



Virtual Executive Meeting – 23 February, 2012

A Virtual Meeting of the Executive Committee was held on Thursday, 23rd February, 2012. The meeting commenced at 9.00 am (EDT).

Minutes

1. Opening and President's Remarks

RRo declared the meeting open and invited all to register their attendance by 10.00 am. At that time he invited TF and GM to initiate the discussion on Item 3.1, at the same time reminding all to keep things progressing at a steady rate, while giving everybody sufficient time to participate. He indicated that there were some important decisions to be made, so that each person's input would be most important.

2. Attendance and Apologies

The following registered their attendance via an email:

Rob Robson (RRo), Patrick Kluth (PK), Trevor Finlayson (TF), Judith Reinhard (JR), Roger Read (RRe), Peter Jarvis (PJ), Kay Double (standing in for Maria Nowotny and also in attendance as AvH Scientific Ambassador) (KD), Gabrielle McMullen (GM) and Gary Bryant (GB).

Michael Fellows (MF) and Peter Schwerdtfeger (PS) registered their attendance later in the day.

Apologies had been received from Maria Nowotny (currently on leave of absence) and Jeff Malpas (JM) (currently overseas) although note correspondence from Jeff towards the end of the day's meeting.

3. Reports

3.1 Visit of AvH President to Melbourne

TF "tabled" (i.e., circulated as an email attachment) a report prepared on Professor Schwarz's lecture, the reception which followed (Monday, 30th January) and a dinner which was hosted by Dr. Anne-Marie Schleich, German Consul General, Melbourne, on the evening of Tuesday, 31st January, which GM attended on behalf of the AAvHF. This report would be placed on the AAvHF website, HumboldtAustralia (together with a file of the text of Professor Schwarz's lecture entitled "Promoting Excellence, Building Trust: The Alexander von Humboldt Foundation and the Australian-German Research Partnership", copies of which were sent to the Bio21 Institute, Dr. Amian (AvH), Dr. Schleich and (more recently) to the DAAD. (The latter was in response to a request from Dr. Andreas Jäger, DAAD, for inclusion in the regular DAAD Alumni Newsletter.)

It should be noted that AAvHF contributed \$671.00 towards the cost of the reception. This was arrived at on the basis of Eur25 (= \$30.50)x22 (there having been 20 AvHFs (+Prof. Schwarz and Dr. Schleich) registered to attend the Lecture and Reception. (This funding support by the AvH

had been agreed upon by Dr. Amian during the planning of the event back in December.) The AvH financial support for this event is acknowledged with gratitude.

PK confirmed that the report and text of the lecture would be placed as a “News” item on the website.

Action: PK

GM noted that that Professor Schwarz's visit to Melbourne was very successful and that he is clearly looking forward to returning for the AvH Treffen in 2013. GM added that we were fortunate that the University of Melbourne Faculty of Science invitation made this recent visit and links to the AAvHF possible.

3.2 Presentation of Distinguished Fellow Awards to George Bornemissza and David Teakle

JR commented on the presentation of the Distinguished Fellow Award to David Teakle (Q'ld) as follows:

“In 2011, Queensland Humboldtian, David Teakle, received one of the inaugural AAvHF Distinguished Member Awards in recognition of his scholarly achievements and for his service to the Association and its ideals. The award was formally presented on Saturday, 1st October, 2011 at the AAvHF conference dinner in Sydney, which David could unfortunately not attend due to travelling overseas.

The award was presented to David Teakle in person by his former Humboldt mentee and long-standing friend, Ralf Dietzgen, on 10th November, 2011, in the company of his wife, Kathy, and myself. The presentation was at the end of a lunch at the University of Queensland staff club. The ‘awards lunch’ was generously supported by the Association. A report and photo to commemorate the occasion has been posted on the AAvHF website. David Teakle emailed AAvHF President, RRo, thanking the Association for the award, and said that he greatly appreciated the honour bestowed on him.”

PJ made the following comments regarding the presentation to George Bornemissza (Tas):

“The dinner for the presentation of the distinguished member award took place in early November and was attended by about 15 people including myself and JM from the committee, four or five other Stipendiaten, a representative of the Faculty of Science & Technology and the University Public Relations Officer, Mrs. Wojtowicz. Also in attendance was Dr. Hubertus Klink, Head of Culture, Science and Press Section, German Embassy, Canberra, and his Assistant, Mr. Lorenz. The Vice-Chancellor, Prof Rathjen had to pull out at the last minute because of a bereavement.”

PJ added that he had been very fortunate to have received funding for the dinner costs from Dr. Klink and the Embassy (~\$800). The AAvHF provided funding for drinks, room hire at the University Club and for a professional framing job of the certificate (~\$300). This has all been documented and submitted to GB who has reimbursed PJ for this outlay.

George Bornemissza appreciated receiving the award and there had been small speeches in his honour on the night.

PJ attached to his email, letters of thanks that he had sent to Mrs. Wojtowicz for her help, and to Dr. Klink for his enthusiastic participation. (Copies of letters attached to these Minutes.)

In closing discussion on this item, RRo thanked JR and PJ for their reports and their efforts in arranging these presentations. RRo reminded members that it was not too early to start thinking about identifying suitable candidates for the Peter Schwerdtfeger and Distinguished Fellow Awards for 2013.

Action: All

3.3 Approach to Government regarding the Proposed von Müller Fellowships

In the absence of JM, RRo commented that for many years, members of this Association have been lobbying the ARC to try to get a fellowship for German senior scholars named after von Müller. More recently, JM has taken up the challenge through a direct approach to government ministers. His draft letter was circulated prior to this meeting. (Copy attached.) He added thanks to JM for his efforts.

