

MARCH
2014

NEWSLETTER

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Presidents update:



The strange fiasco with the bogus interpreter broadcast at Mandela's memorial service in South Africa in late 2013 brought an opportunity for Deaf and interpreter organisations worldwide to advance public understanding that a recognised standard of training and qualification of interpreters is an essential safeguard for the human rights of Deaf people.

Like other interpreting organisations, SLIANZ has an important role in promoting a minimum level of qualification and ethical standards that consumers can rely upon, and takes a further responsibility to improve the level and conditions of professional practice. Without an active association, it is difficult to increase respect for interpreting as a specialised profession that has important impacts for Deaf people. The smallness of New Zealand gives us the advantage of a uniform system of qualification through the AUT programme. Some other countries envy this consistent pathway into the profession via a recognised, thorough course of academic and practical training, which is not the norm around the world. The end of 2013 was an important milestone in this regard: the first cohort of graduates completed the new Bachelor of NZSL/English Interpreting programme at AUT. SLIANZ warmly congratulates the first group of degree-holders and salutes the dedicated teaching team at AUT who have worked extremely hard to make the transition from the two-year Diploma to the three-year Bachelor's degree. No doubt every single day of the last three (plus) years made new demands on AUT teachers, behind the scenes and in the classroom. Their efforts are hugely important to laying a solid foundation for a high level of interpreting services in New Zealand. SLIANZ extends appreciation of their contribution, and offers best wishes to the incoming students of 2014.

Over the summer, the committee worked on conference and professional development planning. The success of both depends on members' input and participation: it's all about you. It has been exciting to see the recent expansion of PD opportunities offered by other service providers and interest groups, which benefits SLIANZ members. It has been difficult for SLIANZ, as a voluntary organisation, to gain traction with a mentoring programme, and we are now looking to interpreting service providers to play a stronger role in organising mentoring and supervision for interpreters they contract.

It was excellent to see so many members involved in discussions about interpreting issues with Deaf community members at our Consumer Forums in Wellington, Auckland and Christchurch. We also need the experience and insight you can contribute to leading sessions at the 2014 conference, (note extended deadline later in the newsletter). You don't have to be a world expert - just have a good idea or experience-based insight that you feel is worth sharing with colleagues. Or perhaps you know someone in a related profession who could share knowledge with us. Please consider what you can contribute.

Also at the July conference we will be seeking committee members and officeholders. At the 2013 AGM, Louise and Rachel agreed to serve as co-presidents for one year to bridge a gap. We aim to hand over the reins at the 2014 AGM, so please consider whether you (or a colleague you want to nominate) could give a little time and energy to keeping your organisation alive. Feel free to ask us about what's involved. The deadline for nominations is 31st May 2014.

All in a Day's Work – by James Bichan

Timed to coincide with the end of the WFD conference in Sydney, this was the rather fitting theme for the 2013 ASLIA National Conference (ANC). I say "fitting" because this (usually two day) conference managed to squeeze into a single day the diversity of experiences we endure in a day's work. All in a Day's Work celebrated interpreters as they don their interpreter capes and launch off to the next heroic assignment where the only predictability is the unpredictability contained in the very nature of our work.



Opportunity for advanced academic study and research in interpreting

Heriot-Watt University (Edinburgh) has PhD scholarships available in the fields of language and interpreting studies. If you are interested, please check them out:

<http://www.sml.hw.ac.uk/about/programmes/phd/phd-scholarships-languages.htm>

Keynote Presentation



Chris Stone (he's been out to a SLIANZ conference in the past) spoke about the history of the Deaf community in Australia and how interpreters fit into this. He made a great comparison about how, as interpreters and Deaf community, our differing values, cultures, individual personalities (and more!) all influence our memories and subsequent recollections of our interactions together. It was a Venus and Mars thing where each planet will recount the same story based on their view of their world.

Chris noted a disparity between interpreter and community views of “professional interpreter”. Common community perception of “professional” are based on interpreter attitude, language skills, culturally appropriate behaviour, timeliness and flexibility - views that more commonly centre on the relationship between the Deaf person and the interpreter (also resonated in the findings of our very own Jenn Gilbert’s recent article). In light of this, I’m still reflecting on my own views of “professional” and how these align (or not) with the community view.

The presentation provided a good reminder of the massive leap of faith the Deaf community takes when working with us... especially if we’ve never met before.

