



## **Annual Report to the Federation of New Zealand SeniorNet Societies Inc**

### **Chairman's Report**

#### **Presented by Zoom to attendees at the AGM 20 August 2020**

In a number of respects, it has been a challenging year for the Federation and your management committee. The retirement of Ray McDonald and Duncan Fuller, committee chairman and secretary respectively, represented a significant loss of knowledge and experience. We acknowledge their contribution to the committee and the wider SeniorNet community.

The management committee met on six occasions during the year, three of which were face-to-face meetings and the remainder via audioconference.

At the time of last year's AGM no nominations were received for Auckland and Top of the South regions. Both positions were subsequently filled by co-option. The rotational system governing the appointment of Regional Representatives means that changes to the committee are inevitable, and this year we farewell Rex Fowler who has represented learning centres in the Wellington Region for six years. Thank you Rex for your commitment and support. We wish you health and happiness in the future.

Twelve months ago, the impending retirement of Grant Sidaway, necessitated the search for a new Executive Officer. And so the process of selection and appointment began, resulting in the appointment of Heather Newell, on a one year contract, confirmed at the management team meeting in October 2019.

Following her appointment, Heather worked tirelessly to familiarise herself with the unique culture that is SeniorNet. She made early contact with each of our major sponsors, and explored the factors likely to contribute to a growing number of learning centres considered at risk of closure. This survey led her to ask, "Do some learning centres have too high an expectation of themselves?"

The establishment of a sub-committee, the Resource Team, was a successful exercise and we are indebted to the team for their considerable efforts in updating that section of the Federation website housing our teaching/learning resources. We will likely use sub-committees consisting of both committee and non-committee members, to undertake aspects of our annual work plan.

It is with sadness that we noted the passing of Ian Turner, well respected and a past chairman of the Federation.

At his final meeting with the management committee, Grant Sidaway, outgoing Executive Officer, had this to say:

“I am a lucky man. I found something I enjoyed doing so work was never a chore. On the 31 December I shall retire from being your Executive Officer, a position held since 2006 and, after 27 years of involvement with SeniorNet in New Zealand - an involvement I have been honoured to be part of.

It has been a pleasure working with such a supportive management team in the form of Federation committees, my role has been made much easier knowing I had your support. To say that I will miss the organisation especially the many hundreds of people throughout SeniorNet in New Zealand is a serious understatement. SeniorNet has been my life and everyone a friend.”

It was indeed a highlight for us when Grant Sidaway was awarded the New Zealand Order of Merit, ‘for services to seniors and ICT’. Congratulations Grant. Well deserved.

Regardless of the undoubted challenges facing our organisation, I take heart in the resilience shown by learning centres across the country during lockdown, the innovative practices and the strenuous efforts made to stay connected with members. We have the collective strength to continue furthering the values and core beliefs of SeniorNet.

*H. J. Porteous*

3.8.20

### Summary of Executive Officer Activity - 2019

Executive Officer Activity	2017	2018	2019
Visits to Learning Centres (1)	41	33	37
Regional Meetings	10	9	8
Executive Committee Meetings (2)	6	6	6
Presentations at Ryman Villages (3)	-	-	10
Meetings and Public Presentations (4)	23	24	32

*Notes:*

1. 27 North Island, 10 South Island. Usually expected to make a presentation on high interest topics
2. Three meetings face-to-face, three via audioconference
3. Ten ‘entertaining technology presentations’
4. Includes Governmental, NGOs and Sponsors

### Gizmoe

Six issues produced during the year. Limited response to request for contributions from members. The competitions featuring books, photos and Vodafone promotions, proved very popular with members.

### Advertising

The consistent principle was that in any situation, SeniorNet had to be viewed as a vibrant and inclusive organisation. Advertisements or articles were, at various times, included in North & South Magazine, Town & Country, National Grey Power Magazine and Stuff, while the EO was interviewed on air.

## **Digital Training for Seniors**

SeniorNet, through our EO, was involved in discussions and workshops arranged by MSD and the Office for Seniors, concerning the distribution of funding announced in the budget. Subsequently, we responded to the Request for Proposals with a comprehensive case. Unfortunately, on this occasion SeniorNet was unsuccessful.

## **Group Insurance Scheme**

The Group Insurance Policy was successfully renegotiated with NZL, with a slightly reduced premium. The very reasonable premium was offered because of our good claims history. Learning Centres making their insurance arrangements with other providers, could be faced with less generous terms.

## **Regional Representatives**

The role of the Regional Representative continues to evolve and may change even further with the advent of the new Executive Officer. There is a perceived need for each representative to be in closer contact with the Learning Centres in their region. The job description is to be revisited and particular guidelines prepared for new representatives.

## **Cyber Smart Week**

22 Learning Centres conducted at least one Cyber Security workshop during Cyber Smart Week as part of Cert's awareness campaign, "Make Sure of It". The resources provided to centres from Cert were appreciated.

