

Australian Regolith Geoscientists Association (ARGA)

Committee Meeting

4.00 pm AEDT Thursday March 30th 2017

Phone conference

MINUTES

1. Welcome and apologies

Present: Andrew McPherson (Chair), Nadir de Souza Kovacs, Carmen Krapf, John Keeling, Stephanie McLennan

Apologies: Vanessa Wong, Leah Moore, Ian Roach

Meeting opened at 16:05 AEDT

2. Adoption of Minutes of previous meeting (AGM - Feb 2016)

Adoption proposed by Nadir, seconded by Carmen

3. Matters arising from Minutes not dealt with elsewhere

- GSA merger discussion (see *Attachment 1*)

4. Correspondence

Nil to report

5. Finances

ARGA Treasurer' report 30 March 2017

Community Solutions Cash Account	\$27,147.83	
Community Solutions Cheque Account	\$ 2,180.90	
Total:	\$29,328.73	
Payments:		
7 March 2017 Deposit Coopers Alehouse Wallaroo		\$1,000.00
29 March 2017 PO Box renewal		\$ 196.00
Received Interest		\$ 31.04

6. Conference planning

- Carmen – conference progress update
 - Venue (Coopers Alehouse Wallaroo) secured with \$1000 deposit for the preferred dates in April 2018 (see *Attachment 2* for preliminary program).
<http://www.coopersalehouse.com.au/accommodation.php>
 - Discussion around the cost for registration reached a conclusion that similar cost to the Thredbo conference is appropriate in terms of covering expenses such as venue, catering, etc. Variation in costs for transport for field trips, which will be contingent on numbers, may need to be supplemented by ARGA funds.
 - Accommodation availability and cost also discussed. Carmen has identified numerous options covering a range of budgets, all within walking distance of the conference venue.

ACTION: President to review materials supplied by Carmen, and provide feedback or otherwise approve so that material can be distributed.

ACTION: Subject to the above, webmaster to add flyer/link to website and Facebook page; Committee members to distribute through their networks.

ACTION: Subject to the above, Secretary to add link and conference info to planned membership/extended network mail out.

7. Website

Nil to report. Website functioning as normal.

8. Other business

- Update on AJES special volume
 - Vanessa: All manuscripts submitted; some are already published online; the last one (Vanessa's) is in review currently
 - Matilda Thomas: "Yes, all papers submitted, Vanessa's has one overdue reviewer (if they don't submit their review soon, it will have to go out again). And there is one paper awaiting revision, so that will have to go back to original reviewers too when completed. All others should be published (online) now I believe. When we get the final one through, VW and I will write an editorial, and the paper special thematic edition will be produced... at this rate... it should be all done by June? I don't know if the paper edition has to wait in a queue, or if it will be "next available", am very hopeful it would happen before the end of this year! "

- Tribute to Bear McPhail

The ARGA Committee and membership formally recognise and acknowledge the contributions of Bear McPhail to the regolith discipline. Bear was an excellent teacher and strong supporter of regolith geoscience specialising in hydrogeochemistry. His great expertise in the field saw he and his students defining new mineral stability fields, studying gold-fixing bacteria for biogeochemical applications to the minerals industry, defining low temperature mineralisation pathways in gold mineral systems, define mineralisation pathways in inland acid sulfate soil systems, and using hydrogeochemistry in the search for new mineral deposits, to name a few.

Bear's passing is a sad occasion for all, and our thoughts and best wishes are with his family. He will be sorely missed.

Vale Bear.

9. Close of meeting

Meeting closed at 16:55 AEDT.

Attachment 1

Discussion of the possibility of a merger of ARGA with the Geological Society of Australia (GSA) took the majority of the time in this meeting.

Carmen reported on her discussions with Caroline Tiddy (President – GSA).

