Annual Report 1999
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Mission
The Australian & New Zealand College of Mental Health Nurses provides professional leadership and encourages excellence in mental health nursing by:

- promoting a positive identity for the profession
- encouraging unity within the profession
- promoting best practice in mental health nursing education and training
- promoting the development of best practice in nursing care
- facilitating partnerships between mental health nurses and consumers, carers, indigenous people and other stakeholders in mental health.

Objectives of the College
The College seeks to:

- promote public confidence and professional recognition of mental health nursing
- set standards of practice and encourage professional accountability, autonomy and partnership
- provide a forum for collegial support, networking and collaboration
- provide support and quality education and ongoing professional development
- develop and facilitate research into mental health nursing practice and health care
- represent the profession and provide advice to consumer and carer agencies, the government and non-government sector, community groups and the general public
- participate in policy development concerning the profession, health care delivery, promotion of mental health and prevention of mental illness and disability.

Contacting the College

Australia
PO Box 126, Greenacres SA 5086
Web site: www.healthsci.utas.edu.au/nursing/college/
ANZ-PSYCH: anz-psych@postoffice.utas.edu.au

New Zealand
PO Box 83–111, Edmonton Road, Auckland, New Zealand
Web site: www.voyager.co.nz/~anzcmhn/index.html
At the closing of the last chapter of the millennium, we are also celebrating the 25th year since the foundation of the College. This may not seem a very long time, but having only recently returned from London, where the International Council of Nurses (ICN) was celebrating their 100th anniversary, it was apparent to me that the College globally is still one of only a handful of national professional bodies within the specialist field of psychiatric/mental health nursing.

The College, however, is the only such body operating across and representing two countries, and within the nineties particularly has established a reputation as a leading force internationally within this vital field of nursing and health care. The ICN Centennial conference in July 1999 was attended by more than 4,500 nurses worldwide and had a technical program in excess of 800 papers. Mental health was one of four clinical fields of nursing that were given special attention. This should come as no surprise, since mental illnesses and particularly depression are predicted by the World Health Organisation to be a leading burden of disease in our world by the year 2020. Already, studies are revealing that the years lost due to disability from a mental illness within many societies exceeds that of other illnesses responsible for the highest mortality rates such as heart disease and cancer. All of us have witnessed the debilitating affects of mental illness and the social disadvantage that accompanies it. There can be no doubt in our minds, from our experience, and the evidence, of the need for care.

Twenty-five years ago, a now distinguished group of mental health nurses came forward with their vision, and throughout the eighties and nineties mental health nurses in both Australia and New Zealand have been keeping that vision alive and adding their special touch to bring us to where we are today. The voice and work of the College today, and not merely the struggle for survival, recognition, and that we continue to exist, is a fitting tribute to the many active members within our profession, past and present.

I represented the College at the ICN conference, and was fortunate to meet mental health nurses from many countries. I was proud to see a significant number from the College within our midst presenting, and in a position to ensure that the College was present and visible to the broader nursing community. Many nurses from around the world visited us at the Royal College of Nursing exhibition stand. Thanks to the assistance of many of our colleagues, we were able to share the College’s vision and work with those who expressed interest, many from countries who did not have the networks and resources the College provides, that we sometimes overlook or take for granted. This also reminded me not only of what we had achieved over the years, and not without struggle and disappointment, but that this had been accomplished exclusively on the voluntary time, energy and expertise of dedicated officers and members of the College. This has been both our strength and weakness. As we grow in membership, as we are doing, we may not have much longer to wait before we reach the critical mass to put staff onto the payroll. When we do this, I am confident we will be able to secure the future, and function even more efficiently. There is still much to do if we are to continue building the profession – building a profession where the heart and minds of its members are focused on setting standards, promoting exemplary
knowledge, skills and attitudes, and providing better care for people with mental illnesses as well as services to the community. We can be sure we will be making the difference; in the workplace when nurses are consistently and adequately prepared for mental health nursing practice; when increasing numbers of graduates start to enter the mental health workforce; when it is commonplace for our colleagues to express optimism and enthusiasm in the workplace; when we value and promote the interests of the mentally ill, consumer outcomes, and the work practices that support these things; and when we can assure others of the standards, ethics, and qualities that define mental health nursing. I believe it is these things that led to the foundation of the College and continue to drive it today.

I trust the activities of the past year reported here in the 1999 annual report will in the most part reflect this journey. I therefore thank all those who have given freely of their time to support the activities of the College in the past year, contributors here, our office bearers, Council and especially the hard working executive, Scott Fanker, Jacky Talmet, and Bob Weaver, without whom the wheels simply wouldn’t have turned. I am now concluding my two-year term of office and wish the newly appointed president and Council our fullest support and a successful passage into the new millennium and beyond.