## **MYOB**

MYOB now an on-line facility, enables access for more than one manager. What was the EO's responsibility has now been transferred to the committee treasurer. The Federation will take over payment of the MYOB subscription.

## **Ryman Healthcare**

A contract was signed with Ryman Healthcare for a two-year sponsorship deal, with a progressive payment schedule. Individual Learning Centres are being encouraged to reach out to the Ryman Villages in their area. For any work undertaken, there is to be no charge to residents. As part of the deal, the EO has made ten presentations (entertainment focus around a technology theme) at different Ryman Villages. These were extremely well received. The aim was to promote the opportunities offered by SeniorNet, to residents.

## **Other Sponsorships**

Ongoing support from Noel Leeming, Suzuki, and Vodafone were secured. Westpac Bank extended their partnership agreement for a further twelve months.

## **Funding**

A Lottery Grant was secured in March 2019 for administrative funding.

## **Learner Rate**

Late in the year, the hourly rate for learner hours was reviewed and a decision made to raise the rate to \$2.50 from the start of 2020, a move appreciated by Learning Centres.

*(pp Harvey Porteous)*

## **Executive Officer Report**

**From Heather's Desk**

Presented August 2020

After 27 years at the helm of SeniorNet, the very first and only executive officer, Grant Sidaway retired at the end of the financial year and passed on the files and the reins. After a comprehensive handover from Grant, I find an organisation that has high brand recognition, is financially sound, well respected by government agencies and has an enthusiastic membership.

While you will see an executive officer report from 2019 outlining the activities of the last year including visits made, sponsor relationships, national office activity and projects, I have decided that the delayed timing of the AGM is an opportunity to reflect on the implications of the global pandemic and my position as a new EO with a new job description. The world as we know it has changed, and I believe, for this annual report, a forward-looking EO report is essential.

And of course, for future readers, we should explain that the AGM, normally held in May each year, was postponed to August because of the nationwide lockdown to prevent the spread of the pandemic. Our senior population is particularly vulnerable and although the lockdown appeared to be successful, it is highly likely that the pandemic implications will affect the country for several more years to come. In practical terms we were unable to travel to Dunedin for the AGM as planned, our financial audit was delayed and all Learning Centres locked their doors. Regional meetings and Learning Centre AGM's were postponed. Happily not one single member of a Learning Centre (that we are aware of) contracted the virus – the most important and valued piece of information.

Since the pandemic first struck, the organisation has been through a virtual revolution. Internally a significant change has been in the delivery mechanism of our courses. I read in the 2019 Annual Report that an experiment to use online meeting software for the deliver of courses was less than successful. It was put on hold for future review. Since the lockdown, many Learning Centres, tutors and individual members have embraced the use of online meetings, particularly through Zoom and a new Google product – Google Meet.

Although the online tools have provided great benefits in allowing us to spread our reach and to continue to provide a service to our members, the temporary closure also highlighted the importance of the social nature of our Learning Centres. We do want to meet face to face, we do want to be in the company of like-minded people and we do want to be known as lifelong learners. I quickly learnt from your feedback that the physical Learning Centre will continue to be the centre point of our organisational culture.

### **The new Executive Officer Role**

I took over the newly described position on 1 January 2020. A key difference in the new role is that I am not expected to be the technology expert, nor am I contracted to visit every single Learning Centre. My past experience working with seniors, volunteer experience with technology organisations such as the 2020 Communications Trust and Wellington ICT and

over 25 years working with charities in the fundraising space provide a new point of difference and perhaps a new focus for the continuing challenge ahead.

And what a dramatic, new challenge is ahead of SeniorNet.

### **Digital Inclusion vs Digital Exclusion**

In 2019 the Office for Seniors invited tenders for a small contract to address digital exclusion. SeniorNet applied. At the end of January 2020 we were advised that the Digital Inclusion Alliance was the major recipient of the contract. Their programme provides low cost access to Wi-Fi plans, modems and some basic training through libraries for those who are not yet in the digital space. Although the Federation was disappointed to lose out, there is a marketing opportunity for us. We can take over from where this introductory programme ends. For that reason the Federation Committee agreed that collaboration with the Digital Inclusion Alliance would bring benefits.

### **Partnerships**

Our longstanding relationship with Westpac has continued through 2019 to 2020 and is negotiated each year around August. During the pandemic lockdown we talked extensively with Westpac about the challenge of getting vulnerable seniors onto online banking. A recent workshop on online banking saw almost 100 people pack into a hall in Ashburton!

Our relationships with Suzuki, Noel Leeming and Vodafone continue. Both Noel Leeming and Vodafone provide regular payments for commission which contribute towards the Learner Hours payment made to Learning Centres.

