



Friends of Grasslands - Papers for 2020 AGM

Supporting native grassy ecosystems

12 March 2020

Papers for FOG 2020 Annual General Meeting, 17 Mar 2020

Papers included here:

- *Important message*
- *Agenda, president's report & draft minutes of previous AGM (Tues 19 Mar 2019)*
- *Motion to accept Jamie Pittock as an Honorary Life Member*
- *How to nominate to be an office holders or committee member*

Circulated separately

- *The Auditor's Report and Annual Accounts for 2019*
- *The FOG Annual Report 2019*

Important message

Dear Friends of Grasslands members

You are encouraged to attend our Annual General Meeting and celebrate a successful 2019 and the awarding of Honorary Life Membership to Jamie Pittock. If you wish, join us for dinner afterwards.

This is a very important AGM for FOG, as 2020 will be a year of transition and likely twelve months from now the world and our attitude to it will be very different. Likewise, FOG is likely to emerge as a different organisation and we need our members assistance with this.

So that we can cater, could you please register by contacting me, letting me know if you would like to attend the AGM and/or the dinner afterwards. Also, if you haven't already, please consider standing for a position of officer holder or committee member, or taking on some other role.

If you cannot attend, please let me know, particularly if you would like to stand for a committee position and/or wish to volunteer in some other role.

Geoff Robertson

president@fog.org.au

6241 4065 or 0403 221 117

Agenda for FOG 2020 Annual General Meeting

Tuesday 17 March 5.30 for 6 pm

26 Barry Drive (Lena Karmel Lodge), Acton ACT & after,

Dinner at 8pm at Spicy Ginger Cafe, 25 Childers Street

(Map on page 4)

Pre-meeting 5.30pm to 6pm. Join us for wine, nibbles and a catch-up

Meeting. 6.00-7.30pm

- Attendance and apologies
- Minutes of previous AGM, 19 Mar 2019 - (see page 4) and matters arising.
- Annual Report (to be circulated separately) & President's Report (page 2).
- Annual accounts and Auditor's report (circulated with these papers)
- Changes to governance arrangements (see page 3)
- Transition report (see page 3)
- Notice of motion: This AGM accepts Jamie Pittock as a Friends of Grasslands (FOG) Honorary Life Member (see page 2)
- Election of office holders & committee members (to nominate, see page 3)

Dinner at 8pm at Spicy Ginger Cafe, 25 Childers Street

President's report - Geoff Robertson

Last year was a very successful year, however we judge it. Its success was based on the contribution of our many members who are office holders, committee members and public officer, who manage our communications, events, work parties, advocacy, membership, sales and grants, and who participate in our events and contribute to our resources. FOG's success also depends on our many partnerships with agencies and other groups. All these are detailed in our annual report.

Many many people have made an enormous contribution and that makes the task of recognising individual contributions a difficult one. However, last year we awarded Ann Milligan a certificate of appreciation, and, with the agreement of our AGM, we will make Jamie Pittock an Honorary Life Member. The positive aspect of these awards is that the research into a person's background reveals how an individual may inspire and set an example to the rest of us. I would like to thank both Ann and Jamie for their inspiration, leadership and contributions.

However, as flagged in our "Friends of Grasslands in the 2020s" forum, FOG's volunteer base is seriously declining, as some of our more experienced volunteers partly or fully withdraw. Hence, we need some volunteers to take on more tasks or new ones to step up to the mark. 2020 will be a year of transition, which may mean that FOG might look very different in future. FOG will remain committed to support grassy ecosystems, but how that is achieved will be in the hands of our volunteers.

Tasks by volunteers can be flexibly designed, and designed around each volunteer. Some volunteers work many hours, some moderate hours and some few hours. It all contributes. To qualify as a volunteer you need some vision, a preparedness to make an on-going, but not indefinite, commitment, and some skill. Being a volunteer can have many benefits. Often it is thought that volunteers need relevant academic qualifications - that is definitely not the case.

We cannot isolate FOG's future from the world around us. The drought has dried up our vegetation, our rivers and depleted our biodiversity, while the fires and storms have added to the toll. These climate change events and now the coronavirus are impacting our capacity as individuals and as an organisation. Personally, I have found that recent events have profoundly affected me, creating a sense of loss and grieving. Nevertheless, in the next twelve months, I will devote my full energies to ensure that FOG transits well.

