

## **Minutes of Annual General Meeting of the Australian Society of Authors**

**1pm, 11 November 2021**

**Via Zoom**

### **Membership present:**

Nicholas Pickard (Chair), Kirsty Murray (Treasurer), Malcolm Knox, Bruce Pascoe, Sophie Cunningham, Danielle Clode, Anne Maria Nicholson, Liz Anelli, Kelly Gardiner, Judy Reid, Helen O'Neil, Joanna Thyer, Louise Howland, Margot Hilton, Seana Smith, Martin Lyons, Sarah Pye, Fiona Lynch.

### **ASA staff present:**

Olivia Lanchester, Lauren Anderson, Lucy Hayward

1. The meeting opened at 1.00pm and commenced with an **Acknowledgement of Country**.
2. The Chair declared a quorum, gave a **welcome** to those present and introduced himself, the Treasurer, and CEO.
3. **Declaration of proxies**  
Nil.
4. **Apologies**  
Melissa Lucashenko  
Bronwyn Bancroft
5. **Minutes of previous AGM**

Minutes of the previous AGM were tabled and accepted. A motion that these minutes be accepted was proposed by the Chair and seconded by Kirsty Murray. The motion was carried. There were no matters arising from the previous Minutes.

## **6. Chair's Report**

The Chair gave a verbal summary of his written report.

The Chair announced the results of the election. The elected directors are Bronwyn Bancroft, Malcolm Knox, Sarah Ayoub and, reelected to the ASA Board for a second term, Kirsty Murray.

A motion that the Chair's report be accepted was proposed by the Chair and seconded by Sophie Cunningham. The motion was carried.

## **7. Treasurer's Report**

The Treasurer read from her written report, which was tabled. There were no questions from the floor. A motion that the Treasurer's report be accepted and that the financial statements for the period ending 30 June 2021 be adopted was proposed by the Treasurer and seconded by Kelly Gardiner. The motion was carried.

## **8. CEO's Report**

The CEO gave a verbal summary of her written report and thanked members, directors and staff for their support of the ASA in 2021.

A motion that the CEO's report be accepted was proposed by the Chair and seconded by Sophie Cunningham. The motion was carried.

## **9. ASA Medal Recipient**

The Chair stated that COVID-19 unfortunately prevented us from holding our annual Colin Simpson Lecture, as restrictions on gathering are still in place. The 2021 Colin Simpson Lecture is to be postponed until February 2022.

The Chair explained that we ordinarily announce the winner of the ASA Medal at the Colin Simpson Lecture. Instead of waiting until February, we will be making that announcement now.

The Chair invited Sophie Cunningham, director and Chair of the ASA's Nominations Committee, to announce the recipient of the ASA Medal.

Sophie Cunningham announced that the winner of the ASA Medal 2021 is Bruce Pascoe. The Board based its decision on the fact that Bruce is an award-winning author of over 30 books, an editor, publisher, anthologist, researcher and educator. Bruce's literary output ranges from short stories to essays, reviews, textbooks, children's fiction, adult fiction, anthropology, indigenous language and history. He has been published locally and internationally. In 1999, Bruce won the Fellowship of Australian Writers Literature Award. In 2018, he won the Australia Council Award for Lifetime Achievement in Literature.

Bruce founded a publishing company and, along with Lyn Harwood, he founded the magazine, *Australian Short Stories*, which published the works of over 500 emerging and established authors, including Helen Garner, Gillian Mears and Steven Carroll from 1982 to 1998.

Bruce's many works include *Fox*, *Shark*, *Earth*, *Convincing Ground: Learning to Fall in Love with your Country*, *Fog a Dox*, *Mrs Whitlam*, *Seahorse* and *Salt*. The Board pays tribute to the huge influence of award-winning *Dark Emu* (2014) and *Young Dark Emu* (2019) which has shone an important spotlight on the history of our First Nations people, sparked dialogue, widely engaged Australians on a re-consideration of Aboriginal agriculture, and challenged colonial assumptions.

Bruce has taught and mentored young First Nations authors, provided opportunities to First Nations illustrators, worked to preserve the Wathaurong language, and is currently a Professor on Indigenous Agriculture at Melbourne University.

Sophie thanked Bruce for his powerful contribution to Australian literary culture and for his generous support of other authors and illustrators.

Bruce Pascoe thanked the ASA and acknowledged the honour of receiving the award. He took the opportunity to speak about the need to properly fund the ABC and ensure we don't lose our national broadcaster given its importance for reporting and intellectual rigour.

Bruce and Chair admired the design of the ASA Medal by artist Melissa Stannard and thanked her for her beautiful design.

**10. General Business.** There was no further business.

The meeting was closed at 1.40pm.