



AUCKLAND JUSTICES OF THE PEACE ASSOCIATION INC (since 1922)

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2019

One of the special highlights being the President is attending the Swearing in Ceremony of new Justices of the Peace, welcoming them and their diversity as well as their families who witness this special occasion. Their enthusiasm, willingness to learn and participate on our service desks have been exemplary. We are indebted to District Court Judge Cunningham and Judge Mathers for the personalized manner in which they lead these occasions.

Other highlights have been attending the Special Sitting of the Auckland District Court to farewell six of our Judicial Justices. We were honoured to have the Chief District Court Judge Jan-Marie Doogue preside and in attendance our Vice Patrons (and liaison judges) Judge Cunningham and Judge Recordon.

This year another special function held in April at Alberton House in Auckland was hosting the High Tea where we honoured Past AJPA Presidents, Life Members and Regional Representatives to Royal Federation. Memories and talk flowed as the guests and partners intermingled.

At the beginning of this term of office, orientation sessions for new council members were initiated to support their induction to council and these have proven worthwhile.

Visiting and meeting with a number of Members of Parliament has proven fruitful given the opportunity to present the need as well as outline necessary criteria when recommending a member of the public for the office of Justice of the Peace. It is also an opportunity to express our concern re the inactive Justices to MPs. All have been receptive and have continued to communicate with us and in one case, attend the swearing in of a nominee. Some MPs hold morning teas to honour/acknowledge members in their electorate.

Over the past twelve months the policies of the Association have all been reviewed and new ones written where necessary, plus supporting guidelines. The Chair of each Committee has been attentive to detail and positive debate around the council table endorsed these. The relevant policies are posted on our website.

Your Council submitted a document to Royal Federation at their request regarding the RF Draft Guidelines and we await the outcome of these. Ten members of Council attended the worthwhile and well organised RF Conference in Blenheim this year at which three of the four remits from this Association were passed.

The Council is indebted to Ric Carlyon who filled the role of the Auckland Representative to Royal Federation for a six month period, a role that he performed admirably. We welcomed the election to this role of Past President Garry Nicholls who continues in this vein representing and informing the council.

For the second year we are grateful to the NZ Lottery Grants Board for allocating the full amount requested thus enabling council to distribute funds and purchase materials for members and service desks.

There is concern that there are still too many members who are inactive, do not serve on service desks nor attend their support groups or regular training in which to update themselves. This is an ongoing issue and we are in regular communication with Royal Federation and they in turn with the Ministry of Justice.

It has been a pleasure to visit with almost all Support Groups and acknowledge and appreciate the dedication of the Coordinators and Rosterers as well as the commitment of the members themselves. It is pleasing to note others who are taking up the baton of leadership this year.

We have much to celebrate!

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Membership – Susan Walker

The AJPA uses a variety of ways to stay in touch with our membership. Regular contact is maintained with members via telephone, email, and our Facebook Page, which now has 181 members and is a great way to keep in touch, and up-to-date with recent developments. We recently started using Mailchimp to send out newsletters, or items of information for the entire membership. It provides statistics about how newsletters perform. It is a bit dismaying, that after 16 days, only 67.6% of the membership had opened the President's June Newsletter. Before complaining that you never hear from us, check your Junk folder!

Our new website is also a good way to stay informed. The website is easy to use, and does not require any password or login. The information is available to all, so please check it if you require anything.

Keeping the database of members up-to date is another task which is a large one, and recently hours of work have gone into reconciling three databases – the Federation one, the AJPA one and the Xero one, used by the Treasurer for sending invoices. People change email addresses astonishingly frequently. Please, do let us know if you change any of your contact details. It is also the individual's responsibility to maintain updated information on the Federation "Find a JP" site.

Over the year Council receives monthly reports on movements in membership. The statistics for last financial year:

SINCE END JUNE 2018	
New JPS sworn	47
Transfer from other associations	9
Members re-joined	12
Deaths	19
Resignation or Retirement as a JP	31
Resignation from the Association	6
Transfer to other Associations	14
TOTAL MEMBERSHIP JULY 5 2019	1,363

The most common reason for resignation from the Association was objection to paying subs. It is gratifying that so many of you do pay these, and remain committed members, and that people whose membership lapses rejoin. We hope you see the value of the information flow to members, the collegiality, and the opportunity to stay properly trained that membership affords. The Association expresses its appreciation and gratitude to those members who so willingly and generously give of their time and talents to serve the public of Auckland.

