



**Manawatu Literacy Association (MLA)
Annual General Meeting (AGM)
Ross Intermediate - Bilingual Class
14 March 2019**



President's Report for the 2018 Year

Tena koutou,

2018 was an exciting and extremely busy year for our roopu. I had the pleasure of working with our amazing MLA team throughout 2018 as we prepared and hosted the 41st NZLA national conference, Literacy landscapes! On 3-5 October 2018 we joined together with over 220 conference delegates here in PN at the Awapuni Events Centre for a wonderful conference featuring local and international keynote speakers, and talented workshop presenters.

Our conference started with a mihi whakatau and we were delighted that Wiremu and Trieste Te Awa Awe could open our conference for us, and to tautoko for them were the tamariki of this very bilingual unit; Nga tamariki o Te Huinga Manu.

Our own Peter Johnston came home from the USA sharing his knowledge and two amazing books that have stretched our thinking; Bernadette Dwyer, ILA president, visited us from Ireland to remind us of what century we are teaching our kids in; Suzie Johnston made us laugh; Quiz master Wayne Mills, tested our book knowledge; Jan Gaffney challenged our beliefs about how we approach our teaching; Rob Southam excited us with kids books; Rae Siilata made us cry as we confronted some realities for our Pasifika learners; Donovan Bixley inspired us with stories of how he creates; and Nathan Wallis enriched our understanding of children.

Our author session was a special time to get up close and personal with one of the following amazing NZ authors; Gavin Bishop, Des Hunt, Sally Sutton, David Hill, Kate De Goldi and David Riley. And then there were our amazing workshop presenters who were so well received by our conference delegates!

I was fortunate to be conference convenor and work with a superb conference committee. Nga mihi kia koutou; Judy Aitken, Margot Mackie, Sonia Mudgway, Rita Palmer, Jan Watts and Viv Wimms - you are an amazing team! We were supported by our conference organiser, Rosemary Hancock, and very grateful for her expertise. It was very important to our roopu that we accurately represented the people of Aotearoa NZ throughout the conference and in the last year of planning we were joined by Paiana Whaanga who helped and advised us with te reo me tikanga Maori. Nga mihi kia koe, Paiana.

In 2018 we held fewer events than usual due to our conference.

Our **AGM** was a free event held here at Ross intermediate School. We had a huge turnout on a dreadful Autumn evening but everyone enjoyed and learnt a lot from Rita Palmer's session on writing entitled - I taught them but they didn't learn.

We hosted the annual **Kids' Lit Quiz** at Palmerston North Intermediate Normal School. The event is open to all students from Years 6 to 8. We had such a large number of teams from schools from Manawatu, Whanganui, Southern Hawke's

Bay, Horowhenua, Wairarapa and the Central Plateau that we had to turn people away. Nga mihi to Jan Watts for organising this event so well each year.

Then of course it was conference time! The feedback we received was very positive from delegates, exhibitors and presenters. Our goal was to provide exceptional professional learning in a relaxed atmosphere where people felt cared for. We also wanted to ensure our exhibitors and sponsors felt valued, because without them we could not hold our conferences. The venue hosts were absolutely wonderful and made the conference run so smoothly. Our conference team enjoyed the event and looked quite calm to the delegates - even though at times we were paddling madly behind the scenes to problem solve, sort little issues and bring it all together.

Once the conference was over, and we had slept, we gathered for dinner to de-brief, tell some stories and enjoy each other's company. This is an amazing roopu!

We encourage you to think about **joining our roopu**. It is a great way to make connections, grow professionally, and have input into supporting literacy in the Manawatu.

Contact us at manawatuliteracy@nzla.org.nz or visit our Facebook page. It could be one of the best professional moves you make:-)

Thank you again to our amazing MLA roopu. As educators our literacy kete are full because there is a team here who use their creativity, passion and dedication to keep literacy alive in the Manawatu and beyond.

We look forward to seeing you at our 2019 events. Kids' Lit Quiz is coming up, we are planning a big event during the year and Books for Babies will happen later in the year.

This is my last year as president. After 6 years in the role it is time for a change. It is important that our roopu uses our collective skills so that we continue to grow as a team and our association grows. It is, however, not the end of me as a member of MLA. I am firmly committed to literacy in the Manawātū and to this team - so I'm not going anywhere.

Tena koutou, tena koutou, tena koutou katoa,
Sarah McCord
President