



New Zealand

Association of Gerontology

Te Ropu Matauranga Kaumatatanga o Aotearoa

August 2005

Auckland Branch

Auckland NZAG Branch has had an extremely productive half year. We began in March hearing from Liz Kiata, an Auckland based doctoral student, about her research findings into the Everyday World of Older People in Residential Care. Liz's study is a sub-study of the PIRC (Promoting Independence in Residential Care) trial which aims to promote independence in resthomes and hospitals.

Following this in April we had a visit from Dr Mary Davies the 2005 NZiRA /TOWER Fellow who talked about her interest in Work in Later Life - Turning Threat Into Opportunity.

Another popular meeting was held in May, organised and co-hosted by the NZ Nutrition Foundation, NZAG Auckland and NZ Dietetic Association. Five speakers addressed the audience regarding Barriers to Older People Achieving Optimum Nutrition. Over 220 people attended.

In July the HOPE Foundation brought two summer students to a Branch meeting to reveal their findings. "Questions about the Pathophysiology of Osteoarthritis" was presented by Emma Cluet, an undergraduate student of Human Biology who used bovine samples to look at the process of cartilage damage in the knee. Joanne Davidson, a BSc Honours student majoring in neuroscience, has been exploring how Protection of Neurones in Stroke occurs. Her presentation included a video clip to show some of her findings.

The Auckland Membership fee has been increased this financial year to \$30 per individual and \$120 for a residential organisation. Still very good value for money!

Our AGM will be held on Monday 21 November.

Adrienne Poulter, Secretary

Wellington Branch

The topic of the June meeting of the Wellington Branch was *What's happening at Whitireia Community Polytechnic: an update on older person's practice and teaching.*

The meeting was held at Whitireia in Porirua City and the guest speaker was Dr Margaret Southwick, who has worked there since 1985. Before that she had twenty two years experience in clinical nursing, including gerontology.

Margaret started her discussion with a plea for people working in the area of older adults not to focus on the "catastrophes" that could potentially result from an ageing population, and to avoid

interpreting future population figures as a huge burden of frail sick people.

Describing aged care as the "Cinderella" area of health, Margaret said that the workforce situation is grim. Attracting and retaining experienced and suitable personnel is an ongoing challenge.

Whitireia is being proactive, training the existing and future workforce in collaboration with other agencies.

Margaret led a broad discussion of issues in aged care, including:

- Identification of needs in both residential and community care
- Decline of volunteer support (eg. Meals on Wheels)
- Voluntary and professional components of care
- Whose role is it to invest in training - health or education? Is an "apprenticeship" appropriate?
- Higher expectations of care from patients and their families
- Auditing and reporting requirements, increasing paperwork
- Challenges of private and not for profit residential care

While there were few solutions ventured there was healthy debate from the group, which included government officials, residential care providers, volunteers and Grey Power members.

Wellington Branch AGM

Dr Jenni Warburton will be the speaker at the Wellington Branch meeting and AGM on 6th September. For time and venue contact Diana O'Neill on (04) 496 3984 or email diana.oneill@sparc.org.nz

Dr Jenni Warburton is Senior Research Fellow in the Australasian Centre on Ageing and Senior Lecturer, School of Social Work and Applied Human Sciences, The University of Queensland. Her research interests include older people and their contribution to society; and social policy issues associated with volunteering and the non-profit sector. She has published widely. For example, older people as volunteers, the relationship between mutual obligation policies and volunteering, corporate social responsibility, and the impact of change on the non-profit sector.

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Aims of the Association

- To stimulate interest and action in all matters concerning the welfare of older people.
- To encourage the training of those caring for older people.
- To act as advisors to interested persons, bodies or groups on aspects of ageing.
- To study ageing in all its forms, and to promote gerontological research.

Jenni has edited three books, including *Volunteers and Volunteering* with Dr Melanie Oppenheimer, 2000. Her 1998 PhD examined the motivation of older people to volunteer.

Palmerston North Group

The Palmerston North group, formed in August last year, is a network of local people interested in gerontology. Most members work for Midcentral DHB, resthomes, tertiary education institutions or voluntary organisations. Our email list has about 70 addresses, and over 20 people in the network are NZAG (Wellington Branch) members. In April, we had a talk by Mary Davies, the 2005 NZiRA/TOWER Fellow. Her topic was "Older people, sexuality and disability". In July, Judith Davey, Director of NZiRA, gave a talk on "Looking to the future in an ageing New Zealand: Housing for older people".