The Feared AGM

In one word? Efficient! One hour, done! Actually, it went over time by 30 minutes but this was due to a heavy agenda rather than lengthy debates. So what was the secret? All amendments, changes, proposals, etc were organised and distributed in advance of the AGM. All that was left to do was listen to brief committee updates (three minute summary per state) and vote “yes” or “no” to the various motions. There was a *small* window of opportunity to speak for or against each motion as members had been well briefed (and had taken the time to understand each item) ahead of the AGM. The only comments made on the day were short questions to clarify a word here or there. Even elections seemed to be little more than a vote with the majority of work being prepared prior to the AGM.

Interpreter of the Year

An annually celebrated event in Australia is the interpreter of the year award. Each state nominates and selects their own interpreter of the year from which an overall national winner is selected. What I found touching was every finalist was acknowledged and celebrated. They were also filmed answering three questions with their answers being played back for all to see. The questions were:

1. What is it about interpreting that you enjoy?
2. What is your most embarrassing interpreting moment?
3. What tools should all new interpreters have in their toolbox?

If you think how you would answer these questions you can imagine the delight and laughter that resulted as the finalists revealed their answers in a public forum! And in case you're wondering, the 2013 winner was Merie Spring, the very Merie Spring who came out to our 2013 SLIANZ conference! Merie's answer to question three? The importance of having and working with a mentor you trust.

JW Flynn Oration

The annual JW Flynn Oration pays tribute to the pioneering work of John Flynn in the field of Auslan interpreting. Every year a new pioneer is nominated to talk about their personal and professional journey as an influential practitioner, consumer of interpreting services, interpreter educator and/or researcher. We were fortunate to watch Carla Anderson, a Deaf community member, talk about her arrival in Australia and subsequent push to improve and establish services. Some sobering (yet theatrical!) advice that Carla offered interpreters included:

- Reflecting on our business/corporate focus and remembering it's not all about money.
- To arrive early to our jobs to show we are professionals who respect the people we work and to save them panicking that their interpreter's not going to show.
- To avoid checking our phones while on or off and thereby avoid negative perceptions from the people watching the interpreters.
- Her final tip, and perhaps an "all of the above" type comment, was for interpreters to engage in more reflective practises and make time to question what we do, why we do it and how we can do it better?

All in all, some great food for thought presented in an entertaining way that made her an obvious choice for the honour of this oration.



The Panel

A panel of four consisting of an interpreter, a service manager, the WASLI president and a Deaf community member were asked for their views on various topics. Topics ranged from cell phone usage (in light of Carla's comment) to revalidation of NAATI accreditation and everything in between. To help control the influx of questions and keep the debate relevant, the audience was asked to submit questions prior to the panel session.

The final question: “In one word, what do you view as an important attribute for interpreters?” The answers: hope, manners, curiosity and humour. A great summary from a diverse panel!

Conclusion

I’m afraid I can’t do justice to all of the presentations but what I enjoyed most about this conference was the strong focus on celebrating the success of individuals as recognised through the eyes of others. As interpreters, we try to master the art of the ninja: blending in to our environment, causing as little impact as possible while swooping in with stealthy precision to ensure our presence is felt but not noticed! Our praise is often found in the absence of praise as people cease to realise they’re accessing



communication through an interpreter. Once a year, ASLIA makes a point of recognising ninja interpreters as well as those who have helped shape them - it was a heart-warming experience to witness these celebrations.

So, to finish with a brief comment: create the opportunity and find an excuse to get along to events like this at least once in your career. The next one could be in 2015 at the WASLI conference in Turkey! Allow yourself to grow. Continuously define and refine your own experience of the world by seeking to understand the world as experienced by others. Oh, and one last idea floated during a break in the conference? A joint SLIANZ/ASLIA conference - imagine that!

The team at iSign are looking to employ two full time interpreters in Wellington:

one senior (5+ years of experience), one junior (experience of 3 years or less). If you haven’t already received the information and application form, you can contact Clare at iSign on 0800 934 683 or by email info@isign.co.nz.

iSign’s aim is to increase interpreter access throughout Government and to also work with local freelance interpreters to help meet the community demand. Our aim is for this to be a win-win situation for interpreters and the community: increased interpreter availability means more work and more of the demand capable of being met. Not a bad deal in our eyes :) Applications close 7th of March but will be accepted until 8am 10th March (Monday morning).

