

## **Sophie Elliott Foundation Annual Report 2016**

### **Introduction**

This year was intended to be more one of consolidation of what we have been achieving and a considerable reduction in the number of presentations. However, it's very difficult to turn down invitations where there is either direct benefit to the Foundation or opportunities to further spread the message of violence prevention. By year's end we had travelled extensively clocking up some 27 flights covering 15,218kms and driving 2,600kms in rental or borrowed cars. Bill drove my car approximately 7,300kms and together we presented to 4,900 adults and 2,310 students at 59 locations. Getting the message out to over 7,000 people (at an audience average of 122) certainly doesn't look like we slowed down as intended.

On reflection 2016 was a very productive year and further cemented our place as an organisation making a serious impact on family violence prevention.

### **Trustees**

While I get most of the accolades for our achievements I readily point out that this is a team effort and each member of the Sophie Elliott Foundation Board of Trustees plays a pivotal role. I've said before, but it needs repeating, that Bill continues to be my rock. Not once this year has anything gone wrong with our extensive travelling. His planning and attention to detail ensures everything goes smoothly and we are able to maximise each trip away. This year has been difficult as I suffered from a particularly debilitating back complaint and this has put more pressure on Bill as he got me from place to place. But we did it and I owe him a debt of gratitude for literally carrying the extra load.

Not only does Bill manage me he also basically manages the Foundation. I retired from nursing at the end of this year, but up until late November was still working, fitting in travel around this. Bill helped me with all of the correspondence and other requirements to keep up the impetus.

Kristin remains an important member of the team. Despite competing commitments taking her away from her usual level of response to the Foundation, her knowledge of the sector and where we fit in remains valuable.

Heather continues to be our sounding board where it comes to young people and I highly value her advice. The Loves-Me-Not parent film is a good example of Heather's professionalism as a guidance counsellor. Not only did Heather go to extraordinary lengths to get student involvement in the parent film she features in the film giving reasoned and sage advice about the Loves-Me-Not programme.

Joy is a real gem. Looking after our finances isn't easy but Joy provides up-to-date reports so we know exactly what our financial status is. I can honestly say that what Joy did during the year gives me great confidence and I am assured that this side of our Foundation is in safe hands.

Jo resigned from the board early in the year to travel overseas with Volunteer Service Abroad. Her place has been taken by Cheryl Tovizi, an IT specialist, who will advise us on issues relating to our website and other social media applications.

Although not a trustee I value the work of Jessica Todd, a student at the University of Otago. Jess monitors our Facebook page and having a young person in the mix has been a definite advantage.

While talking about our trustees it is appropriate to mention Paula from Markham Clarke Craw who provides accountancy services, and our legal adviser Sally Peart. Bill's wife Olwyn has carried on with her usual high level of typing and for that I am most grateful. The Sophie Elliott Foundation might be headed by me but many people make a huge contribution to our success.

### **Zonta**

Since 2014 our Foundation has been fortunate to be the recipient of the Zonta International District 16 Biennium Project. In mid-2016 I signed a memorandum of understanding with Zonta who voted to support our Foundation for a further two years. This means that we will be able to go on giving away copies of *Loves Me Not* to students attending workshops. This sponsorship goes through until mid-2018 and I am truly grateful for Zonta's help. Feedback suggests the book is well received by students and is proving to be a valuable resource.

### **Parent film**

While we had hoped to have the film available early in the year production and scheduling difficulties meant it couldn't be finished until late this year. However, it is now completed and certainly worth the wait. I need to single out Nigel Latta for his contribution. He has a very hectic schedule with many demands on his time yet he was happy to appear voluntarily in the film and for that I am most grateful. Westpac Bank was our major sponsor to get the film produced and I'm appreciative of their fine gesture.

### **Board meetings**

There were six board meetings that I chaired with Bill recording each one. As is usual there were a variety of challenges to be dealt with but nothing that stretched us. Most of the issues were administrative requirements, but many centred on the further refining and development of *Loves-Me-Not*. Bill negotiated with our publisher, Penguin Random House NZ, to see if they could produce books for Zonta to fund at a lower rate per unit. The publisher was very keen to help by making a substantial reduction in costs. They regard helping the Foundation get books to students an example of their corporate responsibility and I applaud them for what they have done.