Action: JM

JR commented that she had been asked to meet with Peter Tesch, Australian Ambassador to Germany, on 9th March, during his visit to UQ, and among other things, would update him on Humboldt activities at UQ. JR asked for opinions on whether or not this would be a good opportunity to lobby for the von Müller Fellowship? Responses to this suggestion were all in the affirmative.

Action: JR

4. Next Biennial Meeting of the AA_vHF

PJ commented that his understanding of this matter was not much advanced beyond the discussions at the biennial meeting in Randwick, namely, that the Tasmanian chapter would be agreeable to hosting the 2013 biennial meeting, on the understanding that the AvH agreed to have their planned large regional meeting also in Hobart at the same time.

He had hoped that there may have been more discussion about these matters in the meantime (e.g., around the recent reception in Melbourne) but that he was unaware of any update, except for the remark in the report of Professor Schwarz's Melbourne visit about the 2013 year of cooperation "...and the planned 2013 meeting in Australia. Professor Schwarz indicated that he was looking forward to returning to Australia for this regional meeting."

PJ commented further that JM was away at the moment but that he assumed JM has been mainly busy promoting the bilateral matter as we just saw from his commendable letter. He suggested that before commenting further, there should be more information from the Executive about any discussions with AvH or the embassy about these plans.

TF expressed confusion at the above comments, since he had formed the opinion from an email from JM (of 17th January) that JM would be happy for the 2015 biennial meeting to be held in Tasmania, although he admitted at the time, that he had not had a chance to discuss this with PJ. He did say at the time, that he was somewhat disappointed that there had been no opportunity for discussion on the idea that the proposed 2013 Humboldt Colloquium should be held in

Tasmania. TF commented further that in his personal opinion, having been involved with AvH Humboldt Colloquia in the past, the AvH would automatically opt for either Sydney or Canberra, as their preferred locations. This would be even more so, given the pending contraction of German Consular/Embassy activities in Australia to just Sydney and Canberra, respectively.

TF referred to the recent email (of 16th January) from Dr. Katrin Amian announcing the AvH plans to hold one of its 2013 Colloquia in Australia and calling for our response on such details as timing (proposed as 17-19 October) and suggesting “Sydney” as venue with “Canberra” as preferred back-up. (This announcement was also reiterated by Professor Schwarz during his recent Melbourne visit.)

TF went on to say that the responses from Committee members to his email on this matter were all positive and both JM and PJ had written that they would be willing to transfer their offer for a “Tasmanian Biennial Meeting” to 2015. Indeed, it had occurred to him as being most beneficial for our 2015 biennial meeting, to be able to announce this very positively at the Humboldt Colloquium in October, 2013. So it would be excellent for PJ and JM to be proceeding with their planning, despite the fact that 2015 is “some way off.”

TF had anticipated preparing a response to Dr. Amian following this Virtual Meeting, which would convey the collective AAvHF Committee response and any suggestions (e.g., speakers, a possible venue, the need for there to be time available for an AAvHF biennial Business Meeting, etc.) He said he would welcome further suggestions for inclusion in such a letter from the AAvHF, replying to Dr. Amian’s email of 16th January.

GM added that we were aware of Dr Amian's advice re the city for the colloquium before Professor Schwarz's visit. Nevertheless, the matter of the venue for the colloquium was raised on a number of occasions during Professor Schwarz's visit, especially by the Consul General. Professor Schwarz indicated that the venue was a matter for local decision and that this should be followed up with Dr. Amian. GM had subsequently emailed Dr. Amian - she advised that there was already a firm decision for Sydney.

JR asked, “Who is organizing the program for the AvH Colloquium?” She assumed the overall programme will be decided by AvH, similarly to the meeting in Auckland in 2003, but is AAvHF responsible for local organisation? There should definitely be time for the AAvHF business meeting, and perhaps the NZ organization will join as well.

JR thought that having the Tasmanian meeting in 2015 and using the 2013 meeting to announce and advertise the Tasmanian meeting is an excellent idea.

KD thought the Sydney Convention Centre is the best venue for the 2013 colloquium and the AAvHF meeting, if the AvH have “deep enough pockets.” KD commented that she had already suggested this to Dr. Amian. It is central and harbour-side, with hotels, restaurants and sightseeing a short walk away, so good for interstate and international visitors. She also agreed there should be a slot for the AAvHF biennial Business Meeting in the program.

GM and RRe agreed with the above suggestions, from personal knowledge of the Sydney Convention Centre. RRo also felt that it would be good to get some early feedback from the AvHF about the viability of the venue in case we need to consider alternatives.

Responding to JR's specific questions, TF commented that in the letter of response he should:

- (a) make any recommendations for a venue;
- (b) specifically enquire what assistance we, as one of the Regional Associations held in high regard by the AvH, might offer for the organization of the event;
- (c) enquire if some recommendations for "local speakers" on the programme will be acceptable; and
- (d) clarify the issue of the inclusion of our NZ colleagues.

(In regards to (d) TF said that he can see quite naturally why the AvH would couple Australian AvHFs into a NZ-based Humboldt Colloquium but the reverse may not necessarily be the case, but the point needs clarification.)

In responding to PJ, RRo commented that it seems clear that the AvH is going to proceed with its plans for a meeting in Sydney or Canberra in 2013, and practical considerations would seem to dictate that our next biennial meeting would have to be run concurrently with that. In the circumstances, RRo's impression has been the Tasmanians would be prepared to host the following meeting in 2015 and he asked for clarification of this.

Specifically responding to JR, RRo said that he expected the AAvHF would be asked to assist the AvH in the organisation of the 2013 meeting, but that we are not at that stage yet. In the first instance, however, the AvH is simply awaiting our response to their suggestions, although from what GM says a decision has been made for Sydney.

