

Chairman's Report

This year has been another one disrupted year by Covid 19 and measures to contain it affecting the whole of society. It was looking good until the Delta variant arrived and we all know how much of a struggle it has been since to contain it.

The committee has continued to meet monthly on Zoom. Planning has been quite difficult as they were dependent on the state of the COVID levels and since they were not low enough for us all to meet in Wellington this year we had to delay the Conference until Feb/Mar 2021 (date to be decided). Fortunately all the hard work has already been done but even Feb/Mar could be affected. Hopefully by then nearly every will be vaccinated so we could still meet even at level 2

Despite the challenges, good work has been done this year. Laurie has maintained a high standard magazine which is the key-stone of our organisation. It has been a major way in which SOFiA has kept connected. A special thanks to Editor Laurie Chisholm and his team of supporters.

The website continued to be updated and revamped and has been accessed by a good number people far and wide. It offers a wealth of information and resources. Both of these offer important ways in which potential new members may discover us.

Your committee has been small but highly effective. Steve Collard has recorded our meetings and kept us all informed; We picked up one extra member last year in John Thornley, whose willing participation has proved most useful. Our clarion call for new committee members has resulted in Mary Ellen Warren offering herself as a committee member and has in fact been attending our Zoom meetings to see how everything works. We still need more committee members – the constitution says we should have a minimum of 8. With the 4 year terms up meaning Ian Crumpton, Brian Ellis and Steve Collard are retiring, we are left with just four; Pete Cowley, John Thornley, Phillip Grimmett and Mary Ellen Warren. This small number makes organising a conference a challenge as it takes quite a bit of work. So please consider joining the committee and adding your voice and energy.

Sadly, Ian Crumpton, our chair, has had to step back from the chair and committee due to ill health, but all the committee members want to thank him for his leadership wish him well and a return to good health again.

The Newsletter of November 2019 gives a good account of the simplified conference of that year, the format well received by almost all who attended. Despite the 2020 conference not happening at all, the committee decided to adopt this format for our 2021 conference. Although now delayed by COVID it will still retain the format of a Friday Afternoon to Saturday afternoon conference whenever it is that we can hold it.

Pete Cowley
Acting Chair