



26 October 2007

## **ANNUAL REPORT 2006/07**

Since our last AGM in September 2006, NZSSES has achieved some remarkable results. Our feature event of the year was the *Talking and Walking Sustainability* Conference in February 2007. It exceeded all expectations. The Conference was attended by nearly 200 people, attracted twelve highly respected national and international keynotes, and showcased some eighty-four papers under the sub-themes of Philosophy and Science, Liveable Communities including transport, Sustainable Tools, Sustainable Technology, Education, and Business and Governance. The conference also attracted a contingent of academics, researchers, and students from the United States of America, supported by the National Science Foundation, to encourage international collaboration and the development of a global perspective on sustainability engineering.

In the area of philosophy and science especially, the papers demonstrated that some people and some disciplines are still coming to terms with the meaning and definition of sustainability, whereas others demonstrated that discussions have now move passed what sustainability means in their area of expertise and talked about what is being done. Panel discussions and interactive workshops generated some high-level discussion and, at times, disagreement, which in turn developed networks for further talks and possible areas of research.

In conjunction with, and immediately prior to the conference, The Society sponsored the University of Auckland Students for Sustainability Group, NEXUS, who organised a students day entitled *Joining the Dots*. Many of the keynote speakers spoke both formally and informally to students. The opportunity to address students at this level was considered an added bonus by the conference speakers, as today's students are the engineers, scientists and educators of the future.

Immediately following the conference an invitation only workshop hosted by NZSSES and the National Science Foundation, USA, on *Frontier Research Directions and International Collaborations in Sustainability Engineering and Science* was held. International and national keynote speakers, students and NSF nominated researchers attended. The workshop report written by Carnegie Mellon University stated that as a result of facilitated panel and group discussions numerous valuable insights for

sustainability engineering were achieved, and the workshop provided an unusual opportunity for international interaction.

Post the conference The Society hosted two successful public lectures for Professor Peter Guthrie of the Centre for Sustainable Development at Cambridge University in both Wellington and Christchurch.

The increasing numbers attending our Forums, which indicates the credibility and awareness that are being raised. These courses and Forums have raised the profile of The Society, and will continue throughout 2008.

Dr Carol Boyle  
Chair  
NZSSES