

## NZHS Annual Report 2023 / 2024

It has been a busy and successful year for the society, and it is my pleasure to be able to report back to the membership. This annual report provides an overview to the members of key Society activities and undertakings over the last year and updates on the upcoming conference. The Society has continued to function well over the year, administratively, professionally and financially. The ongoing administrative support for the Society provided by On-Cue continues to deliver efficiencies and improvements to our services both to our members and our key sponsors.

The Society's work requires commitment and dedication from the entire executive team, and I would like to acknowledge everyone's contributions. I would also particularly like to further thank Conny Tschritter, Secretary of the Society for her administration overview of the society and her commitment over the year. Sincere appreciation and thank you also to Mike Ede our Treasurer for managing the Society's finances diligently and for his advice to the executive team.

Thanks to Richard (Editor), Laura Keenen (Assistant Editor) and Jo Dickson (layout and production specialist) for all their ongoing mahi to our publications. The Society's newsletter "Current" is tracking well. I would like to offer my sincere thanks to all the contributors and reviewers of our publications. Richard is disappointed that the printing of the Journal has been slow this year, but he assures me the Journal is coming. Since my last report, Issue 2 of 2023 has been published. That issue contained papers on adaptation to climate change – particularly a comparison of adaptation options to changing water availability at a farm scale; soil water profile visualisation for real-time irrigation and drainage management; correlation and observation of differences between drilling approaches. Richard is hopeful that we will (soon) have a Journal focussed on the Christchurch Aquifer Systems. There is a large body of work on the Christchurch groundwater system and there are many notes and papers coming together on this topic.

This year, Queenstown provided the backdrop for the annual Technical Workshop in April 2024, and we had an increase in attendees, breaking the 150 number mark for the first time. We had 155 in attendance. Despite the varied weather and some rain on the field day, our intrepid field hydrologists were undeterred and successfully carried out the annual gauging regatta. It was also noted that for a second year in a row, the data workshop also took place as well again with increased participation. The overall event has now really established itself in the hydrology calendar and is a sought-after event by everybody.

The NZ Diploma in Field Hydrology is gathering momentum with 70 graduated with a diploma and a further 26 in the process of completing theirs. This diploma is now appearing as a desirable qualification for most hydrology technician job descriptions. Most employers now also have it as a part of their staff development program for their teams, with a couple of agencies providing pay advancements as a result of successful completion. It's great to see the involvement of the NZHS in the early days of establishing this qualification which now is providing an excellent crop of field hydrology staff to regional Councils and others in New Zealand.

Last year's election at the AGM resulted with Conny Tschritter being re-elected as Secretary, with Richard Hawke re-elected to the position of Editor. Three current executive members of the Society i.e., Sarah Mager, Adam Martin and Rebecca Morris were re-elected to the Executive. The Society has been fortunate in the continuity of knowledge and experience in key positions within the executive team. I would like to thank the membership of the Society for the confidence in the Executive and would like to note that we consider it is a privilege to serve the Society. The Executive is committed to the Society's core purpose in furthering the science of hydrology and its application to the understanding and management of New Zealand's water resources.

The Society has built and sustained long-term relationships with sponsors and continues to cultivate connections with potential sponsors. This has enabled the Society to continue being successful in procuring revenue both for the conference and the Society. Sponsorship support continues to help fund project and travel grants as well as student grants. The Society would like to acknowledge and thank all the sponsors and supporters for the ongoing support of the Society over the years. Well done and thank-you to everyone who has worked diligently on securing various sponsorship for the Society and its conference, as it means a lot to the strength of the Society's financial

position and reputation. The financial strength of the Society gives us confidence to undertake projects and to continue to provide support for a range of projects and other grants including supporting students to attend our annual conference. For instance, we provided a record number of complimentary student registrations (17) to attend the Annual conference at Auckland. This year, we support five students to attend the Blenheim conference. All these are possible because of the generous support from our sponsors. If there are potential sponsors that we are not aware of, we would love to hear about them from the membership. Also, if you are interested in supporting specific activities, such as helping students attend national and international conferences, please talk to me or one of the executives. We are keen to hear your ideas. Last year's conference was in Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland, and it was a joint conference between NZHS/Australasian Groundwater and was organised by NZHS and the New Zealand and Australian Chapters of the International Association of Hydrogeologist (IAH). The conference was held at the Auckland University of Technology – City Campus. It was a very enjoyable and stimulating conference with the mix of papers from Australia and New Zealand offering a great opportunity to learn from each other. There were over 300 delegates registered. It was also pleasing that the conference made a profit though that's not our primary intention when organising conferences. The Society would like to thank and acknowledge the full committee including Theo Sarris and Conny Tschritter the Co-chairs from NZHS, our partners from IAH NZ and OnCue (our conference support) for running a fantastic, fun, exciting and successful 2023 conference. The Society's Outstanding Achievement Awards for 2023 were also presented to David Scott and Peter Callander. The recipients truly deserved these awards for their significant contributions to their expert areas of hydrology over many years. Whilst both recipients were not at the Auckland Conference – the Society was able to make a personal presentation and acknowledgement to them in a gathering in Christchurch earlier this year.

This year's conference is in Te Waiharakeke Blenheim from 26 – 29 November 2024 and is being held at the Marlborough Events Centre. The conference is a stand-alone NZHS conference providing a breather from previous joint conference. It is also great to see our conferences being hosted in the provincial centres and not just the larger cities. The numbers registered still look positive with over 170 registered at the time of this report. One of the field trips is already fully booked with a wait list. This is the third time the Hydrological Society's conference is being hosted in Blenheim, the previous two being in 2002 and 2014. The conference theme this year is "Securing Our Water Future: Embracing Adaptation and Collaborative Solutions". This theme is highly relevant given the challenges we face in New Zealand, including extreme weather conditions and the complexities of managing water quantity and quality with various stakeholders who often have competing needs and interests.

I am pleased to report that the Society continues to be in a sound financial position and the financial reports will be tabled at the upcoming AGM. The current membership is stable at 605 which is a positive despite the events over the last few years. The Executive continues to be diligent in how our finances are managed and our strong financial position enables us to undertake and plan projects with confidence, supporting various undertakings that promote our science.

At the AGM this year there are several positions which are up for election i.e. President, Treasurer and two or three executive members as per our Constitution. I am keen to pass the baton as president but am committed to supporting the transition with the Executive team as the immediate past president as provided for in our constitution. I am looking forward to seeing as many members as possible attending our AGM this year and keen to see interest from the membership for putting themselves forward for executive positions. Nomination forms for the executive positions and proxy forms (if you are unable to attend the AGM) will be sent to everyone prior to the AGM. The executive role is not too onerous but can be very rewarding both in terms of serving to promote our science as well as our members. If you can't make it to the conference or AGM, please feel free to contact any of the Executives with your suggestions and ideas to further promote our science. The executive team is eager to receive feedback and input from all our members to continually advance our science. I would also like to personally thank and acknowledge everyone who has contributed to the successful running of the Society over the past year.

Joseph Thomas  
President