

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

Secretary's Report for 2016–17

This is my third report as PHANZA's Secretary, having been first elected to the role at the 2014 Annual General Meeting (AGM).

Committee meetings

PHANZA's Executive Committee has held seven ordinary meetings between the last AGM on 8 October 2016 and the end of the financial year. The average attendance was six committee members, either in person or via Skype.

Our meetings have continued to be hosted by the Ministry for Culture and Heritage (MCH), for which the Committee is grateful.

Sarah Burgess was co-opted onto the Committee as the MCH representative at the October 2016 ordinary meeting. Lucy Mackintosh (Auckland) and David Young (Nelson) were also co-opted at that meeting.

Sub-committees/working groups

- **Membership sub-committee**

The membership sub-committee assesses applications and provides recommendations to the Committee regarding additions to the membership list. This year the sub-committee consisted of me, Michael Kelly, Lucy Mackintosh and David Young. Because I am stepping down as Secretary and from the Committee, the Committee will be looking to appoint another member to this sub-committee. This is likely to be the new Secretary.

Between the 2016 AGM and the end of the financial year six new members were added to the membership list and two former members were reinstated.

- **Website redevelopment/information upgrades**

As noted in the previous Secretary's report, the new website was launched early in this financial year (September). Aside from a few anticipated teething problems, the website is functioning well and is regularly updated and backed-up.

The Committee has now turned its attention to updating the guidance information available on the website. This task is being led by Michael Kelly and David Young. We expect to be able to launch a revised Code of Ethics, rates of payment guidance, and other documents within the next few months.

Wellington mini-conference, 'Piecing together the jigsaw: Information and where to find it'

Organisation for this event, held on 8 October 2016 at St Andrew's on the Terrace, began in the previous financial year. The organising group consisted of Eileen Barrett-Whitehead, Georgie Craw and Jamie Jacobs.

Around 40 people attended and we received positive feedback about the event and its content, which is a credit to the hard work the organising team put in. Simon Nathan, one of the speakers, produced an article in the December 2016 *Phanzine* issue (<http://phanza.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Phanzine-Dec-2016-web-2.pdf>) about the event.

Correspondence

PHANZA received regular newsletters from our counterparts at Professional Historians' Australia, Victoria (*Pharos*) and also regular newsletters from the New Zealand Military Historical Society, which was then distributed to members who have opted to be on that email list.

We are also routinely sent notifications for the noticeboard about Alexander Turnbull and National Library events, Stout Research Centre lectures, UNESCO Memory of the World register updates and Archives New Zealand intentions to dispose.

There appear to have been more enquiries this year from overseas, including clients seeking help with family history research, historians requiring local assistance, and there was even an opportunity to be a tour guide for an Australian school group.

Since changing to the new website we have also been operating a different email system (MailChimp) for our weekly notices and other group emails. This provides us with reports on various aspects, such as the number of emails opened each time the notices are sent and also the amount of clicks on the links therein. For example, for the first six months of 2017, on average 69% of members opened weekly email newsletters, and then, after skimming the headlines, members clicked through to the content links on average of 36% of the time.

Phanzine

This year our *Phanzine* editors were Marguerite Hill and Margaret Tennant, who have continued the tradition of producing this interesting and insightful PHANZA newsletter three times per year. Marguerite is stepping down from the Committee after this AGM after many years of service in various Committee roles.

A helpful team of Wellington-based PHANZA Committee members and MCH staff continue to volunteer to complete the enveloping for every *Phanzine* issue mail-out. This assistance is much appreciated.

As per our standard practice, hardcopies of the three issues produced this financial year (vol. 22:2-3 and vol.23:1) have been routinely sent to repositories, such as the National Library, and we maintain our own archive. Electronic versions of past issues are available online. When a new issue is produced the previous one is uploaded to the website.

Social media

I continue to manage the Facebook account but will be handing this task over to the new Secretary. Currently we have 92 Facebook page followers which is up 16 on last year. It is mostly a vehicle for sharing news from other Facebook pages which members and the general history community might find interesting and we particularly highlight events and news posts featuring our members.

Our Twitter account follower numbers also continues to grow. We currently have 208 Twitter followers, which is an increase of 38 on last year's numbers. Marguerite Hill has managed this aspect of our social media presence for many years and will be handing over the reins to another Committee member after the AGM.

Karen Astwood

PHANZA Secretary
12 September 2017