We are proceeding slowly with our events. We would welcome your ideas on our program but we realise with many unknowns we may have to adapt and cancel events.

Notice of Motion

to accept Jamie Pittock as an Honorary Life Member

Motion: This AGM accepts Jamie Pittock as a Friends of Grasslands (FOG) Honorary Life Member for his outstanding contribution to grassy ecosystems since the 1980s, his contribution to Friends of Grasslands and more broadly his leadership and public advocacy of Australian conservation.

Statement in support:

In support of this resolution, this AGM notes the following contributions made by Jamie Pittock:

- Jamie's contribution to grasslands commenced in Victoria in the 1980s when he was an advocate for the conservation of natural temperate grasslands in Victoria.
- Subsequently he joined the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) where he undertook the leading role in arranging Commonwealth Government support for a number of very important grassland conservation projects. Amongst these was the grassy ecosystems grants program. FOG received one of these grants which led to its work on Old Cooma Common. Jamie's behind-the-scenes-support for FOG's project was an extremely valuable contribution to the project and laid the foundation for much of FOG's subsequent successful on-ground projects. In addition, with his encouragement, FOG and WWF formed a very close relationship which lasted many years and was extremely important to FOG in building its networks, credibility and advocacy work.
- In 2009 Jamie initiated FOG's partnership with the National Capital Authority for restoration of National Capital Lands. That project has been sustained and enormously successful. Jamie's role as organiser, co-ordinator, liaising with NCA, public advocate, team builder, technical expert, mentor, and his enormous

personal commitment have epitomised what an ideal conservationist is, and grasslands are extremely fortunate to have him as a champion.

- His list of professional achievements and writings is truly outstanding and his appointment as Professor, Fenner School of Environment and Society, is truly deserved. In his professional life he shows the same openness and friendliness, preparedness to act as advisor and mentor - truly great personal qualities. His willingness to appear in the media and be a public advocate for grasslands and conservation are major contributions to Australian society.

How to nominate as a FOG office holders or committee member

The AGM elects the FOG committee, including office holders (President, two vice-Presidents, Secretary and Treasurer) and up to eight ordinary committee members. Financial members may be nominated to any position. A nomination requires a nominator and seconder and agreement by the nominee (who also may be the nominator or seconder). Under our rules, nominations should be received by our returning officer, paul.archer@fog.org.au by c.o.b. 10 March (now extended to 15 March). Please seriously consider nominating. You may contact Paul with any queries.

Changes to governance arrangements

To summarise, changes to the ACT Associations Incorporation Act 1991 were introduced on 1 July 2019. After inquiring of Access Canberra, the committee decided to recommend not to change FOG's constitution until the ACT Government issues new model rules which FOG would then adopt. (FOG has always followed the model rules with some exceptions). In the interim, the committee recommends changes to the release of the Membership register and minutes of meeting and has considered what it might do to resolve disputes. For background, see "News of Friends of Grasslands, March-April 2020, ", page 10.

Recommendations on transitions

The committee is considering trialing a number of initiatives:

Committee

- Creating an administrative committee
- Conducting full committee meetings in March, July and January
- An open committee/forum: May, August and November.

Membership

- A survey of members
- A membership drive
- On-line membership application, credit card, etc.
- A year's free membership to grant recipients.
- \$250 payment to undergraduates for policy papers.

Activities

- Aim the activities program more at non members, and
- Advertise more through known networks where appropriate.

Other issues

- Term limits for office holders, and reducing newsletter to four times a year under consideration.

For background, see "News of Friends of Grasslands, March-April 2020, ", page 10.

**Friends of Grasslands Annual General Meeting
Tuesday 19 March 2019
Draft Minutes**

The meeting was held at Lena Karmel Lodge, 26 Barry Drive, Acton ACT with President Geoff Robertson in the chair, opening at 6:05pm. The following papers had previously been circulated: Agenda, draft Minutes of the 2018 AGM and a collation of annual reports.

