19th Biennial Business Meeting – 19th November, 2022

Deakin University, Geelong, Victoria

1. Opening

The President, Professor Gabrielle McMullen AM, opened the meeting at 12:40 pm and welcomed members and non-members.

2. Roll Call and Apologies

Member Attendance List:

Kathy Andrews (KA)	(QLD)
Hans Bachor (HB)	(ACT)
Ravichandar Babarao	(VIC)
Thomas Baumgartl	(VIC)
Klaus Bremhorst	(QLD) (On-Line)
Gary Bryant (GB)	(VIC)
Ron Clarke (RC)	(NSW)
Jean du Plessis (JdP)	(VIC)
Adrian Dyer	(VIC)
Michael Fellows	(NSW)
Trevor Finlayson (TF)	(VIC)
David Glynn	(SA)
Rosanne Gujt (RG)	(VIC)
Murray Hamilton	(SA)
Robin Hill	(VIC)
Peter Jarvis	(TAS)
Ravi Jagadeeshan	(VIC)
Nathan Kilah (NK)	(TAS)
Jeff Malpas (JM)	(TAS)
Ross Marceau	(VIC)
Gabrielle McMullen (GM)	(VIC)
Paul Mulvaney (PM)	(VIC)
Michael Netzel	(QLD)
Christoph Nitsche	(ACT)
Roger Read (RR)	(SA)
Anthony Thomas	(SA)
Sarah Turpin-Nolan	(VIC)
Glen Wheeler (GW)	(NSW)
David Yost	(VIC)

Non-Members:

Miguel Vatter	(VIC)
Rosamond Francis	(NSW)

Apologies:

David Black	(NSW)
Allan Bretag	(SA)
Kay Double	(NSW)
Majella Franzmann	(NSW)
George Gream	(SA)
Thomas Haselhorst (THa)	(QLD)
Stephen Hultgren (SH)	(SA)
Keith Lloyd	(SA)
Elspeth McLachlan (EM)	(NSW)
Laura Parry	(SA)
Daniel Prebbenow	(VIC)
Judith Reinhard	(ACT)
Rob Robson	(QLD)
Matthew Tam	(VIC)
Nilmini Wickramasinghe	(VIC)

Also in attendance:

Thomas Hesse (THe) (AvHF)

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 23rd November, 2019 at Macquarie University, were ratified by a motion to this effect (Moved: TF; seconded: JM; and carried).

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes

4.1 Von Mueller Fellowship

JM had submitted a report, (Attachment I), updating the current situation regarding the von Mueller fellowship. While the Association had lobbied various Federal Government representatives who had expressed sympathy for the fellowship, no progress had been made. JM indicated that with a new German Ambassador due to arrive, it would be appropriate to take up the matter with the German Embassy again.

THe suggested that it would be appropriate for the Australian Association to raise the matter with the new Ambassador and to ask for this matter to be added to discussions between the Embassy and representatives of the German Research Ministry.

GW offered to assist with any future discussions of the von Mueller fellowship.

Action: Item for incoming AAvHF Executive

4.2 Promotion of Humboldt Foundation within Australian Universities

HB initiated discussion of this issue by suggesting that Universities have become businesses with little interest in international research collaboration. He felt that our Association should continue to raise awareness of the Foundation and at the ANU this could be done via the European Studies Centre. PM and GB suggested that we should push for advertising the Foundation through University Research Offices.

RC drew a parallel with the DAAD for which there were "DAAD Ambassadors" within certain Universities and suggested the setting up of "Humboldt Ambassadors" within Australian Universities. To JM, the problem is that Universities do not see the Humboldt Foundation as having value to them and are therefore not interested. RG said she would like to see collaborative groups of Humboldt Fellows within individual Universities.

THe mentioned (from his interactions at RMIT, Melbourne, Monash and Deakin) the idea for hand-picked staff being sent to Germany for a two-year interaction.

With no firm resolution on this issue, it remains one for consideration by the incoming Executive Committee.

Action: By incoming Executive Committee

4.3 Published Proceedings from 2019 Biennial Colloquium

TF reported that the above had occurred and the papers had appeared in an issue of the "Proceedings of the Royal Society of NSW". There were nine papers published as a result.

Prior to this current Humboldt Kolleg, he had had discussions with Dr Bill Birch who is currently Editor of the "Proceedings of the Royal Society of Victoria". Dr Birch was keen to publish papers from the current Kolleg in one of the two issues of the RSV Proceedings which will be published in 2023. A figure of $1,000 had been agreed to as a payment from our Association to the RSV for this. All presenters would be sent the details for manuscript submission and a submission deadline.

Action: Honorary Secretary to send this information to all presenters

5. Awards Sub-Committee Report

The Awards Sub-committee for 2022 had comprised JM (Chair), EM and RR. JM had submitted a report from the Sub-committee (Attachment II), and which was accepted with applause. The report contains some specific recommendations, A (i), (ii), (iii) and (iv) and B.

In relation to Recommendation B, TF indicated that scholarly output and service to the Association are already covered in the criteria advertised for the Distinguished Fellow Award. But he disagreed with this being emphasized for the Peter Schwerdtfeger Award which is intended to be for the scholarly work of an ECR.

It was moved JM and seconded RR and carried, **"That Recommendations A (i), (ii), (iii) and (iv) be accepted."**

Action: Honorary Secretary to add details covering these recommendations to Awards advertising

GM expressed the thanks of the Association to the Awards Sub-committee and added that it was pleasing to see the number and standard of nominations for this year.

6. President's Report

The President's Report had been circulated to all members prior to the meeting (Attachment III). GM added her thanks to Deakin University and the local Organising Committee for this current Humboldt Kolleg. She also recorded the thanks of the Association to Judith Reinhardt for her assistance to the Association, during her time of working at the German Embassy. This sentiment was supported by the motion (moved JM, seconded HB and carried unanimously), **"That this Association expresses thanks to Judith Reinhardt for her assistance to the Association during her time in the Embassy in Canberra."**

GM also wished to record her thanks to TF (as Honorary Secretary) and GM (as Honorary Treasurer and Registrar) for their work during the past three years.

It was moved by GM and seconded by TF (and carried) that the President's report be accepted.

7. Secretary's Report

Likewise, the Secretary's Report had been circulated and is attached (Attachment IV).

At this time the meeting had to be interrupted and was resumed during lunchtime the following day.

8. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer's Report had also been circulated prior to the meeting (Attachment V).

As GB has explained in the preamble to his report, this is an unusual report on account of COVID. So to conform to normal financial reporting standards, he has made the change to reporting the finances on a financial year basis. In order to introduce this change effectively, he has prepared and presented financial statements for the last five years from which there is a surplus of $25,391.84. (This figure excludes the donation from Professor David Pollard, to be discussed later.)

GB suggested that this ongoing balance is sufficient to underwrite biennial meetings but there is also scope for using some money to sponsor additional events.

It was moved GB, seconded JM and carried unanimously, **"That the Treasurer's Report be accepted."**

Action: Incoming Executive to discuss the Financial status of the Association

GB also presented a report on Association Membership. His file (Attachment VI) shows a current membership of 205, although of these, 37 are not up to date with membership payments. He emphasized that those who have not paid their membership fee (only $40.00 for a two-year period) since 2014, will be removed from the Association's membership list at the end of 2023.

Action: GB to remove memberships unpaid since 2014

The membership report contains data on membership type, showing the growth in Life Members and highlighting the fact that we may not be contacting all returning Fellows. On this point THe suggested that at any time, the currently returning Fellows could be requested from the Foundation.

Action: Honorary Secretary to request details of returning Australian Fellows on a regular basis

9. Web Master's Report

NK reported that the Association's website is kept up to date with anything he receives. He requested that anyone should contact him for additions or changes to the information contained on the site.