Thanks
From the iSign team



Professional Development

The end of the membership year is fast approaching and along with that comes PD submissions. In order to make it easier for everyone here is a list of events that have been held over the past year with the categories they fit into and the points that they are worth. If there is more than one category listed for an event please pick one which you feel is most relevant. This is by no means an exhaustive list so please add any other PD you may have done – reading relevant articles, other workshops etc. Any event hosted by SLIANZ has a list of attendees so no proof is required. For other events please attach some form of evidence.

Just as a reminder the categories are as follows:

- Ethics of the Profession
- Language Proficiency (NZSL/English)
- Interpreting Practice
- Contribution to the Profession
- Deaf Community/Culture

Date	Host	Name of Event	Categories	Points
8 th June 2013	Connect	Afterhours Callout workshop	Interpreting Practice	4 points
Ongoing	Connect	Peer supervision session	Individual to decide	2 points
5 th /6 th July 2013	SLIANZ	Conference – “Staying Alive”	Individual to decide	4 points per day (8 points max)
26 th Sept 2013	Connect	Darrel Firth presentation	Interpreting practice	2 points
5 th Oct 2013	SLIANZ	Ethical Health Check workshop – Louise Hackshaw	Ethics of the Profession	2 points
23 rd Oct 2013	SLIANZ	Wellington Consumer Forum	Deaf Community/Culture	2 points
2 nd Dec 2013	SLIANZ	Auckland Consumer Forum	Deaf Community/Culture	2 points
16 th Nov 2013	SLIANZ	Mentoring Workshop Wellington	Interpreting Practice	2 points
22-24 th Nov 2013	Connect	Medical/Mental Health Interpreting – Karen Malcolm	Language proficiency/Ethics of the Profession/ Interpreting Practice	4 points per day (8 points max)
28 th Jan 2014	SLIANZ	Christchurch Consumer Forum	Deaf Community/Culture	2 points
15 th Feb 2014	iSign	Peer Supervision Workshop	Interpreting Practice/Ethics of the Profession	4 points
22 nd - 24 th Feb 2014	Signal/The Edge	Theatre Interpreting Workshop	Interpreting Practice	4 points per day

Up and Coming; 2014 Professional Development:

Deafblind Workshop

29th March (Auckland) and 30

Australian interpreter Dennis Whitcombe is visiting New Zealand to run 2 full day workshops on Deafblind interpreting in both Auckland and Christchurch. During the day interpreters will learn about tactile signing (hand over hand), visual frame interpreting, Deafblind fingerspelling, tracking, print on palm and Social Haptic Communication.

PD points: 4

Categories: Interpreting Practice, Language Proficiency

Consumer Forum Northland

19th March 2014 – Whangarei

Northland is next on the list for a Consumer Forum. Hosted by Harri Harrison and Alana Best this is another opportunity to be involved in a discussion about the relationship between Deaf people and interpreters. Come along and have your say.

PD points: 2

Category: Deaf Community/Culture

Consumer Forum Hamilton

April 2014 – Hamilton

We will be holding another Consumer Forum in Hamilton hosted by Shannon McKenzie and Rachel Turner. This is a great opportunity to be involved in an informal discussion about the relationship between Deaf people and interpreters – what you think is working well and what you feel may need improvement.

PD points: 2

Category: Deaf Community/Culture

Lille Deafblind Conference Review

5th April – Wellington - 9am-12pm

Elinor Cuttford attended the Deafblind International (DbI) European Conference in August 2013, and will be recapping the experience in Wellington (location TBC) on Saturday 5th April, 2014. As part of the workshop we will have the opportunity to practice various methods of tactile communication/interpreting (Deafblind Manual Alphabet, Close Vision Interpreting, Tracking/Tracing) & recap some of the main points from the Social Haptic Communication workshops as presented by Dennis Witcombe in Auckland & Christchurch.

PD points: 2

Categories: Interpreting Practice, Language Proficiency

Technology Workshop

9th April – Auckland - 6-8pm

Hosted by Noreen Smith, this workshop will look at different types technology, that can help interpreters make the leap from paper to tablets. Specifically looking at iPads/samsung tablets and iPhones, also a beginners guide to downloading the right APPs. It will be a chance to learn and share how we use our smart devices to help us with our daily tasks. (location TBC).

PD points: 2

Category: Other



2014 SLIANZ Conference info coming soon:

**Deafblind International
(DbI) European
Conference in Lille,
France.
By Elinor Cuttiford**

In August 2013, thanks to a generous boost of support from SLIANZ, I had the incredible opportunity to attend the Deafblind International (DbI) European Conference. Taking a brief respite from my lovely husband on our honeymoon, I travelled solo from England to the old, Flemish city of Lille, with the hope to network and source information for NZ Sign Language Interpreters and Deafblind community.

