

February 2019 **NZGA Newsletter**



WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING

The new year has sadly seen the passing of three geothermal greats, Dr. Tim Dobbie, Prof. Ron Keam and Dr. George Grindley.

Dr. Tim Dobbie, 1941 - 2019



Tim graduated as a Chemical Engineer from the University of Canterbury in 1964. After spending the early part of his career in chemicals manufacturing and R&D, Tim returned to UC to gain his PhD. In 1977 he was hired by consulting firm KRTA and was promptly despatched to the Philippines for the first of many trips over the following few years associated with the design and development of the Tongonan 3 x 37.5 MWe power plant.

Tim continued to work with KRTA and its successor companies, Kingston Morrison and Sinclair Knight Merz, as a Principal Engineer and senior shareholder until his retirement in 2011. During this time he played key roles in much of the firm's geothermal consulting work in Kenya, the Philippines, Indonesia, New Zealand and elsewhere. Notable projects include Olkaria I, the Leyte plants, and development at Darajat. Tim was a passionate geothermalist, a successful consultant, a generous mentor and a true gentleman.

Sadly, Tim died while body surfing with his wife, Gay, at Hahei Beach on 1st February.

Prof. Ron Keam, 1932 - 2019

Associate Professor Ronald Frank Keam had a MSc and Dip Hons from Auckland University College (as the University of Auckland was known then), a BA from Cambridge University, and a D. Phil from Oxford University. He was an academic staff member of the University of Auckland from 1958 to his official retirement in 2006, and he continued on staff in honorary roles until his death on 6 February 2019.

He taught undergraduate and post-graduate geophysics courses at the university from 1974 to 2006, and supervised numerous post-graduate student theses on geothermal topics. He published widely in peer-reviewed journal papers and conference proceedings, mostly on the behaviour of the Waimangu thermal system, and also published many booklets, books, popular periodic articles and scientific reports on geothermal topics generally. Ron and Ted Lloyd were largely responsible for alerting the country to the decline of the geysers at Whakarewarewa in the 1970s, and for this work, the [New Zealand Science and Technology Silver Medal](#) was awarded jointly to them in 2002 by the Royal Society, cited as their 'outstanding contribution to the understanding and conservation of geothermal features in New Zealand. In 1989 Ron received the New Zealand Book Award for Non-Fiction for 'Tarawera'. He had also been successful in a legal challenge to prevent drilling and extraction at Waimangu in the 1970s. He has recently published papers with Cornel de Ronde of GNS on the location of the Pink and White Terraces.

Dr. George Grindley, 1926 - 2019



On 12 February 2019. Died peacefully at home aged 93. George's scientific output spanned a wide range of field, from stratigraphy, structure, tectonics, petrology, geochronology to geothermal geology. His understanding of geological structures was used in his geothermal studies in the North Island where his acknowledged expertise at siting successful steam-producing wells based on geological cross-section interpretations of well data, combined with the recognition of active faults from air photos, led to an increased perception of the role that faulting has played in the movement of

hydrothermal fluids through the crust. He was involved in the siting of the "bonanza" steam wells in the Te Mihi Field to the west of Wairakei and in re-injection studies at Ohaaki-Broadlands, Wairakei-Tauhara and Kawerau fields. He published a major study in the 1965 NZGS Bulletin 75 on the Geology, Structure, and Exploitation of the Wairakei Geothermal Field, Taupo which, together with NZGS Bulletin 90 by A. Steiner were the definitive accounts of Wairakei geology at that time.

There was a special tribute to George published in [GSNZ Newsletter 22](#) (July 2017) pages 31-59.

INDUSTRY UPDATES

Mercury NZ has released their Quarterly operational update. You can find all the details [here](#).

Contact Energy reported that December was the lowest month for [Contact's geothermal production](#) in more than a year. Those assets produced 227 GWh

Hydrogen strategy and Geothermal Energy

Tuaropaki Trust and Japan's Obayashi Corporation last November turned the first sod on a JV project at the Mokai geothermal station in Taupo aimed at [commercially producing hydrogen](#) using geothermal

OTHER NEWS:

Geothermal resources and hazards below Rotorua

There could be a large, untapped geothermal resource between [Rotorua](#) and Taupō. The theory comes after years of research by GNS Science and was announced by geophysicist Dr Ted Bertrand to a crowd of 180 to 200 community members.

Beyond Electricity – Geothermal Energy Development

The IGA continues its effort of [promoting geothermal energy](#) and its activities to foster geothermal development worldwide. Geothermal energy is now generated in 27 countries with a total installed capacity of 14.600MW (year-end 2018). They are also seeking nominations for its Board positions.

Zayed sustainability Prize

The [Zayed Sustainability Prize](#), the prestigious global award based in the United Arab Emirates, has awarded the 2019 prize for the Energy category to BBOXX, a company based in the U.S. The category prize is for US\$600,000. BBOXX is an energy solutions provider and was recognise for its plug-and-play solar device. It would be great to have **New Zealand geothermal entries** in the future!

WHATS COMING UP...



2019 Bandung Indonesia.

8th ITB International Geothermal Workshop

"Geothermal Energy Among Other Renewable Energy: Present and Future", March 20th-21st,



**WORLD
GEOTHERMAL
CONGRESS
2020 REYKJAVIK**

2020 World Geothermal Congress

Abstract submissions have now closed, with ~2700 abstracts received by the committee. Responses of acceptances are slowly being received, with final papers due June 30 2019.