10. State Representative Reports

Reports had been received from SH (SA) (Attachment VII) and from KA (on behalf of THa) (QLD) (Attachment VIII). In presenting the report from Queensland, KA also drew attention to the recent Bioeconomy agreement between the Queensland Government and Germany (Attachment IX) which she felt could be of interest, particularly to some Queensland researchers.

11. Election of Executive Committee for 1/1/2023 – 31/12/2024

TF reported that, following the receipt of formal nominations via the form which had been circulated prior to the Meeting, there had been ten nominations received from: Hans Bachor, Gary Bryant, Trevor Finlayson, Thomas Haselhorst, Stephen Hultgren, Nathan Kilah, Jeff Malpas, Gabrielle McMullen, Sarah Turpin-Nolan, and Glen Wheeler, for the 12 positions on the National Committee. There being no further nominations from the floor, these persons were declared elected and, together with the Immediate Past President, will comprise the National Committee for the coming two-year period.

In the short meeting amongst those members of this group who were present, the following positions on the National Executive were declared for the above term.

President: Gabrielle McMullen
Vice-President: Jeff Malpas
Secretary: Trevor Finlayson
Treasurer: Gary Bryant

Also, the following will be the recognized State/Territory Representatives for the coming two-year period (1st January, 2023 – 31st December, 2024).

Q'ld: Thomas Haselhorst
NSW: Glen Wheeler
ACT: Hans Bachor
Vic: Sarah Turpin-Nolan
Tas: Nathan Kilah
SA: Stephen Hultgren

At this stage there is no representative from either the Northern Territory or Western Australia.

But it can be recorded that subsequently (in December, 2022), Scott Stewart, University of Western Australia, accepted the Representative position for **WA**. Then in January, 2023,

Michael Fellows confirmed that he had accepted an Adjunct Professorship at Charles Darwin University and that he was willing to represent the Association in the **Northern Territory**.

One other member of the National Committee will be Rob Robson as **Immediate Past President**.

Gary Bryant will continue to act as **Registrar** and Nathan Kilah agreed to continue as **Web Master**.

12. General Business

12.1 Gift from Professor David Pollard

TF summarized the background to a most generous gift from Professor David Pollard, a PhD graduate of the ANU, who had been awarded a Humboldt Fellowship with his host Professor Peter Gaenssler in Bochum, after which he had been a Professor at Yale until his retirement. David had initially written to HB at the ANU enquiring about making a donation to our Australian Association, to be used to create a fund in memory of his Humboldt Host, Professor Gaenssler. The initial sum of $10,125.14 had already been received from David (as shown in the Financial Statement) and he had subsequently asked that the fund be set up in order that perhaps at some time in the future he could transfer further money into the fund.

David had been invited to attend the current Humboldt Kolleg but he had declined the invitation for personal reasons.

It was moved GB, seconded JM and carried **"That the incoming Executive Committee should decide an appropriate use of the Gaenssler fund consistent with David's wish to have the money used in the spirit of Humboldt."**

Action: Incoming Executive to do the above

12.2 Comments from AvHF

GM welcomed THe and invited him to address the Meeting.

THe thanked the Association for the opportunity to visit some of the Victorian Universities during the week. He went on to outline a new programme being introduced in which the Foundation would select a German host professor who would be allocated three fellowships which he could then offer to visiting researchers. The scheme is already in place and the relevant German Professors are advertised on social media, e.g., Twitter.

12.3 Comments on 2022 Biennial Conference

JdP expressed the thanks from the Deakin Organising Committee for the assistance received throughout the planning of the Kolleg from members of both the Australian and New Zealand Executives. He also acknowledged the support received from Deakin University and the Humboldt Kolleg Grant from the Foundation.

12.4 Venue and Time for Next Biennial Meeting

GM indicated that an offer had been received from New Zealand to host the next Biennial Meeting at the University of Otago. Discussion followed in regards to an apparent agreement which had been made between two former Presidents concerning the frequency with which the Biennial Meeting should be hosted in New Zealand. While there seemed to be no known record of this agreement in past minutes, etc., nevertheless, it was agreed that the 2024 meeting should be held in New Zealand. November would be preferred time and it remained up to the incoming Executive to negotiate this matter further.

KA had put forward an offer from Queensland to host a future Meeting and it was agreed that this would be in 2026.

13. Issue with ARC Grant Refusal by Federal Minister

RC outlined the case which had occurred in 2021 whereby proposals which had been approved for ARC Grants by the relevant discipline committee had been refused such grants by the Federal Minister. At RC's initiative, this resulted in a letter being written by the AvHF Secretary General to the relevant ARC authority, deploring such political interference with ARC expert committee decisions, for which RC expressed thanks. JM indicated that he was aware that the matter was still being reviewed within the ARC.

Members noted the current review of the ARC and agreed to collaborate on a submission/s coordinated by RC.

14. Closure

In closing the meeting, GM thanked all in attendance for their support. She looked forward to convening a meeting with the incoming National Committee to deal with the important matters mentioned during the meeting.

Minute Taking
Associate Professor Trevor Finlayson
Honorary Secretary

Attachment I

Report on current situation regarding the *Baron Ferdinand von Mueller Fellowship – September 2022*

For over ten years now, the Australian Association of Alexander von Humboldt Fellows has been lobbying various bodies in an effort to establish a small Australian fellowship scheme, the Baron Ferdinand von Mueller Fellowship, that would provide some reciprocation, on a much smaller scale, for the enormous support the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation has provided to Australian researchers.

Such an arrangement has operated in New Zealand for some years in the form of the Julius Von Haast Fellowship (see https://www.royalsociety.org.nz/what-we-do/funds-and-opportunities/catalyst-fund/catalyst-leaders/funding-overview/julius-von-haast-fellowship/), administered by the NZ Royal Society in conjunction with the NZ Government and the von Humboldt Foundation. In Australia, the AAvHF was successful in establishing an MoU with the Australian Research Council in 2004 to support a Baron Ferdinand von Mueller Fellowship. The Fellowship operated as part of the ARC's Linkage programme. Unfortunately, that programme ceased to operate in 2009 and the Mueller Fellowship ceased with it.

The AAvHF has lobbied the federal Government and several other bodies since that time, including Universities Australia. The responses have often been sympathetic, however, they have yet to give rise to any concrete result, and the intervention of COVID also resulted in a hiatus in the AAvHF's efforts. This means, however, that not only does Australian lack any sort of reciprocation for the enormous support provided by the von Humboldt foundation to Australian researchers, but the existing MoU with the ARC has also been effectively allowed to lapse. This is all the more unfortunate given the renewed vigour with which Germany, and the European Union, is now pursuing international research collaboration with countries like Australia.

The AAvHF has retained its commitment to the value of the von Mueller award and to the attempt at reviving the arrangement – whether through the ARC or some other body. The question, however, is how best this should be done. It seems clear that any re-established Fellowship would require some Federal Government support but it may well be done through a collaborative arrangement between various Australian institutions. The cost of instituting a new von Mueller Fellowship need not be high. The NZ von Haast Fellowship has a very modest budget of $50k over 3 years. While something similar might work for the von Mueller Fellowship, the AAvHf would argue that a more substantial commitment is in order in the Australian case, although details regarding any re-established form for the von Mueller Fellowship would need to be worked out with the relevant funding body or bodies. Nevertheless, the total budget for the Fellowship would still be relatively small – certainly when compared to the von Humboldt Foundation's own contribution.

It seems likely that the AAvHF is unlikely to be able to achieve the desired outcome here working on its own and as a consequence we are keen to explore the possibility of working with the German Embassy to find ways of taking forward the case for the re-establishment of the von Mueller Fellowship to a more successful outcome.

Jeff Malpas, Vice-President, AAvHF

Attachment II

Report from Awards Sub-committee for 2022

The Awards Sub-Committee Membership for 2022 was: Jeff Malpas (Chair), Elspeth McLachlan and Roger Read.

