



President's Report – Annual General Meeting – 2 Dec 2021

2021 has once again been a challenging year for the society, and no doubt for many of our members. In the backdrop of a continuing global pandemic my thoughts are with those who have struggled both personally and professionally. I hope that 2022 brings better fortunes to all.

The largest challenge faced by the society this year was in relation to our Molluscs 2021 conference, planned to be held this week. Although we tried to circumvent the potential border closure issues by moving the conference from Perth to the Gold Coast, we sadly had to make the decision to postpone until 2022. Planning for the event, including keynote speakers, was well underway and we hope that much of the event will go ahead as planned next year, offering the in-person conference experience that we are all looking forward to. I thank the members of the organising committee (Kirsten Benkendorff, Priscila Salloum, Kerry Walton, Lisa Kirkendale, Kate Summer, Marina Richardson, Nikolina Nenadic, and the team at WillOrganise) for all their work to date. Planning will resume in March 2022.

Despite the challenges, the society has remained active, with regular council meetings (held in February, May, August and December), the award of the Molluscan Achievement Award and three Malacological Research grants, publication of the newsletter and Molluscan Research, and managing the membership and finances of the society, which are both looking strong.

While the pandemic has caused us many challenges, it also brought about an exciting new initiative – MSA's free, online mini-symposia. The first event was held on the 22nd of June and was entitled 'Marine Molluscs at Work', showcasing research on molluscs in fisheries and aquaculture. With four keynote presentations and six 'lightning' talks, the event was an excellent opportunity for both established and early-career scientists to showcase their work. The event attracted over 70 attendees from all over the globe, particularly from the Indo-Pacific region, and from a range of sectors. This demonstrated the appetite for this type of event in our region, and represents a unique niche that MSA is well poised to fill. I congratulate the event organisers, Lisa Kirkendale, Priscila Salloum, and Kerry Walton, and thank them for their time and effort.

The postponement of Molluscs 2021 provided an opportunity to hold a second online symposium. This symposium has been scheduled directly before this AGM and is based on the theme 'Molluscs as bioindicators of change'. We have a fantastic program lined up, including two international speakers, and a good number of registrations. I would like to once again thank Priscila for her assistance with organising the event.

As always, the MSA council has been busy behind the scenes donating of their time to keep the society running. I thank Matt Nimbs for enthusiastically taking on the



role of Treasurer this year, this role has a steep learning curve and you have risen to the challenge! I also thank Priscila for keeping council on track in her role as secretary, and for helping with almost every activity that MSA conducts - even helping to get our website up to date – a huge effort that is much appreciated. Platon Vafiadis, as always, has worked tirelessly to produce and procure interesting content for our newsletter. Don Colgan ensures that our journal, Molluscan Research, continues to deliver a well-respected outlet for malacological papers, despite a few COVID-related delays in printing. Kirsten Benkendorff, Wayne O'Connor, Simon Hills and Kerry Walton were all key contributors to the council, each taking on additional roles such as judging of awards – thank you very much.

I would particularly like to thank Felicity Masters who held the MSA Membership Secretary role in 2021. Felicity has been instrumental in keeping our members up to date and has volunteered for other council roles including judging grant applications. Felicity is moving on from the council and we wish her all the best for the future.

To any new council members who join our ranks – welcome! I look forward to seeing what the incoming MSA council can achieve in 2022.

C. McDougall

Carmel McDougall,
MSA President