



*Helping our Nation to communicate*

## **Chairman's Report**

### **Speech New Zealand AGM**

**Year Ended 31 December 2017**

I am delighted to present my third Annual Report as Chairman of Speech New Zealand.

My motivation to support and work for Speech New Zealand comes not only from the vision of *Helping our Nation to Communicate* but from the many individuals who are actively involved with the organisation. I gain particular energy and awe thinking of those forward-thinking people committed to empowering fellow New Zealanders through communication who in 1964 established our organisation.

In 2017 we were delighted to receive notification that Her Excellency, The Rt. Hon Dame Patsy Reddy Governor-General of New Zealand had accepted our invitation to be our Patron. Dame Patsy's acceptance is indeed a great honour for Speech New Zealand. It is well known that Her Excellency supports the Arts in New Zealand and is an able and accomplished communicator. We acknowledge and sincerely thank Her Excellency for her support and we look forward to a close association with her during her term as Governor-General.

I extend my sincere thanks to fellow board members who work tirelessly, unpaid and give up valuable personal time in support of the aims and objectives of our organisation. Our organisation's public relations front line are the examiners, secretaries and teachers throughout New Zealand who continually support and promote Speech New Zealand in their communities. I am grateful to you all.

On behalf of the national board I extend our heartfelt thanks to National Office Manager Maureen Gray, Tracy van Rooyen and Brittney Silk who are a fine example of a committed and dedicated team who go beyond the call of duty at all times to provide the organisation with sound, professional management.

In late 2017 we were delighted to welcome the return of Ashleigh Gulliver to our board. Ashleigh has returned to New Zealand after extensive worldwide travel. As we welcome Ashleigh back we also farewell Rebecca McMenamin. Rebecca has been granted leave from the board to travel to Germany where she will complete her LLB with 1<sup>st</sup> class Honours. Both Ashleigh and Rebecca bring youth and experience and have been major contributors to our board.

In 2017 we undertook a very successful two-day accreditation seminar titled *Get Going: Get Growing*. A highlight was listening to Robin Payne speak about growing diversity. Speech

New Zealand answers the call and continues to grow and be diverse. During this time many of our examiners bravely upskilled by taking the opportunity to sit the Professional Speaking Diploma. Having sat my Diploma earlier in 2016 I acknowledge the work and commitment undertaken by all our examiners so as to remain standardised and professional. All examiners are to be complimented for their sterling commitment to our profession and a willingness and enthusiasm to upskill and keep learning.

Theory papers went on line for the first time 2017 and was met with great success. Our Facebook competition 2017 was focussed on Public Speaking and promoting our organisation. Special thanks to colleague Melda Townsley for adjudicating this excellent and creative competition. Congratulations to the winner Romy Hooper.

In 2017 Speech New Zealand conducted a very successful Professional Development Day aligned to the Speech Communication Association (SCA) conference. This was a day that enabled not only training in the ethics of public speaking but many of the participants sat and passed the LSB theory paper. Our thanks go to facilitator Cecily Archer.

We continue to further our work towards NZQA affiliation. This is time consuming but nothing ventured nothing gained. A new Speech and Drama syllabus is proposed and by the next accreditation seminar in 2019 we will be presenting and working through the implementation.

We must never forget that teachers and examiners are our greatest resource and we all personally share in their passing. So, it was with profound sadness and fond memories that we acknowledged the passing of esteemed colleague Alma Johnson (Evans-Freke). Alma was a ground-breaking actor and broadcaster in both radio and television and a huge supporter of Speech New Zealand. Alma was a highly skilled and professional teacher of our Syllabi and a very capable examiner. Renowned for her charm, poise and elegance she was a friend and mentor to many of us involved with the teaching of Speech and Drama and Public Speaking throughout the country. The National Board was indeed grateful to Alma's colleague Lindsay Nash who represented Speech New Zealand at Alma's funeral. Alma will be greatly missed by us all and especially her many students taught over the decades.

Speech New Zealand continues to explore marketing and promotional opportunities and is firmly committed to meeting the demands and expectations of our clientele so we look forward to the challenges and new ideas that 2018 will bring as we move optimistically forward as an organisation proudly celebrating its 54<sup>th</sup> year.

*Gabrielle Thurston*

**Chairman**