There were four nominations for the Peter Schwerdtfeger Award and three for Distinguished Member Awards. All nominees were of a high standard which made the task of the Sub-committee quite challenging by comparison with what has been the case in some previous biennial periods since the Association's Awards were introduced in 2011. As has been the procedure since the Association awards were introduced, the awardees for 2022 will be announced and presented at the Conference Dinner on 19th November.

The Sub-committee would like to make the following recommendations to the Association, for discussion at the forthcoming General Meeting, with the aim of modifying the Awards Process as was agreed to some years ago and as is currently outlined on the Association Website.

Recommendation A (i): That the number of named referees from whom reports be requested be increased to three (in addition to the two AAvHF supporters).

Recommendation A (ii): That at least one of the named referees be neither a previous nor current close colleague/collaborator.

Recommendation A (iii): That nominees be advised to contact referees before the applications are submitted to ensure that referees are willing and able to commit to providing a report within the relevant time-frame.

Recommendation A (iv): That nominees also be advised that decisions regarding awards can only be made on the basis of documentation submitted to the Awards sub-committee (such advice to be incorporated into the application form in an appropriate fashion).

Recommendation B: That nominees and referees have their attention drawn to fact that the Distinguished Fellow Award "recognises those AAvHF members who have excelled in their professional field and/or have provided outstanding service to the organisation [emphasis added]" – in other words service to the organisation (i.e. to the AAvHF and to the Humboldt community more broadly) may alone be sufficient to warrant the award – this could be done by simply including this specification at the head of the application form (the same might also be done for the Peter Schwerdtfeger Award).

Attachment III
President's Report to the Meeting of the Australian Association of von Humboldt Fellows
Deakin University Geelong, November 2022

A general meeting of the Australian Association of von Humboldt Fellows will be held on 19 November 2022 at Deakin University in Geelong. The meeting will take place during the joint symposium of the Australian and New Zealand Associations of von Humboldt Fellows, entitled *Humboldtian Research towards a Sustainable World*. This report to the general meeting summaries significant matters for the Association since its last meeting in November 2019 at Macquarie University.

The Australian Association of von Humboldt Fellows (AAvHF) was officially constituted at a conference of Australian Fellows held at the University of Melbourne in 1983. Since that time, a biennial symposium, in collaboration with the New Zealand Association of von Humboldt Fellows, has been held regularly. The 19th biennial symposium was originally scheduled for November 2021 but was postponed for a year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The scheduled election of the AAvHF Executive and National Committee consequently needed to be delayed – with the agreement of the membership by electronic means, these officers generously agreed to continue in office for a further 12 months.

I have been privileged to serve as President of the Australian Association of von Humboldt Fellows in 2020-2022. Service to the AAvHF is a means to recognise the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation's generosity to Australian Fellows and *Wissenschaften*, as well as to promote academic cooperation between Australia and Germany.

This report encompasses the following sections related to the AAvHF's activities in 2020-2022:
- Celebrating Humboldt's Birthday
- New Alexander von Humboldt Foundation President
- Deaths of Australian Fellows
- Honouring Australian Fellows
- Australian Association of von Humboldt Fellows Activities
- Australian-German Cooperation
- Awards Sub-Committee
- 2022 Conference at Deakin University
- Gratitude to the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation
- Service of AAvHF Executive

Celebrating Humboldt's Birthday
The Australian Association has had a long tradition of celebrating Alexander von Humboldt's birthday – over many years dinners in capital cities across the country have been held on or about 14 September. With the restrictions on gathering in 2020 and 2021, we introduced a national online celebration of Humboldt's birthday, which proved popular and has now been added to our annual 'program'. The occasion allows the AAvHF to gather online nationally and also to invite representatives of the Foundation in Bonn and our New Zealand counterparts to join us. The speakers over the last three have been as follows:

- 2020: Professor Gabrielle McMullen AM, AAvHF President– *Alexander von Humboldt visits Australia* [see https://www.languageonthemove.com/alexander-von-humboldt-visits-australia/]

- 2021: Dr Enno Aufderheide, Secretary General of the Humboldt Foundation – *New Challenges for the Humboldt Network: The Pandemic, Climate Crisis and Authoritarianism*
- 2022: Professor Dr Robert Schlögl, President-Elect of the Humboldt Foundation – *Global Energy and Australia: Relevance for Germany?*

With representatives from Bonn present, the online events have also allowed us to receive an update on the Foundation's programs. The virtual gatherings have then concluded with a toast to Alexander von Humboldt.

This year we no longer had to cancel birthday dinners due to the pandemic. I was pleased to be able attend the one in University House at the University of Melbourne on 28 September. We were joined by Honorary Consul-General Michael Pearce SC.

New Alexander von Humboldt Foundation President
During the course of the year the appointment of the next President of the Humboldt Foundation, Professor Dr Robert Schlögl, was announced. While Professor Schlögl does not commence his role until January 2023, we wondered if he might agree to be guest speaker at the above-mentioned 2022 celebration of Humboldt's birthday, given his strong research links with Australia. He graciously agreed and the Association was privileged to have him address the gathering. On behalf of the AAvHF, I express our sincere gratitude to Secretary General Dr Aufderheide for conveying our invitation to Professor Schlögl and making the arrangements for his participation.

An internationally recognised chemist, Professor Schlögl is currently Director at the Fritz Haber Institute of the Max Planck Society in Berlin and at the Max Planck Institute for Chemical Energy Conversion in Mülheim an der Ruhr. With his research focus on energy conversion processes and catalysts, he is currently co-leading a major project entitled HySupply, funded by the German and Australian Governments. Of the project, which explores conditions for the export of renewable hydrogen or hydrogen-based energy sources from Australia to Europe, he has stated: "*With hydrogen, we can pack the energy of the Australian sun into tankers and bring it to Germany … we are investigating how this can be done on a large scale and over long distances*" [https://www.fhi.mpg.de/1002874/2022-02-25-australia].

Deaths of Australian Fellows
During 2021 we were advised of the passing of three AAvHF members, Professor Andrew Cheetham, Dr Wim Wouts and Dr Rebecca (Bec) Harris:

- When Professor Cheetham retired in 2014, he was Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) at the University of Western Sydney. The Association valued his contributions to our activities. Upon receiving news of his death, Carmen Klein, Programme Officer for our region at the Humboldt Foundation, wrote: "Professor Cheetham will be remembered as a dedicated researcher and cherished colleague, and we are deeply saddened that he is no longer with us. By the death of Professor Cheetham the scientific community too has suffered a great loss and the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation has lost a friend".
- In December last year, Dr Wouts' wife, Alice, advised the AAvHF that "he died peacefully at home according to his wishes". In expressing our condolences to her, we noted with appreciation his inputs to our Association's activities not only in more recent years when he was living in Perth but also during earlier times in New Zealand.
- Also in December, we lost Tasmanian Humboldtian Dr Harris, Director of the Climate Futures Programme at the University of Tasmania. A globally respected climate scientist, her 2016 Fellowship took her to the Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research in Leipzig. Dr Katrin

Amian from the *Stiftung* paid tribute to her as follows: "I met Rebecca several times during her time in Germany as a Humboldt Fellow. She was passionate about her research and full of ideas and energy. It is so sad to learn that she has passed away, leaving her projects, family, friends and colleagues much too early".

Australian Association of von Humboldt Fellows Activities

Association member, Professor Hans-Albert Bachor AM FAA of Canberra, received a significant honour in early 2021, the Cross of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany. It was conferred on him by Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany H.E. Dr Thomas Fitschen at a dinner at the Germany Embassy held on 2 February.

Earlier this year Dr Judith Reinhard resigned as Head of Science and Innovation at the German Embassy in Canberra to take up the role of Senior Program Manager Hydrogen with Rheinmetall Defence Australia. In her seven years with the Embassy, Dr Reinhard took German-Australian cooperation in science, research and technology to a new level – some members of our Association were her partners in these endeavours. On behalf of the Association, I thank Dr Reinhard warmly for her contributions to the Association, facilitated through her role at the Germany Embassy. She gave generously of her time, expertise and access to a network of contacts to support AAvHF activities. I was pleased to represent the Association at a farewell lunch hosted by Ambassador Fitschen on 3 May. It offered an occasion to express our appreciation to Dr Reinhard personally and to offer her congratulations and best wishes as she took up her new role.

