

ARANZ President's Annual Report 2020 - 2021

Dr Eric Boamah



Tēnā koutou katoa

Ehara tāku toa i te toa takitahi, engari he toa takitini
My strength is not as an individual, but as a collective.

It has been a privilege and great honour to serve this august association in the highest capacity as President. When I look back and reflect on all that has transpired in the last three years of my term, I see clearly that my strength alone would have failed, but the collective strength of all members, and especially members on the ARANZ Council and specific individuals providing invaluable support from the background. The purpose of this report is to present the 45th annual report of the Archives and Records Association of New Zealand, my third and final as President present, and to recall the key highlights of events.

Highlights of the year's Events

Most of the events Council concerned itself about, were carried on from the previous year's activities which were affected in one way or the other by the COVID-19 pandemic. Prominent among them were:

ARANZ Conference

The year began with serious discussions on what we could do about our Biennial Conference. As you may recall, the conference was supposed to happen in 2020 in Dunedin and because of the COVID-19 pandemic, it was postponed to 2021. The new Council launched straight into discussions and initially planned a one-day lightning talk conference in Wellington. But because the pandemic showed no sign of slowing down with its in-out-in-out regional lockdowns, (especially in Auckland and Wellington),

coupled with the uncertain financial implications to the association, made the Council decide to cancel the conference for this year as well.

This year was also the time for the ARANZ/ASA Joint conference. The Vice President and I had several discussions with the new President of ASA to see the possibility of making that happen. But because of the same issue with the pandemic, we decided to shelve the idea of a joint conference and pick it up again next year.

The Community Archive

The decommissioning of The Community Archives website was an issue that Council considered important and took a keen interest in following it up last year.

Council resorted to engaging with key stakeholders, including consultation with key leaders of the various information organisations in our community. These consultations led to the development of a survey to collect the perspective of all members and users of the Community Archive about its future.

The survey received very high participation from records managers, archivists, researchers, librarians, and a variety of users from various fields in New Zealand. The outcome of the survey was a resounding YES for the future of the Community Archive. Almost all the participants found the Community Archive very useful to them in various ways. The full report of the survey is published on the ARANZ website.

Following this outcome, the President and the Vice President followed up with the current Chief Archivist, who has promised to address the needs of members regarding the future of the Community Archive. The Chief Archivist has assured to address the Community Archive issue through the role of a Kaihatu position at the Archives New Zealand. Once the establishment of this position is finalised, we are assured of progress on the Community Archive concerns.

Stakeholder engagement

The Council, through the President and the Vice President, has been engaging with key stakeholders in various ways to ensure ARANZ stays relevant to its shareholders.

Meetings with the Chief Archivist

We have established a regular monthly catchup with the Chief Archivist where the President together with the Vice President updates the Chief Archivist on ARANZ matters and discuss the various issues and concerns from our members. The Chief Archivist also shares their visions and a plan for the community. Through these meetings a lot of ARANZ's concerns have achieved progress, including the progress on the Community Archive concerns. Also, through the discussion of the concerns from the School Archivist Group in one of the meetings, the Chief Archivist found the need to offer an amount of money up to \$10,000 as a grant to support research into the state of archival education and training in New Zealand. The Chief Archivist wants ARANZ to design the mechanism to support a member or a student to use the money for the research.

MOU with ASA

ARANZ continues to collaborate with our sister association across the Tasman. The president and the Vice continue to meet with the leadership of ASA to ensure that our members receive reciprocal benefits the associations offer. To fully achieve this purpose, we have renewed the ARANZ/ASA MoU this year. The last MoU, which was signed in 2017 expired this year. So, it was useful to renew it so that our members could especially take appropriate advantage of the upcoming ASA conference.

Victoria University Guest lectures

Every year, The School of Information Management invites key industry leaders to their INFO 520 – The Information Profession Course, as guest lecturers to tell students about their professional associations. The President has been attending this lecture every year. This year it was interesting to have our own Vice President also being a student of the class. So, having him also talk to his colleagues made the lecture more

interesting and livelier. Through these guest lecturers, we have had more students signing up to become members of our association. The Member Secretary will tell you more about that soon.