Jon Chesterson
President

Executive Report

Branch Presidents, the Board Directors and Office Bearers describe the activities of the College over the past year throughout the 1999 annual report. Therefore, this report has been confined to summarizing and highlighting key issues and initiatives.

College Council has met on two occasions and the executive once, face to face since September last year. Our year commenced with the conclusion of another highly successful international conference on mental health nursing in Fremantle, WA thanks to the commitment and hard work of the convenor, Rosalie Van Aiken, the WA Branch President Liz Marsh, the conference organizing committee, and our hosts, the WA Branch. It is worth noting that once again, feedback has indicated both from within the College and overseas, that we continue to convene an annual conference of the highest standard for the dissemination of practice through the technical program, networking, social programming and conference organisation.

During the year and of particular note was the value and success of the Executive’s visit to New Zealand in April 1999 which coincided with the New Zealand Branch Annual General Meeting. The Executive was in Wellington at the time of the AGM that was conducted by teleconference. In addition to meeting with our hosts in both Wellington and Auckland, we also met with the Director and staff of the New Zealand Mental Health Commission, an independent statutory body that advises and monitors national mental health policy and service providers in New Zealand. This visit was vital in continuing to build a meaningful partnership between our two countries, opening up new dialogue, and
working on some previously unresolved issues. We all came away with a sense of the collaborative spirit and partnership that underpins the growing force of the College in the closing years of the nineties.

The Mental Health Council of Australia (MHCA) elected its inaugural Board in October last year. The College has a seat on the Board alongside mental health consumers, carers, key national non-government organizations, other mental health disciplines, and now two State Peaks from NSW and WA. Now that the constitution of the MHCA has been accepted, the organisation incorporated, and funding secured from the Commonwealth, the day to day business has begun. Des Graham has been appointed as the CEO and a secretariat established. The MHCA is the independent national peak body for the mental health sector, and has already assumed responsibility for one Commonwealth funded project for the next three years involving the future coordination of World Mental Day and National Mental Health Week. The MHCA has established its national office in Canberra.

In February the College forwarded its submission for the proposal to establish an Institute for Mental Health Nursing to the Mental Health Branch of the Commonwealth Department for Health and Aged Care. This in-depth proposal was the culmination of more than six months work and consultation with an international steering committee, and the written support of the American Psychiatric Nurses Association. The Commonwealth has written to acknowledge its receipt of the proposal and has commented on the quality and comprehensiveness of the submission. The proposal seeks approximately $2.5 million over five years to establish an Institute under the auspices of the College. The Institute would aim to develop mental health nursing research, evidence-based practice, accreditation of courses and credentialling of mental health nurses in collaboration with other key stakeholders. Early indications have been given that the submission will be brought before the AHMAC Mental Health Working Group in September for initial consideration. While it is hoped that funding might be earmarked out of the Second National Mental Health Plan, other funding sources will probably need to be investigated, and the College will need to do some serious promotion and lobbying to increase the potential of a positive outcome.

In June 1999, the College signed a $50,000 contract with the Mental Health Branch of the Commonwealth Department for Health and Aged Care to conduct a national scoping study on mental health nursing in collaboration with Curtin University of Technology, WA. The project consultants Professors’ Michael Hazelton and Clinton have been travelling throughout Australia, consulting and collecting data in association with the project, which is to be reported to the Commonwealth in November 1999. The College has established a steering committee for the duration of the project.

The report on the credentialling of mental health nurses commissioned last year by the Nurses Board of Tasmania has been submitted and approved. The report, prepared by Dr Mike Hazelton and Dr Gerry Farrell on behalf of the College in association with the University of Tasmania School of Nursing, is currently being presented by the Nurses Board with their recommendations to the Minister for Health in Tasmania. One key recommendation is a collaborative partnership between the Nurses Boards and the College.
in planning and implementing the credentialling of mental health nurses in Tasmania over the next three years. This could be a pivotal step towards the introduction of professional self regulation or self-governance for mental health nursing at a national level in both Australia and New Zealand.

This year also sees the publication of a unique 25 year history of the College to commemorate the silver jubilee in September. The College commissioned an historian, Philippa Martyr in late 1998 to write the history based on examination of College archival records, interviews and enquiries. This limited edition publication is being launched at the 25th annual conference in Tasmania in September along with the College’s third research monograph on the subject of ethics.

The College journal continues to grow in circulation, reports our publishers, Blackwell Science, and marks Professor Mike Hazelton’s first year as the new editor. The final edition of the millenium will be in December. The College’s web sites and ANZ-PSYCH in association with the University of Tasmania are being visited, accessed and used extensively. Both the College and the New Zealand Branch homepages are being visited well over 300 times per month. ANZ-PSYCH has generated considerable interest and debate between members of the profession. It is now very much alive as a voice and network for mental health nurses after two years of operation.