Both speakers also gave lunchtime talks on different topics for the School of Psychology at Massey University.

Helen Pennington, Group Coordinator

Canterbury Branch

The May meeting of the Canterbury Branch heard an interesting address on "Trends in Palliative Care" presented by Dr Sandy McLeod, Medical Director of the Nurse Maude Hospice. Dr McLeod had recently attended the Asia Pacific Forum held in Korea on Palliative Care and reported on some of these sessions, as well as his own significant experience in palliative and aged care.

Approximately 130 people attended a meeting on the Residential Care Sector staffing crisis held in Christchurch on Monday 4th July 2005. The meeting posed questions about what could be done to develop strategies to address the short term, medium term and long term issues resulting from the local staffing crisis facing residential care. NZAG Executive member, Dr Daphne Manderson, chaired the panel and continues to work with the steering group set up at the conclusion of the meeting. Three groups are also working hard at a local level to progress some immediate, medium and long term solutions to this care dilemma.

Panelists were:

Lianne Dalziel – Member of Parliament; Lesley Spence – Nurse Manager, Residential Care; Tracy Reason – General Manager, Clinical Services, Nurse Maude Assn; and Marion Clark – CEO of the New Zealand Nursing Council.

Canterbury Branch and National Executive Annual General Meetings

5.30 pm Tuesday 30th August, 2005

Lovell Smith Room, Arts Centre, Cnr Hereford St/ Rolleston Ave, Christchurch.

Our speaker at these meetings will be Dr Jenni

Warburton, Australasian Centre on Ageing and School of Social Work & Applied Human Sciences, University of Queensland, Australia.

Presentation: "Older people as volunteers: resource or exploitation?"

Waikato Branch

An interim Executive, under the leadership of Maree Pierce, was set up in September 2004. On 6 July 2005 a meeting attended by over 30 people agreed to formally establish themselves as the fully incorporated Waikato Branch of the New Zealand Association of Gerontology. The first Executive Committee will be chaired by Professor Peggy Koopman-Boyden, who was a foundation member of the Canterbury Branch over twenty years ago. National NZAG President (Sally Keeling) attended the July AGM, to affirm the support of the National Executive at this inaugural meeting.

The meeting also heard about the Hamilton City Council's Older Persons Policy and Action Plan 2003-2006.

NZiRA Postgraduate Symposium

Report from Liz Kiata, PhD Candidate, Department of General Practice & Primary Health Care, University of Auckland

In June 2005, NZiRA hosted the 'Emerging Researchers' symposium for postgraduate students at Victoria University, Wellington. Research in various stages of completion was presented by masters and doctoral students.

Aspects of Wellbeing and Dependency

- Using a narrative approach **Lorraine Ritchie** will explore how older people's stories add value to the quantitative results of the clinically focused interRAI¹ MDS-HC (Minimum Data Set – Home Care) assessment tool.
- **Diane Jorgensen's** work will examine the decision making process resulting in the move of an older person to long term residential care.
- Increasing understanding about the psychological affects following stroke was the focus of **Marisa Finn's** research.

¹interRAI is a collaborative network of researchers in over 20 countries committed to improving health care for persons who are elderly, frail, or disabled. See their website www.interrai.org/

Housing for Older People

- Critical theory is utilised by **Mary Simpson** to illustrate how retirement village organisations depict and promote 'ageing, retirement and leisure' in new ways that will impact on future notions of how society views old age.
- **Max Reid's** work is a review of the existing literature, including policy and demographic data about models of independent accommodation for older people.
- **Sally Greenbrook's** project takes a geographical view and will describe the changing role of retirement villages for older New Zealanders.

Social Contexts

- **Valerie Wright-St Clair's** review of the literature about older people successfully taking part in society will inform her discussion about how older people's wellbeing is interconnected to their day-to-day participation in life.
- **Alex McAllum** will interview older people living in long term hospital care, and their families, exploring the impact of transitions into institutional care on family relations.

The Wellbeing of Older People (1) Residential Care

- **Will Edwards** recently began a PhD that will examine positive ageing strategies for Maori elders.
- **Marian Bland** offered an overview of her doctoral work on the nature of 'comfort', a critical ethnography carried out in three New Zealand rest homes.

