

The Executive Committee in 2023:

Richard Northey (President), Janet Copsey (Vice-President), Karen Thompson (Treasurer), Amy Malcolm, Eva Tollemache, Rachael Yang, Neil Pollock (co-opted in December) and ex-officio member Jody Clarke and, from April, Shayna McWhirter as the Executive Officer

Membership

The current membership stands at 401 (271 paid memberships and 130 honorary life members) and there is just over \$87,000 in the bank account. Because of the ongoing uncertainty relating to the future of the Society the decision was made not to seek membership renewals for this financial year or to solicit donations in the same period. A soiree on the topic of housing and urban development was planned but it was then decided to concentrate on undertaking research, meetings and discussion about whether the Society would continue. The 2022 AGM and Christmas Party was the only Society event although, through the Society Newsletter, the Ingenio magazine and emails, members were invited to events run by the University. All memberships were extended without extra charge by a year.

Membership feedback

In the previous year the Society Executive surveyed members to learn more about what they valued. Sixty-two responses were received and followed up with phone calls. The most prominent reasons for joining the Society were to keep in touch with what was happening at the University and to stay connected to, and support, the University community. It seemed these roles were generally being fulfilled more effectively by Alumni Relations than by the Society, which lacked an identity for many.

The Executive late in 2022 accepted an offer from some original members who were involved in setting up the Society, or had been active in the earlier Alumni Association, to work with the President and Vice-President on ideas for reinvigorating the Society or, alternately, recommending a successor body to take on any distinct remaining roles of the Society. This was made up of Jack Woodward (who sadly died in March), Gae Griffiths, Peter Hays, Christine Keller Smith and Warwick Nicoll. A number of meetings took place with this group, resulting in well-researched papers and ideas. Initially there was enthusiasm for a renewed Society, but the final outcome was to recommend (a) the winding up of the Society and (b) a strong recommendation that the University establish an Alumni Advisory Group to take on the Society's roles of advocacy, advice and support for the University. I am very grateful for the commitment and thorough work of this group.

Supporting the University Community

The Society contributed \$2500 in student sponsorship, including towards the cash prize for the Three Minute Thesis competition and for the Student Life Support Fund.

Thanks

As in previous years, the Alumni Relations team has provided considerable support to the Society through the Executive Officer, Jody Clarke and, since April, Shayna McWhirter and the Treasurer, Karen Thompson, who holds the position of Associate Director, Alumni Relations and Engagement. My thanks also go to Vice-President Janet Copsey and the other Committee Members Amy Malcolm, Eva Tollemache, Neil Pollock and Rachel Yang for their continued support and dedication to the University of Auckland Society.