



## New Zealand Historical Association

### Annual General Meeting 2024/5

#### Minutes (DRAFT)

## Agenda

Date: 28 February 2025

Time: 11am

Location: Online, via Zoom (please register) [https://waikato.zoom.us/meeting/register/T0\\_FktpaQ\\_Gnlji2mrjiYQ](https://waikato.zoom.us/meeting/register/T0_FktpaQ_Gnlji2mrjiYQ)

- 1) Welcome (Miranda Johnson)
- 2) Apologies
- 3) Minutes of the previous AGM (24 November 2023)  
To be confirmed
- 4) Matters arising from the minutes
- 5) Reports
  - a) President's Report (Miranda Johnson)
  - b) Treasurer's Report (Greg Ryan)
    - i) 2024-25 Budget
    - ii) Subscription increase
    - iii) Motion to increase subscriptions to \$60 (standard) and \$20 (students)
- 6) *NZJH* update (Maartje Abbenhuis)
- 7) Discussion of NZHA/*NZJH* relationship (Miranda Johnson)
  - a) Election of NZHA representative to the *NZJH* Management Board  
Bain Attwood nominated by Charlotte Greenhalgh
- 8) Election of PHANZA representative to the NZHA council  
Amanda McVitty nominated by Rebecca Lenihan
- 9) Conference Progress (Charlotte Greenhalgh)
- 10) Updating the NZHA constitution (Miranda Johnson)
  - a) Working group on values and identity
- 11) General Business
- 12) Date of next meeting: 26 November 2025 (first day of the NZHA conference).

# Minutes

Date: 28 February 2025

Time: 11am

Location: Online, via Zoom

## In attendance

Miranda Johnson (President), Charlotte Greenhalgh (Secretary), Greg Ryan (Treasurer), Rebecca Lenihan (Web Convenor, Minutes), Maartje Abbenhuis (Chair of the *NZJH* Management Board), Neill Atkinson, Bain Attwood, Bettina Bradbury, Barbara Brookes, Linda Bryder, Katie Cooper, Melissa Cross, Raewyn Dalziel, Martin Fisher, Kate Geange, Toby Harper, Aroha Harris, Marguerite Hill, Randolph Hollingsworth, Cybele Locke, Grace Millar, Keri Mills, Carol Neill, Marinus La Rooij, Rowan Light, David Littlewood, Natalie Marshall, Jim McAloon, Amanda McVitty, Ewan Morris, Katie Pickles, Kerryn Pollock, Marianne Schultz, Kate Stevens, Margaret Tennant, Virginia Warbrick, Liz Ward, Cameron Wilkinson, Michael Wynd (Members).

### 1. Welcome (Miranda Johnson)

Noted the meeting is being recorded, not for sharing but for the purposes of creating these minutes.

**Miranda** thanked everyone for attending. Noted we had more than quorum. Thanked everyone for their patience in waiting for the AGM which we had to delay from November 2024, largely due to the kinds of constitutional issues that we were trying to work out. Noted we would have another AGM this year, in person at the conference in November.

Thanked Ewan Morris (PHANZA rep on the council) for his time on the council, and also Madi Williams for her time on the council. Both of them have taken on a lot of service for us and we're very grateful for that. They will both be moving off the council.

### 2. Apologies

Jennifer Frost, Charlotte Macdonald, Kathleen Stringer, Geoffrey Watson, Frances Steel, Malcolm McKinnon, Sam Iti-Prendergast, Felicity Barnes

### 3. Minutes of the previous AGM (24 November 2023)

Minutes accepted as a true and accurate record of the 2023 AGM.

Moved by **Rebecca Lenihan**; seconded by **Barbara Brookes**. Passed.

### 4. Matters arising from the minutes

Nothing raised.

### 5. Reports

#### a. President's Report (Miranda Johnson)

**Miranda** provided a brief summary of the main points of her report:

We set three goals of objectives at the beginning of 2024 - increasing the visibility of the NZHA, increasing out membership, and working with other associations. We've worked hard on all three objectives.

As outlined in the report, our membership is now looking quite healthy. We're at about 219 members, which is quite good for a non-conference year, and we expect that to increase in a conference year.

A number of challenges were highlighted in the report including declining research funding, and job losses across the sector, both in universities and in other areas, and the financial situation of the association itself, which will be discussed further in Greg's financial report, and the challenge of building and sustaining community in this context and in terms of the future of the association.