- I, **Liz Kiata**, talked about some of the issues arising from the data collection process of my doctoral work, which is about social aspects of older people living in long term residential care.

The Wellbeing of Older People (2) Living in the Community

- **Rose Carr's** work discusses the nutritional issues of older people, specifically food choice and consumption. She examines nutrition between two groups of older people - those with private transport and those without private transport.
- In 'Ageing in place and quality of life' **Penny Hambleton** explored some questions about the ways that low level home support contributes to enabling older people to remain in their (home) communities, and experience "quality of life".
- **Sarah Walters-Puttick** draws on her work about older people as victims of crime. Themes from her data include older peoples' views about their lives in contemporary society.

Retirement, Work and the Baby-boomers

- **Kathy Glasgow** discussed the New Zealand Positive Ageing Strategy and possible impacts of this policy for 'baby-boomers'. She demonstrated how the Strategy itself constructs expectations as to how the boomers are to age successfully.
- **Doreen Davy's** research focuses on the effects of redundancy experienced by 'mature' female clerical workers.
- **Nina Reid** discusses the impact of ageism on older employees (aged 55+) in the New Zealand workforce.

At the NZAG discussion in the afternoon of day two I offered to match emerging researchers with international counterparts, following my attendance at the 18th World Congress in Rio de Janeiro, June 2005. With assistance from NZAG and NZiRA, these links will be facilitated as soon as possible.

18th Congress of the International Association of Gerontology (IAG)

Report from Liz Kiata, NZAG Student Representative

Thanks to financial support from the New Zealand Association of Gerontology (NZAG), the International Association of Gerontology (IAG), and a Claude McCarthy Fellowship awarded by the University of Auckland, I had the privilege of attending the 18th Congress of the International Association of Gerontology held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil 26th – 30th June, 2005.

Presentations

Hundreds of delegates attended the congress, which covered a variety of topics in many fields of ageing. The plenary sessions were conducted bilingually in English and Portuguese, with some Spanish, and earphones were offered for simultaneous interpretation. Other presentations were conducted in one of these languages, most often English. In addition to plenary sessions and lectures there were generally 15 sessions from the symposia, round tables and oral presentations to choose from in every ninety minute slot, so only a fraction of sessions of interest could be attended. Find below a thin slice of the presentations available:

- Marisa Accioly from Brazil oversaw an international workshop titled **Long-term care: a perspective from the Americas**. Discussing the ageing populations of Argentina, Chile, Uruguay and Quebec, each author offered a perspective on aspects of residential care that require attention. For example, Alicia Villalobos spoke about the need for **A human rights framework for establishing the rights of individuals residing in long-term care institutions in Chile**.
- Jenny Swindle and colleagues offered a roundtable on Canadian perspectives on the **Social capital and the care networks of frail older adults**. Norah Keating spoke to this, emphasising the role of social aspects of care. A paradigm shift is necessary because we seldom discuss what is given **by** the older person through their networks, rather we talk about what was given **to** the elder by others. We all too often focus on what the frail elderly **take** in resources. We seldom recognise the resources, such as social capital and networks, that these frail elderly **give** to us.
- Fellow NZAG member Diana Spratt Casas enlightened listeners with her presentation **Promoting independent living in long-term care: putting the research findings into practice**. This explained the successful goal setting and exercise programme implemented by ElderCare New Zealand, which improves quality of life and independence for older people.

Poster sessions

A vast number of posters were displayed in the two rooms allocated over the course of the congress. The interest in the posters resulted in large numbers of people in attendance when I visited. Following are a few samples:

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Book Review

Facing age: A practical guide for families. Nancye Bourke. 2005. Exisle Publishing, Auckland New Zealand. ISBN 0-908988-52-4

This book provides useful information to assist families and older people to negotiate the various challenges of ageing. In fact, it is really a book for all adults.

"Facing age deserves to be read by everyone who is ageing; and I ask you, who is not?" Gary Andrews, Professor of Ageing, University of South Australia

For the older person and family members supporting them it includes retirement planning, health management, facing death, funeral arrangements and settling the estate.

In terms of families, it addresses issues such as family disputes and tensions, managing change, moving to residential care, and the challenges of family being widely dispersed geographically.

The final section, "Looking After Yourself", covers some of the feelings and stresses that we all face, along with some useful strategies to cope with these.

