

Epilepsy Waikato Charitable Trust AGM, 11th September 2018

Chair's report

I warmly welcome all attendees at the 2018 AGM of EWCT – members, clients, family supporters, trustees, and guests. Now in our seventh year, I wish to firstly thank the board of trustees, especially the office holders, for their commitment to attain the aims of the trust, and for their support given to me as chair. We have had a number of changes to the board and officers this year: Ai-Ee Teo resigned as secretary and trustee in March, Cyril Markham resigned as treasurer in March, and Faith Gibbs resigned as funding manager in April. I am pleased to advise that both Cyril and Faith continued on the board as trustees, Bryce Hopkins (former advisor to the board) was appointed as a new trustee in February, and Emma McNeill (below left) was appointed both as a new trustee in March and treasurer in April. In April, we appointed a paid part-time administrator, Margaret Paine (below right), who undertakes



secretarial and other duties for two days per week, and Jill Davies was appointed as our new funding manager (Jill is also deputy chair). I wish to especially thank AiEe Teo for her exceptional work for the board for nearly five years, and Cyril and Faith for their massive efforts that span decades. We remain very grateful to our patron, Hon. Tim Macindoe (MP for Hamilton West), for his longstanding and ongoing support of EWCT.

Sponsors and donors I acknowledge and thank all who have donated to EWCT or sponsored our trust's work over the last year. We are supported by donors (private individuals) and numerous funding organisations, which provide us with significant funds or 'in-kind' support. The funders include NZ Lotteries Grant Board, Glenice and John Gallagher Foundation, Gallagher Trust, DV Bryant Trust, Community Organisation Grants Scheme (COGS), WEL Energy Trust, Trust Waikato, ANZ New Zealand Staff Foundation, Len Reynolds Foundation, Hamilton City Council Community Funding, Norah Howell Trust, and Sir John Logan Campbell Residuary Estate. All funders are acknowledged on our website and on our letterhead documents. Trustees and supporters also organised and ran several fund-raising garage sales.

Epilepsy advisor I and board members wish to thank Maria Lowe, our full-time epilepsy advisor, for her hard work in helping many people with epilepsy in our community. Maria reports to the board each month. Her role encompasses aspects of education, advice, and support including:

- (i) providing one-on-one advice to people with epilepsy and their families, friends, and workmates, including interaction with neurologists and hospital referrals;
- (ii) preparing client-specific epilepsy action plans for clients, caregivers, and employers;
- (iii) advocacy for members in meetings with medical practitioners, government agencies (e.g. Dept. of Social Welfare, Work and Income, Housing NZ, Corrections), and in interview situations, in hospitals, and in courts;
- (iv) giving talks and interviews on the radio (usually available as podcasts on the website);



- (v) educating through talks, including at schools, and providing in-service training about epilepsy, and writing fact sheets for the EWCT website (we now have 27 fact sheets in total including the popular “A to Z directory of epilepsy”);
- (vi) running displays at expos including the Waikato “Wellbeing Expo” in April with puppet ‘Harry’, a big hit with the children (see photo of ‘Harry’ with Roma Lane, bottom of page 1), the Waikato “Women’s Expo” in May, and a “Craft Expo” at Western Heights Community Centre in December;
- (vii) coordinating and helping to run Epilepsy Club events for members and clients such as the bi-monthly Fresca Café get-togethers in Hamilton and also at Tokoroa, Huntly, Tauranga, and Te Awamutu (where a new group was formed this year), and the annual trip (see below);
- (viii) organising activities for the “Epilepsy Awareness Month” in November, which in 2017 included EWCT’s participation in the Round-the-Bridges event (some of the EWCT team in photo at right);
- (ix) communicating with members, clients and supporters through Facebook, newsletters, epilepsy research articles, and our website including ‘blogs’ (EWCT’s blogs were ranked in the top 50 globally by Feedspot in 2017); our award-winning website is at www.ewct.org.nz
- (x) our website ‘views’ and ‘visitors’ continue to increase each year, showing the importance and impact of the site – e.g., for three years 2016-2017-2018, ‘visitors’ have totalled 3862-6009-6952, respectively; ‘views’ have totalled 11,039-18,380-21,325, respectively;
- (xi) designing and preparing posters for displays and the website; and
- (xii) helping to develop and publish our books, with Ben’s Buddies” now available as an animated video in three languages, English, te reo Māori, and German: <https://ewct.org.nz/product/bens-buddies-epilepsy-childrens-story-book>



Epilepsy Hero Award In June 2017, two awards were made at the annual mid-winter dinner to Sharon Holt (author of our two books) and Stu Robinson (owner of Fresca Café). On 7 July this year the award was given to Antony Booker, our outstanding webmaster. The photo at left shows Richard and Mary Booker, Antony’s parents, receiving the award on Antony’s behalf from chair of EWCT, David Lowe, at right.

Annual trip Around 36 members and supporters (right) went to Tauranga and had a memorable harbour cruise on the *Kewpie* and a picnic lunch on Matakana Island on 2 December 2017.



Reprints of our two books

Although we launched our second book “Ariana and Jack” only in March 2017, it was reprinted in May this year to ensure we could keep up with demand for its use. At the same time, we reprinted “Ben’s Buddies” (first published in 2014), which was nearly out of stock. The reprints were funded by grants from the Hamilton City Council and the Sir John Logan Campbell Residuary Estate, together with proceeds from book sales.

In closing, I am pleased to advise that EWCT is functioning well, the trust is in good heart, and all involved can be pleased and proud of EWCT’s achievements, especially over the past year when we have experienced a number of significant changes. I am honoured to chair the trust.

David J. Lowe – Chair, EWCT