

## **Chairperson's Report for 2008-2009 for Neuromuscular Alliance – Muscular Dystrophy Association - Canterbury Branch.**

It has been yet another interesting year for our branch and National Council. At the National AGM last year the existing national councillors were voted out and replaced with members of Muscular Dystrophy Northern in major positions. This meeting was then deemed to be unconstitutional and as a result mediation was held in July 2008. The outcome was that a new National Council was established to bring the organisation through to the next AGM which will be held in Auckland on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> April this year. The national constitution needed to be revised for general purpose use and more importantly for the purpose of registering with the Charities Commission. These amendments were ratified at a special general meeting in Auckland in December 2008.

The Branch and National Office continue to have a strong relationship and regular contact and support through field officer meetings, attendance at a conference in Australia and support for our annual children's and adult's camps. I have participated in a number of National Council meetings as the representative for this branch and the focus of the majority of these meetings has been on the rebranding of the organisation. A review of the organisation was undertaken nationally and some of the outcomes from this review are being implemented. A National Lottery was trialled as a fundraiser and an opportunity to raise much needed funds for our branch. This lottery was not a huge success and will be decided as whether to run again following the appointment of a new Managing Director.

Registration for the "Window on tomorrow" conference which is to held in Auckland May 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> 2009, were inserted in the latest In 'Touch' magazine. Speakers of a very high calibre have been confirmed for this conference so keep these dates free.

As you will all be aware the Christchurch office has moved to Community House 141 Hereford Street.

I once again have the pleasure of thanking Lis for the fantastic support she continues to give to our branch of MDA and its clients. Her work is truly valued by us all and is unmeasurable.

Eris, I thank you for the work you undertake on behalf of the branch and its members and also for picking up the role as branch secretary.

I also take this opportunity to acknowledge the work of our branch treasurer, Philip Austin. Phil has been in this voluntary role now for the past fourteen years and continues to keep us in such a sound financial position. Thank-you Phil.

To maintain our existing level of support to clients we access monies from a number of funding providers and I acknowledge the financial support we receive. I also acknowledge the support of CCS Disability Action, for including Lis and Eris in their family and giving our branch a place to thrive.

Your branch is managed by a small group of members, Vivienne Palmer, Jill Waldron, Earl Mason, John Eban, Phillip Austin, Derek Woodward, Rodger Alexander (ex-officio) and myself, who meet monthly to support Lis and attend to branch matters. It would be great to see new faces on our committee and tonight is an opportunity to put your hand up to support your branch.

As a branch, we offer our condolences to those families who have lost family members, friends and loved ones during the past year.

Thank-you, to all committee members, staff and supporters who have contributed to our branch and made it the year that it has been.

Sue Robinson  
Chairperson  
Canterbury Branch of Neuromuscular Alliance/Muscular Dystrophy  
Association.