PJ expressed his thanks for the confirmation about the plans for the 2013 regional meeting on the mainland. He went on to say that if it does not go against the constitution, then he would suggest that the 2013 regional AvH Colloquium (Sydney) subsume the role of our biennial meeting, and at least have a business meeting, etc.

He said that this being the case, then he thought he was speaking on behalf of JM and himself in offering to host a 2015 biennial A&NZAvHF meeting in Hobart. However it would probably be fair to consult the NZ group about this, and then we could come to the 2013 meeting with some understanding that they are happy with this arrangement also.

Action: PJ and JM

RRo replied to the above points as follows:

- (i) The plan is to hold the Biennial Meeting of the AAvHF as part of the AvH Colloquium in 2013. This has been done before and there is no constitutional issue.
- (ii) From what you say I gather that the Tasmanians are happy to host the 2015 Biennial Meeting of the AAvHF and thank you very much. Note that the Kiwis have always been welcome at AAvHF meetings, but the AAvHF does the organising.

RRo enquired further as to the meaning of "A&NZAvHF?"

(Suggestion from Hon. Sec. and Minute taker: A&NZAvHF = Australian and New Zealand Association of von Humboldt Fellows)

RRo also made the following comments to KD:

"The one thing that concerns me with the Sydney venue is that if the Association is asked to help, as I think it will be, the organisational burden will fall mostly on the Sydney-siders. Will you have had time to recover from last year?"

On another matter, RRo commented that biennial meeting will actually be incorporated as part of the AvH colloquium, as it has in the past.

Action: Hon. Sec. to prepare response to AvH (Dr. Katrin Amian)

5. Publication from 2011 Biennial Meeting

TF had summarized the current state of this publication as at 10th February, 2012, within the Agenda: “11 manuscripts received, one more expected soon; peer-reviews and manuscript revision completed for five; peer reviews completed for one and awaiting authors’ response; awaiting peer reviews for four; introduction (from Dr. Müller) received. Preferred format as suggested by three members of the Executive Committee consulted to date is for an A5, perfect-bound booklet for which a quote, (from SNAP Printing, Elizabeth St., Melbourne) for \$1,475.00 (assuming 100 x A5, 110 pp (100 pp black & 10 pp colour), 100 gsm paper, 300 gsm 1/s colour cover).” He indicated some minor updates to these data in relation to reviews received and those returned to authors. Also an ISBN has been received, consistent with the two previous AAvHF publications. He felt the issues to be decided by this meeting were:

- (a) Is the quote obtained acceptable?
- (b) Who should receive copies? - One might have thought that a copy should be sent “free of charge” to all those who registered and attended the October Meeting. It would also be TF’s suggestion that copies be sent to AvH, German Embassy (Canberra) and Consular Offices (Sydney and Melbourne), National Library (requirement of ISBN No.) Any other suggestions?
- (c) *.pdf file to be added to HumboldtAustralia website.

TF indicated that he was still holding to the aim (as expressed to some authors) that the booklet file will go to the printers by mid-to-late March.

RRo emphasized that there is a decision to be made about costs and the number of copies and suggested we aim to close discussion on this item at 14:00 hr (EDT).

GB commented that the figure of \$1,475.00 seemed to him to be a lot of money. Speaking personally, he did not see the value in producing a printed copy - he would prefer to see only an electronic version published. He suggested this has more currency and can be read by a wider readership. As with other publications these days, you download them, and if you want a printed copy you print it yourself.

JR agreed with the above and suggested the printing of “only a handful of hard-copies and binding them properly to send to AvH, Embassy and Consulates.”

MH also leaned toward the idea that an electronic version is sufficient, but if appropriately bound paper copies were produced for the likes of the Embassy and AvH, what is then the incremental cost of copies for the attendees?

RRo commented that we have had two hard-copy publications relating to biennial meetings in the past (Adelaide, 1988, Melbourne, 1993) and both were very well received; in fact demand may have outstripped supply. He felt that there will be a similar demand for the 2011 version, but the question has arisen whether hard copies are necessary in this electronic age. While most might be happy with an electronic version, we nevertheless need some hard copies for distribution (the

Embassy, the AvH, libraries, etc.) and they have to be of presentable quality, properly bound, etc. As MH points out, the question is then about the incremental cost. RRo asked specifically what was the minimum number of copies one could have printed by SNAP Printing?

RRe supported these comments and suggested we should consider incremental costs, in that it seems highly desirable to have at least a core of hard copies.

(In response to these specific questions TF consulted SNAP Printing, Elizabeth St., Melbourne, and came back with the following:

“Let’s say 25 Copies, using the perfect binding and size as mentioned in the quote previously received: Total Cost (25 Copies) (including GST) - \$463.00 (= \$18.52 / copy) cf. \$14.75/copy for the 100 copies in the original quote.

If you want 50 copies printed and “perfectly bound”, you can’t exactly scale this unit cost linearly but it would be very close to it.

An alternative, say, at A4 page size and “stitched” binding, (i.e., stapled): \$383.00 for 25 copies and \$1275.00 for 100 copies. TF suggested that the main reason for initially looking at the A5 booklet size with Perfect Binding, was because this was the same as our two previously published Proceedings - 1988 and 1994.)”

PJ commented that whatever the format he hoped that the articles remain as “F1 refereed conference publications”, this being important for “bean-counting” purposes.

TF commented that in relation to “number of copies”, he did not remember how many books were printed for the 1993 biennial meeting publication which appeared in 1994. He commented that he had given out a few over the years, both to passing visitors who expressed an interest to have a copy and also to one or two of the authors who asked to have additional copies. He currently has four copies of the booklet left.

