

President's News

We are now well into the year and a new decade. Normally we would be looking forward to enjoying the cooler autumnal months and the start of the winter sporting codes. Instead we are in the midst of hugely uncertain times with the global coronavirus pandemic. However, I won't dwell on this as I know you will all be dealing with the ever-changing situation as best you can. So please follow the advice of the authorities and, perhaps most importantly, look after yourself, family, friends and co-workers and be mindful of the impact on your local community.

In the February Council had its first meeting of the year. This was an extremely productive two-day meeting and essentially set the strategic direction and priorities for the coming year. Although we wouldn't normally meet for a second day we decided to take the opportunity to kick off revision of the Society's constitution. The primary reason for this revision is that the Society has recently changed its charitable status to a 'Health promotions Charity' and as a result we now fall under the regulatory umbrella of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC).

We want to make our strategic direction visible to members and so will be putting this on our website in the near future. However, irrespective of specific goals the underlying principles remain to ensure financial security, a strong membership and ensuring all our activities advance the vision and mission of the Society. Council also believes that our standing committees are a key element of the Society's work, the engine-room if you like, underpinning much of what we do and hope to achieve. Therefore, Council will be working closely with the standing committees to determine their direction and focus for the coming year.

For now, we can only guess what the 2020s will bring. Already the coronavirus has thrown financial markets into turmoil and all but ended a long period of economic stability. In some ways this maybe sounds eerily familiar. For a world that was recovering from the trauma of the "Great War", the 1920s or "roaring twenties" were a decade of dramatic social change, technological advances and economic prosperity, although by the end of the decade the 1929 US stock market crash brought on the worldwide Great Depression. Notable inventions of the 1920s include the radio, talking movies, frozen food, television, electric razor, aerosol sprays and the handheld hairdryer. But perhaps the most important discovery was made by Alexander Fleming in 1928. His work on penicillin has been heralded as one of the greatest advances in modern medicine, and by the 1940s it had become the wonder antibiotic. For now, let's hope science and medicine soon provide us with the solution to coronavirus!

Simon Benson
ANZSBT President