German-Australian Cooperation

The thirtieth anniversary of German reunification was celebrated on 3 October 2020. To mark the occasion Ambassador Fitschen, invited 30 Australians to deliver a thirty second message. The COVID-safe 'event', entitled "30 for 30", saw Australians from politics, academia, journalism, arts and culture sharing their thoughts about German reunification. Tasmanian AAvHF member Dr Peter Jarvis, Reader in the School of Physical Sciences at the University of Tasmania, and I were invited to record messages. Mine was as follows:

> *As an Alexander von Humboldt Fellow, I experienced a divided Berlin in 1978, noting and regretting the contrast of East and West. I have visited Germany many times since. One of the most memorable times was in 1989, just as the Berlin Wall was coming down. Thirty years on, the reunited Germany is critical for a strong Europe in our global context.*

AAvHF members, through research partnerships and other collaborations, continue to foster German-Australian cooperation. Locally, there is also participation in key activities such as the Falling Walls Lab. The AAvHF Honorary Secretary, Associate Professor Trevor Finlayson, is tireless in his efforts to bring such events and other opportunities for German-Australian interaction to members' attention and to encourage participation.

Normally the *Honorargeneralkonsul* in Victoria Michael Pearce SC hosts an annual *Runden Tisch* in Melbourne. The afternoon gathering brings together some two dozen German groups based in Victoria and encompassing aged care, cultural, educational, industrial, media, professional and religious bodies. After a break due to COVID-19, this activity resumed this year, and I represented the Australian Association at the gathering on 19 October.

Contributions to German-Australian cooperation, such as the above, are valued and build on the spirit that underpins the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation and its awards.

Awards Sub-Committee

The Association offers two awards in association with its symposia — the Peter Schwerdtfeger Award to an early career researcher and up to two Distinguished Fellow Awards. These recognise, respectively, the academic or professional achievement of early career AAvHF members and of long-standing members who have excelled in their professional field and/or provided sustained service to the Association. I acknowledge with gratitude the work of the 2022 AAvHF awards sub-committee with membership of Professors Jeff Malpas (chair), Elspeth McLachlan and Roger Read. The sub-committee considered the nominations for this year's awards which will be announced at the forthcoming symposium dinner – significantly, they noted the very high level of achievement demonstrated by all nominees. The awards sub-committee has made recommendations to refine the documentary requirements for future applications and advice to nominees, for consideration by the Association at its 2022 general meeting.

In 2022, the AAvHF received a most generous donation from Australian Humboldt Fellow Professor David Pollard who, following his Humboldt Fellowship at Bochum University, had a distinguished career at Yale in the United States where he still resides. The purpose of the donation was to recognise Professor Pollard's mentor and Humboldt *Gastprofessor*, Professor Peter Gaenssler. The general meeting will explore recognition of this donation within the AAvHF awards structure.

2022 Conference at Deakin University

The Australian and New Zealand Associations last gathering for a highly successful symposium at Macquarie University on 22-24 November 2019 organised by Professor Ingrid Piller with her local committee. Delegates very much appreciated the stimulating program and collegiality of the events of this 18th biennial symposium, for which papers were subsequently published by the Royal Society of NSW in a special online edition of its *Proceedings* [https://royalsoc.org.au/council-members-section/470-v152-3].

The AAvHF's biennial meeting on the occasion considered the venue for the planned 2021 symposium and accepted an invitation from Deakin University, conveyed by Professor Jean du Plessis, for its Waterfront Campus in Geelong to host the event. While planning for the 19th biennial symposium commenced in mid-2020, a decision was taken in February 2021 to delay the gathering by 12 months, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and with the hope that interstate and international travel would have resumed by November 2022.

In early 2022, planning for the 19th (now triennial) symposium recommenced with the local organising committee at Deakin University comprised of Professor Jean du Plessis (Faculty of Business and Law) (Chair); Professor Rosanne Guijt (Faculty of Science, Engineering and Built Environment); Associate Professor Shiri Krebs (Faculty of Business and Law); Associate Professor Ross Marceau (Institute for Frontier Materials); and Ms Jess Holmes (Senior Event Coordinator, Deakin University). The organising committee met regularly with members of the executives of the Australian and New Zealand Associations of von Humboldt Fellows. Associate Professor Trevor Finlayson successfully applied to the Humboldt Foundation for a *Kolleg* grant in support of the symposium – this will defray some of the costs of the meeting and Fellows' attendance as well as support the attendance of the invited German speakers.

Gratitude to the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation

Members of the Association value the academic and cultural opportunities that have been offered to them by the Humboldt Foundation. In turn, many Fellows become 'ambassadors' for Australian-German collaboration, contributing to the spirit of international cooperation underpinning the *Stiftung*.

During the pandemic the Humboldt Foundation adapted its programs to enable their continuation despite the restrictions on international travel. The Australian Association had contact with local award recipients who were able to undertake their Fellowship at their home institution, communicating with their German *Gastprofessor* virtually. By way of another adaptation, the *Stiftung* conducted a rather different annual meeting in June 2020. Rather than gathering at Schloss Bellevue in Berlin, Fellows and guests attended the congress digitally, allowing antipodean Humboldtians, like me, to participate from home. The time difference was challenging but I was delighted to be 'present' for keynote addresses, entertaining science slams and a ceremony awarding initiatives developed by Humboldt alumni.

In November 2020 I was asked by the Humboldt Foundation to provide some insights into research communication during the COVID-19 pandemic. Secretary General Dr Aufderheide had been invited to present on developments in research communication and sought to communicate an international perspective by seeking wider input from Humboldtians. I was delighted to provide some insights from an Australian viewpoint.

In the period 1953-2021, Australia was the beneficiary of 658 Humboldt research fellowships, 100 Humboldt research prizes and 132 Feodor Lynen scholars. The AAvHF executive is disappointed that more than half of these eligible Humboldtians choose not to join the Australian Association. I would strongly encourage AAVHF members to recruit other Humboldtians to join the Association and to take part in our activities. This is an important way of fostering the Humboldt family 'down-under'.

Significantly, the *Stiftung* commits to supporting "fellows and award winners for their entire lifetime". In the case of the Australian and New Zealand Associations, this has seen the award of a *Kolleg* grant to the Deakin symposium. Further, the AAvHF is delighted that Dr Thomas Hesse, Deputy Secretary General of the Humboldt Foundation, will journey to Australia for the symposium. He will spend a week in Victoria, visiting local universities as well as representing the *Stiftung* at our gathering in Geelong and providing an update on the Foundation's work.

Service of AAvHF Executive

AAvHF Executive and National Committee 2020-2022	
President	Professor Gabrielle McMullen AM
Vice-President	Professor Jeff Malpas
Secretary	Associate Professor Trevor Finlayson
Treasurer	Professor Gary Bryant
Australian Capital Territory representative	Professor Hans Bachor
New South Wales representative	Dr Glen Wheeler
Northern Territory representative	vacant
Queensland representative	Associate Professor Thomas Haselhorst
South Australia representative	Revd Dr Stephen Hultgren
Tasmania representative and Webmaster	Dr Nathan Kilah
Victoria representative	Dr Sarah Turpin-Nolan
West Australia representative	Professor Walter Bloom
Member of the executive (immediate Past President)	Professor Rob Robson
Member of the executive	Dr Peter Jarvis

Our Association is fortunate to have members in most jurisdictions who are willing to serve on the national committee. State/Territory representatives play a key role in organising and supporting events locally – I express my gratitude to them. Regrettably, we do not currently have a Northern Territory representative and would welcome any relevant contacts from members.

