



CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S ANNUAL REPORT – 1 January to 31 December 2022

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1. OUR PEOPLE

NZCF's immediate past Chair Juliet Dreaver was accorded Life Membership at our 2022 AGM in May, in recognition of her exceptional contribution to NZCF at a national level. Juliet was a member of the Governance Board for 9 years and served three of those years as Chair. Her term as Chair included working tirelessly alongside Cathryn Wyllie and Olive Leddy to keep NZCF running effectively during the period of Grant Hutchinson's illness and death, and effecting a smooth transition to a new Chief Executive. Juliet contributed significantly to NZCF's application to Creative New Zealand which saw the organisation achieve Tōtara Arts Leadership status with CNZ. Juliet played a key role in the preparations for the 12th World Symposium on Choral Music as chair of the international Administrative Committee and she played an active role in the discussions and negotiations which saw NZCF win the bid to host the World Choir Games in Auckland in 2024. Juliet continues to serve on the Board of Chor24 (the board overseeing management of the upcoming World Choir Games). Her Life Membership Award was richly deserved.

In May 2022, Ann-Elise Miles, was presented with a Distinguished Service Award in recognition of her outstanding contribution to the Waikato-Bay of Plenty region over many decades (including as Chair and Kids Sing Coordinator), as well as the important roles she played as local coordinator of Sing Aotearoa in 2009, 2013 and 2016, and as joint Coordinator (with her daughter Elizabeth Pilaar) of the inaugural Upper North Island Cadenza in 2019. Omitted from the 2021 AGM report was the presentation of a Distinguished Service Award in November 2021 to Carrol Donoghue for her considerable contribution to the NZCF Manawatu-Whanganui committee, and to the wider choral community in the region, over many years.

We were sad to note the passing of long-serving NZCF member Judy Tallon in 2022. Judy had been awarded an NZCF Distinguished Service Award in 2018 for her excellent contribution to NZCF Waikato/BOP, in particular as Coordinator of The Big Sing, for many years. She was well-known in the region as a singing teacher and choral musician and has been greatly missed since her passing.

a) Patron

Dame Patsy Reddy's term as Governor-General of New Zealand came to an end in late September 2021, at which point she relinquished her role as Patron of NZCF. We have not yet identified a new Patron for NZCF.

b) Officers and staff

Governance Board

As mentioned above, we farewelled Juliet Dreaver from the Governance Board in May 2022, after nine years of outstanding service. Toby Gee also stepped down at the 2022 AGM and the Board welcomed two new members: Dr Karen Grylls (returning to the Board, having served on the inaugural NZCF Board from 2007 – 2014), and Dr Igelese Ete. In August 2022, Robert Wiremu retired from the Board, having recently accepted a new position on the Board of SOUNZ, and was replaced by co-opted member Melissa Absolum. In November 2022 Megan Hurnard advised that increased work and family commitments had led her to resign from the Board, leaving a vacancy to be filled at the next AGM.

The New Zealand Choral Federation is enormously grateful to the members of the Governance Board for their oversight of the organisation and strategic vision for the future of NZCF. Special thanks go to Chair Warwick Harvey for the tremendous amount of time and wisdom he devotes to this voluntary role.

| | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Warwick Harvey | Chair; Strategic & Governance |
| Pete Rainey MNZM | Vice Chair; The Big Sing (Chair) |
| Kim Cunningham | Finance & Legal |
| Igelese Ete | Sing Aotearoa; Diversity & Reach |
| Karen Grylls ONZM | Association of Choral Directors |
| Megan Hurnard | Strategic & Governance; The Kids Sing |
| David Squire | Association of Choral Directors (Chair); Youth |
| Robert Wiremu / Melissa Absolum | The Big Sing; Diversity & Reach |

Staff in 2022

| | |
|------------------|------------------------------|
| Christine Argyle | Chief Executive |
| Emma Billings | Events Manager |
| Ann Gibbard | Finance & Membership Manager |
| Lisa Bates MNZM | Development Manager |
| Hannah Darroch | Communications Coordinator |

We were sorry that funding constraints did not enable us to employ Hannah beyond 2022 in her role as Communications Coordinator and wish to thank her for the valuable contribution she made to NZCF over 15 months in this part-time contract position.

NZCF National Advisory Committee

The National Advisory Committee (NAC) comprises the NZCF Board Chair and the Chairs of each NZCF region. The chairs and committee members from the ten regions are vital to the Federation delivering its activities and services.

