

## **President's Report, December 2018**

It is with regret that I am not able to deliver my final President's report in person as work commitments mean I must be in Sydney. The Society has had another busy year with its monthly lunch schedule serving up a course after course of fascinating speaker. We started the year with now Committee member Michelle Cooper from Zoos Victoria on conservation of rare species, had James Bond relating to changing geopolitics, plus a dose of the Productivity Commission and mortgages. We've also had Victoria's volcanos; Mungo Man and the best attended lunch of the year was Professor Alan Fels' personal talk on mental health. Thanks as always to Peter Baines for organising and to Jeremy Adams for making use of the Savage Club possible as a venue. And thanks to the Savage Club itself, a splendid venue where the Society is always given the warmest of welcomes.

This year's annual dinner featured Newnham alumna Chloe Munro who spoke on joining the dots between infrastructure, finance, energy and climate change. A few less people this year than last, but a fascinating topic by an excellent speaker so no surprises that the questions flowed. The Melbourne Club as always proved an excellent venue, and a big thanks to the tireless work of Janelle, Jerry and Antara in handling the logistics of the dinner and Patrick Moore for being our host. The Boat Race Dinner was a hit again this year, albeit perhaps lacking the sense of suspense of prior years, given everyone knew the Light Blues had had such a comprehensive victory! Thanks as always to Peter Adams for organising a splendid event.

Turning to sporting jousts with Oxford closer to home, The Henry Gordon-Clark Trophy for the best golf team still remains in Cambridge hands, as does the Oxford trophy as the Light Blue team continues to dominate on the fairway. We have had drinks throughout the year with our Oxford friends, but having seemingly nailed the formula at the end of last year, it seems like there is still some work to do.

It is a pleasure to report a healthy number of new members joining the society throughout the year, meaning our membership is now in the high two hundred.

And so, to the most important part of my report. The changing faces on the committee. David will be standing down as Secretary and retiring from the Committee after being its backbone for the past few years. His dedication to the role has been something to behold, having a unique skill of being able to get the job done, cajole others to get their jobs done, yet never lose his gentle mild-mannered charm. Big boots to fill!

A pair of thongs to fill come in the form of the President stepping down. I have thoroughly enjoyed being President and look forward to continuing on the Committee. Vice President, Janelle Ward will also be stepping down. Committee retirements present us with opportunities, and we're looking forward to the new young faces on the Committee helping us connect better with more recent alumni.

I would also like to thank everyone for their involvement in the Society, pass on my best wishes to those leaving us, and on behalf of the Committee wish you all a very Merry Christmas.

Chris Briggs