The Association has received outstanding support through the dedicated and professional contributions of Honorary Secretary Associate Professor Finlayson, Treasurer Professor Gary Bryant, Vice-President Professor Malpas and Webmaster Dr Nathan Kilah. I thank them all most sincerely for their commitment of time and expertise to the AAvHF and to me as President. In particular, I highlight that Associate Professor Finlayson regularly distributes to members, on behalf of the Association, the wide range of updates and requests received from national and international contacts, and Professor Bryant continues to play a proactive role in maintaining and growing the Association's membership.

******

I conclude this report by expressing my gratitude to all members of the Australian Association for their ongoing efforts to promote the Humboldt Foundation and its ideals, especially in the Australian context. I look forward to seeing many Humboldtians at Deakin University and thanking them personally for their commitment to the AAvHF and our activities.

May the Australian and New Zealand Associations of von Humboldt Fellows flourish and continue their efforts to foster the spirit of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation in Oceania.

Gabrielle McMullen
President, Australian Association of von Humboldt Fellows

Attachment IV
Australian Association of von Humboldt Fellows
19th Biennial Business Meeting,
Deakin University, (Waterfront Campus), Geelong,
19th November, 2022

The activities of the Secretary during this past three-year period have been as follows:

1. Victorian-based "AvH Birthday Celebrations"

During September, 2020 and 2021, with Covid restrictions in place, the usual Humboldt Birthday Dinner was quite out of the question. Hence the concept of a "Virtual Birthday Celebration" was suggested.

In 2020, the whole Association Membership was invited to such a celebration arranged on Zoom. Our President, Professor Gabrielle McMullen AM, gave a most interesting presentation entitled *Alexander von Humboldt visits Australia*, reminding all who were "tuned in" that we were celebrating his 250th Birthday. This was followed by a proper toast to Alexander von Humboldt, with a drink of ones personal choice.

In 2021, with Covid restrictions still in force, Dr Enno Aufderheide, Secretary General of the Humboldt Foundation, spoke to all who were "tuned in", on the topic, *New Challenges for the Humboldt Network: The Pandemic, Climate Crisis and Authoritarianism.* Again, there was a toast to Alexander von Humboldt.

Given the success of these two on-line celebrations, it was agreed that for 2022, even though State and Territory-based birthday dinners could be resumed, it would be good to continue with the on-line celebration for all members as well. So that on 14th September 2022, we were honoured to have President Elect of the Humboldt Foundaion, Dr Robert Schlögl, speak to us (from Germany) on the topic, *Global Energy and Australia: Relevance for Germany.*

I was grateful to our Victorian Representative, Sarah Turpin-Nolan, for arranging this particular Zoom session and for recording the evening. After confirming that Dr Schlögl was in agreement with the recording being sent out to our Association Members, this was done. Despite a minor "glitch" at one point in the recording, there have been some favourable responses from members for having received it.

In Victoria, we subsequently had a "Birthday Dinner" at University House, Melbourne Universiy on Wednesday, 28th September. I am aware that "face-to-face" dinners were held in some other States/Territories, as organized by the local National Committee Representative.

2. Distribution of Notices

Our Association regularly receives items from the Office of the Honorary Consul General for Victoria or from the Ambassador's Office in Canberra, which are of potential interest to our Membership. Such items are distributed electronically to our Membership group email list and, as appropriate, to the full list of Australian Fellows who, for whatever reason, have chosen not to become members of our Association. In addition, the regular newsletter from the DAAD which is sent to our Association is also forwarded on to all on our Association Membership list. Maintenance of such email group lists is not a simple task and on almost all occasions that either group list is used, the Inbox of the Secretary's PC is "flooded" with automatic responses, many of which are from discontinued email addresses.

In this regard may I urge all members please to notify the Honorary Secretary of any change to your email address.

3. 19th Biennial Conference at Deakin University (Waterfront Campus), Geelong

With the ongoing Covid restrictions during the lead-up to November, 2021, it was agreed that the regular "biennial" sequence should become "triennial" and that our 19th Association Conference should be delayed until November, 2022. I was most grateful that all members of the National Committee for the period 1st January, 2020 till 31st December, 2021, agreed to stay on until 31st December, 2022.

While the organization of our 19th Biennial Conference has been the responsibility of an Organizing Committee based at Deakin University with Professor Jean du Plessis as Chair, I have shared a number of exchanges with him and then more recently, with his Organising Committee. I was pleased to be able to offer assistance particularly in relation to a Humboldt Kolleg application during June, 2022, which was successful, thereby assisting the 2022 Conference financially. The Foundation will be duly acknowledged for this Humboldt Kolleg Grant in the reporting of our 19th Association Conference.

In relation to our 19th Conference, it has also been the responsibility of the Honorary Secretary, to liaise with the Editor of "The Proceedings of the Royal Society or Victoria", Dr. Bill Birch. As a result, it is planned for there to be an issue of the Royal Society journal, to be published in 2023, in which all manuscripts and extended abstracts submitted for peer review following our 19th Conference (Humboldt Kolleg), will be published. I should like to urge all presenters at our 19th Conference to contribute to this issue of "Proceedings of the Royal Society of Victoria".

4. 2022 Association Awards

As has become our practice since our Association introduced both the Peter Schwerdtfeger Award for an Early Career Researcher Member and the Distinguished Member Awards, in 2010, we have followed the practice of firstly establishing an Awards Sub-Committee, in order to agree to a suitable deadline date for the receipt of nominations, and then to distribute the information calling for nominations, in a timely manner. I should like to thank our Vice-President, Professor Jeff Malpas, University of Tasmania, for accepting the task of Chairing this Sub-Committee, and to its other two members, Emeritus Professor Elspeth McLachlan, University of New South Wales, and Associate Professor Roger Read, University of New South Wales, for offering their services to our Association on this Sub-Committee. While one does not like giving busy colleagues additional work, it was pleasing that there were four nominations for our Peter Schwerdtfeger Award and three nominations for the Distinguished Member Award this year. I should also express my thanks to those members who nominated young or older colleagues for either of our Association Awards and also to those colleagues who responded to my correspondence inviting professional references for each of the award nominees. I am sure these references were of great assistance to our Awards Sub-Committee.

I must refer the Meeting to the report prepared by the Awards Sub-committee, and particularly to the recommendations to our Association for the future procedure in relation to the administration of these awards, which are to be discussed at this forthcoming General Meeting.

As Members should be aware, these awards are offered every two years (with the exception of the recent Covid disruptions), coinciding with our Biennial Conference and I urge Members to give thought to nominations of either your younger research colleagues or your older ones (or perhaps both) when the nominations are next invited in early 2024.

Trevor R. Finlayson
Honorary Secretary
19th November, 2022

Attachment V

Financial Statements

Traditionally the Treasurer's report has been presented at each Biennial meeting, with the report presenting the finances for the (approximately) 2 years since the last conference.

Since this conference was delayed due to COVID, and in order to comply with normal financial reporting standards, I have made the change to reporting the finances on a financial year basis.

As this is the first time we have moved to this system, I have prepared the financial statements for the last 5 financial years and present these in the attached.

Finances are strong, and the ongoing balance is sufficient to underwrite our Biennial meetings – this allows us to plan meetings knowing that costs can be covered in the event that we do not receive AvH funding.

However, there is also scope for using some of this money to sponsor additional events, and the executive would welcome suggestions.

The Gaenssler will be addressed in a separate report.

