



**Manawatu Literacy Association (MLA)
Annual General Meeting (AGM)
Tokomaru School
18 March 2021**



President's Report for the 2020 Year

Kia ora e hoa ma,

2020 was a very different year for MLA; indeed for all of us! I had the pleasure of once again being the President, and working alongside an amazing team of motivated educators; albeit via many a Zoom meeting (affectionately termed 'Zui').

This year our **AGM on 20th March 2020** was a relaxed after-school get-together at the Fat Farmer in Hokowhitu Village. It was a lovely way to enjoy a drink and nibbles amongst familiar and some new faces. We were thrilled to see so many new faces who then joined our committee. Little did we know that the country was about to go into Lockdown a few days later, and our lives would change significantly!

The **2020 National Literacy Association Conference** due to be held **27-29th September 2020 in New Plymouth** was cancelled as a result of Covid-19, as were so many of our planned events.

Once again we hosted the annual **Kids' Lit Quiz** on the **13th October 2020**. This was the 19th year of the Kids' Lit Quiz in the Manawatu, held in the Feilding Civic Centre, with 25 schools and 40 teams competing, travelling from as far as Masterton, Dannevirke, Waikanae and Kuratau on the southern edge of Lake Taupo. This was again a very successful event, but that success is thanks to the 19 keen supporters from the unofficial 'Friends of the Lit Quiz' group who turn up on the day and who so willingly fall into assigned roles that make the occasion so easy to manage. We also got fantastic support from Pat Bellhouse and her book club (ex Altrusa PN group members), who help with marking and act as runners to get answer sheets to the markers.

It is also important to acknowledge the help and support of Sarah McCord, who managed the 'marking team' on the day, prepared certificates for each team, and organised a wonderful raffle with the support of Scholastic NZ. This raffle helps with travel costs to the NZ final in Wellington. We also took a moment at this event to **thank Jan Watts** for her many years of work in coordinating and growing the Kids' Lit Quiz in our area. We will forever be grateful to Jan for her dedication to childrens' literacy. We acknowledged Jan's contribution by making her a **Life Member of MLA**. We are thrilled that Margot Mackie has stepped up to take over this role.

Our **May meeting via Zoom**, saw us sharing ideas for how we could best support schools during distance learning, and ideas to promote literacy from a distance, as well as supporting our members when so many of our events had to be cancelled. Our planned **'Play-Based' event** and **'Mystery Literacy Rally'** were just two of many casualties of the uncertain times we faced.

Instead, we shared ideas, links, resources, quotes, good reads and websites widely via our **Facebook page** and email tree. We used our **social media platform** to share great literacy ideas that our members and local educators could use, adapt or modify to suit their needs. We posted at least weekly, and were continually on the hunt for good material to share with our followers.

Our 'Council News' was published in the No.3 issue of Forum 2020. Since we were unable to run any of our planned Term 2 literacy events during Covid, we decided to post our members a little something to perk them up. We included an MLA card, satin bookmark and a chocolate bar.

This was a great way to support their wellbeing, and we received positive feedback.

The message inside the card read:

To our wonderful MLA Members,

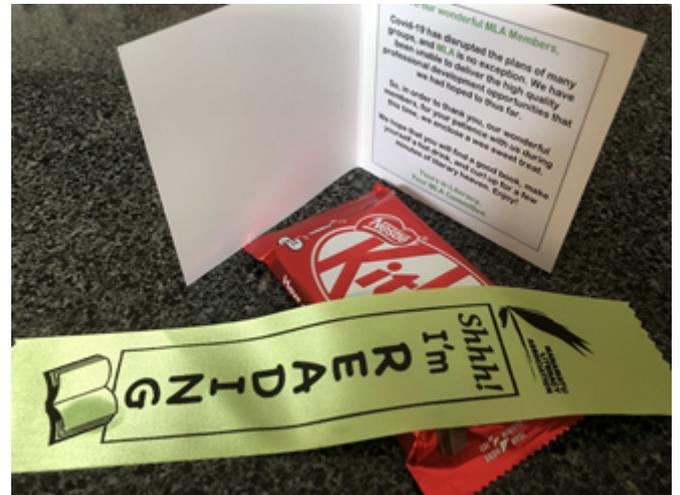
Covid-19 has disrupted the plans of many groups, and MLA is no exception. We have been unable to deliver the high quality professional development opportunities that we had hoped to thus far.

So, in order to thank you, our wonderful members, for your patience with us during this time, we enclose a wee sweet treat.

We hope that you will find a good book, make yourself a hot drink, and curl up for a few minutes of literary heaven. Enjoy!

Yours in Literacy,

Your MLA Committee.



We encourage you to think about **joining our committee**. It is a great way to make connections, grow professionally, and have input into supporting literacy in the Manawatu. We are a relaxed, fun group of educators, passionate about Literacy.

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 committee. I love working with you. Your passion and dedication keep literacy alive in the Manawatu and beyond.

We look forward to seeing you at our 2021 events. Kids' Lit Quiz is coming up, we are planning an oral language event, and we hope to get our 'Mystery Tour' off the ground. Don't forget to join up as a member to get the 'member discount' on our events!

Smiles, Sonia Mudgway 😊

President