

The DTAA

The Year Behind and the Year Ahead

Jane Guthrie and Denis Kelynack

Looking back at 2001, this report draws from Denis Kelynack's address at the AGM and tabled reports from the various sub-committees. Looking forward to 2002, it draws from the planning of the new DTAA committee who held their first meeting in mid December.

But firstly, 'A Thank You':

A very special part of this year's AGM was a 'thank you' to Naomi Aitchison who is retiring from her main responsibilities for the Association. Latterly these responsibilities have included newsletter editor, resource person and librarian. Naomi was part of the original steering committee to form an Association prior to Incorporation, before becoming a valued committee member and the first DTAA secretary and member of the newsletter sub-committee. In this role, Naomi was responsible for much of the DTAA's present organisational structure. A term as President followed, prior to that of newsletter editor for 5 years. During this time, the newsletter flourished and grew to achieve its present high professional standards. Denis paid tribute to Naomi's outstanding contribution to the DTAA by saying that she "will be deeply missed for her dedicated work and for her generous and willing participation in anything that involved the Association". Denis continued by offering Naomi "heartfelt thanks on behalf of us all".

We are indeed fortunate that Naomi is not deserting us totally and will stay as the convenor of the Hanny Exiner Memorial Fund sub-committee. Many members who were unable to attend the AGM, rang in to ask that their personal thanks and best wishes be passed on to Naomi.

The DTAA

The general committee has a responsibility to DTAA members to fulfill the organization's functions as expressed in the Aims, which are part of the Constitution. These are the guide for the committee who work constantly towards their fulfillment. The Aims include providing identity, representation and criteria for cer-

tification and registration (Professional Membership) of Australian dance therapists. They also include providing opportunities for networking; publishing a newsletter; producing professional literature; organising inservices and conferences (professional development), and establishing resources (library; responding to inquiries). Others include addressing industrial and /or employment issues.

To achieve the Aims, a number of sub-committees are in place that report back to the general committee. These are *Newsletter and Publications*; *Professional Membership*; *Professional Development*; *Interstate Liaison and Outreach*; *Promotions and Publicity and Industrial Relations and Employment*. Another newly developed sub committee that has been recently formed is for the *Hannie Exiner Memorial Fund*. All DTAA activities or business come under one of these committees. The central committee meets monthly (at Jenny Czulak Riley's house in South Yarra, where thanks to Jenny, we receive warm hospitality, conducive to pleasant and social meetings).

This report to members continues by looking at what has happened in the various sub committees, together with any planning to date:

Newsletter and Publications

Naomi was responsible for the first two newsletters in 2001 and when she went overseas, Sue Mullane kindly stepped in to fill the gap. We are grateful to both Naomi and Sue for their hard work and great effort. We are also very grateful to Dianne Gordon who has quietly got on with the tedious job of mailing the newsletters. She is indeed an unsung hero of the DTAA. Our 2001 editor's wish to thank Heather Hill for her regular net column, which has maintained a high standard of presentation throughout the year, and all those members who have provided major contributions to the publication. They both reported their work of soliciting for articles for publication meeting with mixed success, and hope that the members of the DTAA will take on a more active role to contribute their work in the future. We are indeed all wanting to be able to share in what is happening in dance therapy in Australia, as well as what is happening offshore

and 'over there' from our overseas members.

For the future, we are delighted to announce that our new editor is Rachael Byrnes, who will work in a newsletter team together with Heather Hill and Jane Guthrie. The thrust for 2002 future will be to involve the membership more in writing and expand the newsletter towards a Journal. The newsletters will therefore become larger and be mailed less frequently. Moving towards this format may mean that some intervening 'What's On' or 'News Sheets' to members, may be needed. Where possible, we are hoping to achieve this via E-mail bulletins, but are still a long way from having the entire membership on line. We would ask members to provide their E-mail addresses to the DTAA, if they haven't already done so and / or notify us of any change of address.

A reminder to members that we have a library available with a great selection of dance therapy books and publications. These are available to all members at no cost. Contact Naomi on (03) 9878 1602

Professional Membership

The business attached to PACFA comes under the Professional Membership Committee. Following a great deal of hard work by the committee, particularly by Denis, our application for full membership has been submitted. This move will enable DTAA professional members to be included in the PACFA register, together with a list of professionals from other helping professions who will also have reached approved standards. The committee continues to meet on an as needed basis to handle professional membership inquiries and applications and to continue to address and upgrade the criteria needed to reach the required standards.

Professional Development

Two significant workshops were sponsored by the DTAA in the past year. The first, was given by Penny Best, who came out from the UK with a fresh, original and transparent approach that has been an inspiration. Her work gave us new and deep insights into the therapist/client relationship, emphasising the need for therapists to be aware of their own process.

The second and this years' AGM event, was to sponsor Jenny Tyrell to Melbourne from West Australia. Jenny's work, with a variety of populations, is also inspiring and original. Her use of puppets enables a direct access to the mind of the child (and / or adult)

and opens up possibilities for all dance therapists to use this or similar approaches in combination with dance.