The report outlined a number of responses we've been making in the face of those challenges, and we'll return to the question of the future of the association and thinking about creating a values and identity statement that would be located in the constitution itself towards the end of the meeting today.

Particularly wanted to emphasise the importance of activation, that we all need to play a part, and that the Executive are happy to receive ideas and work with members on addressing any of these challenges in particular.

Highlighted a new prize, aiming to show our intention to support New Zealand-based historians working in fields other than New Zealand. Sekhar Bandyopadhyay Prize, for an article on areas beyond this archipelago.

Asked if there was anything arising from the President's report that anyone would like to bring up. There was nothing.

**Rebecca Lenihan** moved that the report be accepted; seconded by **Keri Mills**. Passed.

#### **b. Treasurer's Report (Greg Ryan)**

**Greg** provided a brief summary of the main points of his report.

Noted some of the expenditure outlined in the report was quite reasonable - assistance to post-grads and ECRs; paying an EA for work such as the website overhaul and the wonderful newsletter, that have boosted our membership to a very high level for a non-conference year.

Some problematic aspects of the 2023 conference included an administrative fee charged by the University of Canterbury Student's Association that was not value for money.

Possibly if we had increased conference fees to adjust them realistically for inflation the conference would have broken even. That was a decision we made at the time.

However there were some aspects of over-reach in the conference expenditure including things that were committed to such as venues in town that were too much of a stretch.

Lessons learned from that conference, and arrangements for Auckland are on a rather different path.

Significant issue moving forward is that in real terms we have not adjusted our subscription since 2012 and so we are going backwards. Suggestion of a 25% increase in the standard subscription, to follow inflation. Also a question of whether or not we can afford to maintain free membership for students.

Any questions on the report?

**Randolph Hollingsworth** noted she is a former university administrator and was curious about what it was the Exec was expecting of the students at the conference and how did that fall out such that we didn't get what we were expecting? She feels that the money is well spent to support a student group.

**Greg** clarified that the University of Canterbury has an arrangement with the Student Association as a commercial entity whereby the UCSA provides conference services. It is meant to cover administrative fees, space and equipment charges, IT support, and various other things, and there is value in that, but in the end we found that other things that we had thought were part of that agreement were then billed separately, including furniture charges at venues and other things. So if you track back through it, it became questionable as to what value we were getting from \$50 per delegate for a number of things that we either ended up doing ourselves or ended up in some way as extra charges. So it's really that the Students Association is a commercial entity. The University of Canterbury, as many institutions do, seek full cost recovery. So the notion that you will be given a space, for example, in the University to hold your conference because it's good for the academic standing of the institution seems to be long gone in some places. So it's not so much the students. It's the Students Association is as a commercial entity and Conference services.

**Bain Attwood** said he thought it terrific that the Association has been able to increase its membership in these difficult times. Asked if the Association is doing anything to try to get bequests. Noted it is a rather delicate issue, but if the Association is not doing anything about it presently, he wondered if it could give some thought to approaching the more elderly amongst us and seeing whether they're prepared to make bequests either immediately or making provision in their wills.

**Greg** noted that during his 3 terms as NZHA Treasurer he was not aware of any bequests being just randomly given to us, but that he looked enviously towards Australian Sports History where the Society received one bequest in the realm of \$250,000 and 20 years later it is still serving them well. So no, we haven't looked into this, but it is something worth pondering.

**Bain** noted that the alumni section of any NZ University could probably give advice about strategies and ways to approach people. It's probably a medium or long term strategy, but nonetheless worth considering.

**Greg** agreed it should be considered.

**Raewyn Dalziel** asked if Greg could please give more detail on the breakdown between paid members and student members for this current year.

**Greg** noted it is about  $\frac{1}{3}$  students. Tends to be closer to around 40% in conference years.

**Raewyn** noted that in terms of revenue then, asking students to pay something would make quite a significant difference.

**Greg** agreed it would. Not a huge amount of money in some senses, but in terms of the margins that we operate on it is not insignificant, when you look at prizes every second year, and administrative costs.

**Barbara** noted that students probably wouldn't want to pay even \$20 so she'd be in favour of raising the standard membership fee higher and not asking students to pay.