Mental Health Nurses have now had professional indemnity and legal representation available to them for two years through Guild Insurance at highly attractive and competitive rates for members. The College has this year also taken out corporate cover for professional indemnity and public liability.

Membership has continued to steadily grow to approximately 1,600 members out of a total workforce pool of around 10,000 in Australia and 1,600 in New Zealand, representing a little under 15% of full potential. While this may seem low to some, it is in fact consistent with and in many cases represents a higher proportion than other equivalent professional and specialist nursing organizations. This figure could grow substantially over the next two years, particularly if supported with a national and local marketing strategy. The College has made substantial improvements this year in membership renewals, and servicing new members, and the College has renewed its contract with Jan Properjohn & Associates for the provision of the membership secretariat.

Janssen-Cilag continued their generous sponsorship of regional professional development programs well into 1999 with seminars and clinical supervision training in the ACT and NSW.

Within New Zealand, the process for the review of our standards of practice has commenced, along with the development of a research proposal to conduct a validation study on the clinical indicators.

The College is also establishing a Board of Clinical Practice this year, one task of which will be to assume responsibility for the regular review of these Standards of Practice for Mental Health Nursing.
The College Research fund is being launched this year as part of the silver jubilee, given that it has now reached a level to administer a small research grant on an annual basis without eroding the fund’s capital. This is consistent with the College’s intention and response to the issue raised at last year’s AGM.

Financial statements may be found elsewhere in the annual report, which nevertheless show that the College has continued to benefit from sound and careful financial management.

Overall the College is well placed for the future with the support of membership, and it is perhaps with anticipation that we look to the immediate year ahead – the year 2000.

Jon Chesterson, President  
Jacky Talmet, Vice-President  
Scott Fanker, Executive Officer  
Bob Weaver, Treasurer

Scoping Study of Mental Health Nursing in Australia

In May of this year the Australian and New Zealand College of Mental Health Nurses Inc. was contracted by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care to undertake a “scoping” study of the mental health nursing workforce in Australia. In broad terms, the study aims to address issues influencing the quality and quantity of the mental health nursing workforce in Australia, and issues concerning education and training of nurses both at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. The project has a completion timeline of October/November 1999, when the project report and associated recommendations will be submitted to the Australian Health Ministers’ Advisory Committee (AHMAC) National Mental Health Working Group.

Curtin University of Technology in Western Australia is assisting with the project; specifically, Michael Clinton and Mike Hazelton have been retained as the project’s consultants. Additionally, a Steering Committee, which comprises consumer representation and representation from the various streams of mental health nursing (academic, clinical and management), is overseeing the study. The Steering Committee is as follows.

- **Professor Michael Clinton**, Director, Centre for Nursing Research and Development, School of Nursing, Curtin University of Technology, Project Consultant.
- **Associate Professor Mike Hazelton**, School of Nursing, Curtin University of Technology, Project Consultant.
- **Scott Fanker** (Chair), Clinical Nurse Consultant and Senior Lecturer, Bankstown Health Service and University of Western Sydney, Macarthur, Executive Officer and New South Wales Branch President, ANZCMHN.
- **Helen Connor**, Helen Connor & Associates, Queensland, Interim Chair, Australian Mental Health Consumer Network.
- **Dr Kim Usher**, Head of School, School of Nursing, James Cook University, Queensland Councilor, ANZCMHN.
• Associate Professor Gerry Farrell, Head of School, School of Nursing University of Tasmania, Director, Board of Research, ANZCMHN.

• Dr Brenda Happell, Senior Lecturer and Associate Head of School (Research and Higher Degrees), School of Postgraduate Nursing, University of Melbourne, Director, Board of Education, ANZCMHN.

• Irene Henley, Team Leader, Eastern Community Mental Health Services, Adelaide South Australia Secretary, SA Branch, ANZCMHN.

The study is utilizing a “mix-and-match” methodology, which includes consultation with identified stakeholders in each state and territory. A large stakeholder “pool” has been identified, including the following.

• Commonwealth and state/territory mental health departments
• Chief Nursing Officers in each jurisdiction
• Registering bodies
• Public- and private-sector service providers
• Consumers and carers
• Universities
• Branches of the ANZCMHN
• Other professional groups (both within and outside of nursing)
• Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs
• Consultation with practicing nurses
• Consultation with undergraduate and postgraduate nursing students

The Scoping Study of Mental Health Nursing in Australia is significant for (at least) two reasons. First, the study will provide substantive data in relation to issues affecting the current and future status of the mental health nursing workforce in Australia. To this extent the study will provide a basis for informed decision-making, say, by government, the higher education sector and employers, in respect of the mental health nursing workforce, particularly in terms of recruitment, retention, education and training. Second, and importantly, the study represents an important ‘first’ for the College. The Scoping Study is a measure of the fact that, increasingly, the College is regarded as having the necessary credibility, infrastructure and ‘talent’ to undertake funded consultancies of this type. This augurs well for the College’s future capacity to compete for strategically significant and/or revenue-generating consultancies.