Gary Bryant
Honorary Treasurer

AAvHF 5 year Finanancial Report for 2017-2022 Financial Years

AAvHF

Expenditure	
Conference Reimbursements	($16,228.68)
Peter Schwertfeger Award	($400.00)
Bank fees	($30.20)
Miscellaneous costs	($438.73)
Web domain registration	($136.50)
Total	**($17,234.11)**

Income	
Membership	$5,880.00
Membership (retired)	$300.00
Life Membership	$1,640.00
Interest	$1,538.26
AvH Funding	$33,267.69
Total	$42,625.95

AAvHF Surplus/Loss	**$25,391.84**

Bank Accounts	
Transaction Account	
Opening Balance	$21,893.45
Closing Balance	$46,024.10
Surplus/Loss	**$24,130.65**
Term Deposit	
Opening Balance	$23,542.10
Closing Balance	$25,080.36
Surplus/Loss	**$1,538.26**
Total Surplus/Loss	**$25,668.91**

Reconciliation	
AAvHF Surplus/Loss	$25,391.84
Gaenssler Fund Surplus/Loss	$10,125.14
RAMP Program Surplus/Loss	($9,848.07)
Total Surplus/Loss	**$25,668.91**
Check	**$0.00**

Gaenssler Fund

Expenditure	
Total	**$0.00**

Income	
Donation (David Pollard)	$10,125.14
Total	$10,125.14

Gaenssler Fund Surplus/Loss	**$10,125.14**

Ramp Program

Expenditure	
RAMP Mentor	($8,600.00)
RAMP Reimbursements	($1,248.07)
Total	**($9,848.07)**

AAvHF Finanancial Report for 2021-2022 Financial Year

AAvHF

Expenditure	
Total	**$0.00**

Income	
Membership	$1,080.00
Membership (retired)	$200.00
Life Membership	$380.00
Interest	$25.07
Total	$1,685.07

AAvHF Surplus/Loss	**$1,685.07**

Bank Accounts	
Transaction Account	
Opening Balance	$34,238.96
Closing Balance	$46,024.10
Surplus/Loss	**$11,785.14**
Term Deposit	
Opening Balance	$25,055.29
Closing Balance	$25,080.36
Surplus/Loss	**$25.07**
Total Surplus/Loss	**$11,810.21**

Reconciliation	
AAvHF Surplus/Loss	$1,685.07
Gaenssler Fund Surplus/Loss	$10,125.14
Total Surplus/Loss	**$11,810.21**
Check	**$0.00**

Gaenssler Fund

Expenditure	
Total	**$0.00**

Income	
Donation (David Pollard)	$10,125.14
Total	$10,125.14

Gaenssler Fund Surplus/Loss	**$10,125.14**

AAvHF Finanancial Report for 2020-2021 Financial Year

AAvHF

Expenditure	
Domain Name Registration	($97.50)
Total	**($97.50)**

Income	
Interest	$134.56
Total	$134.56

AAvHF Surplus/Loss	**$37.06**

Bank Accounts	
Transaction Account	
Opening Balance	$34,336.46
Closing Balance	$34,238.96
Surplus/Loss	**($97.50)**
Term Deposit	
Opening Balance	$24,920.73
Closing Balance	$25,055.29
Surplus/Loss	**$134.56**
Total Surplus/Loss	**$37.06**

Reconciliation	
AAvHF Surplus/Loss	$37.06
Total Surplus/Loss	**$37.06**
Check	**($0.00)**

AAvHF Finanancial Report for 2019-2020 Financial Year

AAvHF	

Expenditure	
Conference Reimbursements	($16,228.68)
Peter Schwertfeger Award	($200.00)
Bank fees	($30.20)
Miscellaneous costs	($108.52)
Total	**($16,567.40)**

Income	
Membership	$1,120.00
Membership (retired)	$40.00
Life Membership	$300.00
Interest	$411.08
AvH Funding	$33,267.69
Total	$35,138.77

AAvHF Surplus/Loss	**$18,571.37**

Bank Accounts	
Transaction Account	
Opening Balance	$16,176.17
Closing Balance	$34,336.46
Surplus/Loss	**$18,160.29**
Term Deposit	
Opening Balance	$24,509.65
Closing Balance	$24,920.73
Surplus/Loss	**$411.08**
Total Surplus/Loss	**$18,571.37**

Reconciliation	
AAvHF Surplus/Loss	$18,571.37
Total Surplus/Loss	**$18,571.37**
Check	**$0.00**

AAvHF Finanancial Report for 2017-2018 Financial Year

AAvHF	

Expenditure	
Miscellaneous costs	($275.21)
Total	**($275.21)**

Income	
Membership	$3,160.00
Membership (retired)	$20.00
Life Membership	$960.00
Interest	$483.42
Total	$4,623.42

AAvHF Surplus/Loss	**$4,348.21**

Bank Accounts	
Transaction Account	
Opening Balance	$21,893.45
Closing Balance	$21,505.27
Surplus/Loss	**($388.18)**
Term Deposit	
Opening Balance	$23,542.10
Closing Balance	$24,025.52
Surplus/Loss	**$483.42**
Total Surplus/Loss	**$95.24**

Reconciliation	
AAvHF Surplus/Loss	$4,348.21
RAMP Surplus/Loss	($4,252.97)
Total Surplus/Loss	**$95.24**
Check	**($0.00)**

Ramp Program	
Expenditure	
RAMP Mentor	($3,800.00)
RAMP Reimbursements	($452.97)
Total	**($4,252.97)**

Income	
Total	**$0.00**

RAMP Surplus/Loss	**($4,252.97)**

Attachment VI

Membership Report

Australian Association of von Humboldt Fellows

Promoting scholarly interchange

www.humboldtaustralia.org.au

Membership Summary, 19 November 2022

There are 205 Members on the books. Of these, 37 are not up to date with membership payments. The distribution of membership types is shown in figure 1. Those who have not updated membership since 2014 will be removed from the list at the end of 2023.

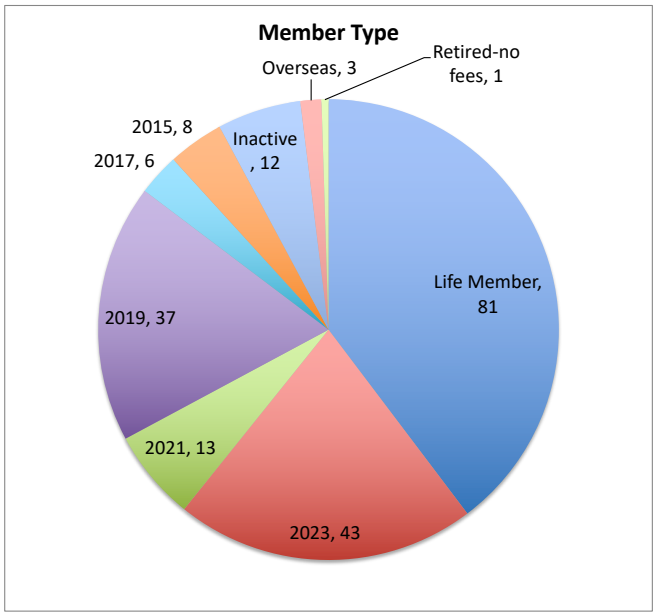

Figure 1: Membership Breakdown

Membership revenue continues strongly, as shown in figure 2.

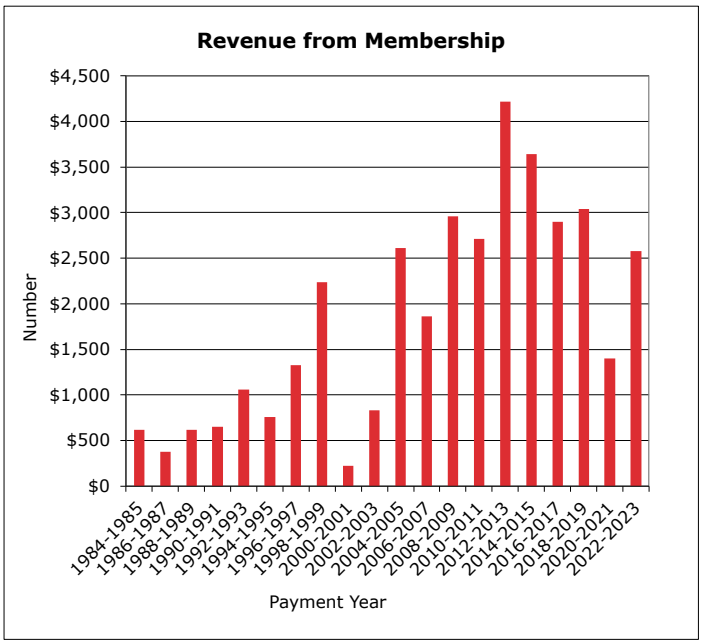

Figure 2: Trends in revenue from membership

New member trends are shown in figure 3. COVID has interrupted membership growth, so we need a strong push in 2023 to entice newly returned fellows.