[In Zoom chat **Melissa Cross** agreed with keeping the student subscription free and this was given a thumbs up by **Marguerite Hill**. **Randolph Hollingsworth** also agreed with keeping the student sub free and asked if there was a way to include them more in Association business. **Melissa Cross** noted that the PSA operated on a pro-rata to income basis. This was given a thumbs up by **Marguerite Hill**.]

**Greg** noted that although the recommendation on the subs is embodied in the report, we should move the report one way or the other and then discuss subs.

**Miranda Johnson** moved that the report be accepted; seconded by **Rebecca Lenihan**. Passed.

- i. 2024-25 Budget
- ii. Subscription increase
- iii. Motion to increase subscriptions

**Greg** said he had no firm opinion either way regarding subs. He can see the risk that students might feel that they aren't getting value for a \$20 subscription. So perhaps there is an argument to increase the general subscription, and we are in a stronger position to do that now than we have been, thanks to the strenuous efforts of the rest of the Exec, and we have achieved much greater visibility in the last year. So we can justify this.

**Miranda** noted that other associations in other counties all ask students for some subscription fee.

[In Zoom chat **Keri Mills** asked if we could have waged and unwaged options like many conferences offered. **Marguerite Hill** noted that PHANZA offers waged and unwaged rates. **Melissa Cross** and **Ewan Morris** gave this comment a thumbs up.]

**Jim McAloon** said he was leaning toward no charge for students, and also that many early career researchers have little more money than students do, while some other members are comparatively well paid. So perhaps worth considering a subscription arrangement according to income, which would require a degree of honesty on the part of members, but it might spread the burden a little more equitably.

[In Zoom chat **Neill Atkinson** replied to **Melissa Cross**'s earlier comment regarding the PSA fees being pro-rata to income that the PSA had the benefit of departments directly subtracting membership fees from staff salaries. **Melissa Cross** noted that many pay their PSA sub by automatic payment and a trust model.]

[In Zoom chat **Kerryn Pollock** noted that members in the public sector can have their membership paid by their employer - that is typical at least.]

**Bain** supported Barbara's suggestion regarding free membership for students and that it wasn't worth the risk of losing student members. Also that the increase to standard subs should be greater than what's been suggested.

**Miranda** asked in that case are we proposing an increase of subscriptions to, say, \$70 for a standard sub and maintaining free student subs?

**Bain** said he would suggest an increase in the standard subs to \$100. That most people could afford that, and given the state of the Associations finances.

**Barbara** suggested an increase to \$80 and wished to put that as a motion and keep the student subscription free.

**Bain** seconded that motion.

[In Zoom chat **Marianne Schultz** wrote that \$80 sounded doable.]

**Greg** noted that such a thing can always be reviewed again in November if we were to find there is a cascade of membership downwards, following such a change.

**Miranda** reiterated the **Barbara's** motion that standard subscriptions be raised to \$80, maintaining a free subscription for students.

**Greg** noted that had been seconded.

**Rebecca** asked if there could be an unwaged rate as well.

**Greg** said that he'd seen many organizations do that and asked would an unwaged rate be the same as the current?

[In Zoom chat **Marinus La Rooij** wrote 'Yes for waged and unwaged, as a waged person'. **Marguerite Hill** noted 'PHANZA's unwaged is half the full fyi'. **Grace Millar** wrote 'I think it makes it simple to keep unwaged the same as current'. **Melissa Cross** added 'Students free, unwaged, waged'. **Martin Fisher** wrote 'I support the rise to \$80, \$40 for unwaged and free for students too. This was given a thumbs up by **Kate Stevens** and **Melissa Cross**.]

**Miranda** noted that PHANZA's unwaged rate was half of the full.

**Miranda** put forward the following motion: That the Association's annual subscriptions be amended to \$80 for waged members, \$40 for unwaged, and free for students. Seconded by **Raewyn Dalziel**. Vote in support of the motion passed.

**Greg** noted we will be able to evaluate it in November, because he had held off the general call for subscriptions because of this motion coming up. So we will be able to evaluate the response of this year at least fairly quickly, for the November AGM.

## 6. NZJH update (Maartje Abbenhuis)

**Miranda** asked that discussion relating to Maartje's update be held off until after both items 6 and 7 had been introduced.

The NZHA/NZJH relationship was already required to be discussed at this AGM due to a previous arrangement by a previous exec making a requirement that we would discuss the nature of the relationship in a few years time. So that's partly why that item had been included on the agenda. But the Exec knows there are other issues members are keen to discuss, and Maartje will be addressing some of those in her report.

