

New Zealand Association of Psychotherapists

Wellington Branch

Annual Report 2021-22

Over the past 12 months the branch activities have been severely limited by the COVID pandemic and associated lockdowns, venue restrictions and personal cautions.

At the beginning of this 12 month period the responsibility for holding the branch together lay in the willing hands of Jacinda Doogue. Jacinda very capably managed the finances and the coordination of meetings. We thank her for her tireless efforts.

A previous branch member, Mark Davis, had enthusiastically initiated meetings in the 20-21 year until his declining health prevented his involvement.

Mark passed away on 26th April 2021. His commitment as a psychiatrist to psychotherapy and the roles of psychotherapists was of great value to NZAP whether as a member, or in his retirement from the Association, as an interested mental health professional. I valued him as a friend and colleague for 36 years.

That Mark so enthusiastically supported the branch, even though no longer a member, was symbolic of the Branch's value to psychotherapy in the Wellington region. It is in this spirit that meetings remain open to interested professionals, whether NZAP full members, ACP candidates, prospective members or valued co-professionals in mental health.

In July 2021 Jacinda stepped down from her sole responsibility as Branch Convenor and Treasurer and I volunteered to take her place. I have taken on this role with the support of an active convening group: full members Diane Zwimpfer and Annie Burgess; and students Clare Rousseau and Anne Ortlepp. This arrangement was confirmed at our November Meeting and the necessary financial formalities eventually achieved at the bank. This group has continued to meet both online and face to face and has been a good source of energy for the future of the branch, as a welcome mix of age and experience.

Finances:

Currently the branch has had sufficient funds to enable us not to charge any local fees for this year.

Activities:

In the past year we have planned and cancelled face to face meetings, successfully had one in-person meeting, had one mixed online/face to face meeting, another online meeting where some members met face to face in their own space and are planning a face to face meeting this month.

We have also been searching for a new venue for face to face meetings and are experimenting with a venue in central Wellington

Meetings held this year were:

November 2021: Annual pre-Christmas meet up (our first face-to-face meeting for some months).

March 2022: Anne Woodside presented an online session on working with people diagnosed as being on the Autism Spectrum. Although generally watched individually, a group of branch members were able to join with each other to watch.

April 2022: “The Depressed Clown” – an online and face to face discussion, led by Jerri Bassi, with participants (in the USA, Giovanni Fussetti, Psychodramatist and clown teacher) and Spain (Knut Østrådal, the main character) in this Norwegian movie about a Drama Teacher who pulled himself through a lengthy deep depression by organising a theatre piece: “Depression The Musical”. The session required a preliminary viewing of the movie, screened online.

May 2022: A planned face to face meeting where we will view and discuss a British Psychoanalytical Society Webinar in their “Political Mind” series: “The Role of the Unconscious in Political and Social Life”, with Renee Danziger.

National Events:

We were also able to participate in the Association’s celebration of 75 years, **Ka mua, ka muri** in April, originally planned to take place in the Wellington area, but eventually online. Some branch members were able to meet for a celebratory dinner at a local restaurant.

In June, branch members also attended the Patrick Casement online presentation, ***Preconception, in life and in the consulting room***, facilitated online by Gerald Maclaurin and screened to NZAP Branches.

Waka Oranga

The branch enjoys a collegial relationship with Waka Oranga and hopes that this will become more active when face to face events are more viable. We were sorry to note that a valued member, Cherry Pye, has had to relocate to the Bay of Plenty to support whanau. Cherry had been very supportive of the branch’s links with tangata whenua.

The Future:

We’ve experimented with various means of communicating with Branch Members and plan to increase our mailing list to include PBANZ registrants who are not NZAP members.

We are currently canvassing members about branch activities. One idea for a future where face to face meetings are not so ‘risky’ is to organise regular “Psychotherapy Cafes” where people meet in various formats to discuss presentations, reflect on experience and share casework practice.

Eric Medcalf

Branch Convenor and Treasurer

8th May 2022