Scott Fanker, Executive Officer
South Western Sydney Area Health Service
and University of Western Sydney, Macarthur
Financial Report from the Treasurer

1 July 1998 to 30 June 1999

This Report is yet to be audited. A full audited Treasurer’s Report will be tabled at the College AGM in September 1999 in Launceston, Tasmania.

The main areas of College income were:
- Membership $146,481.02
- College convention $23,519.00

Other areas of income growth are:
- Bank interest $9,002.59 (this year)
- Sales of College publications $9,662.50 (this year)

Discussion

Membership has increased by $2,000.00 from last year. College Convention is down $20,000.00 from last year. Bank Interest: although bank interest is low, our nest egg (Research Fund) is continuing to grow and therefore earning interest on more money. An increase of $3,000.00 from last year.

Sales of College publications have increased by $4120.00 due mainly to the College Benchmarking Program. Sponsorship: this year the major sponsorships from drug companies went directly to Branches to run day conferences.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Income</td>
<td>$ 188,912.63</td>
<td>$ 208,874.64</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Expenses</td>
<td>$ 178,109.12</td>
<td>$ 106,122.90</td>
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<tr>
<td>Net Income</td>
<td>$ 10,803.51</td>
<td>$ 102,751.77</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Areas of increase in expenses are travel. Due to the College Executive travelling to New Zealand to meet with the New Zealand Branch members and the additional costs of flying to Fremantle for the Council meeting.

The College Council has gone to great lengths to ensure that air travel is purchased well in advance, and at the lowest rates. Much of this work has been carried out by Goodwood Travel in South Australia, with thanks to Michael Wunderlich.

Board of Education: increase in meeting cost. Postage: increase in posting new member kits. Consultancy: the College has increased in external consultancy this year. Honoraria: an increase reflects the number of honorary positions within the College as we continue to grow. This increase has been paid in kind, that is airfare, registrations and accommodation.

A word of thanks to the College Executive who have gone to great lengths to ensure that we run within budget. Thank you also to Geoff Dulhunty in his role as College Print Coordinator, who is always on the lookout for the best printing deal for the College.

**College Research Grant:** As has been announced during our 25th Convention the launch of this award will occur following our 26th Annual Convention in Brisbane 2000. The $200,000.00 Research Fund is made up of $150,000.00 Research and $50,000.00 College funds. The College Council is committed to building up the Research monies to $200,000.

This Research Grant Award is an exciting financial development for the College and our ‘members’. It was only in 1991 with a $9,000.00 grant from Squibb Modecate that the Research Fund was launched. A hearty thanks to those College members and Branches who have contributed. We also acknowledge the NSW Health Department for it’s $25,000.00 contribution. Donations are gratefully received.

**Professional Membership Services:** The services of Jan Properjohn & Associates are a welcome relief to the College executive. (PRD) Payroll deductions and direct debit payments are now centrally located. One has to wonder how College members did this job. Thank you to Deslee Jessie, Alan Hall and Chris Hattan for your many hours of unpaid work.

The Chartered Accountant firm of Witt Mairs & Woods is nominated to audit the College accounts and books for the year 1July 1999–2000.

My thanks to the College Council who I assure you, work very hard to ensure that ‘members’ money’ is well managed. My personal thanks to the College executive, Chris Hattan, College Assistant Registrar and Treasurer and Bob Zarb (College accounts, data entry and computer whiz) without whose help my job would be even more difficult.

**The College Finances as at 30 June 1999**

<table>
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<th>Account</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Cheque working account</td>
<td>$14,044.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research account</td>
<td>$185,812.14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project accounts (total)</td>
<td>$52,682.78</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$252,539.31</strong></td>
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The College continues to have a healthy financial base. I hope that this form of Financial Reporting is of assistance to College members. Looking forward to catching up with you all at our 25th Convention and Jubilee Celebration in Launceston Tasmania in September 1999.

_Bob Weaver_  
_College Treasurer_  
_12 August 1999_
Kaiwhakahaere Report

Mihimihi

Tena koutou katoa. My name is Tio Sewell; this is my first report to membership as Kaiwhakahaere. Tena ra koutou katoa.