Engagement

Two options for engagement with GSA are available:

1. Standing Committee (Working Group) – only Committee Members need to be GSA members
 - Only two existing examples – Bowen Basin Symposium and Sydney Basin Symposium Committees
 - Limited activity beyond these specific events
2. Specialist Group – all members need to become GSA members
 - Preferred option from GSA (and ARGA) perspective due to desire to do more than just a biennial conference (e.g. regolith training workshops)
 - ***An informal vote of those Committee Members in attendance at today's meeting gave unanimous in principle support for ARGA to work towards becoming a Specialist Group of the GSA.***

Finances

- It was confirmed that any existing ARGA monies would be rolled into the greater GSA 'pot' (for the purposes of having a single large sum to maximise interest earned), but that the money is tagged to any given Group and its use is at the Groups' discretion.
- GSA is keen for Specialist Groups to continue essentially operating pseudo-independently to support their own activities (conferences, etc.), but under the GSA banner.

Logistics

- John notes that ARGA members need to vote to wind up the Association – this would take a special resolution, which could be an item at the next AGM, or alternatively an extraordinary General meeting could be called.
- Timing for such an event was discussed, and options are to either present such a resolution at the next AGM, or call a special meeting after the 2018 conference. Either way it was agreed that timing for any potential wind-up of ARGA would be most appropriately occur between the ARGA 2018 Conference (April 2018) and the Australian Geoscience Council Convention (October 2018).

GSA feedback

- GSA are excited about the possibility of ARGA becoming a Specialist Group (SG) of GSA, as regolith is seen as a holistic branch of geoscience which has significant overlap with many other discipline areas.
- Caroline (as GSA President) is fully supportive of such a move.
- As first steps, GSA suggested that ARGA should:
 - a) Produce [document] a very clear and definite position establishing the *purpose* of the proposed group, and reasons and rationale for the transition, including identifying the relevant benefits and costs.
 - b) Seek endorsement from existing GSA members, ARGA members, and other relevant stakeholders (e.g. industry contacts) and get feedback on the viability/interest of such a group.
 - c) The Committee agreed that a document pertaining to (a) above should be a priority activity.

ACTION: Nadir to talk to existing GSA (Structural Geology) Specialist Group members in her workplace to get feedback on how the Group operates, and if possible, how it came to be part of GSA.

ACTION: ALL Committee Members to review existing documentation on background and purpose of ARGA (including notes from Carmen's meeting with Caroline), and work to compile a document addressing (a) above ***by the end of May 2017.***

ACTION: Vanessa/Steph – acquire and circulate existing documentation alluded to above.

Other Linkages

- Vanessa - "In terms of specialist groups, there was discussion at the Federal Council meeting of Soil Science Australia about this. The Society is open to having specialist groups and including a regolith group, so I think it's still something to consider."
- Committee discussed this matter and determined that, even if ARGA should pursue a merger with GSA, this should not preclude ARGA from engaging with colleagues in the soil science and related disciplines. Indeed, ARGA more closely aligning with GSA could be seen as a useful way to promote engagement between soil science and 'geoscience' disciplines (e.g. host combined conferences)

Preliminary Program ARGA 2018 Conference

Saturday 7th April 2018

OPTIONAL: 10th year anniversary end of CRCLEME dinner, Adelaide

Sunday 8th April 2018

6 pm – 8 pm Icebreaker @ Coopers Ale House, Wallaroo

OPTIONAL: pre-conference fieldtrip Clare Valley Rocks fieldtrip - soils, wine and more (M. Werner)

Monday 9th April 2018

9 am – 5 pm talks & posters

Tuesday 10th April 2018

9 am – 5 pm fieldtrip 'Regolith and geology of the York Peninsula' (S. Hill, C. Krapf, M. Sheard, J. Keeling)

7 pm – 10 pm conference dinner

Wednesday 11th April 2018

9 am – 5 pm talks, posters & AGM

Thursday 12th April 2018

OPTIONAL: Post-conference fieldtrip 'More regolith of the York Peninsula and the Adelaide Plains' (S. Hill, J. Keeling, C. Krapf)