He went on to say, and felt that GM (as co-editor of the 1994 publication) would agree, that our editing and publishing of that booklet perhaps pre-dated the current “electronic book” age, when, for example, graduate students don’t ever buy and read a hard-copy newspaper, but read their newspaper on-line. Also, they would rarely look at a published paper which they could not download from their Library electronic subscription. However, his own personal choice, is a “hard copy” that can be read “on the train”!

PK commented that even as a great advocate of electronic media, he thought that a professionally printed copy for sending to the Embassy, etc., is something that can certainly raise the profile of the AAvHF. In addition, it should be made available for download from the website. He felt that the cost of \$1.5k (or maybe even below \$1k for fewer copies) is absolutely reasonable.

GM commented (from her involvement as co-editor for the 1994 publication) that both previous publications have been effective means of promoting the AAvHF and the AvH.

At this stage RRo put the following options to the vote:

- (a) No hard copy, all electronic;
- (b) 100 hard copies @ \$1,475, plus posting on the web as per TF’s original proposal; or

(c) A minimal number, say 25 @ \$463.00
He requested a vote reply ASAP.

(Result of subsequent voting:

(a) 1 vote

(b) 5 votes

(c) or (c+) 3 votes (where (c+) stands for some other "minimum" number yet to be decided)

Yet to vote: RRo (the Chairman usually has a "casting vote" if such is necessary), JM, MF and PS.) RRo subsequently declared option (b).

Action: Publication to be as per (b) - TF

6. Initiatives

6.1 Humboldt Lectures

In opening discussion on this topic (deadline 14:30 hrs), RRo indicated that the idea of a national series of Humboldt lectures was approved at our biennial meeting in 2010 and the first, on global climate issues, took place at JCU in Townsville in April of that year. As reported to the biennial meeting in Sydney last year, this was a great success, and raised the profile of the Association considerably. However, as also reported, there have not been any subsequent lectures at any other venue, although there has been no shortage of ideas for themes. One is that there be a debate about the Great Barrier Reef, but that would be back at JCU.

He asked if there is a problem with the limited budget (presently \$200)? Should we increase the figure to (say) \$500? Is there some other way in which the Association could assist local members to get their ideas off the ground?

GM commented that the lectures are a good idea and promote our Association as well as the intellectual life. With hindsight we could have badged Professor Schwarz's address as one! She felt that the increased allowance would be a good idea and had her support.

JR indicated that UQ International is a supporter of the Humboldt lectures, and that she will address the matter this year, as discussed at the Sydney meeting. Suggestions for topics of public interest would be welcome. She also asked what the allowance of \$200-500 is intended to cover – an Honorarium for the speaker(s)? Unless the speakers are local, the allowance would not cover travel costs for them.

TF commented that in Victoria our Association has had some involvement in:

(a) the AvH presentation given by Dr. Katrin Amian on 6th October, 2011; and

(b) the lecture presentation given by Professor Helmut Schwarz on Monday, 30th January, 2012.

While neither of these lectures was specifically billed as "AAvHF Lectures", the events as such gave our Association quite reasonable exposure to the sets of people attending - about 50, mostly young researchers in regards to (a) and just over 100 registrants in regards to (b).

He felt that for his own part, while he has had some discussions about a possible "AAvHF Lecture/Discussion/Forum", he does not have a "registration system" at his disposal, as a retiree in his University, and so is at a bit of a loss regarding the administration of such an event. He pointed out that items (a) and (b) above were administered (via an "electronic registration

medium”) by an Officer in the MU Research Office (for item (a)) and by the Events Coordinator of the Faculty of Science (for item (b)).

JR added that, if she recalled correctly, the idea of Humboldt Lectures was to have a topic of public interest and invite (if possible) two expert speakers with opposite opinions on the topic, each giving a half-hour lecture. The public lecture would be introduced as a Humboldt Lecture because it is supported by AAvHF and in the spirit of Alexander von Humboldt who investigated pretty much everything on this planet. Universities usually support such public lectures by providing the venue and help with advertising, and sometimes drinks, etc., afterwards.

Having Professor Justin Marshall as Great Barrier Reef expert at QBI, she felt she could try to organize a Humboldt Lecture on this topic at UQ, if OK with RRo. She asked who from JCU could be contributed as second speaker?

RRo commented that the budget the Association provides is intended to support any costs associated with meeting, to supplement speaker’s travel, accommodation costs (but not an honorarium) plus “tea and bikkies.” It can best be used as leverage to secure funding from elsewhere. The JCU lecture, which involved flying someone from Melbourne, cost the Association \$87. He added that UQ colleagues would no doubt have ideas for a theme. As one of them, what about the present Coal Seam Gas debate? Get two speakers, one from the mining industry and another from the scientific/health community.

RRo added that the “Great Barrier Reef”, “Coal Seam Mining” are just two examples in the public arena in the north, and not prescriptions for anyone else to follow. There must be many issues elsewhere which could provide a theme. Off the top of his head he said that Victorians might be interested in “Bushfire Modelling and Forecasting”, which has both scientific and political aspects. However, he said that it was not for him to prescribe anything; that is where the membership comes in. (State reps could canvas them for suggestions.) He looked forward to learning about concrete proposals, with actual budget estimates to put to the Treasurer.

GB commented that the budget needs to be modest to be sustainable - perhaps a total budget of \$1,000 per year would be sustainable at this stage given our regular income. So if there are multiple events planned, about \$200 per event is the nominal maximum. He agreed with RRo that the AAvHF funds should be used to supplement funding from elsewhere - piggy backing on someone visiting a lab, or attending a conference. If we only have two per year, then \$500 would be reasonable. Alternatively, we could have one per year, make it larger (\$1,000 budget). We could include it as part of the biennial meeting in the years when it runs, and have it as a stand alone event in off years.

RRo thanked GB for his remarks but commented that the problem, as he saw it, was to get members to start spending! We have had only one Humboldt lecture in two years.

