

Annual General meeting of SFFANZ, the Science Fiction and Fantasy Association of New Zealand held at ConScription, at the Airport Hotel Grand Chancellor on June 1st, 2009.

Meeting Opened: 10.20am

Present: 30 members

Apologies were received from: Lyn McConchie, James Dignan, Andrew Dixon, Daena Dixon, Peter Clendon and Linnette Horne. Proxies for Lyn McConchie and James Dignan were being held by June Young. Lynelle Howell held proxies for Andrew and Daena Dixon.

Minutes of the previous meeting, held at Conjunction on March 24, 2008.

Maree Pavletich, and Sylvana Whyborn seconded "that the meeting take the minutes as read."
Carried without dissent.

Matters Arising

Ross Temple suggested that these be deferred to general business. This plan was agreed to by the chair.

Treasurer's report

Norman Cates reported that in the next financial year there will be a large expense for the cost of making the trophies. He noted that the membership subscription total did not equal the number of members in the organisation as some members had paid for multiple years, and there were some exchange differences for overseas paying members.

He also noted that the figures balanced on the first try.

Norman Cates moved, and Maree Pavletich seconded "that the accounts up to January 2009 be accepted."

Brian Howell added that this motion be amended to "that the accounts up to January 2009 be accepted, subject to usual scrutiny" Carried without dissent.

Election of Officers

The following people stood for nomination:

Norman Cates

Simon Litten

James Dignan

Lynelle Howell

Alan Robson

June Young

Brian Howell

Andrew Dixon

Barbara Clendon

Jan Butterworth

An election was held and was scrutineered by Maree Pavletich, Harry Musgrave and Lesley Hughes-Visiler. The following were elected: Norman Cates, Simon Litten, James Dignan, Lynelle Howell, Alan Robson, June Young, Andrew Dixon, Barbara Clendon and Jan Butterworth.

Brian Howell was thanked for standing for the board, and for his previous years' service to SFFANZ.

Whilst the votes were being counted, Simon gave the president's year in review.

From Simon's perspective he's standing down as president. He has been very happy that we have had a lot of progress as an organisation. SFFANZ has been approached by outside organisations partly because of the work done by June Young and James Dignan and the excellent website by Norman Cates and Alan Robson. He thanked these people.

He also thanked Lynelle Howell and Norman Cates for their work on the Sir Julius Vogel Awards. He was pleased that 357 nominations were received, and noted that not all of the nominated works ended up on the final ballot. He was also pleased with voter turnout.

He noted that SFFANZ has been approached by Harper Collins and Hachette Press, which represents Little Brown, Gollancz etc and asked SFFANZ members to do book reviews. Anyone interested in reviewing was asked to contact Simon, who is the point of contact. He was also pleased with the listing service – Alan Robson has been working hard on that but there are plans to expand the listings from more than the current literary works to cover other media as well.

He noted that there were a low number of fans nominating works and would like to see this change.

General Business

Matters Arising

Donee Status

Simon hasn't done anything about this as he was under the impression there was a fee to be paid. It appears there isn't so he will organise this to be done within the next month.

Hall of Fame

This has now been established, but we now need to populate this with information and revise.

NZSFW wind-up

This has not progressed, but Simon noted there is now a new group for SPECIFIC writers so there could be an opportunity to advance this, and to use the accumulated funds. SFFANZ is to do further investigation. June Young noted that Regina Patton (a Christchurch fan) has created the SPECIFIC organisation and so far has 16 members. It was noted that SPECIFIC will work with SFFANZ, but remain a separate entity.

DUFF/FFANZ separate bank accounts.

Still to be done.

Register of qualifying works

This has now been set up, and Alan Robson was thanked for doing this.

New General Business

Awards rules

Simon advised the meeting the membership gave some direction at last year's AGM and a LiveJournal discussion group also provided useful input for the board to work with as to what needed to be looked at. The schedule of the rules has been re-written and we have used this for running this year's awards.

Maree Pavletich raised the point that the Sir Julius Vogel Awards sub-committee should be empowered to decide what goes through to the final ballot. She noted at present this doesn't occur. Simon Litten advised that Maree was out of order and that this matter should be discussed later in the meeting.