Finally, there are some very useful checklists to assist with decision making, record keeping and putting legal requirements in place.

Overall, a very useful resource.

Web-based news from the UK

The House of Lords Science and Technology Select Committee on Ageing have published their Report on the 'The Scientific Aspects of Ageing'.

The report in full can be found at:

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/1d200506/1dselect/1dsctech/20/20i.pdf>

Evidence given at Committee stage can be found at:

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/1d200506/1dselect/1dsctech/20/20ii.pdf>

- Of particular interest was Caroline Becker and fellow researchers' work on **Functioning and participation in leisure activities in a nursing home**. The authors argue that leisure pursuits are activities considered worthwhile and meaningful to people. Leisure for older people tends to stay the same as long as the activities remain accessible to them.
- Chantal Viscogliosi and colleagues' presented work on **Family caregivers' perception of their role in maintaining social participation of older adults after stroke**. The authors concluded that the social context in which the carer/recipient role is played out is vital in the care of stroke survivors.

ICGSO and ISNAH Inaugural Meetings

IAG International Council of Gerontology Students' Organisation (ICGSO) and International Students' Network on Ageing and Health (ISNAH)

The inaugural meetings of ICGSO and ISNAH attracted few students, and further meetings were cancelled during the congress due to low attendance of students. Low attendance rates may have been due to difficulty locating venues, and meeting times coinciding with pertinent congress presentations.

Students who attended these meetings expressed their keenness to be part of an international networking collaboration.



Canadian Association on Gerontology (CAG) Legacy award recipients with Professor Norah Keating, University of Alberta, front row, centre; and me, an interloper, back row, left.

PhD research presentation

Chantal Girfanner from France chaired the session where I presented my doctoral work **Everyday worlds of older people living in residential care facilities in New Zealand**. This was one of six presentations by international speakers about different aspects surrounding housing/homes in which the aged reside.

Informal international student networking



New networks Juan Liu (Susan), University of China, Liz Kiata, University of Auckland, NZAG student section, and Xiaobo Yuan, University of China, Gerontological Society of

China representative, student section.

I am pleased to have met new student-colleagues from Brazil, Canada, China, Serbia, and the USA. Contact with existing international colleagues initially began when I was in Canada as a visiting scholar in 2004.

Sincerest thanks to the New Zealand Association of Gerontology Executive for helping me to attend this International Congress. He ngākau māhaki.

Membership

Any person interested in promoting the aims of the Association can be a member of the NZAG. This may include members of the public, health professionals, care staff, administrators, managers, representatives from organisations involved with the wellbeing of older people, and academics interested in gerontological research. If you are interested in becoming a member, contact one of the following people:

Editor's Desk

The next Newsletter will be circulated in early December 2005.

Send contributions to:

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Please send by: 31st October 2005

Calendar of events 2005

September 18-20

Wellington, New Zealand
NZ Home Health Association Conference
Email: conferencebrokers@xtra.co.nz
Web: www.conferencebrokers.co.nz

September 20-24

Sweden
12th International Psychogeriatric Association Congress
Aging with Dignity: new challenges, new possibilities, new solutions
Email: IPASTockholm2005@talley.com
Web: www.ipa-online.org

September 28 – October 1

Istanbul, Turkey
21st International Conference of Alzheimer's Disease International
Email: congress@topkon.com
Web: www.adi2005.org

October 20-23

Nova Scotia, Canada
33rd Annual Scientific Meeting of the Canadian Association of Gerontology
Email: info@cagacg.com
Web: www.cagacg.ca

November 9-11

Gold Coast, Australia
Australian Association of Gerontology 38th National Conference
Exploring the Meaning of Ageing: Linking Research, Policy and Practice
Email: aag.conf@flinders.edu.au
Web: www.aag.asn.au/conf

November 18-22

New Orleans, USA
58th Annual Scientific Meeting of the Gerontological Society of America
Email: geron@geron.org
Web: www.geron.org/AnnualMeeting/annual.htm

Calendar of events 2006

April 28-30

Melbourne, Australia
3rd International Conference on Healthy Ageing & Longevity
Email: info@longevity-international.com
Web: www.longevity-international.com

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Websites to visit...

New Zealand: www.gerontology.org.nz

Australia: www.aag.asn.au • International: www.sfu.ca/iag/