

Minutes of the Zoom AGM for the Sea of Faith in Aotearoa, 5 Nov. 2022

Present: Pete Cowley (Chair), John Thornley (Secretary). Mary Ellen Warren, John Warren, Michael Templer, Laurie Chisholm, Jocelyn Kirkwood, Jan and Andrew Calvert, Maria Cash, Stephen Warnes, Gretchen Kivell, Yvonne Curtis, Lynne Tasker (14 present) **Apologies:** Doug Selman, Ian Harris, Natalie Allen Vicki Steel, Carman Goldsmith, Phil Grimmett, Bob Stewart,

Minutes of the 2021 AGM 6 November via Zoom (19 plus present)
(Moved) Mary Ellen/Michael Templer adopted as a correct record.

Chair's Report (Pete Cowley) (Received Pete/Laurie) The future pattern for live gatherings will be the hybrid model with mix of live events and virtual/online participation to the audience. The annual conference held at St Andrews-in-the – City 7/8 November, trialled this approach. Despite some technical hitches, those attending were positive in their responses. Laurie Chisholm's continuing work on the Newsletter was appreciated. Discussion on its future format has begun and will continue during 2023. With the retirement of Phil Grimmett after completing his four year term of service, the incoming Committee has just three members: Pete Cowley as Chair/Treasurer/ Admin, John Thornley as Secretary/ and Mary Ellen Warren, liaison with groups and other online events, covering learning/social needs. New members would be welcomed. The committee's Zoom meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month, starting 7.30 pm. We thank Phil for his service and look forward to future issues of original poems – a project he began and will continue in 'retirement'.

Treasurer's Report/Membership/Webmaster (Pete Cowley) Covid's closure of the usual live conference with 100 plus attendees and costs for outside speakers, the annual financial balance is \$14,174.30. Current membership 184 as at June 2022. Website continues to receive visits – an annual average of 300 unique visitors ('unique' = not repeating). Pete moved these reports be received. Agreed.

Newsletter (Laurie Chisholm) received. 'The Newsletter continues in pretty much the same way as it has over previous years. Mostly 12 pages per issue and delivered in two variations: electronically and printed, sent by post. It is possibly that with the Covid disruptions and the rise of Zoom and other computer-based ways of meeting that the Newsletter has become relatively more important. We should bear in mind, though, that the real interpersonal connection is invaluable and is perhaps the only way of mediating experience rather than concepts and ideas.' Laurie would appreciate more reports from groups on local activities.

Mary Ellen will follow this up in her emails to groups and contacts. Discussion on future electronic formats will continue during 2023.

Local Groups Report (Mary Ellen Warren) received. Mary Ellen increasingly moves from face-to-face local meetings to zoom meetings. In Feb and July emails were sent to 17 identified local group coordinators (some one individual) . There were six responses. Promoting the Auckland SOF's regular talks (both live and virtual) has been an exciting development. Other help was given to preparing for the Wellington Oct 7/8 conference. ' Identifying accommodation, public transport and restaurant options...It was a joy to welcome 25 attendees to our Wellington Conference and 30 more online.'

General Business

Numbers of new members? Yvonne Curtis asked how many new members had joined this year. Pete could not give the specific figure at the agm meeting, but it would appear in the next Newsletter. Because of the controversial nature of SOF for some people, names would not be included.

Future format for Newsletter. Further discussion was held. Face book as an option was raised, but not warmly endorsed . We need to trial electronic options current available. Irrespective of whatever format is chosen for the electronic newsletter, a print version will be produced for as long as somebody wants it.

Ian Harris Keynote Address at Conference; This will be published in the next Newsletter. Tom Hall, from the States, and who has contributed editorial work for US publication of Lloyd Geering titles, warmly received a copy of Ian's address, and it is circulating internationally. Well one, Ian!

New Life Member With support from members and endorsement by the Committee, Laurie Chisholm was nominated as a Life Member of the SOFiA. The nomination was unanimously adopted by the AGM . Members noted his ongoing participation in conferences, core group leadership, and continued promotion of Sea of Faith activities. His major contribution has been responsibility for regular publication of the Newsletter, where his layout/design skills plus his search for writers that ensured quality contents for the Newsletter. His own writings reflect a theological breadth and depth from both foundational and progressive thinkers and writers. Laurie warmly expressed appreciation for this honour.