Simon moved “that the rules, as used by the 2009 SJV sub-committee be accepted.” Clarifications were sought and it was noted that there were no changes to the rules, but rather the schedule of categories.

Questions were asked about what was changed, and why. It was noted that flexibility of accepting nominations was added. Where previously nominations could only be accepted from 1 January in the year the awards were to be presented, these could now be taken from 1 December of the previous year. It was noted that by doing this, the sub-committee has the most time in which to process the awards.

Simon moved, and Ross Temple seconded “that the new schedule of the categories to the awards be accepted.” Carried.

It was noted that some issues had arisen from the last round which needed discussion – principally tie breakers, and the question of whether categories are for the work or the artist.

Norman noted that tie breaking was used to work out which works would get onto the final ballot. He explained the process that we can only put a maximum of five to seven nominees on the final ballot. To select which ones these are, we look at those with the most nominations received. Where there are ties for spaces on the ballot then a tie breaker system must be used.

Discussion followed on how the tie breaker system should be used, and whose weight should carry most. Concern was expressed that the system could be gamed by ensuring that you get all your friends to vote for the work.

The guidance from the room was that the following tie breaker system be used: weight placed on SFFANZ members, if that doesn't resolve the tie then it should be by random ballot. There was one dissenting vote.

Kelly Buchanan suggested that once nominations for a work are received, then these should be put on the website for general information. Concern was expressed that this could cause a google effect – that is, if people see that a work has been nominated, they will vote for it and get all their friends to do the same, just because it is already on the list, not necessarily because it is worthy of nomination. The feeling of the room was that we need to educate people to nominate.

Professional/fan categories

The question has arisen of how we define what is professional or fan work. A fan work has always been treated as something which was not paid for. But if someone has done something fannish, and has appeared previously in a professional category, the question for the room was what do we do?

It was agreed that rather than come up with a definition for professional, we should have the ability to put a nominated work in a professional category should the nominee wish to.

Definition of collections

Maree Pavletich advised the meeting that she was unhappy with the inclusion of *Invisible Road* by Elizabeth Knox on the ballot as it was two novels put together. She believed it did not qualify as it was an omnibus.

Simon Litten advised that he had made the nomination and believed that the word “collection” was a broad term and thus believed that collections, such as this omnibus should be eligible to be nominated.

Alan Robson stated that as the work won the collected works award, clearly the membership are happy with the inclusion. The meeting felt that omnibus are eligible if 50 percent of the work or more has not previously been on the ballot, and that at least two genre works in a collection are required for that collection to be eligible.

Genre content in works

Alan Robson said that deciding how much work in a collection was genre was making a value judgement which the SFFANZ board is not entitled to make. Ross Temple thought that works should be included even if only one item within the work qualifies. Others felt that there should be more than one work in a collection for it to be considered for the awards.

The guidance from the room was that the SJV subcommittee be able to decide genre content in discussion with the nominee. If it doesn't meet criterion then it doesn't go through.

Andrew Dixon, by proxy, proposed the motion:

“That every committee member should turn up once every three years (to an AGM) so that those attending the convention/AGM might meet who they are voting for.”

Barbara Clendon seconded the motion.

It was opened for discussion. Robin Clark noted that it is expensive for South Islanders, particularly, to get to North Island conventions, and therefore this motion would exclude Southern representation on the board. Norman Cates added that SFFANZ is about fandom, not just about conventions.

At this point Barbara withdrew her support for the motion and it duly failed.

The chair officially declared the SFFANZ business session closed at 11.56am and invited convention attendees in to hear bids for the 2011 convention.

There were no bids received for the 2011 convention. Ross Temple made a presentation to the meeting of a potential action plan to work through.

Bids to be called for up to 30 November 2009.

If no bids are received that we try again on 31 March 2010, and if no bids are received, SFFANZ is to begin contingency planning for the hosting of the AGM and awards if there is no convention.

If no bids are received by Au Contraire (27-29 August 2010) then the contingency plan can be debated and ratified.

Ross moved, and Robin Clark seconded “that this proposed action plan be accepted.” Carried without dissent.

Meeting closed 12.05pm.

Au Contraire then made a presentation.