

Auckland Region Convenor Annual Report 10 June 2006

Good morning and welcome to the members and other visitors. The 2005-2006 year has been very busy for many of us and this Report will show the different ways that SLANZA both inside the library community and without.

I am going to start by highlighting the events that we have been involved with since June 1st last year. As many of you know in July 2005 the Auckland Region hosted the biannual SLANZA conference at the Langham Hotel. This provided us with professional development that had us reeling with the impact of the future seen through the eyes of Ian Dukes, the new technologies of Derek Wenmoth, glimpses of the promise of the ERO Report on Student Achievement from Karen Sewell, and brought us back to the one critical element that we are all involved with – literacy and reading. It also proved to be a great opportunity to network with colleagues from throughout the country, and to see the latest on offer from our suppliers and other relevant parties. A big thank you to the organising committee for the hard work they put in to make this opportunity a successful event.

Our next big event was the Christmas ‘do’ at Mount Eden Normal Primary. This was held in the fourth term and was an opportunity to see how a library can occupy a non-purpose built environment to great effect. Lyn Walker took us through the story telling process with aplomb providing us with resource links that I am sure many have used. I still have the spider that landed on my feet and visions of Lyn talking to herself on the Auckland Motorways.

In term one 2006 the committee got together to discuss ways that we could acknowledge Margaret Mahy’s 70th birthday, and eventually decided on two strategies Jill Stotter, a committee member, would construct a list of possible activities for teachers and librarians to do with children on her birthday, 21st March. This was posted on the SLANZA website to share with other regions. We also decided that we would help sponsor the dinner that was being held in her honour at The Heritage Hotel and that the committee would aide with the decoration of the dining room. This was an enormous task that was co-ordinated by Sarah Fordyce as a member of Storylines and took hours. We had also negotiated with Storylines that SLANZA members attending their AGM and Margaret Mahy Lecture got a \$5 discount on the entry fee. This was a wonderful opportunity to mix and mingle with the elite of New Zealand writers. I would like to acknowledge Storylines role in preparing the submission on Margaret’s behalf to the Hans Christian Andersen Award Committee. As we all know she won that Award, which made us all very proud for her and for our country.

Later in term one there was an opportunity for the membership to discuss the proposed SLANZA Strategic Plan. There was a very disappointing response to this with only one person indicating that they would like to have that opportunity. The Committee could only assume that submissions for change were made via the SLANZA website or that the membership was happy with the direction that SLANZA National Executive were steering the organisation.

SLANZAK, as the Auckland Region is commonly known, has been involved in a number of other activities throughout the year. Much of this is hidden from the membership; however it is a very real part of what we do to support the growing needs of the members. I was invited to attend the launch of the Elgar library access system for Auckland Region public libraries at the Auckland Memorial Museum; this was an acknowledgement that we in school libraries have a professional impact on their members. As with any organisation there is much lobbying that takes place that is not seen. It is work that the committee members undertake as a matter of course for the betterment of the organisation and membership, ie.

- Development of an information literacy model relevant to New Zealand schools. This should be available for schools to use shortly.
- Representation at Caucus level on the NZEI Support Staff Caucus who advise the NZEI National Executive of concerns and opportunities for support staff.
- Dialogue with ministers – A colleague and I were pleased to attend the CTU Government Forum this last week and speak to David Cunliffe and Parakura Horomia about Support Staff and Literacy issues that affect us.
- Representation at Professional Registration meetings
- Attending discussions around the proposed changes in the Public Library sector which have strong parallels to issues that we have – environment, staffing, and resourcing. Creating dialogue between the sectors.
- Organising applications for Awards submissions – we have two people from the Auckland Region receiving awards at the Nelson mini-conference in July
- Meeting with the members – I was privileged to meet the recipient of one of our study awards from a low decile primary school this last week. It has made a huge difference to her and she will continue to study towards her Level 5 diploma.
- Helping members who find themselves in difficult situations in their workplaces. Offering support and advice is an integral part of our job.

The committee has identified areas for further action during the course of the year, they are:

- The need for presentation skills seminars to give the members confidence in their delivery of information to students, teaching staff and others.
- Dialogue with school principals with the aim of attending their meetings to take them through the information literacy process.
- Working closely with ERO and providing assistance when necessary on Information literacy matters. A letter has been sent to ERO congratulating them on the delivery of their report on student achievement and offering our support in any way we can.
- Continuing to work closely with NZEI on grading, remuneration, and job description issues. Liz, myself and Jan Matthews from Waikato Region

met last weekend to establish generic job descriptions which will be available very shortly for discussion

- Low attendance at events such as the AGM.

These are just a sample of initiatives that the committee is involved in.

I would like to thank Raeco for their continued support, their support made it possible to have Stu Duvall at this event. Also thanks to Jabberwocky and Women's Bookshop who are only too willing to go out of their way to come to these events to provide members with the opportunity to see the latest in book titles. It is great to be able to browse and discuss books with your colleagues. I would also like to thank the National Library, Auckland Centre Manager for allowing us to hold numerous meetings in their staffroom, to the Advisors for advertising and pushing our events at their network meetings as well in Reference Services and for allowing us to hold events when necessary in their seminar room, their support is invaluable to our organisation.

It is with regret and sadness that wish a fond farewell to Pauline McCowan, Jane Mackie, and Lois Jamieson who are all standing down from the committee this AGM. Pauline is a past Convenor of this group and founding member of SLANZA. She has been on SLANZA National Executive initiating an Archives strand within the organisation and is a National Library Advisor. Her professional leadership, organisation skills, and knowledge will be greatly missed – we wish her well in her new endeavours within the literacy sector. Jane Mackie has been with us for two years providing us with her valued experience with committee discussion and policy making. Jane is resigning to write the history of her school – we wish her well in her endeavours. Lois Jamieson has been the treasurer for the last five years, providing us with accurate and timely financial information when needed. Auckland Region has always had a pat on the back at auditing time from National Executive because she has our Reports in on time. Lois has lined up some 'me' time in her retirement from committee activity.

As you all know committee members are very busy with their own lives and show extraordinary commitment to the development of this organisation through policy and initiative development as well as attending meetings when they are called for. And attending meetings in Auckland can become harrowing with members often travelling over an hour to attend. I would like to extend a big thank you to the committee and thank them for their support during my term as Regional Convenor of SLANZA. The job is much harder if you don't have a committed and organised team behind you. A big thank you also to all those people who have lent me their ear and provided insights into the realities of the situation for members and the way that we can move forward for the betterment of the membership.

Kaaren Hirst,
Auckland Region Convenor,
SLANZA.
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