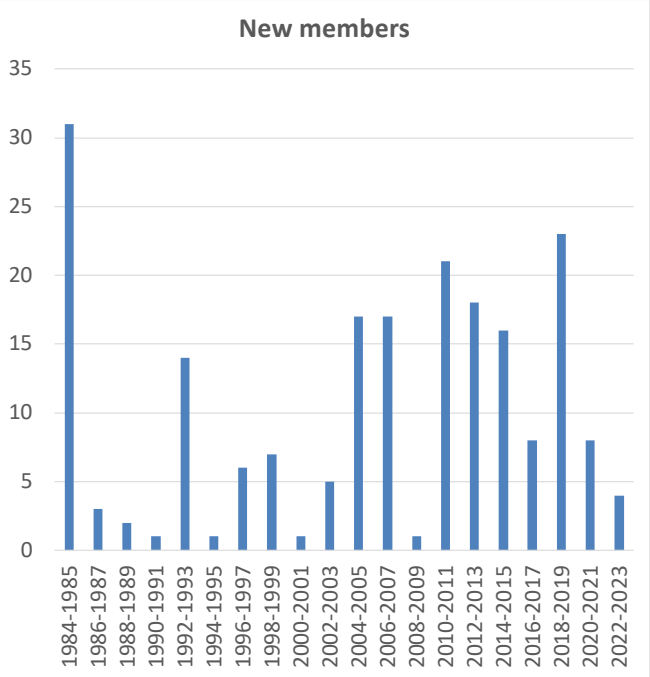

Figure 3: New Members

Figure 4 shows the growth in life members, which currently represents 40% of the membership.

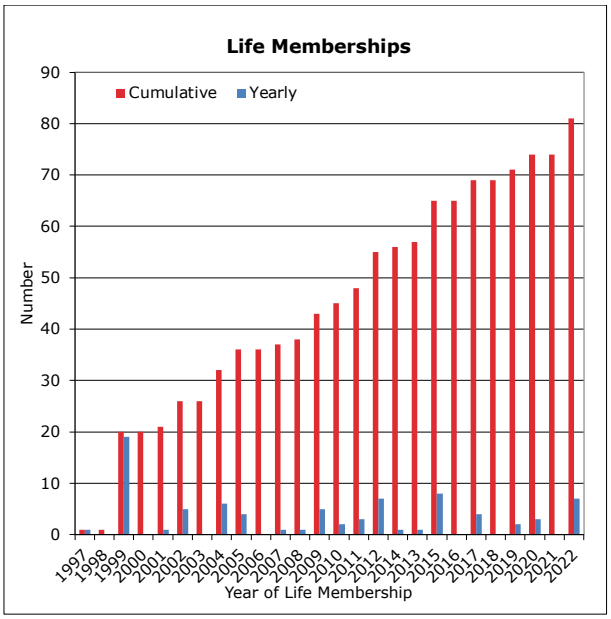

Figure 4: Life Members

Figures 5, 6 & 7 show the geographic, gender and discipline distributions respectively. It would be good to compare the gender distribution with the statistics from the AvH to determine if our distribution is representative.

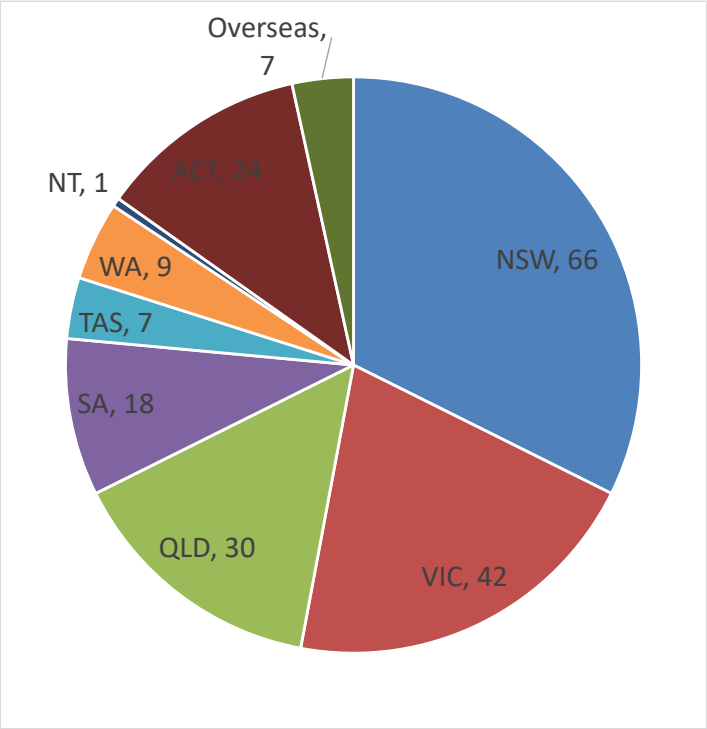

Figure 5: Geographic Distribution of Members

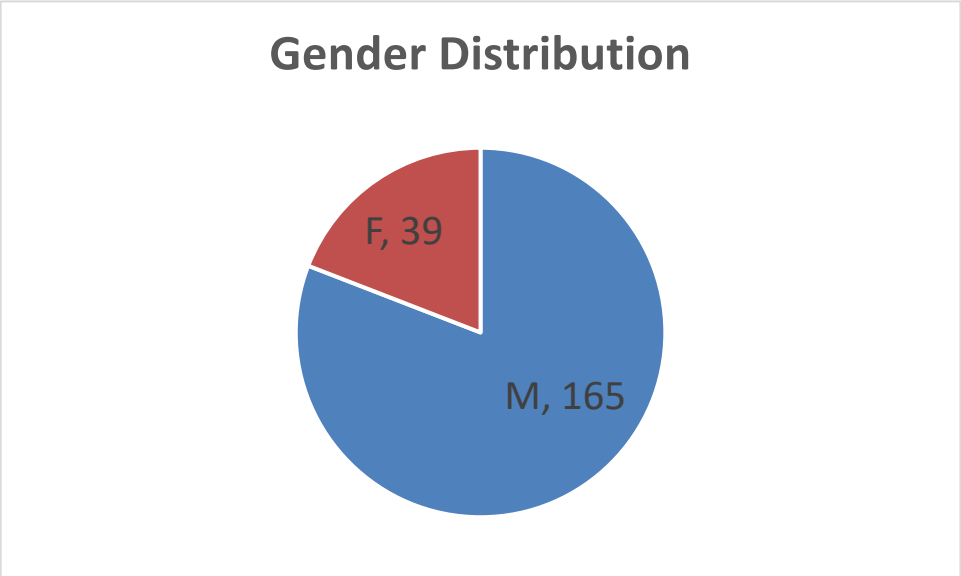

Figure 6: Gender Distribution of Members

Finally, Figure 7 and Table 1 show the distribution by broad discipline area. This is in response to recent discussions which have highlighted that our active membership outside the Sciences appears a little low. Again it would be good to compare with AvH data, and make sure we are contacting all returning fellows.