**Maartje Abbenhuis** introduced herself as a Professor in History at the University of Auckland, speaking at this AGM as the Chair of the Management Board of the *New Zealand Journal of History*. She was appointed to that position in late January, by the head of the School of Humanities, Professor Kim Phillips. Speaking to give a report on the Journal and give an opportunity for members to ask questions about the relationship between the Association and the Journal. Noted there are limits on what she is allowed to say, that she will give a formal response and it will be clear why there are reasons there are some things she can't talk about.

Began by saying that since taking over as Chair she had realised how much the Journal is a labour of love that involves us all in some way as a community of historians that work in and on Aotearoa in various ways. Noted it was clear to her that there was an enormous commitment by everyone to the Journal and to ensuring its future as the flagship journal for the history of Aotearoa.

In her formal statement as Chair of the Management Board Maartje reported on NZJH matters including a commitment to reviewing the journal's terms of reference, asked for a NZHA representative to be elected, and announced it will be seeking EOIs for a new editorial team to begin later this year.

## 7. Discussion of NZHA/NZJH relationship (Miranda Johnson)

**Miranda** thanked Maartje for her report. Emphasized that we want open and respectful debate and to give an opportunity for everyone's comments and observations to be put on the record, if they wish them to be on the record.

Underlined that, as Maartje had already said, the Exec is grateful to everyone involved in this process because it has taken an enormous amount of work already, and particularly grateful to Maartje for presenting today and for the work she's already done for the Journal.

Emphasised that both the NZHA and the NZJH are based on voluntary labour, and that good will and good faith are the primary currency of that form of labour.

Opened up for questions.

**Barbara** thanked the management committee. Noted that when Otago took over the Journal (and she was editor) she contacted Keith Sorensen, one of the initial founders, who made it clear that the founders always believed the journal would move around the country. Barbara also noted that the Journal was always seen to have a relationship with the NZHA as a national organisation, and with academics throughout the country. It wasn't ever always going to be an Auckland institution. This was all also noted in an editorial of the Journal at the time.

**Greg** noted that although that's been the ideal, unfortunately, the terms of reference as they stand as written, do seem to tie many aspects of the Journal to the University of Auckland at the moment.

**Maartje** responded: There is a legal reason why the University of Auckland, who owns the Journal as an asset, which is not a way we like to talk about the Journal, I know, but it is also an asset with costs and liability, and therefore, when the University required us, in order to keep the journal as an Auckland asset, to have a particular structure that included the requirement that at least one of the editors be located in Auckland. Now that is an issue that the Journal needs to revisit. Possibly, but there will be limitations to how much movement the University of Auckland will provide us on that. But that's a conversation that needs to be had. And it's certainly something that when the management board is reconstituted, it can focus on addressing as well.

**Kerryn Pollock** noted she was nervous to speak at this meeting, as the person who wrote the rejected article. She had joined the meeting as she was very interested in what people had to say. She had had a lot of support from members of the organisation but wasn't sure how widespread that support was. Wanted to say that she is in the room during the conversation, and to thank the people who had provided her with a lot of guidance and support prior to approaching *The Spinoff*. Noted she had had absolutely no communication from the Journal, either the Editorial Board or the Editors or anyone else. Has not been kept in the loop, so has no idea what has been discussed, so this would be an illuminating conversation for her.

**Bain** observed that in terms of making changes to the policies and procedures and structure of the Journal it would be useful to keep in mind a comparable example. The *Journal of Australian Historical Studies* is also owned by a university - the University of Melbourne - and the University of Melbourne allows for the editor or editors to belong to universities other than the University of Melbourne. It is able to do that because it protects its interests by having a large number of ex officio members on the Board that oversee the Journal. Hope we can use that example to try to persuade the University of Auckland that it can protect its interests legally without insisting that one of the editors is a member of the staff at the University of Auckland.

**Bain** continued: Secondly, bearing in mind what Kerryn had said about her being out of the loop: The Editorial Board had been unable to meet until about a week ago. It was able to meet as a result of the Management Board no longer having a quorum. A number of members of the Editorial Board moved very quickly to call an Extraordinary meeting of the Editorial Board. By that time, and only at that point, did the Editorial Board become aware of what had happened in terms of the rejection by the Journal of Kerryn Pollock's review. Once they knew and had fuller knowledge of what had happened, the majority of the members of the Editorial Board that attended that meeting - on Monday of this week - were deeply troubled by what had occurred. The meeting was attended by a majority of the members of the Board, and they moved a series of motions.