TF proposed (with supporting comments from GB and KD) that we should aim at ONE properly funded Humboldt Lecture per year and that GB’s suggested budget of \$1,000 - if that is sustainable over a reasonable period of time - should go towards that event. TF made the point that, in Victoria, unless GM and GB would wish to prove him wrong, he did not think that we could mount something of the nature that he was hearing, such as a “Coal Seam Gas Forum”, a “Great Barrier Reef Debate”, or, say, “A Down-with-Hazelwood-Power-Station Debate”, involving two decent speakers from the opposite sides of the issue in question, for less than

\$1,000. He argued that as far as he was aware, none of the Executive Committee members in Victoria (i.e., TF, GM and GB) has the “University Resources” to call on to do this.

RRe (with the support of GB) proposed that a budget of \$1,000 pa be established, but that a flexible approach be taken to the individual events. It should be possible to identify members who can organise venues at minimal cost, even at universities, so that budgets can support other items such as travel, accommodation and refreshments. It is unlikely that we will organise lectures in each state each year so the \$1,000 should meet the one or two that are held.

KD suggested that it could be made a job for State Reps to organise these lectures and to alternate amongst the states so that a Humboldt Lecture occurs annually.

MH argued against setting a hard and fast limit at this stage, rather allowing someone who had a definite proposal to go beyond \$500 even. It might take that to get the ball rolling properly. At any rate, the AAvHF cannot go it alone and must go in with another entity. The obvious ones are other societies or university departments, but they are mostly not very flush with cash either. Thus, the more we can put in the better. If this takes off and gets too popular, well then there are worse problems to have.

PK and PJ concurred with the above suggestion. PJ added that the opportunities at local levels are intermittent, but worth supporting when they do arise. This is not to suggest inaction or lack of enthusiasm for the idea, just flexibility.

RRO also passed on the following message from PS:

“Dear Rob,

You are to be applauded for your sterling efforts to promote debate and discussion of issues relevant to Australia, especially from a “Humboldtian” point of view. I am sure that reps from each State will be able to emphasise matters that are particularly relevant to their sphere of representation. E.g., in South Australia, the matter of fresh water supplies will certainly not disappear from the arena of public concern for many a year. It just seems to become more critical as time goes on. The cost of water to the public cannot but escalate to the point where many disadvantaged people will just not be able to afford using it in the manner we have become accustomed to in the past.”

RRO closed discussion on this item by saying that JR’s summary of the rationale of the Humboldt Lecture series is “spot on.” Humboldt lectures are meant to appeal to the public and will do so if they tackle controversial issues head on. Money does not seem to be the issue here. He felt he and JR should discuss a particular plan later.

Action: RRO and JR to discuss Humboldt Lecture on GBR

6.2 Mentoring Scheme with DAAD

6.2.1 Current involvement

KD summarized the *status quo* as follows:

“The mentoring scheme with the DAAD is progressing, a bit slow to get going I must admit, but we are getting there. Currently we have a list of 40 individuals signed up to be mentors or mentees, of whom 19 are Humboldt Fellows (mostly as mentors). Of these 19, only three are currently in active mentoring relationships (including myself). I think one sticking point is

finding a mentee in a similar area near the mentor but hopefully more people will be matched up at our up-and-coming mentoring meeting in Sydney. It seems to be working OK, my mentee has completed her PhD and has just been offered a postdoc at Cambridge University and the mentee of another Humboldtian is currently preparing an application to the AvH for a Fellowship.”

TF stated that his interest in this item had been prompted on 30th January, when he was strolling back from Professor Schwarz’s lecture and reception, with Tina Stubenrauch (the current DAAD Lecturer at the University of Melbourne). Tina made the remark that she was very disappointed not to have learned anything about the mentoring scheme (either by receiving a list of mentees of whom she believes there should be a few at UoM) nor to have learned of any mentors who have volunteered to take part in the scheme. TF said that he found himself agreeing with Tina's sentiments.

KD expressed surprise that Tina had not been contacted about the scheme by Dr. Andreas Jäger for a general discussion about people in Melbourne who might take part but the list of mentors/mentees and who is matched up needs to be kept confidential and not widely circulated. KD stated that she can certainly ask Andreas to chat to Tina about matching people in Melbourne. KD further stated that it was intended to put a list of available mentors on the AAvHF website so that it would be available for any interested people to look at.

Action: KD

(It should be noted that subsequent to this meeting, Andreas Jäger has sent the details of currently connected mentors and mentees in Melbourne to TF.)

6.2.2 Next mentoring meeting

KD indicated that a mentoring meeting is planned to be held in Sydney on 31st March. It is hoped to get about 40 people along to the meeting, including about 15 people (mentors and mentees) from interstate. KD further added that if any AAvHF Committee member is signed up to the mentoring scheme, i.e., if one has filled in the form to say one is interested, and would like to come to Sydney for the meeting on 31st March, please let her know.

Action: From any AAvHF “signed-up” Mentor

KD would soon be asking the AvH for possible funding for the flight costs but at this juncture had to depart for another commitment.

7. Call for Proposals for Local Activities by State Representatives for 2012/2013

MH stated that this may not be quite following instructions, but he intended to do the same as in 2011, and to put on a dinner for the DAAD-RISE exchange students plus hosts. This will subsume the annual AAvHF dinner. He had discussed this with Andreas Jäger in Sydney last year and Andreas had indicated that the DAAD might be willing to kick in a bit of funding for this. (Venue hire is what he had in mind.)