Current Year

This past year has seen the appointment of a new Kaiwhakahaere following the withdrawal of Iona Edmonds. Iona has been the inaugural Kaiwhakahaere representing Maori membership since the inception of this role in 1994. She has been responsible for cementing the role into the college culture and ethos, both here in Aotearoa and Australia.

Current National New Zealand office holders and Maori committee membership comprise:

• Kaiwhakahaere – Tio Sewell; Tainui, Ngati Maru, descent. Tio is employed as a practicing Maori mental health nurse in Rotorua.
• National Committee membership (Maori) Lin Morrison Ngatai. Lin is of Te Arawa, Kahungungu, and Tainui descent. From Rotorua, Lin brings over a decade of mental health experience.
• Laurie Hakiwai who is of Kahungungu descent, currently practices as a nurse manager in Whakatane. Laurie has been a committee member since 1996.

Maori Committee has caucused with Maori membership in Waikato, Te Arawa and Mataatua over the past year. Maori caucus is a formalization of Maori participation within the College branch and provides a forum where by issues relevant to Maori can be discussed and progressed. Maori caucus has been a significant development over the past 18 months, providing support to Maori, College membership.

Relations are being nurtured outside of caucus through continued liaison with other Maori nurses groups such as, National Council of Maori Nurses, and Aotearoa College of Nurses, Maori membership. Acknowledgement at a College level of the position of Kaiwhakahaere as Tiriti partner has seen a significant movement towards fostering partnership between Australia and New Zealand. The hard work of Iona Edmonds is again, here in acknowledged. Constitutional amendments ensuring both constitutions are consistent with the above position, is the next step, towards ensuring full participation and partnership by Maori within the College.

This raises for the college, issues for our Australian partner, and the importance of forging relationships with the indigenous people of that land as imperative. College council has expressed commitment to develop links at national, state and local levels with 'Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islander People'. Towards this end, it has been encouraging to hear of the Northern Territory experiences and nursing stories along this journey.

Where Have We Come From?

Te Tiriti o Waitangi, the positions of Kaiwhakahaere and National Committee membership (Maori), are embraced and given life through the 1994 NZ Branch constitution; sections
9, 12 and 17. The branch objectives; sections 3.1.5 state, in part, that the branch will ‘…promote the development of nursing codes of ethics, education, practice which encompasses the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and kawa whakaruruhau (cultural safety). Section 3.1.6 states, that the branch will in addition ‘…approve’ (and by inference monitor) ‘national standards of practice consistent with New Zealand’s unique social, cultural and political conditions...’

Publication of the New Zealand branch ANZCMHN standards of practice for mental health nurses 1995, require that ‘mental health nurses within the NZ branch incorporate the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi into their practice. The tiriti principles of partnership, protection, participation and tino rangatiratanga (self-determination) are here in highlighted as fundamental for mental health nursing practice in Aotearoa today.

**So What Does This Mean?**

The last few years have seen increased development of kaupapa (Maori specific) services across mainstream services. In addition, Iwi, towards a vision of total integrated health care for Maori, are breaking down barriers between secondary mental health and primary health services through the development of community based Maori Well Health Clinics.

Recent research undertaken in Rotorua, with Maori mental health service users and whanau to explore expectations of mental health and service provision concluded a growing view of ‘Maori faces for Maori cases in Maori places’ (Dyall, Bidois, Gurney & Hawira, 1998). Appropriate services for Maori would by definition, therefore include whanau participation, cultural assessment, Maori language and custom, and access to elders, traditional healers, and Marae. All are viewed as imperative to Maori recovery.

It becomes evident that, mental health nurses in Aotearoa, need to examine their current philosophy and practices, in relation to community expectations, especially Maori realities and notions of well being. One way of doing this is to forge nursing partnerships that permit choice in relation to gender, age and culture specific nursing specialisation and care.

Therefore, issues for mental health nursing identity within Aotearoa, requires consideration of the branch standards and in particular the relationship to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, which will in turn, shape nursing best practice, there by securing a place for mental health nurses beyond the new millennium. Finally I would like to thank Maori caucus and national committee for their support over the past year as well there input towards this report.

*Tio Sewell*
*Kaiwhakahaere*
Council and Office Bearers of the College, 1998–1999

College Council

College President
Jon Chesterson
Vice President and Councilor (SA)
Jacky Talmet

Executive Officer
Scott Fanker
Treasurer
Bob Weaver

Kai Whakahaere
Tio Sewell
Councilor (VIC)
Steve Elsom

Councilor (ACT)
Steve Hartnett
Councilor (NZ)
Kate Prebble

Councilor (NSW)
Dennise Allen
Councilor (NT)
Denise Gilchrist

Councilor (QLD)
Kim Usher
Councilor (TAS)
Cecily Pollard

Councilor (WA)
Liz Marsh

College Office Bearers

Journal Editor
Dr Mike Hazelton
Censor in Chief
Geoff Dulhunty

Director, Board of Research
Dr Gerry Farrell
Director, Board of Education
Dr Brenda Happell

