



Helping our Nation to communicate

Chairman's Report
Speech New Zealand AGM
Year Ended 31 December 2016

Overview of 2016

This is my second Annual Report as Chairman of Speech New Zealand.

Many of the challenges I reported on in my first Annual Report are still with the organisation and the role of Chairman is no less challenging.

I have been supported by a dedicated group of colleagues who bring to the table professionalism and a wide cross section of lived experiences and collective wisdom. We must always remember that members of the board are unpaid volunteers who give of their time freely so as to promote, grow and fulfill the Speech New Zealand vision. I am indebted to each and every one of you and place on record my sincere thanks and gratitude to you all.

The year has again seen the board and National Office focusing on the ongoing financial challenges that we continue to confront. Along with the Manager and Staff we continue to be fiscally prudent whilst continuing to uphold our high standards and responsibilities to the sector we serve and especially our obligations to the founders of our organisation.

To Speech New Zealand Manager Maureen Gray, Tracy van Rooyen and Brittney Silk at National Office I extend on behalf of my fellow board members, our sincere thanks and appreciation for your professionalism and ongoing efforts to support the governance of the organisation. The board joins with me in extending special congratulations to Brittney Silk on the occasion of her marriage in late 2016.

With great sadness, we acknowledge the loss of Bill Carpenter early in 2016. Bill's passing has left a huge void in the organisation. His passing was particularly felt by his colleagues at National Office. Bill's marketing, publicity and communications expertise combined with his good humour and camaraderie to one and all is greatly missed by the organisation. Bill was raised in a highly-respected speech and drama family who remain dedicated to promoting the value of speech communication and drama. Bill will forever be remembered.

Special thanks must be extended to our staff for the magnificent and stoic manner in which they addressed the series of earthquakes that hit the Wellington region in 2016. Our National Office and the Thorndon commercial area in particular were featured prominently in the aftermath and our admiration and thanks go to Maureen Gray and her staff for the professional and calm

manner in which they managed under duress to keep National Office fully functioning throughout this most difficult period.

In 2016 we undertook a successful distance accreditation. I thank all the examiners for the professional work they continue to undertake on our behalf in the field and commend them for continuing to upskill and be appraised on a regular basis.

Speech New Zealand is not averse to change and we have focused on growth and creativity in all our programs. 2016 saw the organisation moving forward with technology both at National Office and in the field. Emphasis was placed on social media and we ran an innovative \$500.00 Scholarship through Facebook to celebrate the 400th Anniversary of the death of William Shakespeare. We thank renowned actor and speech and drama stalwart Robin Payne for willingly adjudicating this competition. The competition lifted our profile and generated more views to our web page and in doing so a larger audience became aware of Speech New Zealand.

In 2016 we also reaffirmed our intent to work collaboratively with candidates and schools throughout New Zealand hence we are now allowing supervised videoing for NCEA Examinations to occur within Speech New Zealand examinations.

There still remains an imbalance of youth in our organization which we continue to address. We are looking at new technology and growth ideas continually and strive to embrace new ways of promoting and marketing our business so as to fulfill the expectations of our clients and candidates of all ages.

We celebrate the fact that a larger part of our Nation is learning to communicate. Since our establishment in 1964 we have substantial alumni across New Zealand and abroad, it is from this strong base of alumni that we will continue to grow as it is this section of former candidates who by word of mouth promote our services and can attest to the benefits throughout life of oral communication. I earnestly believe we continue to uphold our original motto "*Speech is Life*" as we embrace and promote our current vision "*Helping our Nation to Communicate*"

Speech New Zealand is a forever changing and developing organisation. An organisation that is constantly open to new ideas and promotions. I have every confidence that we will continue to grow and empower future generations to better communicate.

Gabrielle Thurston

Chairman