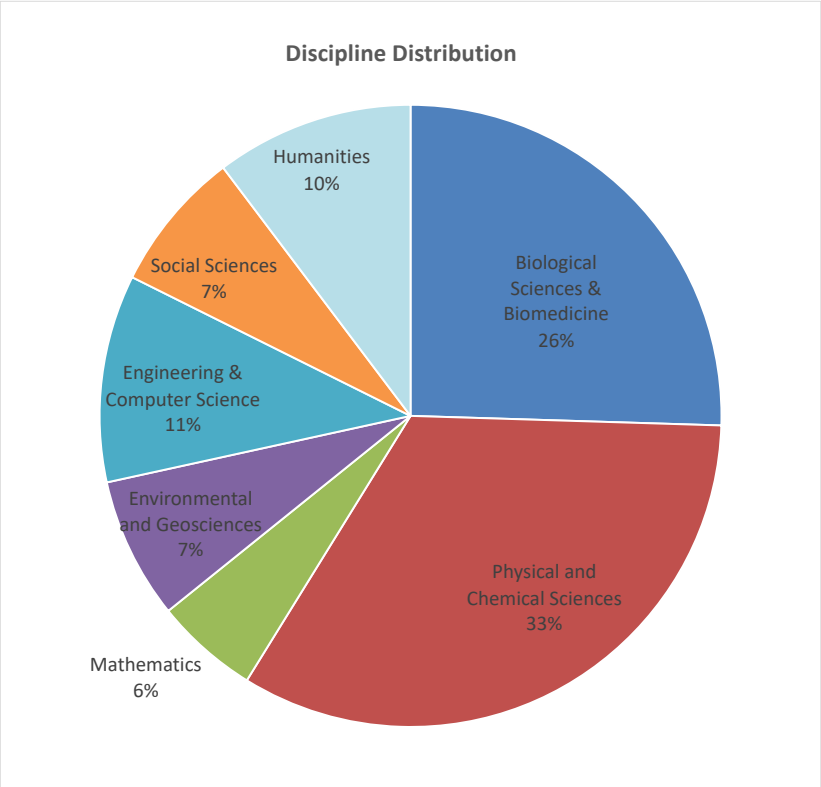

Figure 7: Broad Discipline Distribution of Members

Discipline Distribution		
Biology	29	14.3
Biomedicine	23	11.3
Chemistry	26	12.7
Computer Science	3	1.5
Economics	5	2.5
Engineering	19	9.3
Environmental Science	7	3.4
Geology	8	3.9
History	7	3.4
Languages	7	3.4
Law	3	1.5
Mathematics	11	5.4
Physics	42	20.6
Religious Studies	4	2.0
Social Sciences	10	4.9
Total	**204**	**100**

Table 1: Discipline Distribution of Members

Gary Bryant
Honorary Treasurer

Attachment VII

Report to Biennial General Meeting – Dr Sephen Hultgtren (SA Rep)

Dear Trevor,

Here is a brief report that you can include at the upcoming biennial meeting, or elsewhere, as necessary. If you need anything else, let me know.

"Stephen Hultgre took over as South Australia State Representative in late 2020, after the former representative, Peter Hochs, returned to the Netherlands. We currently have 18 members on our list of active members in the State. At least three of these are new in the past three years. We have enjoyed getting to know these new members at our Humboldt birthday celebrations, which we have held each year at an Adelaide venue, usually attended by about 10 to 12."

Stephen Hultgren
13th November, 2022

Attachment VIII

From: Thomas Haselhorst <t.haselhorst@griffith.edu.au>
Sent: Saturday, 5 November 2022 8:19 AM
To: Katherine Andrews <k.andrews@griffith.edu.au>
Subject: Re: Humboldt Meeting

Hi Kathy,

Excellent. Thank you for that Kathy.

In theory there is not tremendously much to report: other than our annual dinners and the AvH information material I usually hand/showcase at the Germany-Australian Science and Innovation Day.

I think the idea to send out a poll to ask for potential interest/support is great, and I will do that before the conference and send that through to you.

I also like your idea to tour the ADAPT facility as a potential excursion to the Gold Coast. In any, I believe it would be great to have it back here in QLD.

Thanks for your help again.

Cheers
Thomas

2019:

- Annual Alexander von Humboldt Dinner, German Club Brisbane, September 2019
- Booth with information material of the Alexander von Humboldt foundation at the Australian-German Science and Innovation day, Customs House Brisbane, October 2019

2020:
No activities due to COVID restrictions

2021:

- Annual Alexander von Humboldt Dinner, German Club Brisbane, September 2021
- Booth with information material of the Alexander von Humboldt foundation at the Australian-German Science and Innovation day, Griffith University South Bank Campus, Brisbane, October 2019

2022:

- Annual Alexander von Humboldt Dinner, German Club Brisbane, September 2021
- Booth with information material of the Alexander von Humboldt foundation at the Australian-German Science and Innovation day, BMW Design Academy, QUT, Kelvin Grove campus, October

2019

A/Professor Thomas Haselhorst | Research Leader & Lecturer

Institute for Glycomics & School of Environment and Science
| **Griffith University** | Gold Coast campus
QLD 4222 | Institute for Glycomics G25 | Room 2.59 |

Attachment IX

Queensland signs bioeconomy partnership with German Government

Published Friday, 27 May, 2022 at 01:46 PM

JOINT STATEMENT

Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment
The Honourable Cameron Dick

Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs
The Honourable Meaghan Scanlon

Queensland's status as a bioeconomy powerhouse has been bolstered by the signing of a new strategic partnership with the German Government.

The Joint Declaration of Intent for Cooperation in Bioeconomy was today signed by Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment Cameron Dick and German Federal Minister of Education and Research Bettina Stark-Watzinger.

Bioeconomies are an emerging model for government and business, with a greater focus on sustainably using renewable biological resources to produce food, energy and industrial goods.

Mr Dick said a bioeconomy collaboration program will now be developed to accelerate research and industry opportunities between Queensland and Germany, regarded as having one of the world's leading bioeconomies.

"This partnership represents an exciting opportunity for Queensland to work with and learn from the German Government," the Treasurer said.

"Queensland researchers will now have greater access to experienced German innovators and investors.

"International collaboration and investment in the bioeconomy sphere is critical to the growth and future prosperity of our state and nation.

"By signing this Intent on Bioeconomy today we're signalling our aim to attract more investment to Queensland and create new jobs of tomorrow.

"Germany is a major goods trading partner of Queensland, with import and export trade totalling more than $2.4 billion in 2021," he said.

"This year also marks the 70th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Australia and the Federal Republic of Germany.

"We now look to build on that significant foundation with a shared vision for expanding our biobased research and industry.

"Queensland has made significant progress in recent years when it comes to biofuels and developing more sustainable products and processes, and we're eager to work with German partners to tap into new biotech and bioproduct knowledge and supply chains."

In 2010, Germany released the world's first National Research Strategy on Bioeconomy, and since then 60 other countries have delivered similar plans.

In 2020 the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research invested 140 million Euros (AU$217 million) into 1772 bioeconomy research projects.

German Federal Minister of Education and Research Bettina Stark-Watzinger said the bioeconomy represents an important building block towards achieving ambitious objectives in climate, environmental and resource protection.

"It is nothing less than the promise to reconcile economic and ecological priorities in order to secure the prosperity of future generations with the help of high technology," Ms Stark-Watzinger said.

"The bioeconomy is multifaceted, interdisciplinary and enormously complex, therefore it is systems-oriented applied research, development and innovation that will determine the success on our path towards a bio-based and sustainable economy.

"As a 'Ministry of Opportunities' and main research funding body in Germany, we have recognised this early on and made this part of our DNA; for example, by considerably funding bioeconomic research since 2010.

“The central focuses of my trip, green hydrogen and bioeconomy, are two sides of the same coin to make urgently needed defossilisation a reality.”

Germany is Queensland’s fourth highest international science collaborator, behind the US, UK and China.

Between 2017 and 2021, Queensland and German researchers co-authored more than 6000 publications across 11 fields of scientific research.

Minister for Environment and Science Meaghan Scanlon said the new agreement paves the way for Queensland to further its climate action credentials in lockstep with a world leader.

“By shaping our bioeconomy here in Queensland, we’ll better protect our natural environment and take further action on climate change,” Ms Scanlon said.

“Germany is a visionary in bioeconomy policy, so this partnership holds great potential for our state and a more sustainable future.”

ENDS

Media contact: Ben Doyle 0400 775 561