

## The Australian and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy

### PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Our nineteenth year of publication saw the biggest changes in the history of the *Journal*, with the appointment of new editors and a new publisher from January, 1997. Maureen and Hugh Crago officially took over as joint editors on January 1, 1997 for three years. An enormous amount of work was necessary to coordinate the double transition of editor and publisher and to meet the new publishing schedules required by Blackwell; great credit is due to Hugh and Maureen and their editorial staff for their efforts in producing four editions in seven months, and getting production schedules back to a regular three month cycle. However, there were inevitably delays and adjustments and unfortunately the *Journal* was late coming out earlier in the year. Additionally, there was some confusion about our subscription base.

All of these difficulties have now been sorted out, and we are looking forward to a long term productive relationship with our publisher. Blackwell have been generous and flexible and we believe we have a good arrangement, which will ensure continuity and financial stability in the years to come. The essence of our publishing contract is that Blackwell produces, prints, distributes, markets and manages subscriptions for the *Journal*. The pre-production of the *Journal* is managed between Armidale (NSW) and Oxford (UK), with printing and postage done in Australia. Blackwell have an office in Melbourne which handles subscription and other enquiries. Blackwell have an active marketing plan, and considerable access to overseas and institutional subscribers. In addition, from early 1998, the *Journal* will be freely available to institutional subscribers in an electronic form, through the World Wide Web.

Our contract with Blackwell is to share surplus income (i.e. profit) after income and expenditure are calculated (including the editorial stipend) at a rate of 67% to the Board, 33% to the publishers. Income and expenditure are defined within the contract, and accounts are finalised at the end of each year when full subscription figures are available. This year, being the first of our new arrangement, it is difficult to predict our bottom-line outcome, but our confident estimate is that there will be significant cost reductions from our previous self-publishing arrangements. However, as always and especially this year, we are still in need of the extra revenue that is generated by Conferences. The Board has undertaken to increase the editorial stipend as our financial situation improves. In addition, it is imperative that we all work as hard as we can to maintain and improve our subscription base.

I have spelled out the arrangements with Blackwell to clarify any misunderstandings. Blackwell does *not* own the *Journal*, we (the Board, representing family therapy communities in Australia and New Zealand) do. The Board has contracted out to Blackwell (initially for five years) the publishing, distribution, marketing, subscription management, etc. Any profits, or other extra income is used to support the Editors in their work. We have always been very fortunate to have first class editors prepared to work extremely hard for relatively minor remuneration. This is not a satisfactory situation, and we need to plan to overcome this in the future.

Overall, the big picture at the end of the year is satisfying and I am very confident about our future. Hugh and Maureen have received magnificent support from many people, particularly Max Cornwell. In addition, Blackwell has shown great good will and willingness to take on board our suggestions (and criticisms). Particular thanks are also due to Shirley Green (Managing Editor, Blackwell Science Asia, in Melbourne) and Amy Willson, Claire Andrews and Richard Fidczuk in England.

A highlight of our year is the Special Award for Distinguished Service to Family Therapy in Australia and New Zealand. This year in Adelaide was the fourth time we bestowed the award, this time to Colleen Brown from Nowra, NSW. We wished to recognise Colleen for her outstanding achievements in bringing to family therapy communities in our two countries an increased awareness, involvement and commitment to Aboriginal families. Colleen has done this in many ways: as a teacher, writer, regular conference participant and story teller, member of our Board, and therapist and health educator. Her presentations and articles on the Stolen Generation have alerted many family therapists to the centrality of these issues for all of us. Her work brought the Stolen Generation to our attention years before it became acknowledged in the wider Australian community. Colleen is universally regarded with deep esteem and affection, and we were honoured to make the award to her, at such a crucial time in our history. Colleen was greeted with a standing ovation at the Award Ceremony in Adelaide, and her efforts and achievements give us hope, tempered with a realistic view of all that still desperately needs to be done.

At our Policy Forum and Annual General Meeting, the Board made a number of important recommendations which I believe will assist in planning for the future. We supported, in principle, an International Family Therapy Conference auspiced jointly by the International Family Therapy Association, the *Journal* and the Victorian Association of Family Therapists. Barbara Fraser will convene a working group. We endorsed a Conferences Liaison Committee to facilitate future Conference arrangements, including co-sponsorship and financial support. Ann Stark will chair this Committee. We also endorsed a Committee chaired by Paul Gibney, to explore possibilities of a transnational focus for Australian, New Zealand and Pacific Family Therapy. I believe we have now set in place structures to work through issues around Conference co-sponsorship, a national therapy and counselling association, and international connections. To develop such policies and linkages in these areas is a vital task for the Board.

In addition, the Cultural Consultation Committee is continuing a process, through experimentation with our Editors, and liaison with the Executive and our Communities, of formulating policy with regard to indigenous peoples and the best methods of handling written material for publication. This process is ongoing and will be reviewed again next year. The Board endorsed a registration of support for Native Title and Reconciliation, and the President is to work with our past editor Max Cornwell on the appropriate forms this may take (e.g. *Journal* advertisements).

Thank you to everyone for your efforts in the past year. Thanks to Barbara Fraser and Stephen Pinkus for Executive guidance and thoughtfulness; Nancy Wallace, Amaryll Perlesz and Luamanuvao Winnie Laban for their contribution to the Board over the years. We welcome Andrew Wood from Adelaide, Catherine Love from Korokoro, NZ, and Ann Stark from Hobart, as new Board members. Thank you to all the editorial staff who have worked with Hugh and Maureen, to the Tasmanian Association for their (promised) contribution from the 1996 Conference, and the Family Therapy Association of South Australia and the 1997 Conference Committee for their support and hospitality. See you in Brisbane from 23rd to 26th September, 1998: *Strands in the Web: Individuals in Context*.

Brian Stagoll  
President, Board of the Australian and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy Inc.