In early 2022, Elizabeth Crayford stepped down as Chair of the Wellington region, after a total of 15 years' service to NZCF in the various roles of regional chair, regional TBS Coordinator and National TBS Coordinator. Elizabeth was replaced by Shawn Condon, director of the Wellington Bach Choir. In Waikato-Bay of Plenty, Elizabeth Pilaar stepped down from the role of Chair, following many years of contribution to NZCF in her region, particularly over successive Sing Aotearoa festivals. We were pleased that Elizabeth continued her role as Coordinator for the Upper North Island Cadenza festival in 2022. Julia McIntyre, Director of Music at Southwell School in Hamilton, took over the role of Chair of Waikato-Bay of Plenty.

2022 NZCF Regional Chairs

Penny Christiansen (Auckland)
 Julia McIntyre (Waikato-Bay of Plenty)
 Alison Thomson JP (East Coast)
 Roy Tankersley MNZM (Manawatu-Whanganui)
 Christopher Luke (Taranaki)
 Shawn Condon (Wellington)
 Lucy Rainey (Nelson-Marlborough)
 Rosemary Fisher (Canterbury-West Coast)
 Carole Randall (Otago)
 Christine McLeod (Southland)

Regional Committees

The Board and National office are hugely indebted to our hundreds of dedicated volunteers around the country who generously serve on regional committees, Big Sing committees and Kids Sing committees. Our Big Sing and Kids Sing coordinators are acknowledged later in this report, but special thanks must also go to the treasurers of each region, who often put in considerable time with funding applications and managing the regional accounts.

We wish to especially acknowledge the dedicated contribution of Stanley Barnes, who retired from the Manawatu-Whanganui committee at the end of 2022 after more than 37 of service to NZCF – first on the inaugural Wellington committee and subsequently in various roles on the Manawatu-Whanganui committee, including TBS Coordinator, Secretary and Treasurer. Stanley was rightly awarded an NZCF Distinguished Service award in 2017.

2. MEMBERSHIP

We saw a drop in Choir membership in 2022 from 207 in 2021 to 193. It seems that the impact of a third year of Covid badly affected some choirs: four wound up, and others went into recess and suspended their membership until such time as they feel confident of resuming again. The biggest drop-off in choirs was in Auckland, which had a more sustained period of lockdown in 2021, followed by the nationwide restrictions at the start of 2022. However, we were pleased to welcome six new Member Choirs into the fold in 2022.

Total individual memberships increased slightly in 2022, from 492 in 2021 to 503. A drop in ACD membership (down from 323 to 281) was due to lower Big Sing registrations and the cancellation of some Kids Sing festivals (meaning fewer choir directors gained complimentary ACD membership). This drop in ACD membership was offset by a rise in Personal Membership from 153 to 205.

We introduced a new Youth membership category in 2022 with a 'pay your age' fee structure. We also offered complimentary Youth membership to NZ Youth Choir members.

| | As at 31 Dec 2022 | As at 31 Dec 2021 | As at 31 Dec 2020 | As at 30 Dec 2019 |
|-------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Personal | 205* | 153 | 162 | 168 |
| ACD Total | 281 | 323 | 384 | 335 |
| *Paid | 120 | 142 | 124 | 121 |
| *free via TKS/TBS | 161 | 181 | 260 | 214 |
| Life | 17 | 16 | 14 | 14 |
| Total Individual | 503 | 492 | 560 | 517 |
| Choirs | 193 | 207 | 204 | 203 |

*This number includes 30 free Youth memberships for current members of NZ Youth Choir.

3. FINANCES

In 2022 NZCF had a consolidated loss of \$4,395. This comprises a surplus of \$654 from NZCF National, a deficit of \$5,056 from NZCF Regional branches and a surplus of \$7 by Chor 2024 Ltd. Consolidated accumulated funds at 31 December 2022 were \$938,989 (\$348,589 NZCF National; \$227,671 NZCF Regional branches; \$362,729 Chor 2024 Ltd).

Sincere thanks to our NZCF Finance Manager Ann Gibbard, and to all our regional treasurers, for their meticulous management of NZCF's financial accounts.