College Membership Secretariat
Jan Properjohn & Associates
Assistant Registrar/Treasurer (NZ)
Chris Hattan

Stan Alchin Award Coordinator
Dr Eimear Muir-Cochrane
Public Officer
Pat Bradley

Newsletter Editor
Sandra Hoot
Journal Editor’s Report

The Australian & New Zealand Journal of Mental Health Nursing (ANZJMHN) had a change of editorial team in 1999. Associate Professor Mike Hazelton took over as Editor from Professor Michael Clinton, from Volume 8, Number 1 (March 1999). The change of editorial team produced some delays in reviewing and processing articles for the Journal earlier in the year, but these difficulties had been overcome by the middle of the year and the production schedule is up to date at the time of this report (i.e. the September and December 1999 editions are finalized and work is underway for the March 2000 edition).

There is no doubt that interest in the ANZJMHN continues to grow, both locally and internationally. Up to date, details from our publisher Blackwell Science Asia indicate that the Journal homepage is now averaging well over 500 ‘hits’ per month (mainly on the current contents section), and the Journal now goes to subscribers in Greece, Hong Kong, Iceland, Ireland, Japan, Malaysia, the Netherlands, Sweden, the UK and the USA, in addition to Australia and New Zealand. In 1998, in a climate of ever-increasing cuts to library budgets, the ANZJMHN increased its non-ANZCMHN member subscriptions by 6.5% (now up to over 130).

The June 1999 edition of the Journal outlined a number of new initiatives to be introduced over the next few years. These include: occasional guest editorials, the first of which will occur in the December 1999 edition; and the publishing of one special thematic issue per year. The first of these will be published in September 2000, on the theme of Education and Training for the Mental Health Professions. While these are exciting initiatives, much remains to be done in advancing the standing of the Journal. In particular, it is clear that the Journal is still not managing to engage the majority of mental health nurses engaged in the delivery of clinical nursing services. Improving this situation must be a major priority over the next few years.

The ANZJMHN nowadays has achieved an enviable reputation as a high quality professional publication. Much of the credit for this rests with Professor Clinton and his editorial team who worked hard to establish the Journal as a fully refereed publication. It is also important to acknowledge that small (but growing!) group of reviewers who devote their time voluntarily and free of charge. Finally I would like to thank the current editorial team (Dr Brenda Happell, Deputy Editor, Professor Michael Clinton, Book Review Editor, and Rosemary Webster, Editorial Assistant) for their support and assistance. Thanks is also due to the Editorial and International Editorial Board members for their ongoing support for the Journal.

Mike Hazelton, Editor
Australian & New Zealand Journal of Mental Health Nursing
Censor-in-Chief’s Report

It gives me great pleasure to write this, my second report as Censor-in-Chief. In order to keep this report as brief as possible, I will address the major issues under the headings that follow.

Board Membership
Currently the Board’s membership is reasonably healthy, with eight (8) Censors and one (1) Patron ‘on the books’. The Board is a little weighted towards NSW, but at the moment the majority of Fellows exist within this State. New Zealand is reasonably well represented and there is room for other States and Territories to nominate some members. Given that some terms are coming up to expiry, vacancies should be able to be advertised in the near future. Two new members have been admitted to the Board with the executive’s approval since last year. They are Ms Derith Harris from Victoria and Ms Jan Barling from NSW. The membership of the Board is, therefore, as follows.

Ms Meryl Caldwell-Smith AM (NSW)  Appointed Patron to the Board of Censors in 1998 at Fremantle. Appointment at the discretion of Council and the Censor In Chief.
Mr Michael Consendine (NZ)  Term expires AGM, 2000. Not eligible for re-appointment until three years after that.
Ms Derith Harris (VIC)  Current appointment expires AGM, 2001. Eligible for another two years after this.
Mr Colin Hayes (NZ)  Current term expires at AGM, 2001. Eligible for another two years after this term.
Ms Debra Nizette (QLD)  Current term expires AGM, 2002. Eligible for another two years after this.
Applications for Fellowship 1999
This year I have received ten (10) applications for Fellowship. The Board of Censors has considered the applications and all candidates will be admitted as Fellows at the 7th Oration and Investiture Ceremony in Launceston. My hearty congratulations and a warm welcome go to the following people:

Mr Brian Pickering (NZ) Ms Elizabeth Marsh (WA)
Ms Linda Duffell (NSW) Mr Roger Edmunds (NSW)
Mrs Christine Neville (QLD) Ms Kate Prebble (NZ)
Mr Bryan McMinn (NSW) Mr Stephen Harding (SA)
Dr Cynthia Stuhlmiller (NSW) Mr Ian Wilson (NSW)

Issuing and Reparation of Membership Certificates
I have received a number of requests from existing members for membership certificates to be provided. I have suggested to Council that Membership Certificates be issued automatically upon membership and that only Fellowship testamurs be issued at Oration and Investiture Ceremonies. Should members want a membership certificate they should write to me care of the College address.

