

# Professional Historians' Association of New Zealand/Aotearoa (PHANZA)

## Annual General Meeting

14 August 2015

St Andrews on the Terrace Conference Rooms 1 and 2, 30 The Terrace, Wellington

Meeting opened 5:45pm

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**Present:** Karen Astwood, Neill Atkinson, Imelda Bargas, Eileen Barrett-Whitehead, Paul Christoffel, Peter Clayworth, Peter Cooke, Georgie Craw, John Crawford, Paul Husbands, Gavin McLean, Ewan Morris (Chair – from 5.2), Claudia Orange, Rachel Patrick, Margaret Pointer (Chair – to 5.1), Barry Rigby, Ben Schrader, David Young.

### 1. Apologies

Grace Bateman, Louise Beaumont, Robyn Burgess, Karen Cameron, Lloyd Carpenter, Sandra Cleary, Janine Cook, Norman Crawshaw, Bronwyn Dalley, Paul Diamond, Anthony Dreaver, Debbie Dunsford, Barbara Gawith, Sandra Gorter, Ian Grant, Jan Harris, Marguerite Hill, Robin Hodge, Michael Kelly, Angela Lassig, Jennifer Loughton, Lucy Mackintosh, Robin McConnell, Hilda McDonnell, Ann McEwan, Malcolm McKinnon, John Martin, Kathryn Mercer, Sonja Mitchell, Gerard Morris, Jessie Munro, Natasha Naus, Tony Nightingale, Ron Palenski, Jock Phillips, Elizabeth Pishief, Elizabeth Plumridge, Helen Reilly, Geoffrey Rice, Kirstie Ross, Louise Shaw, Hilary Stace, Nancy Swarbrick, Margaret Tennant, Richard Thomson, David Verran, Jane Vial, Blyss Wagstaff, Ross Webb, Lyn Williams.

### 2. Minutes from previous AGM (1 August 2014)

**The minutes were approved:** Imelda Bargas/Gavin McLean and unanimous vote.

### 3. Matters arising from the minutes

No matters were raised.

### 4. Reports

The annual reports from the three officers were discussed.

#### 4.1. President's report (Bronwyn Dalley)

In the President's absence, the Chair noted several points from the report:

- The 20th anniversary events in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch were well attended and appreciated.
- The milestone of awarding PHANZA's first Life Membership to Jock Phillips was an important event.
- The committee is getting more representative of the public/professional historian community. We now have representatives from Auckland, Palmerston North, Wellington, Nelson and Christchurch who are either free-lance or work for a range of employers.

**The President's annual report was endorsed and approved:** David Young/Peter Cooke.  
Passed with acclamation.

#### **4.2. Treasurer's report and Annual Statement of Accounts** (Eileen Barrett-Whitehead)

The Treasurer noted several points from the report and Annual Statement of Accounts:

- The Association's finances are healthy.
- The biggest consistent expenses are producing *Phanzine* and maintaining the website.
- Much of the current surplus is likely to be spent on the planned website redevelopment in the 2015–16 financial year.
- Members have signalled they are keen to have more events outside of Wellington and recently we held an Auckland symposium day. We continue to look for opportunities like this but getting them together relies on a strong local commitment and organising group.

**The Treasurer's Report and Annual Statement of Accounts for the Year Ended 30 June 2015 was endorsed and approved:** John Crawford/Paul Christoffel. Passed with acclamation.

Discussion:

- The Treasurer agreed with a comment from the floor noting that funds in the chequing account are accumulating and a portion could be transferred to the interest-bearing account.

#### **4.3. Secretary's report** (Karen Astwood)

The Secretary noted several points from the report:

- In addition to the committee members reported as standing down, Elizabeth Cox is also stepping down from the committee next year.
- *Phanzine* has been successfully produced through the efforts of Ewan Morris.
- The launch of the Facebook page means we have another avenue of communicating with members and those in the wider historian community.

**The Secretary's annual report was endorsed and passed:** Imelda Bargas/Margaret Pointer. Passed with acclamation.

Discussion:

- Eileen Barrett-Whitehead noted that promoting members' newly launched publications and other work is a recent and appreciated member benefit. She also noted that she has approximately four years' worth of *Phanzine* issues left to scan.

### **5. Election of Officers**

#### **5.1. President**

The Chair called for nominations from the floor for the office of President.

**Ewan Morris was nominated by Margaret Pointer, seconded by Eileen Barrett-Whitehead. Ewan Morris was unanimously voted (by show of hands) to the office of President.**

The Chair noted the excellent work Ewan has been doing as *Phanzine* editor and as a very active committee member. These comments were endorsed with acclamation. The Chair was vacated at this point and the new President took over.

#### **5.2. Treasurer**

The Chair/President called for nominations from the floor for the office of Treasurer.

**Eileen Barrett-Whitehead was nominated by Paul Husbands, seconded by Claudia Orange. Eileen Barrett-Whitehead was unanimously voted (by show of hands) to the office of Treasurer.**

### **5.3. Secretary**

The Chair/President called for nominations from the floor for the office of Secretary.

**Karen Astwood was nominated by Margaret Pointer, seconded by Peter Cooke. Karen Astwood was unanimously voted (by show of hands) to the office of Secretary.**

## **6. Election of PHANZA Committee**

The Chair/President noted interest in co-opting further Wellington-based committee members during this year, primarily to ensure a quorum is physically present at meetings in case the video conferencing technology fails.