4. FUNDING AND SPONSORSHIP

a) Creative New Zealand funding

2022 was the third year of NZCF's 6-year funding agreement under CNZ's Tōtara Investment Programme. Given the cancellations of a number of regional Kids Sings, SingFests and workshops in 2022, we were pleased that CNZ's feedback on our December 2022 report indicated that NZCF had met expectations overall in 2022, had a "Good" rating (above "Met Expectations") for *Alignment to CNZ Strategies* and *Organisational Health* and in the first half of the year we were advised that we had exceeded the indicators for *Capacity & Capability* and *Commitment to Diversity*.

b) Ministry of Youth Development funding

Our multi-year contract with MYD expired on 30 June 2022 but we were given a 6-month extension through to the end of 2022. A change in focus for MYD has meant that The Big Sing no longer aligns as strongly with their Youth Plan. As a result, our application for a new contract from 2023 onwards was unsuccessful. However, we were granted an additional 4-month extension and hope to have the opportunity to apply to a different fund within MYD in 2023.

c) Tour Time sponsorship

We were grateful to Tour Time for continuing their commitment to The Big Sing in 2022, especially given the impacts of Covid-19 on the tourism industry. Our 3-year agreement with Tour Time ran until the end of 2022 and has been re-negotiated for a further year in 2023.

d) Other partnerships

We were delighted that Summerset Retirement Villages came on board with a one-year sponsorship of The Big Sing Regionals, Cadenza and Finale. We were hopeful they would renew their support in 2023 but they declined, saying their sponsorship priorities had changed.

Trinity College London (NZ) continued their support of The Big Sing in 2022 and KBB Music came on board as supporters of TBS Finale. TCL have once again renewed their support in 2023 but KBB Music have declined to continue their partnership into 2023.

e) Ministry of Culture and Heritage

We were thrilled to receive the news in December 2022 that NZCF had been granted \$570,000 from the MCH Regeneration Fund for our proposed initiative, *Singing for Lifelong Wellbeing*. The goal for NZCF's initiative is to get more children singing, and to keep them singing after they leave school. The funding we have received will enable us to deliver training and resources to teachers in primary and intermediate schools where little or no singing is currently taking place, and to run youth singing activities and young conductor training for 18-25 year-olds. These initiatives will be rolled out during 2023 and the first half of 2024.

5. THE BIG SING (TBS)

The Big Sing Regionals

With school choir rehearsals severely impacted during all of term 1 (ie, no singing indoors), The Big Sing June regionals were looking in danger of having to be cancelled. In response to the situation schools were facing, we adjusted our competition requirements from 3 qualifying pieces to just two (for choirs wishing to be selected for Cadenza or Finale) and also reduced the number of pieces required at Cadenza and Finale. Predictably, given the challenges in term 1, participant numbers were significantly down on previous years. Many schools that normally field 2-4 choirs only entered 1-2 choirs in 2022. We were heartened that the number of schools involved was relatively constant compared with 2021 (122 schools in 2022; 129 schools in 2021), but it was the number of choirs (177 in 2022 vs 216 in 2021) and total students taking part (5581 in 2022, 6785 in 2021 and 8373 in 2019) that reduced significantly over the course of the pandemic.

Primary school choirs were even more severely impacted by the term 1 restrictions, with schools banning singing altogether. This impacted our usual Taranaki TBS as it is normally held in conjunction with The Kids Sing. Given that primary school choirs had not begun rehearsing, it was not feasible to hold a combined TBS/TKS festival in June, so the three Taranaki TBS choirs instead travelled to Palmerston North to participate in the Manawatu-Whanganui festival.

Heartfelt thanks go to our 2022 TBS Coordinators: NZCF Eveline Harvey (Auckland), Sarah Watts & Jeremy Whimster (Waikato-Bay of Plenty), Glenys Kempshall & Andrea Wilson (East Coast), Karen Hall (Manawatu-Whanganui), Toni Wilson (Wellington), Emily Wragg & Lucy Rainey (Nelson-Marlborough), Rosemary Fisher (Canterbury-West Coast), Rosemary Tarbotton (Otago), Alan Menzies (Southland).

The Big Sing Cadenza

We had a full complement of 36 choirs taking part across three Cadenza festivals in 2022 – the first time all three were able to go ahead since 2019. A total of 953 students took part, and feedback from their conductors was overwhelmingly positive, particularly about the workshops with adjudicator Elise Bradley. Our sincere thanks go to our Cadenza Coordinators – Elizabeth Pilaar & Jenny Lewy (Upper North Island), Edwyna McDonald (Lower North Island), Wayne Pahl (South Island) and their committees for their highly successful hosting of these festivals.

The Big Sing National Finale

We were thrilled to at last be able to mount The Big Sing Finale in Christchurch, following aborted plans to hold it there in August 2020 and August 2021. 24 choirs comprising a total of 854 students from Auckland, Hamilton, Palmerston North, Masterton, Wellington, Christchurch and Invercargill took part in this 3-day event in the Christchurch Town Hall, the first time back in that venue for 15 years. The gala concert was compered by Miriama Kamo and was livestreamed live on Facebook, Face TV, the Radio NZ website and on the NZCF website. The organic reach on Facebook was 62,178 over three days, and on our website we had 8921 views from 46 countries. Our heartfelt thanks go to Rosemary Fisher and her Canterbury committee for the considerable work they put into ensuring Finale was such a success.

