



Minutes for the Meeting

12 Noon Thursday 12 February 2026
University House

Chair and Minutes: OAFs Larkins (Chair) and Beard (Minutes)

1. Welcome

Present: OAFs Janet Beard, Frank Larkins, Lindsay Falvey, Barbara Howlett, Kwong Lee Dow, Paul Taylor.

Bill Malcolm attended for Item 3.3.

Apologies: OAFs Snow Barlow, Brian Davidson, Rick Roush

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 13 November 2025

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 13 November 2025 were approved.

3. Matters Arising

3.1. OAFS Fund Balance: \$732.96 (OAF Taylor)

3.2. Wordpress subscription for website due (\$94.90) (OAF Falvey)

OAF Falvey will send details for payment to OAF Taylor.

3.3. Ag Institute Proposal

Bill Malcolm attended and provided an update on the Ag Institute proposal. The following points were discussed:

- Bill has met with the Science Dean and Head of School and they have offered their support for pursuing the idea.
- He met with Professor Andy Martin from the School of Physics and got Andy's perspectives on pursuing the idea of an Institute based on his experience of building a group of quantum physicists.
- The importance of finding fellow travellers from around the University, especially young and early-mid career staff to supplement and take over from the older cohort that is currently engaged.
- Before creating a formal institute, a group could organise a workshop/s to help build interest.
- The importance of building industry relationships and collaborations, and potentially obtaining funds for projects.

- Bill will continue to pursue development of the Institute concept and report on a regular basis to the OAFs.

[**Note:** OAF Roush was an apology for the meeting but let us know that he has caught up with Andrew Weidemann (AM, Grain Producers, etc,) by phone and they have agreed to meet on his next convenient trip to Melbourne. With Bill's support, he hopes to seek Weidemann's support for the Institute, but also to make sure he is aware of the Chubb/Australian Academy report supporting the need for more government funding of universities in Ag]

3.4. Update on the State of Agriculture Oration proposal (OAF Falvey)

OAF Falvey is still pursuing this concept.

3.5. Fellows' Activities since last meeting-below (all)

3.6. Future Guest speakers (all)

- Linh Do, coordinator of the Wattle Fellowship Program at the University of Melbourne where students are funded to take on practical sustainability projects, will attend the May meeting of the OAFs and join us for lunch. OAF Howlett noted that Linh Do was representing the next generation who are a very bright and articulate group as observed by OAFs Howlett and Beard at a seminar session with several students in 2025.
- OAF Larkins suggested an invitation to a current Director of a University Institute (e.g. Melbourne Biodiversity Institute – Brendan Wintle) to provide an overview of the path to establishment and how it currently runs. OAF Howlett will invite Professor Wintle and will also liaise with Bill Malcolm to attend as well, potentially at the March meeting
- OAF Leury had suggested Ary Hoffmann, School of Biosciences who is involved with the Pest & Environmental Adaptation Research Group (PEARG). It was agreed to ask Brian to clarify how he thought this interaction might work.

4. Tributes

- 4.1.** David Connor sadly passed away recently. OAF Falvey has prepared an obituary for publication on the OAF website.
- 4.2.** Rolf Beilharz also sadly passed away recently on 2 February 2025. A memorial will be held on 23 February, 1.00 pm at Temple Society Chapel in Bayswater.

5. Should oafs.live Add an Obituary Heading (OAF Falvey)

It was agreed to add a tab to the OAFS website called: 'Tributes'. This could cover successes achieved by relevant people as well as include obituaries. It was felt an 'Obituaries' tab would make the OAFs look old and on their last legs.

6. Any Other Business

There were no other items of business.

7. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 12 March 2026 at 12 noon University House.

8. Chair and Minute Taker for the Next Meeting

A decision wasn't reached at the meeting. It was noted that there would be several apologies – OAFs Falvey, Howlett, Taylor and possibly Larkins. OAF Barlow was suggested as a possibility.

9. OAFS Publications at <https://oafs.live/publications-2/>