### **Fundraising**

This remains an ongoing function but an important one as it enables us to achieve what we do. This year there were two major fundraisers for the Foundation. One was through pledgme which raised \$10,000 to enable us to update our website operating system. While the Sophie Elliott Foundation website content is well regarded by followers the actual operating system is now quite old and in need of an upgrade. The founder of pledgme was a close school friend of Sophie and she undertook to work with Bill to make this happen. I'm amazed that Anna was able to raise the money in such a short time.

During the year we were approached by the president of the Catholic Women's League of New Zealand. Through their 'At Home' appeal the various diocese have been encouraged to raise funds for the Foundation. Bill and I appeared at their annual conference (and at some branch meetings) to talk about our work. It was the league members who voted to have our Foundation recipient of the appeal and I'm humbled that they chose us.

Many organisations throughout New Zealand supported us with donations or fundraising ventures resulting in us being able to make even more quality resources to help educate and empower young people regarding how to keep safe in relationships. I never take for granted the generosity of New Zealanders who want to help us achieve lofty goals.

### **Presentations**

What a year 2016 was. We travelled extensively and have some wonderful memories and met many special people. While we visited less schools than in the past (the programme has largely taken away any need for me to visit schools), I did get to present at a number of influential conferences, each one different but special in their own way.

The following is a summary of some of the presentations throughout the 2016 year

- Craighead Diocesan School - Timaru
- Women's dinner group
- Rural Women NZ workshop
- Zonta 'high tea' engagement - Dunedin
- National Conference of the Royal Federation of New Zealand Justices Association Dunedin
- Presentations to school students and community groups in Whakatane, Te Puke and Tauranga
- Tauranga Moana Abuse Prevention Network
- Te Puke High School
- International Women's Day (Zonata)
- Rotary club - Alexandra
- Hamilton District Court
- Rural Women event - Hamilton
- Rural Women - Richmond
- Rural Health Alliance – Dunedin
- Inner Wheel (women's Rotary organisation)
- Social sector – Gore
- International Nurses Day - Dunedin
- St Peter's College - Cambridge
- Massey University Students Association
- University of Otago
- Police NCOs training day
- Milton Lions club
- Rural Women's group - Fairlie
- Rudolf Steiner School - Christchurch
- St Margaret's College - Christchurch
- Zonta function – Dunedin
- Probus club - Green Island
- National conference of the Catholic Women's League - Christchurch
- Canterbury Education Services
- Diocesan School for Girls - Auckland
- School administrators' conference - Christchurch
- School administrators' conference - Auckland
- School administrators' conference – Wellington

- Catholic Archdiocese of Wellington
- Hon Judith Collins
- Wellington Zonta club
- Canterbury Education Services
- Rotary club in Mosgiel
- Glowing Sky wearable arts and fashion show (fundraiser)
- Nelson Marlborough Health Board professional development meeting - Nelson
- Whangaroa College
- Kaitaia College
- Northland College
- Police training day - Whakapara
- Whangarei Boys' High School
- Russell McVeagh - Auckland
- Catholic Women's League – Southland
- Safe Communities group - Waimakariri
- Perioperative Nurses College conference - Dunedin
- West Coast Primary Health conference
- White Ribbon Day events - Oamaru
- White Ribbon Day events - Christchurch
- Zonta club - Christchurch

I also took part in a film made by Westpac for training purposes around family violence prevention. Well done Westpac for taking this initiative.

And so ended a very busy year.

### **Conclusion**

At the end of 2016 I was finally able to retire from my role as a nurse in the neonatal intensive care unit at Dunedin Public Hospital. After over 30 years in NICU I found this quite emotional and my life changed quite dramatically. I don't think it bothered my voluntary manager because now Bill doesn't have to juggle my travels with my shifts at the hospital. Hopefully having more freedom will allow me to concentrate more on achieving things with the Foundation.

2016 has probably been our busiest and most effective year so far. I must acknowledge the many people, those within the Foundation and the supporters across the country, who have helped make this year the memorable one it has been.

Lesley Elliott MNZM  
Chair: Sophie Elliott Foundation