Action: MH

TF stated that following a quite successful presentation in October last year, on AvH funding schemes which he had been asked to do at Deakin University by Professor Neil Barnett, Associate Dean (Research), and which just happened to be attended by an officer from the Deakin University Office for Research, Alison Hadfield, he had been asked to take part in an

annual day which is organised by that Office and at which all funding opportunities for ECRs are outlined, either by visiting speakers or by the Office for Research Personnel themselves. (He added that his presentation of AvH funding schemes had also included a “plug” for the AAvHF.)

In being offered this invitation, he was specifically asked if he could include in the overall presentation of AvH funding for ECRs, two “case studies”, one from a “recently returned male” AvHF and also one from a “recently returned female” AvHF. It was suggested that Deakin University Office for Research would happily pay interstate airfares, if necessary, to bring two young AvHFs to Geelong for the day. Filling the “position” for the former (the “male”) has been quite straight forward and Dr. Jarred Cole, RMIT University, has agreed to present his “case” as an AvHF. Filling the “female” category had not been so easy but he had been assisted by Dr. Katrin Amian whose office has sent two suggestions for possible females within Melbourne, whom he has yet to approach. The exact date of the event is yet to be finalised but it is expected to be sometime in early July.

TF also stated that for the present time, the editing of the book from the October biennial meeting was keeping him reasonably occupied.

Action: TF

JR summarized Queensland activities for 2012/13 as follows:

“Apart from the Annual Humboldt Dinner held in early September, I plan to organize a Humboldt lecture at UQ in 2012. This has already been discussed with UQ DVC-International last year and was met with great enthusiasm. As a topic I suggest “Great Barrier Reef and Fishing.” Timing will depend on availability of potential speakers, but I am aiming for some time in September or October.

Action: JR

Due to UQ's formal agreements for research and teaching with a number of German universities (Munich, Tübingen, Stuttgart, Berlin), there are regular visits by delegates from these universities to UQ. I and other AAvHF members usually attend functions and meetings held for the German university delegates, providing information about AvH funding, and our association's activities.”

PJ summarized activities planned for Tasmania as follows:

“1. Following our November, 2011, award dinner and the embryonic local interest from the UTAS hierarchy, I would say the TAS chapter is aiming for a “German/European researchers day” as a wine-and-cheese event, possibly with an invitation to a speaker such as Dr. Amian or Dr. Klink, as a kind of networking, getting-to-know-you event and consciousness raising. I have informal assent from JM and one or two others for this plan, as well as the University's public relations. The Vice Chancellor, Professor Rathjen, is definitely on side, in principle, as well.

There are a lot of German connections and/or researchers in various institutes in UTAS such as the Antarctic CRC and the Geology CE (as well as in JM's area of European philosophy, etc..) and it is just a matter of bringing out such connections and linking them to the AvHF as well.

2. Depending on how things go “down the track”, we would be interested to invite some or all of the travelling delegation from 2013, to make a pre- or post-meeting stop in Tasmania. (This happened in 1997 when the then Secretary General visited Hobart (and Townsville?), as I recall.) Perhaps this could be taken up by the Executive in the discussions around the future planning.”

Action: PJ and Executive Committee

Commenting on the above, JR indicated that State visits by the AvH delegation in 2013 might occur after the colloquium. Naturally these would be hosted by the State reps. But she asked specifically if any State visits would be planned outside Sydney/Canberra?

TF added that JR had previously mentioned such visits following the NZ Humboldt colloquium of 2003. TF also recalled the same occasion, when a visit included Melbourne. The gathering was held in the Building in the Melbourne Botanical Gardens, as many would know, a venue with connections to von Müller. The delegation included a number of the AvH Selection Panel and was spread across several disciplines. He recalled that PS had organised the invitation list which included AvHFs from different disciplines.

TF suggested that if something similar were to be proposed as follow-on visits in association with the 2013 Humboldt colloquium, it would be a very good idea for similar multidisciplinary groups to be coordinated, perhaps, by this Executive Committee. Such a suggestion should be included in the letter to Dr. Katrin Amian regarding the 2013 colloquium, following this meeting.

Action: TF

8. Relationship with Embassy

In opening discussion on this item (deadline 17:00 hrs (EDT)), RRo said that Association members, especially those in the ACT, have spent many years fostering the relationship with the German Embassy in Canberra, during the tenure of a number of ambassadors and scientific attachés (four of each in his time) by responding positively to official invitations from the Embassy, and hosting them in turn to local Association events. It is therefore gratifying to note the recent increased interest shown by the Embassy in the Association, to the extent of even providing financial support for our activities.

However, he said that this goodwill should not be taken for granted, and it is important to continue to work on the relationship, in particular to have a continued Association representation at Embassy functions, especially at the Day of German Unity in October. If one receives an invitation from the Embassy, he urged members to please do their best to respond positively, or if they cannot, try to get a fellow Association member to deputize.

JR stated that with embassy staff changing regularly, it is important to remain on their mailing lists. She suggested that all AAvHF committee members ask the current scientific officer at the Embassy (Laura de la Cruz) to make sure their name is on the Embassy mailing list. Laura's contact: <wiss->10@canb.auswaertiges-amt.de> Furthermore, Laura is organising a Science Circle (see attached), which may be another good opportunity to remain in touch with the Embassy. JR also added that she is regularly in Canberra for work/family reasons and is happy to fill in with Embassy duties if required.

RRo urged Committee members to follow the above advice.

Action: All

TF commented that in Melbourne we shall greatly miss Dr. Anne-Marie Schleich. In his memory of dealing with the Consular Office in South Yarra, Dr. Schleich has been one of the most enthusiastic supporters of the AAvHF. She will be greatly missed when the Melbourne German

Consular Office closes, on account of the current quite drastic German Federal Government budget cuts for global consular activities, to take effect from September, 2012.