**Bain** read a few of what he described as being the relevant motions:

The undersigned members of the editorial board of the *New Zealand Journal of History*, acknowledging the commitment of the current editors of the journal and recognising that the weaknesses in the current structures and processes of the journal have played a substantial role in bringing about the crisis of confidence that has befallen the journal, wish to suggest to the

editors that it would be in the best interests of the journal, the discipline of history in New Zealand and the editors themselves, that they step aside from their positions by 30 June 2025; and, in the event that they are willing to act on this suggestion, that they indicate to the chair of the management board of the journal by 4 pm on 27 February 2025 their intention to step down by that date.

**Bain** noted that the Editors had declined to act on that motion.

Anticipating that it might be the case that the Editors would decline to step down, the Editorial Board passed further motions:

The undersigned members of the editorial board of the *New Zealand Journal of History* wish to inform the journal's board of management that the editors of the journal have lost their confidence as a result of their evident lack of good judgement in handling the review of Professor Linda Bryder's book *The Best Country to Give Birth? Midwifery, Homebirth and the Politics of Maternity in Aotearoa New Zealand, 1970–2022* submitted to the journal by Kerryn Pollock.

The final motion passed read:

The undersigned members of the editorial board of the New Zealand Journal of History hereby resign from the journal's editorial board as it is currently constituted as the current editors have lost our confidence because we believe that they seriously mishandled the journal's response to Kerryn Pollock's review of Professor Linda Bryder's book *The Best Country to Give Birth? Midwifery, Homebirth and the Politics of Maternity in Aotearoa New Zealand, 1970–2022* and because we believe they have acted in ways that have damaged the reputation of the journal in the eyes of many of New Zealand's historical community and thereby jeopardised its future.

**Bain** didn't have anything further to add on this subject for the moment.

**Barbara**, referring back to Maartje's response to Barbara's statement, asked Maartje does that mean that we operated the Journal illegally at Otago without knowing it?

**Maartje** replied that she didn't think so. At a certain point the University wanted to be more clear about lines of reporting since the Journal is an asset of the University. But that is something that the Management Board will need to look into in terms of what those lines of reporting are and how they might be managed, and if it could be managed in a way that would allow greater participation in the editorial decision making of other historians across the country.

**Greg** added that the terms of reference may have been updated post-Otago, but he couldn't quite remember the date.

**Maartje** noted that 2023 was the last update of them.

**Greg** clarified that total resignations from the editorial board on this matter amount to nine. Seven were a consequence of the Extraordinary Meeting, and there were two

resignations prior to that, including Greg's own. A tenth member of the Board resigned for other reasons. So of an Editorial Board of 14 it was now down to four.

**Greg** continued noting that the financial relationship between the Association and the Journal (re: the subscriptions being combined) was up for review, and that the NZHA constitution needs to be updated and lodged with Registered Incorporated Societies before March 2026. His view is that if the Journal is committed to a process of restructure, then we should leave some of those matters to the November AGM, because we ought not to write anything in our constitution now about an entity that may change shape.

**Aroha Harris** reiterated a question she had asked at a previous AGM when the relationship between the Association and the Journal was first raised: What are the values of the Journal and what is its vision? Because the NZHA started doing some of that work and she wanted to understand whether the Journal was going to try to be aligned on some of those things. She is asking the question again today because she wonders if structure is really going to prevent a similar thing happening in the future. Or is there something about behaviours, values, attitudes that needs to be addressed as well? Noted that if structure was going to save us from this, it would have saved us already.

**Maartje** agreed with Aroha that, like any organisation that relies on the work of love, and the commitment we all have to history, the Journal requires more than just structure. However it does also need structure for all sorts of reporting and legal reasons. Without adequate representation on the Management Board Maartje is unable to promise anything because she is not speaking for a fully reconstituted Board. So it is important that the NZHA appoints the right person to the Management Board as the Association Rep, who will set in motion a review. Maartje is very committed to doing that, not just about the structure but also on policies, procedures and values. She agrees that is all very important.