Our gratitude also to our Registrar, Janet Thompson, who manages all enquiries, and keeps everything updated, for her dedication, skills, and cheerfulness under pressure.

Registry and Finance – Garry Nicholls

During the year we were again fortunate to receive a further grant from the NZ Lottery Grants Board. This together with careful management of the Association's funds has enabled the Council to deliver a number of benefits including:

- Maintaining our members' subscriptions at the same level as the previous two years
- Providing new banners, posters, and publicity material for our Service Desks
- Assisting our members rostered on busy Service Desks to purchase new stamps
- Providing name badges for members who are rostered on Service Desks
- Supplying new logbooks for use by members
- Completing the upgrade of our website

There is still much work to do and in July we applied to the NZ Lottery Grants Board for further funding. We are currently awaiting a decision on this application.

Fortunately the ongoing viability of the Association's finances is not dependent on receiving further funding and the budget for the current year has been prepared on the assumption that our application is not successful.

Support Groups and Service Desks – Sherryl Wilson

All 26 Support Groups within the Association are well served and visited regularly by their AJPA Liaison personnel who make up this very active committee. Most use these meetings as a means of ongoing targeted training and utilize the skills and talents of our ministerial trainers to whom we are very grateful. Members can use these opportunities for Accreditation purposes as well. These meetings are also a means of informing and advising members as well as networking. Communication with these groups is maintained via regular SG Newsletters and emails which Coordinators are encouraged to share with their members.

In February the Association once again hosted the annual meeting for Support Group Coordinators and Rosterers and there was 100% attendance. This year has seen six new leaders of Support Groups who have accepted this role.

Nine HUB sessions were held in different locations on different dates in 2019 offering the same materials so members had choice as to which they were able to attend. Materials devised and led by the Ministerial Trainers offered the opportunity to interact and role play the very important aspect of customer service, as well as be updated on the Anti Money Laundering (AML) Act and its implications plus certifying electronic documents. More members took this opportunity to attend these than in previous years.

The 67 service desks scattered around the Association's region are becoming increasingly busy as members of the public appreciate the opportunity to attend one of these without having to make an appointment. All council members serve on at least one of these desks and in some instances up to three, and we are increasingly grateful to the loyal members who continue to offer their time and abilities working on these. However we do need more members to uplift this opportunity to assist so the burden doesn't always fall on the willing few. Please do contact your Rosterer if you can assist even if it is irregularly. If you do not feel confident, request another member sit with you for the first few sessions. An aspirational goal is that only accredited members will serve on our desks - already some have achieved!

The statistics that are gathered from each of our authorised service desks are collected, collated and form an important and vital function in reporting these statistics to the Royal Federation as well as providing data when we make application for funding from institutions such as the NZ Lottery Grants Board.

For the past 12 months to the end of July 2019, Justices served 168,255 clients at our service desks giving 23,179 hours to justice. A total of 624,045 transactions were done of which 500,026 were certifying copies. Statistics were received from all except three although some others were rather intermittent in reporting. These are an indication of the dedication of our members who voluntarily serve on our authorised desks.

During this year Guidelines have been drawn up for both the Coordinator's and the Rosterer's positions and these have been shared with Support Groups. It is hoped that training can be offered for those thinking of taking up these leadership positions in the future.

Ministerial Training – Garry Nicholls

It has been another busy year for the Association's training team.

The HUB Refresher programme continues to be popular with our members. Hub 2 (2018) which took place during the year was held at 8 different locations and attracted 329 members while Hub 1 (2019) was held at 9 locations with 453 members participating. The 2019 programme also included a joint HUB session with the Northland Association at Mangawhai where some of our members reside.

The training team also delivered training sessions at 7 Support Group meetings where 112 members were in attendance.