GLAMr Collaboration

Following the regular meeting with the Chief Archivist, the Chief Archivist expressed concern about the disintegrated nature of the information professional community in New Zealand. The discussion led to various meetings between association heads in the GLAMr sector, and now ARANZ will be part of a discussion of a GLAMr hui coming up in September this year. The aim is to see how our members can receive full benefits from such a collaboration with other professional associations in the sector.

Open Polytechnic LIS Stakeholder Advisory Group meetings

The Library and Information Studies Programme at the Open Polytechnic has a Stakeholder Advisory Group, which involves representatives from key information institutions and professional associations, including representatives LIANZA, RIMPA, Archives New Zealand, the National Library, etc. Members of this group provide the LIS team at the Open Polytechnic updates on the various organisations and advice on how the LIS programme can be developed and managed to suit stakeholders' needs and interest. The President has represented ARANZ on this committee. Through these discussions most students have heard about ARANZ and what our association stands for, which has been progressive towards membership drive.

Honouring Governor-General invitations

As our patron, we call on the Governor-General on various occasions to grace our events. Plans were far advanced with the arrangements for the Governor-General to attend and open our conference before it got cancelled. We have also had various communications and interactions with the Governor-General to enable most of our processes this year. So, when the Governor-General also invited the President and the Vice President to attend this year's Waitangi Day reception at the Government House, we honoured her invitation with joy on behalf of the association.

Updates on portfolios

Website

The website and social media platforms are constantly updated and effectively maintained by our webmaster. The key highlight includes the development of a microsite to publish Alerts and Archifacts issues online which members can now access.

Membership

- As of August 2021, there were 135 paid members
- Honorary Members 8
- Institutional New Zealand Members 39
- Institutional Overseas Members 1
- Personal New Zealand Members 78
- Personal International Members 3
- Student New Zealand Members 6

These numbers are likely to change as ARANZ membership invoices were emailed out in the first week of July 2021. So, at the time of preparing this report, most members had not paid their subs. Various invoice generating scripts went without incident. Emails confirmation of payment has been sent to all paid-up members, receipts have been issued on request to several members. Membership payments continue to come in each week. Six membership cancellations since 1 July 2021. Seven new membership applications since 1 July 2021 of which three have paid membership fees.

Archifacts

Since assuming office we've had three different Editors and editorial groups working very hard to ensure that we have the usual two-issues yearly of Archifacts publications for our members. The hardworking editorial team faces different challenges including the difficulty of receiving articles for

publication. But the current editorial team has worked out strategies to ensure that the team will rather go out to encourage members and solicit for articles rather than waiting for people to submit.

Also, all the back issues of Archifacts have been digitised and made available on the ARANZ website. Thanks to the hard work of the WebMaster and other support members of the Council. This makes it easy for members to browse and search.

A key focus of the current Archifacts Editor, Linda Liddicoat, is to search for articles from various platforms such as Regional Community Archives, NZ Sound Archives and writing to other bodies like NZ Theatre Archives etc. So, the future of Archifacts looks bright and exciting.

Awards

Despite the postponement and later cancellation of the conference, both of our prizes were offered this year. The selection committees for the biennial Michael Standish Prize, which is awarded to an outstanding essay; and the Ian Wards Prize, which recognises an outstanding piece of publishing writing annually, have been very busy working to select winners to the awards this year. The convenors of the panels worked tirelessly to identify very deserving winners.

Elizabeth Charlton's *"Reappraisal and deaccessioning: Applying a 'Dangerous Practices' in New Zealand", Reappraisal and Deaccessioning in Archives and Special Collections, 2019*", was the Winner for the Michael Standish Prize and Sarah Gaitanos' *Shirley Smith: An Examined Life (Victoria University Press, Wellington)*, was the winner of the Ian Wards Prize

An awards event was held in Wellington, where the winners were celebrated and received their prizes. Details of the winners were also published on our website.

The Council also announced our usual conference scholarship for interested members to apply so that they could use it to attend the 2021 ASA Conference. But the call was not responded to, despite the several announcements on different platforms.

Alert

The format of the Alert newsletter has been improved to include interesting images to go with the text in the news items. Our new Alert Editor solicits new materials and has been a very useful source of updates for our members, especially during the various lockdowns. The editorial with the support of the council is still developing strategies to help find new and interesting ways to engage with readers while building upon the already successful format and keeping up with new advances to enable access.

