

Wellington Region SLANZA Convenor's Report 2002

The current committee has been in office for 16 months and such a lot has happened in that time.

The IASL Conference in July 2001 was an important event for the many Wellington school library staff that were able to attend. The quilt raffle, Janet's brain-child, that was drawn at our last AGM helped two colleagues, one primary and one secondary, from this region attend the IASL conference. And while the plenary speakers and the workshops were stimulating and challenging it was the ability to socialise together between workshops and plenary sessions that created a deeper and warmer collegiality that is so important for school libraries.

The Committee wanted to try and hold some meetings outside of Wellington city to make it easier for members who worked/lived in the Hutt or Kapiti Coast to attend so in September 2001 we organised a SLANZA meeting at Kapanui School in Waikanae on **Boys and Reading**. John McIntyre from The Children's Bookshop attended with several boxes of books about which he happily chatted. The attendance was miniscule-in fact I think the Committee, mainly Wellingtonians, were the significant part of the audience. In hindsight we realised that the topics we chose for meetings had to complement National Library Cluster meetings and focus more on the needs of the library staff such as salary, conditions etc.

When the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) Strategy for 2002-2004 DRAFT was published the National Executive of SLANZA wrote a submission on the role of school libraries. We decided it would be valuable to invite Marian Hobbs, Associate Minister of Education, to speak at a meeting about the Draft Strategy and the submissions made by SLANZA and school library staff. A large audience arrived at Naenae Intermediate library on 2 November to listen to Marian. Marian, who is very supportive of school libraries, soon realised that she had not been well briefed as to what school library staff reactions had been to the invisibility of school libraries in the Draft Strategy.

It was soon after this November meeting that the National Executive decided it was necessary to hold a mini-conference in July 2002-in Wellington. This was a challenge for all of us and the task consolidated the committee. We worked well together and were able to develop a good division of labour. The organising of the mini-conference consumed our energy for three terms. It was a huge amount of work to build a one-and-a-half day mini-conference in two and a bit terms. From the evaluation forms and verbal feedback the conference achieved all that we had hoped for. Subsequently, we discovered, to our amazement, that the mini-conference made a rather large profit. The National Executive has decided that part of the profit will be used to pay for two members from each region to attend the 2003 conference in Christchurch.

A consequence of being responsible for organising a conference was that the Committee had minimal time to organise meetings for the region. We did

however, thanks largely to Barbara and Susan, hold a successful meeting in term one this year with Karen Sewell, the ERO CEO, presenting. Karen was forthright about how Education Reviews are to be carried out and she indicated how school libraries could use student achievement as an opportunity to have the role of the library recognised.

Our membership is still smallish-75 members-so we need to promote the role of SLANZA. It is important for members to encourage colleagues to join-payment of membership fees can be made by the school even though membership is personal-as SLANZA needs to be a valid voice of our profession. If library staff are to improve their status we need to have a national organisation that represents the majority of library staff.

The final act of the outgoing committee was to set a date and topic for the first SLANZA meeting in 2003-***Creating a Simple Intranet Library Site*** and issues relating to electronic publishing. Brian Waddell, TL at Karori West Normal School and ACE Information Studies lecturer will be the presenter. The meeting is planned for 13 March at 4.00 pm at Karori West Normal School Library.

Now it is time to farewell a number of our Committee members-Rosalba Finnerty, Librarian Samuel Marsden Collegiate; Ruth Baker, Librarian Newsland College; Jo Grant, librarian Karori Normal School; and Barbara Walker, librarian Onslow College. Rosalba, Ruth, Jo and Barbara have been on the Regional Committee for two years and their contribution has been phenomenal. These women are very professional, experienced and dedicated librarians and these skills have benefited the committee. They have contributed hours and hours of their personal time especially with the mini-conference organization to assist SLANZA.

We hope that everyone has a relaxing summer vacation and returns in 2003 enthused and looking forward to the national conference.

Adaire Hannah
24 October 2002