Our contract with Ryman Healthcare (started in 2018) was frustrated during the pandemic. We could not attend their villages and they could not attend our Learning Centres. For this reason the Federation decided to terminate the current contract.

The excellent relationship started by Grant Sidaway with Office for Seniors was continued during the pandemic. A meeting with the Minister for Seniors – Tracey Martin – was secured during the lockdown, and the Minister reiterated her support for SeniorNet. The Office for Seniors also organised a round table event to meet the “UN Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons” which I attended on your behalf.

MP Melissa Lee is also interested in our activities and I met with her at parliament in early 2020.

### **Fundraising**

An application was lodged with Lottery Grants Board in mid-2020.

### **2019 Remits**

Bream Bay submitted two remits at the AGM in 2019. The first was seeking a review of the TEC Codes (which categorise the courses provided by SeniorNet). The course codes had not been updated for a number of years and trends have shown that advances in technology, devices and apps have changed and are not reflected in the existing codes. Thanks to a Federation subcommittee and the feedback from Learning Centres, a new set of codes will be adopted for implementation at the beginning of 2021.

The second remit related to the relevance of the existing evaluation form included in the Quality Assurance Guidelines. There has been much discussion about the purpose and usefulness of the template included in the Guidelines. Concerns have been expressed that we overdo the surveying of members, particularly if they are attending on a regular basis and that some of the questions relate to factors outside the control of the Learning Centre. The Federation has determined that it is important to seek feedback from participants and the methodology for seeking feedback at this level is the responsibility of the individual Learning Centre.

### **Regional Meetings**

Grant continued his practice of visiting Learning Centres throughout the country and participating in Regional Meetings in 2019. Although the pandemic has curtailed a lot of face to face visiting in early 2020 I am steadily working my way through face to face and online attendance at as many regional meetings and Learning Centre AGMs as possible.

### **Resources Team**

Mid 2019 preparations began to set up an up-to-date course notes repository on the Federation website for access by Learning Centre tutors from around the country. Notes were to be provided by the Learning Centres in an editable form as much as possible, kept up-to-date as technology changed, and operated by a Resources Team, of which one member was to be a member of the Federation committee.

The new Resources section of the website was set up during January 2020, and on the 27<sup>th</sup> January, the first of the Occasional Newsletters was sent out to the Learning Centres. Course notes on the site have been steadily building since that date, and despite the odd hiccup, the site is going from strength to strength, only possible by the continuing support of tutors who are prepared to share their notes to make life easier for all tutors. It is the hope of the Federation committee and the Resources Team that more tutors will continue to share what they write for the benefit of others, and the Resources page on the website will be the go-to place for tutors to find notes relevant to what they want to present to the members of their Learning Centre.

## Learning Centres

<b>ASHBURTON</b>
<b>BREAM BAY</b>
<b>DARGAVILLE</b>
<b>HIBISCUS COAST</b>
<b>KAIKOHE</b>
<b>MANGAWHAI</b>
<b>WARKWORTH</b>
<b>WHANGAREI</b>
<b>BAYSWATER</b>
<b>EASTERN BAYS</b>
<b>EDEN-ROSKILL</b>
<b>GLENFIELD</b>
<b>KUMEU</b>
<b>MAC AUCKLAND</b>
<b>PAKURANGA</b>
<b>PAPAKURA</b>
<b>WAIHEKE ISLAND</b>
<b>WEST AUCKLAND</b>
<b>CAMBRIDGE</b>
<b>COROMANDEL</b>
<b>HAMILTON</b>
<b>KAWERAU</b>

<b>PAUANUI</b>
<b>MAC CANTERBURY</b>
<b>ROTORUA</b>
<b>SOUTH WAIKATO</b>
<b>TAURANGA</b>
<b>TE KUITI</b>
<b>TURANGI</b>
<b>WHAKATANE</b>
<b>WHANGAMATA</b>
<b>WHITIANGA</b>
<b>NEW BRIGHTON</b>
<b>HAWERA</b>
<b>NORTH CANTERBURY</b>
<b>HAWKES BAY</b>
<b>MANAWATU</b>
<b>NAPIER</b>
<b>NEW PLYMOUTH</b>
<b>PAPANUI</b>
<b>WANGANUI</b>
<b>HOROWHENUA</b>
<b>SELWYN</b>
<b>HUTT CITY</b>

<b>SOUTH CANTERBURY</b>
<b>KAPITI</b>
<b>NORTH WELLINGTON</b>
<b>UPPER HUTT</b>
<b>WAIRARAPA</b>
<b>GOLDEN BAY</b>
<b>MARLBOROUGH SOUNDS</b>
<b>MOTUEKA</b>
<b>NELSON</b>
<b>DUNEDIN</b>
<b>OTAGO</b>
<b>SOUTH</b>
<b>WANAKA</b>
<b>MATAMATA (closed in early 2020)</b>