Attendance and apologies

Present

Alan Ford, Andrew Zelnik, Andy Russell, Geoff Robertson, Janet Russell, Jamie Pittock, John Fitz Gerald, Juliey Beckman, Margaret Ning, Michael Bedingfield, Paul Archer (minute taker), Rainer Rehwinkel, Sarah Sharp, Stephen Horn, Sarah Aylott, Maree Gilbert, David Johnson, Arminel Ryan, Jayne Roberts, Cathy Robertson, Ashton Robinson

Apologies

Sue Archer, Rosemary Blemings, Richard Bomford, Tim Booth, Matt Cook, Roger Farrow, Bob Gay, Elena Guarracono, Naarilla Hirsch, Libby Keen, Christine Kendrick, Lorraine Kennedy, Mira Kwasik, Jennifer Liney, Helen & Gus Macartney, Virginia McCoy, Libby McCutchan, Paul McPherson, Ann Milligan, John Nutt, Pamela Orr, Jane Paul, Leon & Kay Pietsch, Shirley Pipitone, Tony Robinson, David Shorthouse, Christopher Watson, Catherine Watt, Trish & Jim Williamson, Brigitta Wimmer, Katerina Ziesak Ken Hodgkinson, Kim & Yola Pullen, Shirley & Warwick Daniels, Barbara Payne, Cathy Robertson, Kat Ng, Linda Spinaze, Naarilla Hirsch, Helga Mossop, Dietlind Sommer.

Minutes of 2018 AGM

The draft minutes were accepted without change. Moved Paul Archer, seconded Janet Russell.

Matters arising from minutes

There were no matters arising from the 2018 AGM minutes.

Annual report

The annual report, as previously circulated, was tabled. People responsible for the various areas of the report were invited to address the meeting and be available for questions and discussion. The auditor's report and annual account papers were attached to the agenda.

Election of office bearers

The President acknowledged those members who were standing down from the committee. John Fitz Gerald agreed to act as Returning Officer. The outcome of the election follows.

President - Geoff Robertson was nominated by Paul Archer and seconded by Janet Russell. Declared elected unopposed.

Vice Presidents - There were no nominations for the two vice-President positions. These positions remained vacant.

Secretary - Paul Archer was nominated by Geoff Robertson and seconded by Andrew Zelnik. Declared elected unopposed.

Treasurer - Janet Russell was nominated by Geoff Robertson and seconded by Paul Archer. Declared elected unopposed.

Committee

The following FOG members were elected unopposed: Juliey Beckman, Maree Gilbert, Ken Hodgkinson, Margaret Ning, Rainer Rehwinkel

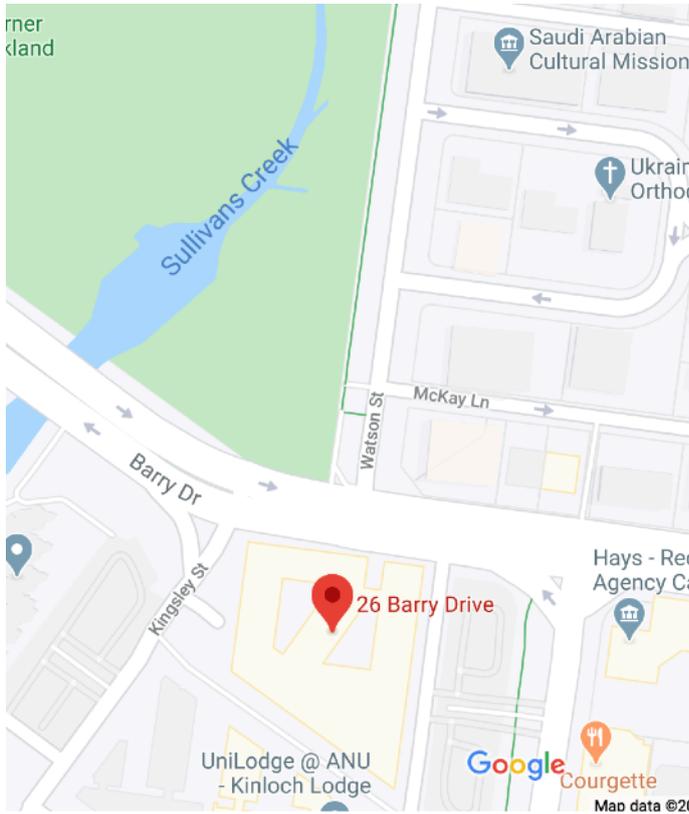
Andrew Zelnik

Motions on notice

No motions on notice had been received.

Close

The meeting closed at 7:15pm



Map for meeting: The location of meeting is on Barry Drive (No. 26) Conservation Council Offices. There is plenty of paid parking (free after 5.30pm) across the road on Watson Street.