

REPORT TO NZAP AGM, JUNE 2023

From the Acting President August 2022 - June 2023

On 18 June, a few days before the AGM, I will have handed back the presidency to Gabriela Mercado, where it belongs. Ten years after stepping down from the Council I have had the opportunity to occupy the chair again for a year and I am grateful for that. The Council are a talented, hardworking and very likeable group of people who have made the job easy, so I want to start by thanking them all for the work that they do on our behalf and for the personal support they have extended.

Gabriela is and will be a terrific president. Her dedication to NZAP had been seen repeatedly with her management of the website, of a series of crucial critical reviews of the Association and innumerable other tasks. The family concerns that had caused her to suspend her presidency having come to a happy conclusion, we co-opted Gabriela back onto Council in February, and she has hit the ground running, taking on several important tasks.

And while I'm on a roll, a big thanks to the Newsletter Editor, Marianna Ackerman, whose forbearance in the face of tardy writers is saintly, and who does such a lovely job putting the Newsletter together, time after time.

John Farnsworth's Life Membership

The Ōtepoti Dunedin branch formally awarded John his Life Membership. At any time there can be a maximum of eight Life Members, who are "persons of distinction who have contributed to the advancement of psychotherapy"¹ John's Distinguished Service Award citation is on the website, and I encourage you to take a look. I think of this as being NZAP's supreme recognition of service, and the Dunedin branch celebrated it with a meeting devoted to reminiscence on the history of the Branch. This Branch has continued to meet throughout the lockdowns with a full programme of presentations and discussions. If the photo seems to depict a small group, think that there were 12 people there, in person and online (one had dropped out by the time the photo was taken), which is a little over a quarter of the membership. In Auckland that would be a meeting of fifty people.

AGM Elections

Seven Council positions are up for election, and it needs a little explanation, as only four will be elected by the membership.

- Candidates for all positions are nominated by the membership, but only six of the twelve seats on Council are actually elected by the membership.
- Two are representatives of Waka Oranga, and the other four – President-elect, and thus also President, and the Chairs of Ethics and ACP – are elected by the Council.
- All positions are elected from nominations from you, the membership, and nominations need to be in a day before the Council meeting or the AGM, whichever applies, depending on the post.

¹ Constitution of NZAP, Section 14

- Even where someone is standing for re-election, you can nominate someone else.
- Elections are healthy, do not be put off if there is a candidate already standing.

The Council have been concerned in recent years that you, the members, seem uninvolved, and your governance body can feel quite separate, in a kind of bubble, but this is not a good process and it is not what the Council wants. At present about 30 people, including the committees, are doing all the work of running NZAP, and that number appears to be getting smaller over the years, though the total membership is quite stable. Without exception that I know of, those who get involved enjoy and grow from the experience. Please consider getting involved, at local Branch or at the national level.

TTBAC

One issue which I leave unresolved concerns the future of the Te Tiriti and Bicultural Advisory Committee. It is currently in recess. I will not attempt to explain why, as I am not sure myself, even after reading all the records I could find and talking to a number of well-informed people. The main thing is that it cannot disappear.

A further item on the AGM agenda is a remit which would automatically bring the convener/chair of the TTBAC onto Council by altering the Constitution. We currently have two 'statutory' committees, ACP and Ethics, the chairs of which are defined as Council members (elected by Council). The change would mean three committee chairs always on Council. It seems an obvious move.

Then we have to figure out what the TTBAC should look like. There has been a suggestion that it should consist of four members, with equal representation from Tangata Whenua and Pākehā/Tauīwi, in a model of co-governance, but there are currently no clear plans, and Waka Oranga recently announced that, in the meantime, they are not attending Council meetings, so Tangata Whenua representation will probably not be available from there.

There are an unknown number of Māori members who are not involved with Waka Oranga, but who can contribute, as Māori, in a number of ways. TTBAC would be an option. Of course, Māori members, like all members can get involved in any way they like!

And then

Meantime I will go back to concentrating on walking, with hat and cane, with my mouth closed, not making old man noises when getting up or sitting down or doing anything else, back to studying, looking out the window and working as a psychotherapist.

Thanks to everybody for the opportunity to be here.

Seán Manning
28 April 2023