Special thanks go to our Events Manager Emma Billings, the TBS Director John Rosser, and the **TBS National Committee**, whose advice has been invaluable over the past three years as we have navigated The Big Sing through the ever-changing Covid landscape. Our Big Sing National Committee in 2022 comprised Pete Rainey (Chair), John Rosser (TBS Director), Robert Wiremu (GB), Siliva Gaugatao, Katie Macfarlane, Peter Watts, Emma Billings (Events Manager) and Christine Argyle (CE).

6. NZCF/SOUNZ award

As of 2021, we now run two composition competitions in collaboration with SOUNZ. For the general competition, we received 12 entries in 2022 (the average over most years of the competition's existence). Our adjudicator was Anthony Ritchie and the winning piece, *Flames* by William Squire of Westlake Boys' High School was performed by *Choralation* (from Westlake Girls' and Boys' High Schools) at the Big Sing Finale.

The new Te Reo Māori Choral Composition Award (established in 2021) attracted five entries (up from three in 2021) and was adjudicated by Reuben Rameka. The winning composition *Ka mate te reo i te reaka kotahi* was by Estella Wallace (Ngai Tahu) from Christchurch Girls' High School, with a text by Hana O'Regan (Ngai Tahu) that speaks of the importance of keeping te reo alive. A performance of Estella's piece by the Tudor Consort was recorded by SOUNZ and played at the Finale in Christchurch, since the voicing of the piece was not suited to Estella's school choir. Estella was presented with the trophy *Te Pūoho Ki Te Rangī* at the Finale, carved by taonga puoro player/composer and maker Tāmihana Kātene.

7. THE KIDS SING

Following on from the term 1 moratorium on singing in schools, with choirs getting off to a late start for the year, only 5 of the 8 scheduled Kids Sing festivals took place in 2022, most of them with lower numbers than in pre-Covid times. Those that took place as planned were in Auckland, Hamilton, Palmerston North, Hastings and Wellington and involved a total of 2126 young singers.

Huge thanks to our 2022 regional TKS Coordinators: Penny Christiansen (Auckland), Georgina Cole (East Coast), Roy Tankersley (Manawatu-Whanganui), Maria Colvin, Julia McIntyre, Lynn Jamieson & Brooke Baker (Waikato-Bay of Plenty) and Anya Nazaruk (Wellington).

Kids Online Singalong

In response to the cancelled Kids Sing festivals, we reprised the Kids Online Singalong project from 2020 & 2021, in collaboration with MENZA and the NZ Music Commission. The project saw primary school choirs record themselves singing (and signing) the winning song from the 2022 Hook, Line and Sing-a-long competition: *Summertime* by home-schooled Hawkes Bay brothers Finn (13 yrs) and Hugo (11yrs) Clark. As in 2020/21, we created a massed virtual choir from all the footage, overlaid with professional animation, featuring 250 school children from 7 primary and intermediate schools in Auckland, Upper Hutt, Wellington, Christchurch, Oamaru, Dunedin and Invercargill. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VJgKLVtNHA>

8. THE NEXT BIG THING

This new event for 18-25 year-olds was developed partly in response to the fact that Year 13 students from 2020 and 2021 had missed out on attending a TBS Finale, and also in response to the insights gained from our Youth focus group study into ways in which we can encourage school leavers to keep singing in choirs. The Next Big Thing was originally planned for April but given the Red Covid setting in the first quarter of the year, it was re-scheduled to November, after all university exams had finished.

We originally envisaged young people would come from around the country to sing together but in the event, 44 mostly Wellington-based singers took part, with a handful coming from Christchurch and Auckland. While the number of participants was lower than hoped, the event was an artistic success with this from-scratch choir giving a very polished performance (after 1 ½ days together) of Fauré's *Requiem* under Brent Stewart.

This project served as a pilot for a series of 10 similar festivals we will run in 2023/24 as part of our MCH-funded Youth initiatives. Thanks go to Juliet Dreaver and Emma Billings for coordinating this project, and to Brent Stewart for his musical direction.

9. REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

SingFest

Six regional SingFests were held in 2022 in Palmerston North, New Plymouth, Wellington, Christchurch, Invercargill and Nelson. Wellington's annual May Workshop was postponed to October and attracted good numbers to sing Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana* under Brent Stewart. The Palmerston North, New Plymouth and Invercargill SingFests showcased individual choirs from each region. Christchurch once again held an outdoor, pop-up choir, central city event. The Nelson SingFest was the first the region has staged, and involved a sing-in *Messiah* in collaboration with the Nelson Civic Choir.

