



Welcome to the third edition of the NZ World Service Newsletter

May 2017

(confidential for members only)

The information in here is supplied by your two World Service Delegates. (WSD).

Heather H
2nd term WSD
heatherh.wsd@gmail.com
(rotates off Dec 31st 2017)

Roger S
1st term WSD
rogers.wsd@gmail.com
(rotates off Dec 31st 2019)

Feel free to contact either of us about AA's international affairs (esp. regarding World Service Meetings (WSM) or Asia Oceania Service Meeting (AOSM)).

Update from Heather H April 2017

Firstly, I'd like to say what an absolute privilege it is to serve Alcoholics Anonymous as the NZ World Service Delegate – a privilege and a responsibility. I'm always mindful that our positions or titles in AA are actually job descriptions too – the main word in WSD being Service.

Terry Bedient, Chair of the USA Canada General Service Board said, (in his welcoming address to our last WSM October 2016 NY) "the World Service meeting has been described as 'a living and growing exchange of experience, responding to the needs of AA worldwide'." It was wonderful to be part of that exchange and to continue the work our previous delegates have done in sharing New Zealand's experience, strength, and hope. As one of AA's earliest structures we can be of great help to newer ones – we also learn from countries which are relatively new to our worldwide fellowship.

One major area of concern at this past World Service meeting was that there was only one first term woman delegate and it was suggested that countries aim at having a gender balance with their Delegates - so the World Service meeting is more representative of AA

The 25th World Service Meeting 2018 will be in Durban, South Africa and just some of the

presentation topics to be discussed will be;

- Old values for a modern AA (is anonymity is still relevant; attraction versus promotion in an Internet world; Traditions in the mass media)
- Service: investing in AAs future (Service, don't tell me - show me; 7th Tradition – supporting our services)
- Share the value of Tradition four (freedom or chaos; how does it support unity)
- Attracting members into service (service Sponsorship, participating in service beyond the group, the rewards of doing service) the
- Special-purpose meetings (the value of women's meetings; special-purpose meetings and the 3rd Tradition; meetings or groups?)

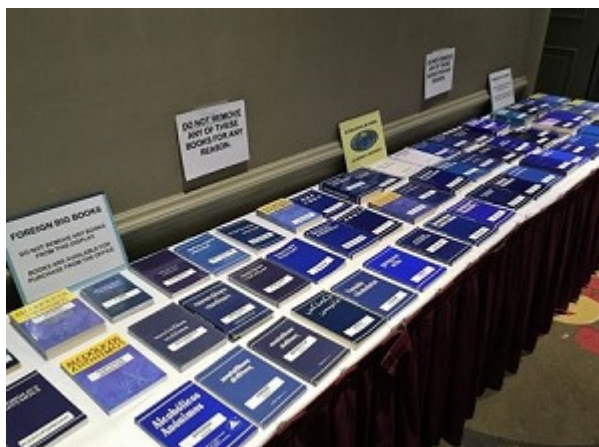
Workshop topics for the 25th WSM will include:

- how to use the Internet wisely
- country to country sponsorship
- leadership in AA.

Note: If you have thoughts about any of these, or the Workshop topics we'd value hearing from you so your Delegates are fully prepared - one of them will be asked to report on the topics.

Other items - just for your interest

- At WSM delegates have 2 minutes at the microphone and can't return until all who want to have shared
- Worldwide it seems most WSDs are considered trustees, attend their Board meetings and Conference, and continue to be used as a resource long after their term is over.
- German Speaking Europe: have been revising their 2005 Service Manual. This has been completed: one area they didn't cover was AA on the Internet and so have formed a group to create a proposal about the topic for their 2017 Conference to consider.
- Great Britain: have a 'online response team' to answer website queries. Their Young Persons Committee developed an animated video for the website. Their trustees have been 'working hard over the past two years' to make sure AA is kept 'anonymous but not invisible'
- 2016 WSM one discussion topic was 'How I will report back". This informal newsletter is one way NZ does this (after learning from another country). Our WSD reports are presented at Conference and smaller reports sent to all Area Assemblies. Both delegates report individually as are on different committees. (Area Delegates have copies you could read, or ask your WSD)
- India: 35 languages; 30,000 members; 9 translations of the Big Book
- Ireland turned 70 in 2016 with special meetings and commemorative edition of their magazine The Road Back. With 15,000 members, it has 85% of its funds from 'table-top' contributions. Meetings are closed, and encouraged to have one open meeting each year
- Mexico: 200,000 members; 600 groups in correctional facilities (NZ delegate Elsie Te K carried the message of how we did this, 25 years ago so have grown enormously since then)
- Latvia has a joke: "if I want to get drunk I will go to New Zealand and look after the sheep". Their Delegate told me this was a serious joke about going to the ends of the world to avoid alcohol -a little like us talking about going to Alaska.
- Some countries dedicate their annual gratitude fund to the International Literature Fund or some other specific purpose