Branches

The Council continues to support branch events and facilitates regular contact with Branch Councils to discuss issues affecting their branches and possible ways those issues can be resolved.

Over the past year our branches have been active with the following activities:

- Creation of the Guide to Archival Repositories in the Manawatū-Whanganui Region 2021 and updating of the Directory of Community Archives
- Representation and presentation at Southland Heritage Month
- Submissions to Dunedin City Council and Otago Regional Council on storage standards for the regions records and archives
- The success of the digital meet-up group, Information and Records Management Group, run by Claire Dowling of Otago/Southland
- Listing of Otago/Southland Branch records stored at the Hocken Library
- A well attended Wellington Branch AGM with guest speaker, Jared Davidon

Recent developments, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and its socio-cultural impact on the whole of society present challenges to the way we operate our current branch system. This is making it difficult for even our most vibrant councils to operate smoothly as we are used to. The Council is, therefore, considering other branch models that will effectively support our members fully and move the association into this new normal smoothly.

ARANZ National Council continues to make available set aside funds for active branches or branches that wish to become active again, to assist with activities or running events that are in line with the aims of the association. Top-up funds were distributed to the active branches in 2019 and 2020, being Wellington, Central Districts, and Otago/Southland.

Finally, I would like to welcome new Committee members from each branch as we move into a new year. Thank you for volunteering your time and effort to ARANZ.

Advocacy

The Council continues to advocate for the profession, our association and members.

In the last year, the Council has made submissions to regulatory bodies such as Archives New Zealand, the Chief Archivist, and the Archives Council on several issues that impact our members and the profession. The submissions on the Community Archives decommissioning, changes to the reading room hours, etc.

The Council, through our Advocacy Secretary, has also written 6 reports on "intentions to dispose" applications submitted to Archives New Zealand by several institutions.

The Advocacy Secretary provides regular updates to members to give annual reviews of some of the advocacy activities the Council undertakes on behalf of the association and the profession as a whole.

Information Management

We now have a substantive team to manage this portfolio and the team hit the ground running. Clear and specific strategies to engage with members, gauge their interest areas and topics of relevance to their needs, so that education and training events will be organised to support them. Key highlights of the strategies include:

- Sharing Records and Information Management content on social media to encourage conversations around them
- Conduct Webinar series on the topics that interest members
- Offer free, and where necessary, affordable online courses
- Employ friendly and approachable tactics to encourage participation

Looking Ahead

The Council is poised to offer the best for the association in the coming years. Calls were made for interested people to join Council and take up new portfolios. Through this process, we have 6 highly skilled and motivated professionals from various areas of our profession taking up various portfolios, including:

- Abigail Wharne - Information Management
- Jennie Hood - Information Management
- Danielle Campbell - Awards
- Haylee Alderson - Alert Editor
- Linda Liddicoat - Archifacts Editor

Council will continue to interact with key stakeholders to advance the association and the profession as a whole.

Acknowledgements

To finish I would like to congratulate all the members of the Council for their commitment and energy. Despite the challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, Council members still made themselves available for discussions through online platforms and still got all their work done effectively. A lot of work goes on behind the scenes that the membership doesn't often see. Sometimes, the going gets tough, tiring, and frustrating but the kindness and understanding among Council members made the support for one another and working together an enjoyable process.

So, I'd like to thank our Vice President, Evan Greensides. If you will observe through my report, you will see that I have been attending almost every meeting with him. He's been amazing; the Advocacy Secretary, Kathleen Stringer; Treasurer, Susan Hanham; Secretary, Tiena Jordan; Membership Secretary, Chris Meech; Webmaster and Social Media Coordinator, Sean Connelly, who also functions as the Helpdesk for Council's shared drive and email account issues; *Archifacts* Editor, Katrina Tamaira; *Alert Editor* Nina Whittaker, who even though resigned from Council keeps inspiring members, General Advisor and Book Reviews coordinator, Stephen Innes. We also appreciate the support of all past Councillors, ex-officio members, and people who are not on Council but provided invaluable support and pieces of advice behind the scenes.

I want to personally thank Peter Millar, Brad Patterson, Kathryn Patterson and Triona Doocey, Sean McMahon and Elizabeth Charlton for their support and encouragement during my term as a President of ARANZ.

Ngā mihi

Dr Eric Boamah
President, ARANZ