**Miranda** noted that there was an agenda item towards the end of the meeting today about NZHA values and identity. The current Exec feels very strongly that if members agree that a relationship with the *NZJH* is to continue in a variety of ways, not only financial but also in terms of how we think about ourselves as a co-produced activity, then the current Exec would encourage whoever takes on the next Exec to continue to develop those ideas with the *NZJH* editors and Editorial Board. We are committed to a much broader kind of process beyond the specific terms of reference.

**Greg** noted that the NZHA constitution has nothing about the values of the Association in this day and age, hence the agenda item later. It is something required to be in the revised constitution before March 2026, quite apart from the fact that it's just something we need to do.

**Raewyn:** Maartje spoke of the University being involved and the University saying certain sorts of things, but the University is people. It looks to me as if there's some very wise heads needed around this issue at the moment to get the Journal back on track, and I am quite surprised at what Bain has told us. I don't know whether that was an open meeting or a closed meeting, but clearly there's a lot of repair work got to go on.

**Raewyn** asked of Maartje: Are you talking to the right people in the University, I mean, does the Board of Management and the Editorial Board who are going to have to deal with these issues. The NZHA has a financial arrangement, and of course the members are obviously interested. But the NZHA, as far as I understand it, doesn't, apart from having someone on the board - and this is a fairly recent event in the long history of the Journal -

it doesn't have a say over the Journal. So this really has to go back to people who are currently involved in the Journal, and maybe you need legal representation to help you sort through these issues. Have you got the right sort of support to deal with this?

**Maartje** agreed and replied that she had been in conversation with University Council, the University Director of Operations, and have taken advice on all the things in order to make sure that the Journal complies with and meets the needs of the University, with what the University wants. They have told her that the Management Board needs to be reconstituted, and once that is done then progress can be made in trying to change, to tighten, clarify, make better, the terms of reference by which the Journal operates, and that is a University of Auckland exercise. But it does require, according to the existing terms of reference, representation from the NZHA directly, and the Management Board consists of 4 or 5 positions, of which one is the NZHA Rep. Currently we don't have an NZHA Rep, which is one of the reasons Maartje is speaking today. And also because she thought it was essential, given that the *NZJH* is such an important part of what the NZHA is able to do, to publish in the academic space. She wanted to give background and clarity about these things.

**Raewyn:** I would suggest that the NZHA leave you to get on with this.

**Maartje:** Well I would be perfectly happy with that. I'm just here to help provide some clarity, because I know there are lots of questions about the *NZJH* going forward. And that's really NZHA's relationship to the *NZJH* going forward. So I'm here to help and to underline how important it is that the NZHA gives the Management Board a rep who can help move us forward.

**Miranda** asked if there were any further questions or comments. There were no further questions or comments.

[In Zoom chat: **Martin Fisher** “Aroha mai I have to go, but I want to thank the exec for their incredible work and Rebecca especially for her wonderful newsletter. The increase in membership is an amazing accomplishment!” This was giving a clapping hands emoji from Aroha Harris.]

#### a. Election of NZHA representative to the *NZJH* Management Board

**Miranda:** The Executive had discussed this at some length and it was their feeling that the person elected to the Management Board would need to be a senior member of the profession given the complexity of the issues involved, and ideally someone with wide ranging experience with Journal and Editorial Boards and so forth. Bain Attwood had been nominated by Charlotte Greenhalgh.

No one else expressed interest in being nominated.

Bain Attwood was nominated by **Charlotte Greenhalgh**. Seconded by **Barbara Brookes**.  
Vote. Passed.

#### 8. Election of PHANZA representative to the NZHA council

Ewan Morris has stepped down from this role on the council. **Miranda** thanked him for his service on the council.

Amanda McVitty was nominated by **Rebecca Lenihan**. Seconded by **Miranda Johnson**.  
Vote. Passed.

## 9. Conference Progress (Charlotte Greenhalgh)

**Charlotte** provided a brief summary of the conference update provided by Felicity Barnes.

Felicity has done a lot of work in organising the essential practical arrangements at Auckland.

Conference 25-28 November at the University of Auckland. He Rau Ringa e Oti ai: Many hands make history.

Will be preceded by an Indigenous postgraduate and ECR wānanga: 'rest, decompress, strategise', held 21-23 November at Mangatoatoa Marae, Kihikihi. Organised by Sam Iti Prendergast with some international collaborators.