- USA/Canada: sale of e-books – 18,686 Big Books and 18, 000 Steps and Traditions
- Most countries still observe November as 'Traditions month'.
- Russia: has concerns about seminars and speaker meetings that focus on 'guest stars' – especially those from overseas or are local 'celebrities'.
- A Class A Trustee, a surgeon/tutor, uses cadavers to talk about alcoholism -his father was a sober member of AA for 40 years and had asked his son to be helpful to AA.
- Japan has Concepts Meetings with past Delegates sharing their experience about the Concepts - so it's not a study meeting but a sharing session as, 'that's what attracts people to attend.'
- It was reported there are about 200 Chinese online meetings nightly
- GSO New York over the past 2 years been reviewing, and 'shepherding' the progress of projects in Afrikaans, Farsi, Russian, Turkish, Czech, Hebrew, Swedish, Polish, Filipino, Portuguese and Arabic. The Big Book is in 70 languages, including the original English, which has sold more than 35 million copies. AAWS prints the Big Book in 33 languages, with 37 printed by local service structures
- Sweden has a 'meeting before the meeting' and encourages members to arrive at least 15 or 20 minutes early so they can talk to newcomers or visitors before the meeting starts. This of course continues at the 'meeting after the meeting'
- A Delegate from the Czech Republic - when talking on social media in AA - reminded us that 'Anonymity is important - it's half of our name.' He also recalled the slogan from Atlanta 2015 Convention 'Anonymity is so fragile, you can break it with one finger.'

Heather Hapeta (2nd term WSD)

Contact me: heatherh.wsd@gmail.com

Phones: 021 158 2816 (04)3858047

Home group: Came to Believe, (11am Sunday, Wellington)

Sobriety date:19 November 1984

From Roger S – 1st Year World Service Delegate

Update from Roger Soulsby. May 2017

Since the last Newsletter the 24th World Service Meeting has been held in the Hilton Westchester, Ryebrook, about an hour or so north of Manhattan, New York on the 23rd - 30th Oct 2016. This is a sprawling complex specially catering for Conferences, weddings, business conventions etc with all sorts of different sized spaces, some huge, others like breakout rooms with coffee/tea supplies on hand. The Hotel is situated in a wooded area (being autumn the colours were beautiful plus squirrels & chipmunks abound!) not far from Ryebrook township. All Delegates gathered together every day (apart from Committees & Workshops) with our lunches & dinners being provided close to "our" Conference Room. This meant we could mix & talk with everyone else over



meals as well throughout the week. The hallways were often wide open areas & outside the Conference room special literature stands were set up with Big Books in a vast array of languages plus AA Literature that Delegates brought along for display. An added bonus for everyone that that attends this Conference is the visit to "Stepping Stones" where Bill & Lois lived from 1941 onwards. We were bussed in smaller vehicles as the usual tourist sized ones are too big to manoeuvre & park at "Stepping Stones" ! Everything inside the quaint 2 level cottage is labelled, something that Lois spent hours completing to preserve for all who care to visit. It really is hallowed ground with the little old enamel table (that Ebby sat at with Bill) in

the kitchen that Bill & Lois kept from the beginning.

Following are some highlights from this World Service Meeting;

- 60 odd World Delegates attended from 40 odd countries. English & Spanish continuous translations.
- NZ has attended every one since 1st in 1969 (Our Common Welfare being the theme)
- Big Book in 70 Languages. AA in 180 Countries now.
- 15 new pending translations of BB. Over 35 million English versions sold to date (4 editions)
- No borders in AA....in Jerusalem copies of BB available in Arabic for those Muslims (Arabs) who drop by at Hebrew meetings! [NOTE over 1.5 Arabs live in Israel]
- Many countries applying for Licensing Agreements to print Big Books & AA Literature. One National structure; one sole License but v difficult to monitor i.e. Amazon regularly has literature at 50% of cost against New York GSO pricing.
- 4 Standing Committees; Agenda Comm (Heather H Chair), Policy/Admissions/Finance Comm (Roger incoming Chair), Literature Publishing Comm, Working with Others Comm.
- 3 Workshops –1st Resentment; What does it mean for individual recovery & for Group survival? 2nd Communication between Generations: Are we succeeding in Carrying the Message? 3rd Spirituality of Our Financial Contributions; the Seventh Tradition, what price sobriety?
- Time allowed for feedback on any subject from Delegates. Blatant self-promotion an issue with self-publication of recovery "biographies" using Group members as customers/salesmen. Difficulty establishing a national structure a common issue in Eastern Europe with all Groups sending own GSR to a "National Conference" i.e. no Delegate representation or minimal.