The Chair/President called for nominations from the floor for members of the committee.

The following committee members were elected by unanimous vote (show of hands):

- **Sandra Gorter** (Auckland) - nominated by Karen Astwood and seconded by Imelda Bargas.
- **Marguerite Hill** (Christchurch) - nominated by Paul Husbands and seconded by Imelda Bargas.
- **Paul Husbands** (Wellington) - nominated by Eileen Barrett-Whitehead and seconded by Ben Schrader.
- **Lucy Mackintosh** (Auckland) - nominated by Karen Astwood and seconded by Eileen Barrett-Whitehead.
- **Margaret Tennant** (Palmerston North) - nominated by Karen Astwood and seconded by Imelda Bargas.
- **David Young** (Nelson/Wellington) - nominated by Eileen Barrett-Whitehead and seconded by Gavin McLean.

The election of the PHANZA's Officers and Committee was passed with acclamation.

The Chair/President thanked the 2014–15 committee for their efforts over the year. In particular, the contribution of those leaving the committee were acknowledged: Elizabeth Cox, Bronwyn Dalley (previous President), Margaret Pointer (former *Phanzine* editor and longstanding committee member) and Geoffrey Rice. These comments were endorsed with acclamation.

## **7. Election of PHANZA's auditor**

The Chair/President called for nominations from the floor for the election of the auditor.

**Our current auditor, Peter Scholtens, was nominated by Eileen Barrett-Whitehead, seconded by Karen Astwood. Peter Scholtens was elected by acclamation.**

## **8. Constitution Review**

A paper discussing proposed changes to the PHANZA Constitution was included in the papers for the AGM. The President noted that the wider membership will be consulted about the issues in the paper through *Phanzine* and by email, and feedback is strongly encouraged. The aim is to finalise amendments over this financial year and vote on them at the 2016 AGM.

The President then highlighted several points from the paper:

- The Law Commission's review of the Incorporated Societies Act is good impetus to update our Constitution, as is the fact that our Constitution is now 20 years old.
- Clause 2: The Constitution on our website and the Societies Office website are slightly different. For example, Societies Office copy mentions about a Code of Ethics, rather than a Code of Practice. Our Rules also refer to a Code of Ethics. Currently we have a Code of Practice. These discrepancies need to be addressed and then further work on modernising the Code of Ethics/Practice will be done. Discussion from the members noted that when preparing the Code of Ethics it will be expedient to look at examples from the wider historical community. Claudia Orange has recently completed a similar task for the National Museum Te Papa Tongarewa and will supply this to the Committee because it is a pertinent example.
- Clause 3: Re the proposed introduction of a new Associate Member category, Imelda Bargas noted that she first joined as an Associate Member. Gavin McLean highlighted that the membership criteria have been a frequent Committee discussion topic over the years. It was noted that members are comfortable with the Committee making judgement calls on the suitability of new members.
- Clause 9: It is proposed that we reassess the best means of voting at Annual and Extraordinary General Meetings. For example, there is provision in the Constitution for proxy or postal voting but we need to address whether or how this would work in practice.
- Clause 10: It seems unnecessary for PHANZA to have a separate Constitution and Rules, so an aim of the review is to incorporate the Rules into the Constitution.
- Other issues to be considered are making specific provision for Committee members to stand aside from discussion and decisions which could compromise their professional or personal interests. Consideration is also being given to outlining a dispute resolution process. Members suggested that in addition to possible parties listed in the paper that dispute could potentially arise with employers and funding agencies where PHANZA may be called upon to intervene in some way.

## **9. General Business**

### **9.1. Defining historians and PHANZA's name**

Peter Cooke brought up the topic of how professional historians can distinguish themselves from others in the field, amateur or employed. The term historian is quite generic, much like that of writer, so membership in PHANZA is a signal of where professional/public historians sit in the spectrum of 'historians.' PHANZA membership is a baseline endorsement of a person's capability for employers.

This led to a discussion about PHANZA's name and whether it would be more modern and relevant to change from Professional Historians' to Public Historians'. However, it was generally felt that there is no need to change our established brand and we also have members whose work crosses over into academia and other areas which are not public history.

The definition of a historian in terms of Accident Compensation Corporation categories was also mentioned. Imelda Bargas noted that the Committee made a submission when the current categories were being devised. The 2014–15 Committee have been discussing this and are going to seek member feedback about what category they use so some guidance

can be provided on our website. As part of the website redevelopment the Committee will be updating the existing website information and the President encouraged members to contact the Committee with their lessons and experiences.

### **9.2. Obituaries in *Phanzine***

The April 2015 issue of *Phanzine* featured an obituary article on Jannelle Warren-Findley. Claudia Orange noted that several notable New Zealand public historians have passed away recently and obituary copy for our December issue was encouraged.

### **9.3. Te Ara - Encyclopedia of New Zealand**

It was noted that there is ongoing discussion within the Ministry for Culture and Heritage about the future of its Te Ara – Encyclopedia of New Zealand project. There was strong support among the members present for the continued resourcing of the project.

**It was resolved to write to the Chief Executive of the Ministry expressing that Te Ara is an important resource which needs to be actively maintained into the future.** Ben Schrader/Claudia Orange. Passed by majority vote, with MCH employees abstaining.

**The meeting closed at 6:50pm.**