Every day I walked the cobbled streets of the Vielle Ville (old town) to the more modern Grand Palais, where I soaked up presentations and workshops over the course of 5 days. On my first day in the auditorium, it warmed my heart to see interpreters at various posts using a range of sign languages - on stage LSF (French Sign Language) and BSL interpreters, in the aisles and seated among Deafblind attendees STS (Svenskt Teckensprak - Swedish Sign Language).. and any number of other sign languages in various stages of interpretation around me.

The conference theme was "Commonalities across deafblindness. Learning from each other". It became clear during the conference that people working in the Deafblind field were very much based in one of two camps - Congenital Deafblindness or Acquired Deafblindness. I'd been unaware of any such divisions myself. Some had even suggested there should be separate conferences for the two. Here in NZ, the Deafblind Services team at the Blind Foundation do a great job of working with Deafblind people from both sides of the coin.. Perhaps relatively small Deafblind populations here in the Antipodes mean people band together and support each other more willingly. (On reflection, there are innumerable support workers who work specifically with people who are either Congenitally or Acquired Deafblind, so I can begin to understand the intensity of divisions in more populated regions).

As with any conference, there were too many workshops to choose from and inevitably I was sad to miss some in favour of others. The workshops I attended came variously from Congenital and Acquired perspectives, covering Social Haptic Communication (Sweden), Sensory Integration and Dance Movement Psychotherapy (Croatia), Information Sharing (Netherlands), Deafblind E-learning Training (Canada), Tactile Sign - Core Vocabulary (Germany), Three-part Tactile interactions (Norway). I attended Focus Groups for an international Deafblind youth network, a Deafblind Theatre Group, Arts and Well-being for Deafblind people (presented by a lovely fellow from London who was a good friend of our very own Alan Wendt!). I marvelled at tri-lingual tactile interpreters, inwardly wowed at the idea of Deafblind pilots (yup, this is happening in France), admired sculptures and photographs crafted and taken by Deafblind folk, and did my best to network and share meals with European colleagues who embarrassed me with their mastery of the English language. Having separate Congenital/Acquired conferences would have taken away so much of the richness of the experience. I was pleased to learn that by conference end there was the general consensus that DbI would only encourage "combined" conferences in future.

This conference cemented for me something I believe to be of the utmost importance - collaboration. Talking to each other. Listening to each other. Understanding each other. Sharing information. Sharing resources. Working together. Moving forward together. There really is so much we can learn from each other if we just keep sharing and learning from each others' experiences.

I am so grateful to SLIANZ for lending support to help me get to Lille. I'll be recapping my experiences of the DbI Conference at a small workshop in Wellington (location TBC) on

Saturday 5th April, 2014. As part of the workshop we will have the opportunity to practice various methods of tactile communication/interpreting (Deafblind Manual Alphabet, Close

Vision Interpreting, Tracking/Tracing) & recap some of the main points from the Social Haptic Communication workshops as presented by Dennis Witcombe in Auckland & Christchurch.

General Matters:

Membership Renewal:

SLIANZ wishes to give a friendly reminder to all that membership renewal time is coming for the year April 1st 2014 – March 31st 2015.

If you wish to renew your membership or become a new member of SLIANZ please provide the following either by email to dbailey.slianz@gmail.com or post to SLIANZ PO Box 6090, Wellesley St, Auckland.

Fill out a membership form. Fill out a directory form

Provide a current photograph for the ID card (before 1st April when card will be ordered)

Make a payment into the SLIANZ account with your name as a reference.



Calling All Aspiring Models:



SLIANZ are currently working on redesigning our website and we need to update our images. Would you like to be the new face of SLIANZ?

OR: Do you have some great ideas for images we could use? Please do give this serious consideration as I'm sure we all understand just how important our public profile is.

All interested parties, ideas etc please contact fleur.slianz@gmail.com before 28th March 2014

Correction:

The December 2013 SLIANZ newsletter incorrectly showed a University of Auckland logo above a story by Lynx about completing the Bachelor in NZSL-English Interpreting at AUT University. We wish to make the correction that the programme described is at AUT, and SLIANZ sincerely apologises to Lynx as the writer, and to AUT which should have been visually identified as the programme host.



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