Induction training was provided to 66 provisionally appointed Justices at 9 Induction sessions. Refresher training was provided to 59 Justices immediately before they were sworn as Justices of the Peace. This ensures that once they are sworn new Justices are ready to serve the public from a Service Desk.

The training materials prepared and used by the Auckland training team has been shared with other Association trainers. Despite the huge effort put into training it is disappointing that the percentage of our members who have achieved Accreditation is less than the other Associations. This is a major target for improvement during the next year.

Ministerial Complaints – Susan Walker

From July 2018 to the end of June 2019, the Association received 23 new complaints. We also had three complaints unresolved from previous years, which await court sentencing, or tribunal verdicts, or other Government body investigation before the Ministry of Justice takes action. One of these has been subsequently resolved with a resignation from office.

The 23 complaints fell into the following categories. Note that some complaints contained allegations of more than one type of bad behaviour:

- Behaviour unbecoming a Justice of the Peace – 10
- Misuse of the letters JP, or the position as a Justice of the Peace - 4
- Rudeness or racism - 8
- Making an error in a document - 8
- Being unavailable, or refusing to do something - 4
- Charging for services - 1
- Signing after retiring -1

All complaints are dealt with according to the Complaints Policy which is on the website. Not all complaints are upheld. There are often good reasons why a Justice of the Peace refuses to deal with a document. In many cases, the Justice of the Peace denies the allegation, which, unless there is supporting evidence, means that the allegation is unproven. Surprisingly, there are several Justices of the Peace with more than one complaint made about them.

When complaints are upheld, generally re-training, or a reminder of the requirements of our Codes of Practice, are the solution. Only the most serious of complaints are referred to the Ministry of Justice for their action.

This year, as a result of a change instituted at the 2019 Federation Conference, all matters of behaviour unbecoming a Justice of the Peace will be referred straight to Royal Federation for their attention. These are the matters which involve behaviour unrelated to Justice of the Peace duties, which potentially makes a person unfit to be a Justice of the Peace.

Judicial – Susan Walker

Our panel has decreased in size to 21 members. This year we have seen the retirement of Gill Court JP, and Dianne Haynes JP has returned to Rotorua. We miss them both from our panel and thank them for many years of committed effort.

In March, a special sitting of the District Court was held to celebrate the service given to the Community by Eddie Stark JP, Allen Spence JP, Mark Sinclair JP, Earle Mead JP, Angela Siu JP and Gill Court JP. The late Cecil Lochan JP was also acknowledged. This was presided over by the Chief District Court Judge, Jan-Marie Doogue, supported by our liaison judges, Judge Cunningham and Judge Recordon. Judge Doogue acknowledged the fact that the group had served over 120 years in total on the bench. Representatives of Police Prosecutions, Auckland Transport Prosecutions, District Court Management and the Duty Lawyers attended the sitting.

We continue to sit one day a week at Manukau and the North Shore, and two days a month at Waitakere in Minor Traffic Court. Auckland now also has one full day a week instead of 4 half days. We also continue to sit on Saturday and Statutory holiday Arrest Courts, and occasionally substitute for Community Magistrates on training days.

We have again selected 4 new people to train as Judicial Justices in 2020, and they will join with one who deferred training from last year. We welcome this new injection to the panel in 2021, as our panel is ageing. Unfortunately, for a variety of reasons, we will have no new members to the panel in 2020. We have conducted in-house training for our members with 4 Judicial seminars annually, and training for three of our panel to become leads in Minor Traffic Court.

This year has seen the retirement of our Appraiser Don Harrow JP, from the Court Management Team. He has observed and advised panel members for the past 5 years, and his contribution will be much missed. We have also seen a change to the way that RF distributes the funds for Rostering to the Associations, with a cut in income to Auckland of some \$5000. We await information as to what the funding for this financial year will be.

Technology – Aston Moss

We continue to look for ways to use technology to deliver services to our clients effectively and efficiently, to support running the Association efficiently, along with being a contributor or enabler of the valuable work done by our training team and Support Groups to keep our members current, competent and confident in providing services to our clients. Our current focuses including maximising the use of the Surface Pros so generously funded by a NZ Lottery Grant to support training and encourage accreditation, as well as spread the use and benefits of the pilot scheme of self-selected service desk rostering and the seamless collection of service desk statistics.