Wanted to underline that the Exec and the people working on the conference - that included Keri Mills - are really leaning into our existing efforts to connect with community really broadly and to think about the history community really expansively and to think about inclusivity. Looking at streams dedicated to history teaching, art history, te reo.

Post-grad day as usual, and the new prize that Miranda mentioned earlier which will recognise work done by scholars based here in fields other than New Zealand history.

**Greg:** Felicity has copied me into various exchanges with the conference and events people with the University in terms of venues, insurance, health, safety, other things, and I will say that they are reassuringly sensible and it is relatively uncomplicated as these things can be, so that is a very good sign. We are dealing with some decent and unambiguous people on that side which is always good in this day and age of dealing with University bureaucracies.

No further questions or comments.

## 10. Updating the NZHA constitution (Miranda Johnson)

### a. Working group on values and identity

**Miranda:** As Greg has intimated, we are needing to do work on the constitution because of legal requirements of the Incorporated Society Act.

**Greg:** The revisions to the Incorporated Societies Act basically require us to launch a new and updated constitution by 26 March 2026 which needs to include such things as dispute resolution clauses. Quite a lot of it can be assembled off the convenient constitution builder, with other parts that are specific to what we do. This update is a legal requirement to maintain a registration. The constitution hasn't been updated since 2015.

**Miranda:** Also an opportunity for us to take a larger view on the constitution of the Association, and to think about a values and identity statement for the Association. Proposing a working group to discuss what that kind of statement might look like, to be presented to the AGM in November and discussed there. These kinds of issues have come up at a number of AGMs over the years, especially in the last 5 to 6 years, and we're trying to build some momentum around those discussions.

**Miranda** outlined some possibilities such a working group should consider include:

- Commitments to indigenous members and to indigenous history and to tikanga.
- The name of the association itself, which has been one issue that has been raised a number of times.
- How do we imagine the NZHA in, say, 10 years time? Who will it comprise, and who do we aim to represent? What issues and challenges may it be facing, then, to try and connect ourselves to a future as well as to the Association's wonderful past.

**Miranda** asked if anyone wanted to suggest ideas around such an identity and value statement here, or if anyone had any initial thoughts around that. Or if anyone wanted to volunteer right now for a working group.

**Barbara** noted that we've often discussed but never implemented a code of ethics for historians, and wondered if that could be part of the discussion.

[In Zoom chat: **Ewan Morris** said PHANZA has a code of ethics. **Keri Mills** noted that NOHANZ does too.]

[In Zoom chat: **Kerryn Pollock**: Kia ora koutou, I have to leave to prepare for another meeting. Thank you to Maartje & Bain for sharing useful information on NZJH matters.]

**Barbara**: I'm interested in this identity thing. Is it about the identity of the profession and what it does, or how are we thinking of it, or how are you thinking of it?

**Miranda**: It is a big question, and we'll need to work out some parameters for asking and answering it. For example it has become clear this year how much the Association had become focussed on those working on New Zealand history. At its inception the Association was for historians working in New Zealand on a variety of fields. A code of ethics is a really good idea. Something the working group could work on.

**Barbara**: But are we thinking about the discipline and the identity of the discipline, which is what the NZHA seems to me to be about.

**Miranda**: Yes, which raises the question of who our membership is. Increasingly, our membership is not only academic historians given how few of us are left. So need to think about language that will help us to think about history as a discipline, and also about history in other spaces. That is some of the work we've been doing in building associational relationships and relationships with public history groups and archives, libraries, groups working in family history and all sorts of other areas.

**Barbara**: I certainly applaud that, and I think it's essential for the Association to build those lines. So thank you for the work you've done.

**Bain** agreed it was a very good idea to be thinking of these matters. Agreed with Barbara that it is essential to ensure that the Association formulate an ethics statement. These are common in other disciplines. Anthropologists on both sides of the Tasman have had these statements for 30 or 40 years. Crucial that the Association develops one. Suggested Barbara would be an excellent addition to such a working group, and also volunteered himself.

**Aroha** asked can we have a more detailed indication of what the subcommittee will consider? Something along the lines of a terms of reference for want of a better term?

**Miranda** replied that that is what she was hoping to initially generate. That it would be extremely helpful if people had thoughts on what those terms of reference should include. Asked Aroha if she had some ideas on what should be included.

**Aroha** replied that a couple of things have already been said, for example a detailed review of the constitution. Addressed Greg, noting that it has been updated since 2015.