At this juncture MF emailed in to say that in relation to the German Embassy discussion, he had sat next to Hans-Dieter Steinbach and his wife, Ulrike, at the AvH banquet. They are new to Australia, and have amazing stories of diplomatic duties in political firezones like Rwanda, Bosnia and Israel “when we met them they had only been in Australia briefly”. He added that he is personally in the habit of befriending Germans newly arrived to Australia. He went on to describe meeting in Sydney with two Germans who have taken up a project to have some sort of event inviting German industry people to a get-together in Sydney. He thought he might attend and asked if anyone else was interested. MF indicated that this would be the NT contribution for this year.

Action: MF

RRe apologized in that he had had to attend some other meetings for the past hour. He commented on an impressive range of activities planned from other states. He said he did not have details of any specific activities, outside the annual dinner and KD’s mentoring session in March, but that we have had joint meetings with the DAAD in Sydney and these will continue. The areas of activity that we should focus on are:

- a program of AAvHF lectures;
- support for and presence at institution career expositions; and
- an ambassadorial function for existing and potential AvH fellows (a member-get-a-member approach linked with the mentoring program)

He hoped to report on more at the next meeting.

Action: RRe

At this juncture, TF circulated to all a flyer which, quite by chance, had just arrived by email from the Secretary of the Australian German Association (with whom the AAvHF has been connected per medium of Dr. Anne-Marie Schleich). The particular event in Melbourne is a reception with Their Excellencies **Dr Christoph Müller** (German Ambassador) and **Peter Tesch** (Australian Ambassador to Germany) on Tuesday, 20th March, 2012, commencing 6.30 pm at the Inter-Continental. A form for response was attached to the invitation. The cost of the event was \$50.00 per person. There was a general consensus that the AAvHF should be represented by members to be paid for by the AAvHF. GM indicated that she was away in Sydney on 20th March so would be unavailable.

Action: TF and GB

9. Relationship of EC to AvH Scientific Ambassador

This item was not discussed as KD had had to depart for other activities. It should be carried over for discussion at a future meeting.

10. Closure

RRe closed the meeting at 17:35 hours (EDT). He thanked all for their time and patience during the course of the day. He said that we had both reviewed the Association’s recent activities and provided a platform for activities in the coming years. The two most important events on the horizon are the AvH colloquium in 2013 (probably in Sydney), incorporating the 15th Biennial

Meeting of the Association, and the 16th biennial meeting, now set down for Hobart in 2015. We are now in a position to write to the Foundation to outline the Association's view on matters relating to the planned AvH Colloquium. State representatives have provided us with an outline of their plans for the coming years. We have authorised TF as Editor to proceed with ordering hard copies of the publication relating to the 2011 biennial meeting.

Postscript:

Shortly after the closure of the meeting, JM sent the following email from France.

“Dear Colleagues,

I have just been through the emails from the meeting. The proceedings look fine and I endorse Peter's comments regarding the 2015 meeting. My apologies for not having had a chance to discuss this more with Peter (it has been a busy few months), but since the decision about 2013 is already made, it seems to me all we could do anyway was express out interest in the 2015 meeting.

I have been in continuing contact with the Embassy regarding the approaches to the Federal Govt. Initially Hubertus Klink had one suggested change, but recent developments have obviously made a difference to the situation, and Hubertus now also advises that the Embassy could not directly support the letter as indicated below (they would obviously be sympathetic but cannot be seen to be interfering at a policy level). Hubertus and I will be discussing this further once I get back.

All the best.”

Attachment 1 - Letter PJ to Mrs. Wojtowicz



Promoting scholarly interchange

Mrs Amanda Wojtowicz,
Director, Events & Protocol, Private Bag 140

December 23, 2011
2011Dinner-Guests.tex

Dear Amanda,

On behalf of the Tasmanian Humboltianer I wish thank you once again for your support for the annual von Humboldt dinner this year. This was a gala occasion and through your support has helped to raise our profile with the University which we hope to continue with a German/European researchers' event in 2012, and we are investigating options for the regional Humboldt meeting in 2013.

George Bornemissza has since had to go to full time care unfortunately, but his wife Jo tells me he appreciated the event and the recognition of the award very much.

You may be interested to know that two more Tasmanian scientists have recently received Humboldt Fellowships for research in Germany, Peter While (a recent PhD from Mathematics and Physics) and Dr David Wilson, Dept. Primary Industries, Parks, Water and the Environment.

Yours sincerely

Peter Jarvis
Tasmanian representative, AAvHF

Attachment 2 – Letter PJ to Dr. Hubertus Klink



Promoting scholarly interchange

Dr Hubertus Klink,
 Culture, Science and Press Section,
 German Embassy
 119 Empire Circuit, Canberra ACT 2600
 tel (02) 6270 1935, 1936
 pr-1@canberra.diplo.de

December 23, 2011
 2011Dinner-ThanksK.tex

Dear Dr Klink,

On behalf of the Tasmanian Humboltianer I wish thank you once again for your visit to Tasmania and taking part in our annual von Humboldt dinner this year, and especially for the support from the Embassy.

George has since had to go to full time care unfortunately, but his wife Jo tells me he appreciated the event and the recognition of the award, and also your anecdote about the elderly German beetle expert whom you called on years ago.

This was a gala occasion and has helped to raise our profile with the University which we hope to continue with a German/European researchers' event in 2012, and we are investigating options for the regional Humboldt meeting in 2013.

