



GROWTH THROUGH LITERACY

President's Report to the Annual Meeting of the New Zealand Literacy Association

28 October 2020

Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, katoa.

A very warm welcome to all of you zooming in to this 2020 Annual Meeting of the New Zealand Literacy Association. Like everyone around the globe, NZLA has not been able to escape the effects of COVID-19 and instead of holding this meeting in Wellington in June here we are holding our AM virtually in October.

So, let me take you through my second year (and a bit) as president of NZLA.

In July 2019 I travelled with President-elect Sarah McCord to Melbourne to the ALEA (Australian Literacy Educators' Association) National Conference. The Conference theme was Literacy Empowering Voices and offered a wonderful choice of quality plenary and keynote speakers as well as workshops and presentations. Several NZLA folk were present and I enjoyed meeting Kathy Headley, president of ILA.

A thrill for me as president and as a member of the Canterbury Literacy Association (CLA) was to attend NZLA's 42nd national conference held in the wonderful setting of Rangi Ruru Girls' School and hosted by CLA. The conference theme of The Arts as a Bridge to Literacy was not only embodied in the buildings and grounds of the venue and the city but also in the richness of the keynote speakers and the depth of the workshop presenters. Although attendance of around 250 meant this was a small conference it had a 'large' heart and offered up a profit of nearly \$50,000 (nearly \$25,000 going to NZLA.) We are so thankful for this profit as 2020 has seen the cancellation of Taranaki's conference and this will help.

On behalf of NZLA I extend very sincere thanks to the dedicated organising committee from the Canterbury Literacy Association and to all our NZLA council members who attended.

At the conference we celebrated those councils who achieved Honour Council status. They were Auckland, Canterbury, Hawke's Bay, Manawatu, Tai Tokerau and Waikato. Congratulations to all Councils for gaining Honour Council status. Your submissions outlay the work your council has done over the previous year and it is appreciated in its visual format.

I would like to acknowledge the ongoing financial support NZLA receives from the Marie Clay Literacy Trust each year. Last year twelve Marie Clay Literacy Trust 'Early Career' teachers and six Experienced teachers from our Councils received either \$1000 or \$500 each from the Marie Clay Literacy Trust to attend the Canterbury Literacy Association's Conference. The Trust also gave us \$2,000 for the Dame Marie Clay address, which was given by Dr Murray Gadd. Five conference awards of \$1000 were also given to workshop presenters.

NZLA and Local Councils sponsored two teachers from the Cook Islands to attend the Canterbury Literacy Association's conference in Christchurch. Piri Puna and Roberta Murray thoroughly enjoyed their experience and were inspired by the professional learning that you all made possible for them through your generosity. They also presented a workshop with Louise Dempsey showcasing their teaching of writing in the Cook Islands and represented the Cook Islands at the IDOC meeting two days later.

Our 'Books for Oceania' project was again very successful, resulting in over \$7000 of quality children's books being dispatched to schools in the Cook Islands. Roberta & Piri shared with the conference attendees the plight of one of their schools where the library burnt down. We were very grateful to the people who purchased books to support the IDOC/ Scholastic books initiative. A huge thank you to Rob Southam, and Scholastic NZ for their on-going support of this project. So far, a grand total of \$106,550 worth of books have been sent to schools in the Pacific Islands. This is a wonderful project that is making a difference.

Following the NZLA conference in October 2019 I chaired the IDOC (International Development of Oceania Committee) meeting in Christchurch. Glenice Andrews also from NZLA attended as IDOC treasurer. ALEA's President Jennifer Rennie and Jan Herold from ALEA also attended. We were joined by Apolonia Tamata from Fiji, Folia Tohovaka from Niue, Roberta Murray, and Piri Puna from the Cook Islands.

I was fortunate to have the opportunity to travel to New Orleans and attend the International Literacy Association's (ILA) conference in early October 2019 which was a first for me! Support from Heather Bell and Wendy Carss helped make this huge conference not quite so overwhelming. A day attending the Research Institute was rewarding even though I was fighting off jetlag. Exciting choices of workshops and other events to be involved with made this whirlwind US literacy extravaganza.