Beyond this, we will be looking to participate in the appropriate discussions around how technology is changing the requirements of our role (for example certification of copies where the original is online, available online through emails, websites or Apps) and how technology is both technically and able to play a role in areas such as statutory declarations and the like. These are exciting areas and, although likely to be dependent upon changes to legislation, must be considered as part of what and how we deliver some of our services in the future.

Social – Frank Rands

Forty-six Justices of the Peace gathered in June for the Annual Luncheon of the Auckland Justices of the Peace Association. The luncheon was held at Parnell and all attendees were able to network amongst themselves making useful contacts for the future. The members and partners were entertained by guest speaker, Captain Lisa Hunn, RNZN who was the first woman to Command HMNZS Te Mana, a warship commissioned in the Royal New Zealand Navy. Lisa spoke of nautical issues, events, tasks and especially provided attendees an insight into the vagaries of Command which she and other Commanding Officers face on a daily basis. The attendees thoroughly enjoyed the speaker. Another event is in the planning stages for early next year.

Communication – Ginny Radford

Over the past twelve months, work has continued to improve communications with both Members and clients. The website has been updated and modernised; policies, once reviewed, have been added to the site as appropriate. Support has been provided for Support Groups in the form of Guidelines, and the trial of Google Docs for scheduling electronically. Pull-up banners to clarify Service Desk visits have been provided to all Support Groups, and have been well received. Similarly, name badges available to all those serving on desks have improved communication with clients. The successful development of the closed Facebook group has continued, and has been noticed and implemented by other Associations. All Council members have contributed to the communication improvements.

Specialist Functions – Neville Madden

The past year has been a very successful year with a number of goals completed:

- Franklin Association accepted the invitation to join the AJPA for the revised Memorandum of Understanding with the Auckland DHBs later in 2018 given Counties Manukau extended their area to include Mercer. This was finally signed off in March 2019 for another three years.
- In November 2018 the Registrar coordinated the Nominated Persons' Refresher and Training Seminar
- Auckland DHBs hosted a mental health Section 9 Training Seminar in January 2019
- May/June 2019, NZ Police requested AJPA arrange a training session for Nominated Persons due to the age of youth changing from 17 to 18 years.

LOOKING FORWARD

During the 2019/20 year there will more to undertake as follows:

- Establish a working party to review the Strategic Plan
- Establish a working party to prepare and plan for the Association's Centennial in 2022
- Review policies as and when required
- Challenge the Ministry of Justice via Royal Federation regarding the inactive Justices as well as engaging with Members of Parliament through their electorates
- Welcome newly sworn Justices of the Peace and assist them through their first year
- Continue to provide quality educational training at HUB and Support Group Meetings
- Provide information, assistance and ongoing support to Support Group Coordinators and Rosterers
- Encourage the uptake of Google Docs as a means of self-rostering service desk duties
- Endeavour to create a system of reporting all service desk statistics electronically
- Encourage members to update and maintain their Accreditation and for others to attempt at local sessions
- Continue to inform and update members on a regular basis.

GRATITUDE

It would be impossible for the Association to function well without the diligence and good will of the membership. On behalf of the Council we are most grateful for the positive role that each of you plays in providing this **outstanding voluntary service** to the community, be it at a service desk, in your home or place of work.

To our Support Group Coordinators and Rosterers we thank you for taking on the mantle of leadership and the extra duties these entail.

We extend special thanks to those of you who support our committee structures outside of council.

We are greatly indebted to the diligence of our Treasurer Geoff Pownall, and to our Registrar Janet Thompson for her commitment, willingness to undertake all manner of tasks with cheerful positivity as well as her professionalism in dealings with all people.

Owen Goodwin is not seeking re-election this year and we thank him for his contributions.

To Susan Walker who is not seeking the role of Vice President, my sincere appreciation for agreeing to be co-opted for the past twelve months in this capacity and her valuable contributions.

To all Council Members, I extend my grateful appreciation for your support and the commitment you each have given to your individual responsibilities.

It is a pleasure and a privilege to serve as your President.

Sherryl Wilson
PRESIDENT