Yours sincerely

Peter Jarvis
 Tasmanian representative, AAvHF

Attachment 3 – Draft Letter JM to Senator Chris Evans



Australian Association of von Humboldt Fellows

Promoting scholarly interchange

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1 February 2012

Sen Chris Evans,
Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills, Science and Research,

Hon Kevin Rudd,
Minister for Foreign Affairs

Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

RE: German-Australian Research Collaboration

Dear Minister Evans, Dear Minister Rudd

In 2004 the Australian Association of von Humboldt Fellows (AAvHF) made an approach to the Australian Research Council to establish a German-Australian Fellowship in honour of Baron Ferdinand von Mueller. The von Mueller fellowship would have mirrored the New Zealand Government's Julius von Haast (JvH) Fellowship, under which German scholars and scientists are able to undertake research in New Zealand for a minimum of four weeks per year over a three year period. An agreement was then negotiated between the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (AvH) and the Australian Research Council (ARC) to establish the Fellowship programme as part of what was then the ARC's International Linkage programme. In spite of there being a signed agreement, the Fellowship was never realised, and staffing changes at the ARC itself seem to have led to the agreement being forgotten, although the AvH was only notified of the abandonment of the arrangement after persistent inquiries by me on behalf of the AvH.

The AvH programme, along with that administered by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), has been extremely important for the development of scientific links, whether in the natural or social sciences or in the arts and humanities, between Germany and Australia. It is a programme entirely funded, however, from the German side, and it is mainly focussed on supporting Australian scientists and researchers to work in Germany. Part of what prompted the AAvHF to propose the Baron Ferdinand von Mueller

Fellowship in 2004 was the sense that it was time for Australia to reciprocate something of the generosity shown by Germany. The proposal would also have provided an important additional means for German researchers to connect with their Australian colleagues.

In the year that marks the 60th anniversary of Australian-German diplomatic relations, it seems an appropriate time to revisit the von Mueller proposal. Unfortunately, the ARC no longer supports international fellowships of the sort envisaged under the original proposal (the Linkage International Fellowships have, rather short-sightedly in the view of many researchers, been discontinued and replaced by an international component in the Discovery programme that only operates as part of the larger scheme). Since in Germany, however, the AvH is itself seen as part of the nation's foreign relations programme, and so is supported, in part, from the Foreign Ministry, we would like to suggest that a revived von Mueller proposal be viewed as also part of Australia's foreign relation programme as well as contributing to research – something all the more appropriate given the current anniversary. It is for this reason that we have decided to approach you in your roles as Minister for Research and Minister for Foreign Affairs.

This approach is made on behalf of the AAvHF, and with the support of the AvH, as well as the German Embassy in Canberra. Together with my colleagues from the AAvHF, I would be happy to discuss this matter further, and to provide any additional information of advice that may be required. I would also be very pleased to consider any other ideas or proposals you might have in this important area that might further strengthen scientific and research collaboration between Germany and Australia.

I look forward to hearing from you both in the near future.

I look forward to hearing from you both in the near future.

Yours sincerely

Jeff Malpas

Professor of Philosophy, University of Tasmania

Distinguished Visiting Professor, Latrobe University

Vice-President, Australian Association of von Humboldt Fellows

cc: Prof. Robert E. Robson, President, AAvHF

Hubertus Klink, Head of Culture, Science and Press Section, German Embassy,
Canberra

Attachment 4 - JM email to TF – 17th January, 2012

Dear Trevor

It is certainly good to get confirmation of the 2013 Colloquium, although I am disappointed that we in Tasmania didn't have more of an opportunity to put the case for holding the meeting in Hobart. I haven't had a chance to talk to Peter yet, but I am sure we would be happy to shift the Tassie meeting to 2015.

A coordinated response from the Committee seems a very sensible way to proceed.

Best

Jeff

Attachment 5 - Letter from Laura de la Cruz to JR – 19th January, 2012



Embassy
of the Federal Republic of Germany
Canberra



Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany
119 Empire Circuit, Yarralumla ACT 2600
Tel.: (+61) 2 6270 1911
Fax: (+61) 2 6270 1951
Internet: www.canberra.diplo.de
e-mail: info@canberra.diplo.de

Canberra, 19 January 2012

Dear ladies and gentlemen, dear friends of the Science Circle,

it has now been three months since we held our first Science Circle in Canberra - time to touch base again and to inform you about some upcoming events in 2012.

First of all, we are happy to announce that **Prof. Helmut Schwarz, President of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation** will give a public lecture

„Promoting Excellence, Building Trust: The Alexander von Humboldt Foundation and the Australian-German Research Partnership“

at the **University of Melbourne** on Monday, **January 30th at 4.15 pm**. This lecture will be embedded in the framework of the Science Circle and thus its first event held in Melbourne. You are cordially invited to participate and encouraged to pass this invitation to interested colleagues in Melbourne. The talk will be followed by a light reception with the opportunity to meet Prof. Schwarz personally. Registration for the event is possible under

<http://schwarz.eventbrite.com/>

(Note that the RSVP date is for catering purposes, but it is still possible to register for the lecture after January 25th.)

We have started the New Year at the Embassy launching a **restructured website**, available under <http://www.australia.diplo.de/>

Science and research has its own section now, with links to German **research organizations**, a **research explorer** to find research groups in a specific area and **scholarship databases**. There is also

Attachment 5 (cont'd)

Embassy
of the Federal Republic of Germany
Canberra



the possibility to directly contact us at the science section from the website with questions or announcements to be posted. We encourage you to make use of these new features and look forward to your feedback.

We would also like to draw your attention to the exhibition **„Handwritten- ten centuries of manuscript treasures from Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin“** at the National Library of Australia. Documents, letters and musical scores from some of the world's most important thinkers and scientists, such as Newton, Planck, Heisenberg, Curie and Meitner will still be **on display until March 18th, 2012**.

<http://www.nla.gov.au/exhibitions/handwritten>

Last but not least, in **2012** we celebrate **60 years of German-Australian diplomatic relations!** In this context we look forward to a series of events this year. We will keep you informed about further lectures held in Canberra as part of the Science Circle.

—
With kind regards and best wishes for 2012

Laura de la Cruz