As can be seen by the above, the Board of Censors has remained active throughout the period between reports and we look forward to a productive 1999 – 2000 period.

Geoff Dulhunty
Censor-in-Chief

Board of Education

During the past 12 months the Board of Education has consolidated its membership. The current membership of the Board comprises:

Dr Brenda Happell (VIC) Mr Greg Miller (VIC)
Mr Ron Brown (NSW) Mr Chan Singh (NSW)
Dr Debra Creedy (QLD) Mr Dave Evans (NZ)
Associate Professor Fran Pagdin (SA)

The major focus of the Board’s attention concerns the accreditation of postgraduate mental health nursing programs. The Board is currently developing draft guidelines upon which the accreditation of such courses will be based, subject to the approval of the Council of the ANZCMHN. The primary issues being addressed in this proposal include:

• the level of award at which such courses should be offered, e.g. graduate certificate, graduate diploma or masters
• essential content of such courses, e.g. psychiatric nursing, psychopathology, psychopharmacology, professional issues
• minimum amount of mental health nursing content, as expressed in hours, units or proportion of total course
• minimum qualifications and experience for academic staff teaching post graduate mental health courses
• minimum amount of clinical experience.

Input into this proposal has been sought from other interested parties via the ANZ discussion list. This draft will be discussed at a meeting of the Board of Education to be held during the Launceston conference in September. A proposal will subsequently be submitted to the Council for broader consultation and advice. In the interim the Board welcomes further inputs from College members and other interested parties. Submissions can be forwarded to: Dr Brenda Happell, School of Postgraduate Nursing, The University of Melbourne, Level 1, 723 Swanston Street, Carlton, Victoria, 3053.

Brenda Happell
Director, Board of Education

**Board of Research**

**New Monograph**
The Board of Research is pleased to announce the forthcoming publication of its third monograph: Towards Ethical Mental Health Nursing. Written by an academic colleague, Jan Horsfall, and two experienced clinicians, Michelle Cleary and Raighne Jordan, the monograph provides readers with a very accessible introduction to ethical mental health nursing practice. The authors cut through the jargon to provide readers with a succinct account of a number of pertinent issues for contemporary mental health nursing practice. The monograph will appeal to students and experienced nurses. Colleagues from other mental health disciplines will also find the material stimulating. The monograph will be launched at the conference in Launceston.

**Sponsorship**
We are in the process of seeking outside funding for annual research awards and grants to be administered by the Board of Research. Many high profile companies have been targeted. We will provide an update on this during the conference.

**Research Web Page**
Our most exciting (and daunting) initiative in relation to our www research page is soon to appear. P.J. Martyr, better known as the ‘web mistress’, is beavering away at building an online database of mental health nursing researchers in Australia and New Zealand. Researchers will be able to enter their own research details, including area of interest, preferred methodology, and contact details. The database will be searchable.
Board Membership
Tom Ryan has recently resigned from the Board on account of his move from New Zealand back to Australia. Thank you for your contribution Tom and we wish you well in your new position. The Board is particularly keen to have members from both Australia and New Zealand; with Tom’s departure we are now without a New Zealand representative.

Current Board members include:
• Phil Maude, University of Melbourne
• Eimear Muir-Cochrane, University of South Australia
• Eamon Shanley, Edith Cowan University/Graylands Hospital
• Cheryl Waters, University of Technology Sydney
• Graeme Browne, University of Southern Queensland
• Gerry Farrell, University of Tasmania.

The College Silver Jubilee Research Award
We are pleased to be involved in the recently announced research award. Details of which are contained in a separate section in this publication. Information on the award was also sent out with the conference registration brochure.

Gerry Farrell, Director
Board of Research

Stan Alchin Award
Cecily Pollard was the winner of the Stan Alchin Award at the conference in Perth in 1998. For the first time, at the Western Australian conference, certificates were awarded to the winner and runners-up.

This year, a review of all of the award processes has been undertaken and new criteria for the evaluation of papers have been developed. Conference presenters submitted full papers for consideration of the award, a further strategy to increase the rigor of the review process. Hence the shortlisting process for the award has been improved in a number of ways. The Abstract Committee undertakes a review of papers that are suitable for consideration for the award. A review of submitted full papers is also made in conjunction with the actual conference presentation.