- Presentations; 9 in all from Delegates/GSO Staff. Very topical over variety of issues.
- Country Highlights from all 1st term Delegates or sole Delegates.
- Finland highest proportion of AA Members; 660 Groups; 10,000 Members; 5mill pop.
- USA/Canada; 67,000 Groups; 1.4mill Members.
- Use of Skype for "live voice meetings" in Europe.
- AA communication. In Japan successful AA message/sticker on disposable bottles !
- Tour of World Service Office for all Delegates followed by an AA meeting in same building.
- Stepping Stones visit. Bill & Lois lived there from 1941 until they died (Bill 1971 & Lois 1988).
- General Service Board Quarterly Meeting. Attendance as Observers. 1st day all Standing Committees (10 with 26 Sub-Comm's!)
- New book underway "Unity in Action" using Bill's sharing on this topic & putting it into text.
- Look up <http://www.aa.org/> then Videos, then "A New Freedom" for latest sharing tape/video.
- Lasting memories; No matter what country, what language, what group, what meeting – we share a common bond.....recovery from alcoholism. Carrying the message requires persistence, structure and a spiritual belief regardless of culture, gender or upbringing! Service is the premium paid for the day we need assurance that AA works. Many countries still "new" in recovery thus structures fragile or not operating according to AA principles.
- United Nations Singers performed. Group been singing since 1947 composed entirely of present or past UN Staff.
- Next World Service Meeting is in Durban, South Africa in 2018.

As I've been assigned to the Policy / Admissions / Finance Committee here are some observations expanding on the previous bullet points. At 1st it was very daunting sitting with 15 other Delegates around a conference table. At that stage didn't know that only 4 of them were 2nd Term World Service Delegates! Bob W from USA Chaired the Committee that had a formidable amount of business to work through. Bear in mind that prior to meeting at Conference, we had participated in an Email vote to admit Paraguay & Slovakia Delegates plus voted on which structure in Russia may send Delegate(s) to the New York Conference.

The last issue is an ongoing "work in progress" not only in Russia but in other parts of Eastern Europe as well as Countries like Mexico & elsewhere in South America.

We don't appreciate here in NZ just how fortunate we are in following the AA structure template 1st set out by Bill W, adopted in Nth America and which we have closely emulated. However as AA begins to grow particularly in Eastern Europe the concept of Delegates representing "Areas" is fragile with Groups electing a GSR to attend a "National Conference" that may have a up to a 100 participants !

Another issue we have never had to resolve is the matter of "distribution licenses" for AA approved literature including the Big Book. A Licence is issued by AA World Services out of New York to the "approved" National structure of any country that publishes their own literature rather than purchase (as we do) direct from New York. This leads to some difficulty as in Russia where one structure had its Licence withdrawn in favour of the current "new" structure.

It should be noted that while AA is present in about 180 countries, only 40 odd countries have World Service Delegates that attend World Service Meetings.

Lastly a common and worrying thread throughout Conference from numerous Delegates was the lack of AA Members stepping forward for service positions. In part, it's why some Countries with relatively high growth in numbers of AA Groups, are struggling with the formation of National structures & sound Delegate representation. Remember it's what we put into, not what we take out of AA that provides the longevity of not only our own recovery but others as well!

Your Humble Servant,

Roger Soulsby

1st Term World Service Delegate

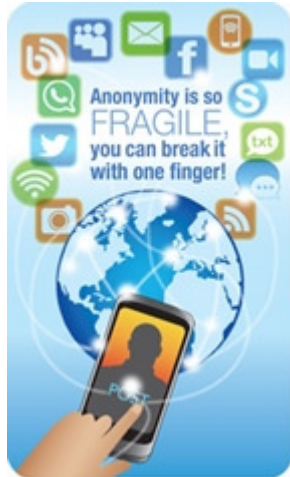
Email address; rogers.wsd@gmail.com

Item from Val H - past WSD

My name is Val and I am an alcoholic.

In 2010 and 2011, it was my privilege to serve as a World Service Delegate for New Zealand. I had served during the previous two years as the Alternate Delegate and was kept abreast of WSM matters by the first term delegate. This connection was extremely beneficial since, when I took up the position of WSD in 2010, I was already familiar with the current topics and had some idea of what to expect at the meetings themselves.