**Greg** replied that there may have been tweaks. However it is certainly not compliant in terms of the legislation. The Constitution builder includes things around dispute resolution. Certainly no version of the NZHA constitution has any species of comprehensive values.

[In Zoom chat: **Rebecca Lenihan** shared the link to the current NZHA constitution: <https://nzha.org.nz/about-the-nzha/nzha-constitution/>]

**Aroha** replied that that is correct, but she can remember being in meetings since 2015. For example, a change regarding the reporting re: accounting requirements.

**Greg** replied Yes, sorry. You're right. It changed in around 2021/22. We changed the financial year reporting to 30 June, and there were other tweaks. These were helpful, but while working through the Constitution builder from Incorporated Societies Greg noted a huge gap where our statement of values should be. He remembered the conversation at the 2021 AGM very clearly, and thought the following executive, of which he was a part, should have moved this forward then, but such is life.

**Miranda** suggested that perhaps one of the terms of reference could be that the working group would go back through some of the previous discussions that we have recorded in the minutes of this, for helping to shape a values and identity statement. Asked Aroha if that would meet some of what Aroha was thinking about.

**Aroha** replied that the point was making sure that the committee has all the documents they should have in front of them, and that they're up to date.

**Miranda** replied that we are trying our best. We have most of the minutes from previous AGMs, although there may be a couple of holes, but we can certainly go back through the last decade.

**Bain** suggested that having a very broad terms of reference would avoid the group feeling confined by a very specific terms of reference. Perhaps something along the lines that the task of the working group is to consider history in the broadest possible sense, as a discipline, as a practice, as a profession, as a discourse, rather than trying to develop terms of reference ahead of actually having the discussions of the group itself. And to look back at what the association has discussed in the past. Noted that he hoped that following a meeting like this, that anybody who's on the working group would have a sense of what members are looking for.

**Miranda:** We can certainly outline the different resources that will be available for the working group.

**Aroha** asked that it be upfront and distributed - a no surprises approach.

**Miranda** agreed and said we could aim to give two updates via the newsletter prior to the November AGM. Shared Google folders could be used by the working group and add people to that as they wish to be added in.

**Greg** noted that his reference to November was only to the requirement to have the new constitution in place and that the AGM is the logical place to do it. Agreed that discussion in all forms leading up to what we might draft for the Constitution is essential.

**Barbara** thanked Rebecca for the link to the current constitution on the NZHA website. Noted that one of the matters is access to archive and other record collections, and that that should clearly be retained and strengthened given the current crisis with the restructuring of the National library, the Turnbull and Archives New Zealand. She is president of the Friends of the Turnbull, and they've been very active about that. It's a really important role for the organization.

[In zoom chat: **Marinus La Rooij**: Also the reduced services at Auckland Public and other places]

**Miranda** noted the NZHA had just signed [ARANZ president] Richard Foy's open letter concerning this, too. I feel like we've got a good relationship now with ARANZ as well.

**Barbara** replied that's excellent. I saw that letter today. I met with one of the politicians today and I'm meeting with others next week.

**Miranda** thanked Barbara.

**Miranda**: Well, don't be surprised to see an email in your inboxes from me soliciting voluntary contributions to this working group. If there's no other questions or comments on that, we'll move on.

[In zoom chat: **Marguerite Hill**: Thank you everyone for your hard mahi. I have to leave but appreciate the updates.]

## 11. General Business

Nothing raised.

## 12. Date of next meeting: 26 November 2025 (first day of the NZHA conference).

**Miranda** closed the meeting noting that we are having the next AGM at the beginning of the conference rather than at the end, hoping to maximise the energy from everyone before they were too exhausted and that she was looking forward to seeing many of the members present in this meeting there.

Encouraged members to keep emailing or sending thoughts through that may arise after this meeting. Acknowledged that often things occur to you once meetings close down. Happy to receive any and all comments.

First newsletter for this year out next Friday, and will continue through the year, and we hope with the next Exec as well.

In the meantime, thank you from all of us for coming along to the meeting today and for all your input.

[In zoom chat: **Barbara Brookes**: I would like to thank the Ex for all their excellent work on our behalf. **Randolph Hollingsworth**: Thank you. **Marianne Schultz**: Thank you. Ngā mihi. **Cybele Locke**: Ngā mihi ki a koutou. **Margaret Tennant**: Thank you all.]

**Meeting closed at 12:24pm**