

HISTORY

New Zealand and The AusIMM

In July 1897, with H.A.Gordon as president, an inaugural meeting was held to form the New Zealand Institute of Mining Engineers with an initial membership of some 80 mining personnel. Gordon, a mining engineer from Scotland originally, had come to New Zealand in the early 1860s and subsequently had become the Inspecting Engineer of Metalliferous Mines (cf Chief Inspector of Mines) 1882-1896. On retirement from Mines Department he continued his interest in the Mining industry. The New Zealand Institute was disbanded in 1900 after only four years and 28 of its members joined the Australasian Institute where Henry Gordon was elected President for the year 1903.

As a consequence of Gordon's Presidency, the Annual General Meeting of the Institute was held for the first time in New Zealand in 1903, with Gordon presenting a Presidential Address and with an attendance of some 20 delegates representing 8 percent of the Institute's membership.

The second Annual General Meeting to be held in New Zealand was in 1911, when J. Mackintosh Bell was the President of the Institute. Bell, a Canadian, was Director of the New Zealand Geological Survey and gave his Presidential Address on "The Hauraki Goldfields, New Zealand". This meeting was attended by 140 members or 28 percent of the then membership of 500.

Resulting from this meeting, an Auckland Branch of the Institute was formed with C.P. Sims of Waihi Gold Mining Coy Ltd as the Secretary. This Branch was, however, disbanded in 1914.

It would not be until 1971 that New Zealand was again host of an Annual Conference of the Institute. However, over the years various New Zealand Members have served as Local Correspondent and/or Councillor for New Zealand. These included Prof. D.B.Waters of Dunedin, (professor of Metallurgy at Otago School of Mines 1906-1926, apart from war service 1914-17), P.G. Morgan, Director of the New Zealand Geological Survey, Hugh Crawford, Director of the Thames School of Mines, and Gordon J. Williams, Dean of The Otago School of Mines 1944-65. It was on the departure of Gordon Williams in 1965 to establish a Department of Mineral Resources in Teheran that Tasman Joseph (Tas) McKee, managing director of a family Company, Lime & Marble Ltd, was elected Councillor representing New Zealand.

The year 1965 was also a milestone in the history of the Institute, particularly for New Zealand as the Eight Commonwealth Mining and Metallurgical Congress was held in Australia and in New Zealand. As Monograph #4 of the publications of the Congress, a most important work edited and largely compiled by Gordon Williams, "Economic Geology of New Zealand" was produced and became "the Bible" for those engaged subsequently in mineral

exploration in New Zealand. On his return from Iran and in retirement Gordon Williams was to produce a second edition updated to 1974 of this publication which was dedicated the "T.J. McKee Memorial Volume".

Formation of The New Zealand Branch

T.J. (Tas) McKee, for many years prior to his becoming the Councillor representing New Zealand in 1965 had been very active in mineral exploration in New Zealand, particularly after the discovery of uranium mineralisation in the Buller Gorge, Westland, in 1955. Shortly after becoming Councillor he called into the Wellington Mines Department Office of L S Jones (The Inspecting Engineer of Metalliferous Mines, later the Chief Inspector of Mines under the 1971 Mining Act) to discuss the possible formation of a New Zealand Branch of the Institute. Dr R.W. Willett, the then Director of the New Zealand Geological Survey, was brought into the picture and an approach then made to G.B. O'Malley, the Hon. Chief Executive Officer of the Institute in Melbourne as to how best to go about the formation of a Branch.

Tas McKee, as Convenor, called for a meeting in Wellington for 16 February 1966 in order to prepare a formal request to Council. Those who attended this meeting were -T J McKee, Councillor, J.B. O'Malley, Hon. CEO Melbourne, R.W. Willett, Director NZGS Lower Hutt, M.H. Buckenham, Member OSM Dunedin, D.S. Nicholson, Member DSIR Gracefield, W.R. Sparrow, Member Dunedin, J.C. Braithwaite, Assoc. Member lime & Marble Nelson, and L.S. Jones, Mines Department Wellington, who acted as interim Secretary. At this meeting it was agreed that a Branch should be formed initially centred on Wellington. The Branch to be known as The New Zealand Branch.

At that time there was a total membership of the Institute in New Zealand of 57, composed of 17 Members, 9 Associate Members, 1 Affiliate, 5 Junior Members and 24 Student Members.

Council approved the formation of the Branch and this approval was published in the April/May Bulletin 1966 of the Institute.

Draft Rules were drawn up and approved by Council. These provided inter alia for a Branch Committee comprising four members elected to represent Corporate Members and four members elected to represent Non-Corporate Members with the Councillor representing New Zealand and the immediate past Chairperson as ex officio members. The first Branch Committee was elected in April 1966 as follows:

For Corporate Members:

- M.J. Buckenham, Member, Dunedin.
- L.S. Jones, Member, Wellington, Hon. Sec/Treas.
- John Rogers, Member, Auckland, Vice Chair .
- R.W. Willett, Member, Wellington, Vice Chair.

For Non-Corporate Members:

R.C. Bradshaw, Affiliate, Wellington.

R.B. James, Student, Dunedin.

R.A. McDowell, Student, Dunedin.

D.N.B. Skinner, Student, Auckland.

The committee was empowered to elect other members to the Committee to be local organisers and such have been appointed in Auckland, Waikato, Waihi, Wellington, Christchurch, West Coast and Dunedin.