The 21st World Service Meeting in 2010 was held in Mexico City and attended by 53 delegates from



32 countries. Portugal and Estonia were first-time attendees. The topic for the Meeting was "Sponsorship: Our Responsibility" and included 29 presentations and three workshops on a variety of related matters. These included Country to Country Sponsorship, Women in AA, AA and the Internet, AA's 12 Traditions and Group Autonomy, the Seventh Tradition, AA's 12 Traditions and group autonomy, General Service Board procedures, and AAs working in the field of alcoholism. Sessions began at 8.30am each morning and ended at 5.30pm so the working days were very busy and productive with delegates sharing their own countries' experiences on the different topics. It was amazing to me to learn the many different ways each country addressed the various matters whilst still maintaining our primary purpose.

It is gratifying to see that New Zealand is finally developing its own Service Manual. Most countries have developed their own version of

the US/Canada Service Manual. Of the countries represented at the WSM in 2010, only Mexico and New Zealand were still using the US/Canada version.

It was noted that great care should be exercised when selecting Class A (non-alcoholic) Trustees. Most countries, including New Zealand, have a clear rotation process. Venezuela and Belgium had problems in the past getting rid of theirs. The Venezuelan Chair of the Board had been in office for 17 years and the Belgian one even longer. Apparently, he was under the impression that it was a job for life! Thankfully, experience has shown that rotation is best.

Since group donations seem to be declining all over the world (with the exception in 2010 of Ireland and Colombia), a fundraising suggestion came from one of the other South American countries and it's called "Plan 365" whereby members put aside a dollar a day for their sobriety and send \$365 to their GSO once a year, possibly on their AA birthday. About a year after I reported this, a Rotorua AA member got in touch to say he'd just sent \$365 to GSO NZ.

The problem of 13th Stepping was brought up by a male delegate from Spain. As he eloquently put it, "Pretty girl turns up at AA and the men flock around her. I wouldn't want that to happen to a family member of mine." Seemingly, this is a global problem and emphasises our responsibility to look after our newcomers.

The World Service Meeting lasted a week and, although very busy and tiring, our Mexico City hosts looked after us extremely well with excellent accommodation and great food.

In 2011, I attended the Asia/Oceania Service Meeting held in Chandigarh, India. The topic for this meeting was "Singleness of Purpose" and attended by 23 delegates from 13

countries. Presentations and Workshops included: Reaching Out, AOSM Structure, Copyright, Translations & Licensing, and continuation of the Adopt-a-Country strategy which had been successful in the Pacific region thanks to the efforts of Australia and New Zealand. India supports Sri Lanka, and Thailand is also very active in supporting other countries in the SE Asia region.

Country reports outlined the number of groups in the various countries, with Australia leading the

way with 1800. It would be too lengthy to outline them all here but of particular interest are: Eastern Siberia 46, Hong Kong 39 English-speaking and 2 Chinese-speaking, Nepal 2 English-speaking and 2 Nepalese-speaking, Kuwait 5, Qatar 3, Bahrain has a meeting every day at prominent locations which makes it easy for AA seekers and overseas visitors to find. A group in Oman self-destructed because it was open to anybody who was addicted to anything. Consequently, singleness of purpose was lost. These figures were at 2011 and have probably improved greatly since then.

The AOSM in Chandigarh was very successful and rewarding and consisted of three full days of meetings and workshops. The Host Committee were congratulated for organising the event and for keeping the costs to an absolute minimum.

It's so important for New Zealand to be a part of this to share experiences with other countries with the sole aim of helping alcoholics to achieve sobriety, wherever they may be. It's also an opportunity for New Zealand and other countries with well-developed structures to help fledgling countries to develop theirs.

It was such a privilege to serve as a WSD for these two years. Unfortunately, I was unable to complete my 4-year term due to ill health but we had an Alternate Delegate in place who was able to complete my term. It's not a holiday that's for sure and consists of hard work each day of the meeting. However, it is a wonderful experience to feel part of this global fellowship and I am extremely grateful for being given the opportunity to participate in AA service at this level. Val Hibbert.

NOTE: Heather H rotates off at the end of 2017 – by then a new World Service Delegate will be need to have been appointed, so it's time to deliberate on all past area delegates. Make sure your area keep a list of all those delegates so you can reflect on each one, that everyone eligible is considered – are they, as Bill W would say 'are they the best' for the role? As he apparently often said "the good is the enemy of the best".

And here's the link to get our fabulous, AA NZ (ANDRIOD) [Find a Meeting app](#)

Not interested any more? [Unsubscribe](#)