

# **Acting Co-Presidents' Report to the AGM of NZSI on Sunday 25 September 2022**

## **presented by Lynette Carson and Margaret Cooke**

### **Introduction and recent events, summary of last year**

After another year of pandemic-induced changes and uncertainty, we write this report at the end of our first post-restriction week. The responsibility for managing the risks of Covid-19 has now devolved to us as individuals and although these risks are much reduced, they will remain a factor in all our planning for the foreseeable future. Things were far less certain at this stage last year, and the South Island and Hamilton Branches cancelled their summer camps owing to the unpredictability of the situation. Wellington Branch, with outstanding support from their venue providers, went ahead with multiple contingency plans. These proved invaluable as a snap lockdown was called on the last full day of the camp, and the organisers proved they had thought through all the possibilities with their calm and orderly plan which saw all the students playing in their final evening concert, then those who were able returning home, leaving no more than the allowable number of people on the site.

Multiple contingencies are here to stay, and branches have shown much flexibility with organising online, hybrid and scaled-down in-person events. Although there have been some cancellations this year, sadly including the Dunedin Workshop in April and the Auckland Town Hall concert, as the year progresses, we are cautiously returning to in-person events. Workshops were held in Hamilton in June, Christchurch in July, and Northland last week. Wellington and Auckland Branches are looking forward to their Spring Workshops in the October holidays.

### **Website and Journal**

The new website is running well and behind the scenes Sarah Newman and May Lee have been working to develop more functions to make administrative tasks easier. Sarah recommended that the online journal be discontinued due to low uptake, and her efforts will now be directed towards two printed journals per year. It is anticipated that further material will be available on the website, including more past journals.

### **Administration**

Membership numbers are growing with the increase in events, particularly around camps and workshops. The day to day running of the NZSI has continued in the capable hands of May Lee, and we are also very grateful to Avril Hillind for her ongoing oversight of the financial reporting.

### **Teacher training**

A significant amount of teacher training has taken place in the last 12 months from September 2021 through to October 2022. Some training has been face to face, some via zoom, some offered privately directly with the teacher trainer. For Violin, Units 1A, 2 and 5 been completed, and in October 2022 Teen Training, Unit 4 and Unit 6 will take place at the Wellington Workshop. Piano have had Units 1A, 1B and 2, and Unit 3 is being held at the Auckland Workshop. Private training has taken place for Cello Units 1A, 2, 4 and 5, Flute Unit 8, Guitar Unit 3, and an in-person Unit 1A for Guitar will be held at the Auckland Workshop. The Introduction to Suzuki Philosophy course has been offered online when needed. We would like to thank Director of Teacher Training Trudi Miles for her ongoing work supporting the delivery of teacher training, and also to thank our local and PPSA Teacher Trainers.

## **National Executive**

The National Executive has met online more or less quarterly over the last year and, where possible, meetings have been limited to an hour. Topics addressed include developing a Covid policy, the recommendation for a subscription increase that will be put to this meeting, review of the annual accounts, and the decision to discontinue the online version of the journal. The National Executive accepted the PAG's recommendation that NZSI become an affiliate organisation of the NZ Institute of Registered Music Teachers. We have been able to cover a lot in the meetings thanks to the delegates preparation of written material for everyone to read prior to the meeting, and their commitment and efficiency is much appreciated.

## **PPSA and ISA**

The PPSA met online in January, and the ISA interim meeting was held in March. The main ISA meeting of the year is coming up in mid-October and next October there will be a TERI-hosted Teacher Trainers Conference in Japan. Highlights of this year have included the launch of new recordings of Violin Books 4-6 by Augustin Hadelich, the launch of Volume 1 of the Suzuki Voice School after twenty years of development, and we are eagerly waiting on a new recording of Suzuki Cello Book 1 by Yumi Kendall. With the changes brought about by the pandemic, the alignment of teacher training across regions, portability of qualifications, and evaluation of the role of online learning have all been ongoing topics for discussion in both organisations. Inter-regional graduation also remains an active topic for discussion in the PPSA.

## **Reflection on the last year/looking ahead**

Last year President Simon Griffiths reflected on the late Stacey Shuck's role in the NZSI, and this time it is our turn to acknowledge the important work done by Simon in all his years of service to the organisation. As well as taking roles on the branch committee, National Executive, Vice President and later President, Simon also served on the board of the PPSA since 2014, latterly as Vice Chairman and then Chairman, and represented the PPSA region on the board of the ISA. We sadly accepted Simon's resignation from these roles in October 2021. Thank you, Simon, for all your work on behalf of the NZSI. Stacey and Simon's vision and leadership have been a model for us all of Suzuki principles in action and we are very grateful for your skills and your generosity.

This year's AGM gives us the opportunity to move forward into 2023 with a full team of two Vice Presidents and a President, and we have a big year ahead. In January we will have all three summer camps running in Timaru, Masterton and at a new venue in Cambridge. In October, the postponed Teachers' Conference will be held in person. There have been changes already in the legislation governing Incorporated Societies, and there are changes pending for Charities as well. In the light of the new legislation, we have a large task ahead for the National Executive to redraft the NZSI Constitution. We aim to have the new version ready for approval at the next AGM.

## **Thanks to all our volunteers**

We could not function as an organisation without all the voluntary work put in by parents and teachers, organising branch events, camps, workshops, and attending committee meetings. Thank you to all the members who have supported the NZSI through the generous donation of your time and expertise. We would particularly like to thank the members of the Professional Advisory Group and the NZSI National Executive, Journal and Website Editor Sarah Newman, and Administrator May

Lee. All these people have helped to keep us running as smoothly as possible through these unpredictable times and we are very grateful.

Lynette Carson and Margaret Cooke

Acting Co-Presidents

September 2022