

Wellington/Wairarapa Branch Report for 2023

I am pleased to write this 2022/2023 report on behalf of the Wellington/Wairarapa Branch committee.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Ingrid Saxton, Secretary, for her invaluable work and support, together with current Committee member, Glenis Bisset and to Andi Harness, who joined our Committee during the 2022 calendar year.

Thanks also to Suzanne Panter who continues the support work as our Branch Almoner, welcoming new members and sending out notes to members and/or families who have experienced difficult times during the year. Together, we have worked to increase our membership numbers by providing worthwhile and informative workshops and social events.

Wellington / Wairarapa Branch membership between 2022/2023 is as per below:

	2022	2023
TOTAL	104	111

Current Branch Committee Members

Jill Southee	Wellington Chair
Ingrid Saxton	Secretary/Treasurer
Glenis Bisset	Committee member
Andi Harness	Committee member
Rachel Clarke	CANZ Executive Liaison
Suzanne Panter	Almoner

In 2022, Rachel Clarke kindly took back the responsibility as our CANZ National Executive Liaison person. We are grateful to Rachel for her support and encouragement as she settled into her new role as National President of Celebrants Aotearoa.

Effective from the 2023 APM, Ingrid and I will not be seeking re-election on our Branch Committee. Ingrid and I joined the Wellington/Wairarapa Branch Committee as Chair and Secretary/Treasurer midway through 2020 and together, we worked as a team to encourage more interaction from our members and to bring you a mix of workshops that were stimulating and provided a learning experience, not to mention enjoying the company of other celebrants.

Wellington Branch Activities

2022 was an easier year for the Committee to organise events without the interruptions and challenges of Covid restrictions. Thanks to members who continue to attend, support and participate in a variety of our events. As a Committee, we always mindful to arrange an interesting and wide array of workshops and welcome feedback from attendees. We are always open to suggestions and topic/speaker recommendations from our members.

2022 Events

1. Sunday 13 March 2022

CANZ APM – included a sharing and caring session

1. Sunday 12 June 2022

John Shackleton – Motivation, Inspiration and Challenges

Venue: Home of Compassion

We were fortunate to engage the services of John who has been a professional motivational speaker for more than 35 years. He has a background of sports psychology, performance coaching and professional speaking, plus his own journey through depression. This has given John a unique approach to helping people deal with their ever increasing stress levels. John challenged members and gave us tips on how we may want to change our thinking processes as well as giving us some guidance on using mindfulness to increase our resilience.

2. Sunday 31 July 2022

CANZ Conference

Venue: Lychgate Funeral Home, Johnsonville

Wellington Branch members, together with the National Executive met for the second virtual conference. The day was filled with excellent presentations from a variety of speakers, break-out workshops and a delicious lunch. Attendees enjoyed time out to network with like-minded colleagues and share their experience, knowledge and learn from each other. Overall, the day was a big success and very worthwhile experience.

3. Sunday 12 September 2022

Te Reo Learning – More reo in our celebrant Kete

Venue: Childspace, Johnsonville

This interactive workshop was led by Branch members Vicky Ellison and her daughter Amira Anglem who guided us through understanding and use of Te Reo Māori, and Tikanga relevant to our mahi as celebrants. Attendees were encouraged to build on their confidence, language knowledge, extend understanding, increase vocabulary, and correct pronunciation in using Te Reo Māori. Members enjoyed this workshop so much, they have asked for a follow-up extension workshop be put into the Branch calendar for 2023.

4. 30 October 2022

Cacao Ceremony with Alexandra Kellahan

Venue: Ohariu Valley Community Hall

Alexandra led a small group of celebrants through a beautiful afternoon where attendees relished the beauty and loving energy in the tranquil countryside setting of Ohariu Valley. Members were privileged to experience being in the knowledgeable hands of Alexandra, the relaxation exercises, an opportunity to replenish our minds and bodies and enjoy the benefits of a cacao ceremony.

5. Christmas Get-Together in Featherston

It was unfortunate the Christmas lunch planned in the Wairarapa did not get lift-off last year and so the plan was made to have a New Year get-together mid-week at the Thistle Inn. Early February 2023 saw 20+ members enjoy a drink and camaraderie, without the pressure of the lead-up to Christmas and work commitments. These small gatherings may be something that is continued in 2023 as a way to just socialise and chat with colleagues.

Communication with Branch Members

Over the last 12 months, we continued to communicate to our members via our Virtual Assistants to promote events and update members on any other information. We are grateful to our VA's, Megan and Hazel for their work, patience and support.

Attendees are asked to RSVP through Humanitix to attend our events (whether there is a cost or not) and if there is a charge, then this be paid for in advance. This process worked well and the plan is to continue using this tool to manage registrations for future events. This enables the Committee to know numbers attending prior to the event to manage catering and set-up for gatherings we host.

Goals for the Year Ahead – 2023

Our National Executive and in particular, the Dunedin Branch, have worked hard to co-ordinate this year's conference, in Dunedin with a diverse range of presenters, workshops and of course, social gatherings. Members are encouraged to make plans to travel south and register as soon as possible to gain the benefit of Early Bird Registration

Thanks to Andi and Glenis who have kindly agreed to take over the main two roles on our Committee from me and Ingrid. I know they would appreciate some other willing hands to join them on the Committee and Ingrid and I will continue to support the Branch and look forward to seeing many of you at upcoming events. A 2023 calendar of events will be something for us all to look forward to and mark in our calendars.

Thank you for continuing your membership of Celebrants Aotearoa. We are all fortunate to have had consistent and timely support from our Association throughout the year and enjoy the benefits of on-line resources that are both current and very useful to our work as independent celebrants of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Wishing you all well for a wonderful year ahead!

Jill Southee
(Chair) Wellington Branch