The Marie Clay Literacy Trust (MCLT) travel awards 2019 were awarded to Rita Palmer (Manawatu Literacy Association) and to Sappho Prentice from the Otago Literacy Association who were both heading to the UKLA 56th conference entitled; " We need to talk about literacy." Why spoken language matters in literacy learning and teaching. This has not happened for obvious reasons, but we are sitting tight to see what the new year brings. There have been no MCLT Travel awards awarded in 2020 due to uncertainty around international travel.

The 2020 Regional Leadership Workshop was held in Auckland on March 14 and was well attended. A huge thank you to Sarah McCord who stepped into my shoes as my husband had surgery and I appreciate the support Scotty Delemare and Judith Woodham from the Exec provided on the day. The feedback we received highlighted that it was great to have the time to plan strategically with committee members, share issues and ideas, and network with other Council members. Thank you to all who made it such a worthwhile day and special thanks to the members of the Auckland Literacy Association who hosted and organised the event at Papatoetoe West School.

Little did we know that this would be the last face to face NZLA event for 2020.

It was very sad to hear of the official end of the Wairiki Literacy Association this year. This group of strong women who had kept the committee afloat could no longer sustain the running of their council without fresh input. Thank you all for your support of the NZLA family.

It was also hard in March to make the call to cancel NZLA's national conference hosted by the Taranaki Literacy Association and scheduled for September. It turned out to be the right call with both ALEA and ILA cancelling their conferences.

I would like to acknowledge several people for their continuing support of NZLA and for the work they do

I would like to thank Mal Thompson for her outstanding efforts in maintaining the high quality of our journal 'Literacy Forum NZ' and all the hard work she does as Editor. Mal has retired from NZLA Literacy Forum editorship and we wish her well. We are fortunate to have another very capable editor taking up the reins for us – Stephanie Dix comes to us from the Waikato Literacy Association. She is bubbling over with ideas and will be talking with councils soon about next steps. Welcome Stephanie.

Scotty Delemare has held dual roles for NZLA as an Exec member for 3 years as well as continuing to do a fantastic job as IT Coordinator. He finishes up in his exec position but will still support us in his IT co-ordinator role. Thank you Scotty and we will miss you on the Exec. We welcome Kay Hancock from the Wellington Literacy Association onto the Exec and look forward to the literacy expertise and experience you bring.

A huge thank you to Jacqui and Glenice, who have so efficiently and capably carried out their jobs as secretary and treasurer over the past two years. Jacqui ends her job as secretary today and a huge thank you to Glenice who has agreed to carry on as treasurer. Both Jacqui and Glenice have been the most amazing and efficient secretary and treasurer that anyone could want. They have both gone over and beyond for me and the Association. Thank you so much. I so appreciate all that you have done.

Many thanks to Sarah and Judith for your valuable and worthwhile contributions to our Exec. Sarah has been a great support as President Elect and I know she will carry out the role as President so well. Judy Aitken from Manawatu Literacy Association will be Sarah's new secretary. Welcome to the Exec Judy. I look forward to working with you all next year or what is left of it as Past President.

To the Executive - you are an amazing group of people and I feel very honoured to have worked with you during the past year. I have really appreciated your on-going support. I have been very grateful to have had the support and mentorship of Glenice Andrews and Sarah McCord as I have taken on this role of NZLA president. NZLA Exec has a special leadership structure that is truly supportive and aids transitions into key leadership roles.

Last, but not least, a huge thanks to all of you here on zoom and to your local committees. The people who work within local councils and give so freely of their time are the valued foundation of our association. You can be so proud of the work you do which is inspiring and appreciated by so many educators.

We have a great subject association of which we can be very proud. Despite COVID-19 and the suspension of our Association for a few months we remain a strong network of councils, all being passionate about literacy, and spreading new ideas and pedagogy to our fellow teachers, parents, and children. NZLA and local councils play a crucial role in providing professional learning with a literacy focus in our communities. Despite the challenges we meet and the pressures we face in our professional lives, we need to continue to fulfil this role.

*He kete korero
Nau te rourou
Naku te rourou
Ka ora ai tatou*

With your basket of knowledge and my basket of knowledge all will benefit.

Joy Hawke
NZLA President
October 2020

