great initiative designed to harness the enthusiasm of Scholars interests in further supporting the Menzies Foundation.

It is envisaged that the first meeting will occur in February 2016. The aims and purpose of the Group will be further defined at this meeting; however, preliminarily, it is expected that the Group will be used to:

- Provide guidance to the MMSA President and Secretary,
- Provide guidance on the structure and purpose of the MMSA,
- Provide guidance on retaining/increasing Scholar engagement,
- Provide guidance on implementation and development of the MMSA Mentoring Scheme and Community Grants scheme, and
- To act as a 'feeder' for Scholars to progress into the role of Secretary and thence President of the MMSA, thereby also gaining Board experience with the Menzies Foundation.

Mark Darian-Smith expressed his enthusiastic support for this initiative.

5.2 Long-Term Horizon

5.2.1 MMSA Excellence Awards

Adrian explained that whilst all of the Short and Medium term objectives of the MMSA 2014-15 Strategic Plan had been implemented or addressed, one Long-term initiative that had not been further progressed was the MMSA Excellence Awards.

The MMSA Excellence Awards will recognize outstanding individuals at the pinnacle of their profession (whether former Menzies scholars or otherwise) who help to perpetuate the ideals and values of the Menzies Foundation. Adrian explained the intent of the envisaged awards and sought feedback on their implementation or otherwise.

Feedback suggested that it was another way to potentially raise the profile of the Foundation, however, again it was reiterated that the Foundation should potentially first ensure that existing awards etc. to Scholars are 'captured' via Menzies Foundation social media/newsletters etc. before necessarily implementing a new 'home-grown' awards scheme.

Also, it was cautioned that such awards, if implemented, should not be limited to Menzies Scholars, but could be chosen by Scholars to award outstanding achievement nationally and perhaps internationally.

5.2.2 Call for other initiatives

It was noted that a Director of the Menzies Foundation, Mr Peter Jopling AM QC, had raised whether the MMSA could ultimately support its own scholarship one day.

There was general support expressed for such an initiative, with Mark Darian-Smith suggesting that such an outcome would be fantastic.

6.0 New-look MMSA Awards Ceremony, Scholar Presentations and Annual Dinner

Adrian sought feedback from attendees re the current 'lighter' format of Awards Ceremony/ cocktail reception, etc.

Support for the current format was expressed, as was desire for the Governor General to be more regularly involved in the presentation of Awards, should such be possible.

Adrian noted that previously it had been suggested that the annual MMSA ceremony etc. might rotate between capital cities every second year or so, and this suggestion was generally met enthusiastically. It was felt that such an initiative would help to increase/retain the engagement of Scholars who do not live in Melbourne. It was, however, noted, that such an initiative would probably incur greater expense.

It was suggested that the MMSA AGM could potentially be teleconferenced to groups of Scholars gathered in geographically displaced locations, perhaps in conjunction with a local social event. However, some concern was expressed that such an initiative might diminish the incentive for Scholars to travel to Melbourne (or alternative location) to physically attend the MMSA AGM and associated ceremonies.

7.0 Menzies Centenary Prize, Dimboola

Josie advised that the 2015 Menzies Centenary Prize was awarded to Nikita Bell. Nikita's \$10,000 prize will assist with costs for the first and second years of her undergraduate study.

Josie asked whether any Scholars would be interested in volunteering to attend the presentation night at the Dimboola Memorial Secondary College on 16th December 2015. Kathryn Peterson advised that she would be pleased to assist in such a manner.

8.0 MMSA Financial Statements

Adrian outlined the approximate financial status of the MMSA. He explained that funds at hand in October 2015 totalled approximately \$82k, after which \$35k will be transferred to the Menzies Foundation to support Foundation/MMSA initiatives in 2016 including: the Menzies Centenary Prize (Dimboola), MMSA Community Grants, Communications initiatives and the MMSA Advisory Group. This will leave a balance of \$47k, excluding further income from donations.

Adrian advised that specific financial details were available to Scholars as desired.

9.0 Other Business

Additional matters for discussion were sought; none were presented.

The meeting closed at 5.05 pm.