Looking forward, we are aware that we need to organise events earlier and not rely on last minute 'ring arounds' to fill available places. With more people on the committee in 2002, we hope to plan more in advance so that members can set aside dates in their diaries. At this stage we are not able to consider another conference in 2002, so will continue with two professional development activities, one of which will be the AGM event.

Interstate Liaison

The interstate liaison group that started a few years ago, did not really function in 2001 due to the reduced committee size. With so many of our members now on E-mail, and a thrust towards drawing the community news into the newsletter, we hope to have more interstate liaison via that source and available for the full membership to read. However, if any of our interstate representatives have other ideas, we would be pleased to hear them, either directly to the DTAA or as a response to this report. The contact person is Iris Solomon: (03) 9598 3617

Promotions and Publicity

Again in 2001, we did not have the 'personpower' for a separate committee, but we are pleased to report that a new brochure is in the making, which has had input from many members. We would like to thank everyone who has been involved and look forward to seeing the new brochure early in 2002.

We are pleased to announce that Kim Dunphy is now the contact person for Promotions and Publicity and the first task she will undertake is a DTAA Website. Sounds exciting doesn't it! Please forward any ideas to Kim, who is contactable on kimdunphy@hotmail.com The content of the new brochure is likely to form the basis for the Website and provide headings that can be 'clicked on' to gain further information. All ideas from members will be gratefully received.

Industrial Relations and Employment

Yet another committee which had to go on the back burner, but will hopefully move to the forefront in 2002, following several enquiries regarding employment issues. We will do our best to address these, but although the committee is larger, we will still be thinly

spread when trying to cover and maintain the structure of the Association. If there are any members willing to assist in this area, we would be delighted to have you aboard. Alternatively, what about an Industrial Relations and Employment section in the newsletter? Sharing your own findings about related issues could be the beginning of a resource that would be of assistance to all working in the area of dance therapy.

The Hanny Exiner Memorial Fund

The Hanny Exiner Memorial Fund was inaugurated this year. The name of the fund was the suggestion of Hanny's late husband Bob Exiner, who hoped to make an initial generous contribution. After Bob's death his two sons, Ron and Jess, agreed to give \$25,00.00 to the fund to launch it. The fund will be administered by a committee. The income from its investments will assist the development of dance therapy within Australia in a number of ways both administratively and educationally. Naomi Aitchison is the convenor of this committee.

Resources

Anna Ganz has kindly consented to be our resource person and will be carrying the DTAA telephone and fielding any dance therapy enquiries. Incoming mail that will become part of our resources, such as Journals from overseas, will be under Anna's care.

Milestones

Many milestones have been achieved this year by our members. To recap only a few, the IDTIA commenced its one-year Certificate in Dance Therapy course, following a great deal of hard work by those involved; Heather Hill published her book, "Invitation to the Dance", which tells of her work with people with dementia. This book has openness and spontaneity which makes it readable by the lay public as well as being valuable to all those working in dance and movement. Another series of publications came from Elizabeth Loughlin who gave accounts of her valuable work using dance therapy in a medical setting. She also won a scholarship from her hospital to go overseas.

Overall:

The DTAA committee are all volunteers, who give their time freely to work towards achieving the Association's Aims. The ongoing development of the DTAA is reliant upon its membership for support. From the financial perspective, the fees are needed to cover the running costs which include paying for commodities such as the telephone, the production and

mail outs of newsletters, printing of new brochures, the annual auditing of the books, the PACFA fees, or developing tools for Promotion and Publicity such as a Website. We therefore need lapsed members to rejoin the Association, as well as to encourage all those interested in the development of dance therapy, to do the same.

We also need voluntary assistance. Maintaining the structure, as above and taking on new initiatives has, particularly this year, been a great deal of work for too few people. The attendance of members at this years AGM was so encouraging and 2002 has commenced with a much needed larger committee. The majority of members who attended the AGM offered assistance in some way for the year ahead. We thank all those who offered and look forward to sharing the work between a larger group so that we can continue to development and support dance therapy within Australia, as well as reach out and network with our friends and colleagues from overseas.

New Dance Therapy Training

We are pleased to announce a new dance therapy training program housed within the Graduate Diploma in Visual and Performing Arts in the Faculty of Education, Language and Community Services, RMIT University. This course has been developed over the past two years by four independent dance therapy practitioners in Melbourne:

Jane Guthrie, Heather Hill, Linda Murrow, Denis Kelynack

GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

One year full-time or two years part-time fullfee paying program. Enrolments are now being accepted for Semester 1, 2002.

For general course and enrolment information, contact David Forrest at RMIT, tel. (03) 9925 7831.

For specific information on the dance therapy component, contact Heather Hill, tel. (03)9730 1248, email heatherhill@hotmail.net.au