The Inaugural Meeting of the Branch was held in the Civil Service Club, Wellington, on Monday, 18 April 1966 and was attended by some 60 members and guests and chaired by the then President Mr Henry (later Sir Henry) Somerset CBE. The guests included the Rt. Hon. Tom Shand, Minister of Mines, P.M. Outhwaite, Under-Secretary for Mines, Mr G.B. O'Malley, Hon. CEO The AusIMM, Melbourne, Miss Beryl Jacka, Secretary The AusIMM, Melbourne, and many other persons of note. The President at the buffet dinner following the meeting presented an address outlining the history of the Institute and something of the current mineral scene in Australia under the title "Some aspects of the Mineral Industry in Australia".

At the time the Branch was inaugurated a total of 65 members was recorded, comprising 23 Members, 12 Associate Members, 6 Junior Members and 24 Students very shortly to be joined by the first Company Member, Lime & Marble Ltd, and the first Affiliate R.C. (Bob) Bradshaw.

Financing the Branch

Apart from small grants from Melbourne the early financing of the Branch depended on some donations from the minerals industry and grants from the residual funds held on behalf of the New Zealand Committee for the Eight Commonwealth Mining and Metallurgical Congress 1965. The chairmanship of that committee was taken over in 1966 by Mr P.M. Outhwaite, Under-Secretary for Mines, from Prof. Gordon Williams on his departure for Teheran. The committee at its last meeting passed a motion that the residual funds be used to set up a New Zealand Branch of the Institute. The funds were held by Mines Department until 1975 when the final balance of \$3,031.81 was paid into the banking account of the Branch.

After his return from Teheran in 1973 Gordon Williams set to produce a second edition of "Economic Geology of New Zealand" and this was at first financed in 1974 by a very generous loan by way of bridging finance by The McKee Trust and from accumulated funds of the Branch. Following publication, the sale of 200 copies to the Institute in Melbourne and the balance of Some 200 copies to the New Zealand Government Printer enabled the Branch to reimburse The McKee Trust and, as at 30 April 1976, establish Branch funds on term deposit amounting to \$5,800.

Education Funds

A fund was originally established in 1977 to provide annual grants for tertiary Student papers as Student Bursaries. The original grants made in 1977 were five in number each for \$250. This scheme has evolved into prizes for the best student papers presented at the Annual Conference of the Branch, and prizes for secondary school students participating in the annual regional Science Fairs, with projects relating to the minerals industry.

New Zealand residents are unable to participate in the AusIMM's Education Endowment Fund bursary programme because of Australian tax considerations. Therefore the substantial profit from the PACRIM 95 conference was used to set up a New Zealand Branch Education Endowment Trust Fund. This has awarded bursaries of \$2000 for tertiary research.

New Zealand Branch Newsletter

The Branch instituted a Newsletter for circulation to Branch members in 1976 under the Chairmanship of Mr J.C. (Jock) Braithwaite and the Editorship of Mr Denis Kelly. The first edition, Volume 1/1, was issued March 1976. Since then, the Newsletter has had irregular production, usually with two to four issues annually, each containing between 7 and 32 pages. Vol 1 No 1 introduced the long running 'Heard at the Cinnabar' column written by Bruce Utting, which continued until December 1989. Cartoons were included together with Annual Accounts, news of meetings, events and members, industry news, Conference and regional reports and political and local commentary/submissions. Among other items published it is the vehicle used to distribute the Minutes of the Branch AGM including the Hon. Treasurer's audited Annual Statement of Accounts.

New Zealand Branch Chairpersons

Tas. McKee	1966-1967
R.W. Willett	1967-1969
John Rogers	1969-1971
Michael Buckenham	1971-1973
Tom Marshall	1973-1975
Jock. Braithwaite	1975-1977
Lloyd Jones	1977-1979
Michael Buckenham	1979-1981
David Buist	1981-1983
Bruce Utting	1983-1985
Vivienne Bull	1985-1987
Nick MacArthur	1987-1989
Martin Ward	1989-1991
Bob Brathwaite	1991-1993
John Hogan	1993-1995

Colin Douch	1995-1997
Vivienne Bull	1997-1999
Tony Christie	1999-2001
Roger Gregg	2001-2003
David Stewart	2003-2005
Graeme Fulton	2005-2007
Murray Stevens	2007-2009
Cam Wylie	2009-2011
Tony King	2011-2013
Les McCracken	2013-2014

Councillors Representing New Zealand

Since the Branch was formed in 1966:

Tas McKee	1965-1973
John Rogers	1973-1977
C H Benney	1978-1981
Jock Braithwaite	1982-1987
Lloyd Jones	1988
Mike Baker	1989-1991
Michael Buckenham	1992-1998
John Hogan	1998
Vivienne Bull	1998-2000

AusIMM Board Members resident in New Zealand

Vivienne Bull	2000-2003
Roger Gregg	2005-2011

AusIMM Presidents resident in New Zealand

Henry Gordon	1903
J Mackintosh Bell	1911
Michael Buckenham	1997

NZ Branch Newsletter Editors

Dennis Kelly	1976-1981
Nick MacArthur (with assistance from John Hogan and David Buist)	1981-1988
Michael Buckenham and Bill Vance	1988-1991
Mike Baker	1992-1999
Geoff Price	1999-2001
Graham Fulton	2001- 2004
Murry Cave	2004 - 2005

New Zealand Branch Members – Awards - [click here](#) for list of recipients

NZ Education Endowment Trust bursaries - [click here](#) for list of recipients

Venue -AGM/Annual Conferences of Branch - [click here](#) for list

Main information source:

Jones, L.S. 1993: The AusIMM in New Zealand. Proceedings of the 27th Annual Conference 1993, NZ Branch of the AusIMM, pp 419-423.

Plus additional material from Michael Buckenham, Tony Christie and Roger Gregg.