Regional Workshops

Four regional workshops took place in 2022. Palmerston North hosted a workshop featuring the song cycle *Shaky Places*, based on 14 NZ poems by Rachel Mc Alpine and set to music by composer Felicia Edgecombe for the Capital Choir in Wellington. Rosemary Russell worked on 5 of the pieces with the participants, with the composer on piano and contributing to the interpretation of the pieces, all written to be accessible to community choirs. As well, New Plymouth hosted a popular workshop with Judy Bellingham titled *Viagra for the Voice*, Waikato-Bay of Plenty held a workshop with David Squire, and East Coast held a workshop led by Jane Pierard.

10. THE ASSOCIATION OF CHORAL DIRECTORS (ACD)

a) Fine Tuning

In May 2022 David Squire, Rowan Johnston and Brent Stewart worked with a total of 10 secondary school choirs across three centres (Hawkes Bay, New Plymouth and Wellington) prior to each choir's participation in TBS regionals. These workshops were all well-received and appreciated by the singers and choir directors alike.

b) Giving Direction

NZCF ran two in-person Giving Direction workshops in 2022 - one in Christchurch and one in Wellington (both with Andrew Withington) - and three online workshops (presented by David Squire, Andrew Withington and Elise Bradley). These Zoom workshops were tailored to the needs of those taking part, with a one-hour plenary session first, then a one-to-one follow-up session.

c) Singing Matters

In 2022 NZCF delivered just one series of online workshops for primary/intermediate choir leaders, led by Megan Flint in May. These tailored workshops followed the same format as that outlined above for the Giving Direction online workshops. Further Singing Matters workshops were offered later in the year but there was not sufficient take-up to run them.

d) ACD Facebook group

Membership of this closed Facebook group increased over the course of 2022 from 206 to 228. The group has continued to provide a useful forum where NZ choral directors can ask each other for repertoire suggestions, seek each other's advice on working in various choral scenarios, and share information on events and courses of interest. Member posts in 2022 ranged from a request to borrow a Tibetan singing bowl through to notice of a Lithuanian choral workshop in Auckland! Our ACD National Committee ran three ACD Zoom sessions, promoted via the Facebook group. These were: *How to get your choirs to be more expressive* (group discussion), *Choral Jazz* (presented by David Squire) and a session featuring David Squire and Sue Densem talking about their experience of working with choral superstar composer and conductor Eric Whitacre.

Our thanks go to 2022 **ACD Advisory Committee**: David Squire (Chair), Karen Grylls, Helen Charlton, Sue Densem, Megan Flint, Brent Stewart, Mark Stamper, Christine Argyle (CE) and Emma Billings (Events Manager).

11. WORLD CHOIR GAMES 2024

Across 2022 further progress was undertaken on the planning to host the World Choir Games in July 2024. Work over this period focused on engagement with the Games major partners, including INTERKULTUR, MBIE and Tātaki Auckland Unlimited.

In August, INTERKULTUR (the Games rights holder) published the Participant and Competition Information, which included the 28 competition categories and category descriptions. Choir registrations opened in September, with earlybird registrations closing on 20 September 2023 and final registrations closing on 6 December 2023.

After a second phase of recruitment, Seiuli Terri Leo-Mauu was appointed to the Chor 2024 Ltd Board in October. Through to the end of 2022 Chor 2024 board meetings were held quarterly, with the board moving to bi-monthly meetings from February 2023.

12. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The Covid-19 pandemic posed further challenges to choral activities in 2022 but our organisation and member choirs proved resilient and nimble enough to quickly adapt to the ever-changing environment. NZCF continued to offer advice and support to choirs navigating these challenges, particularly in the first half of 2022. Once again, the importance of choirs as 'communities' was very much in evidence, and as we emerged from the Covid restrictions, there was an even greater appreciation of the joy of being able to sing together.

I want to thank the Governance Board for their ongoing wisdom and advice, with particular thanks to Warwick Harvey (Chair from May 2022), for his unfailing support and the many hours he devotes to NZCF on a voluntary basis.

To end the year with the news that we had won a substantial grant from the Ministry of Culture and Heritage, aimed at ensuring the ongoing health of choral singing in Aotearoa, was a ringing endorsement and acknowledgement of the impact that singing together can have on individual lives, and the value of group singing in NZ society as a whole. This recognition of our artform by MCH reinforces the importance of continuing to pursue our vision of "New Zealand as a singing nation".

Ngā mihi nui



Christine Argyle

Chief Executive

New Zealand Choral Federation

Te Kotahitanga Manu Reo o Aotearoa