Discussions with Mr Gary Rowley have been very positive and Gary will attend the conference this year and make the presentations at the closing ceremony. As at last years conference, biographical details will be provided as a way of introducing the award and it is hoped that an image of Stan Alchin will be projected onto the back of the stage. This year’s conference and the Stan Alchin award will continue the great success of this annual and international College event.

Dr Eimear Muir-Cochrane
Stan Alchin Award Coordinator
**Newsletter Editor’s Report**

It is with mixed feelings that I pen this, my final contribution to the College as newsletter editor. The feelings are mixed because for the last two years the role of newsletter editor has, as usual, been dogged with a lack of articles, however recent developments hold promise of a bigger, better and more relevant future publication.

The reintroduction of the newsletter by Council was meant to afford members who did not seek publication in an academic arena such as the College Journal a vehicle in which to debate and discuss issues of importance to mental health nurses. It provided a venue for informing members who are unable to attend branch meetings of decisions made by the governing body of the College (the College Council), and provided opportunity for members in different branches to hear what was happening throughout Australia and New Zealand.

Every newsletter editor of every organisation will attest the problems with getting timely information and articles for publishing. I hope that as the new newsletter begins it’s life the improved quality and format will encourage members and Council to contribute on a more regular basis and at the same time make the newsletter more relevant to clinicians.

The proposal, to be put before Council, will outline the development of a commercial arrangement heralding a new era for member contributions to the newsletter. The proposal, when finalized and accepted by Council will see the production of the newsletter by a commercial media company in Sydney. The proposed newsletter will be in full color, have a major sponsor and feature clinical and contemporary issues being debated and discussed in a way that College has not, to date been able to do.

The success of this newsletter will, however, ultimately depend on Council, members and the new editor. I wish my replacement well and encourage all members to contribute to the new and improved newsletter.

*Sandra Hoot*  
*Newsletter Editor*

**Membership Report**

Growth in membership has continued steadily during the year 1998–1999, with 309 new Members, Associate Members and Students being admitted into membership of the College. This number also includes our first members from Canada, Japan and Malaysia, and there are now four members in the United Kingdom.

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*Figure 1. Branch Membership as a percentage of the total membership*
Note that the figure for 1999 is for the part year to June 1999, and is given to depict the upward trend of membership numbers.

The continued growth in membership is due in part to a decrease in the number of resignations and cessations. As shown in Figure 3, the number of those not renewing their membership is the lowest since 1992. The percentages shown are the total of resignations and cessations as a percentage of the total membership for that year, and shows that the year 1998 had the lowest percentage of cessations. The cessations are due to members being unfinancial, and the resignations are generally because the member has either left the mental health area of health care or has retired from the workforce.

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<td>Joined</td>
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Figure 2. Membership growth 1978–1999

Figure 3. Admissions and attrition

Jan Properjohn
Membership Secretariat
Convention Reports

1998 Conference, Western Australia
The 24th Conference was held in Fremantle, Western Australian from the 5–9 October. The conference theme was *Collaboration in Mental Health: Making the Difference.*

The conference attracted 295 delegates from Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong, the Netherlands, Slovak Republik, Spain and the UK.

Prior to the conference, there were pre-conference workshops and professional tours of mental health services. These tours visited the major psychiatric facilities both private and public including Graylands, Bentley Joondalup, Niola Private, and Fremantle.

The spectacular opening ceremony featured Aboriginal Dancers, Maori Dancers and an opera singer interspersed with speeches from the Mayor of Fremantle, The General Manager of the Health Department and the College and WA Branch Presidents. A special feature of the opening ceremony was the welcoming of Taranga to Western Australia with the assistance of the Aboriginal Dancers.

The conference had three outstanding keynote addresses. Helen Connor addressed the topic “Collaboration or Chaos – A Consumer Perspective”. Professor Eamon Shanley with a consumer focus on “Collaboration in Mental Health – A Challenge or a Threat”, and Professor Butterworth’s address was entitled “Breaking the Boundaries – Developing Clinical Academic Careers”.

The remaining technical program consisted of 95 papers and 5 workshops. The program was divided into three themes in partnership, clinical, education and research. A Monograph: *Evaluating the Outcomes of Mental Health Care: An Introduction*, developed by the Board of Research was launched during the conference.

The major conference sponsor was the Health Department of Western Australia. The social program included an unforgettable conference dinner at Tumbulgum Farm. Conference evaluations were positive indicating delegate satisfaction with all events, and some useful suggestions for future conferences.

*Liz Marsh  
WA Branch President*

1999 Conference, Tasmania
An international conference on Mental Health Nursing. The 25th annual conference titled *Looking Forward, Looking Back* will be held in Launceston Tasmania at the Albert Hall between 9–12 September.

The planned program focuses on historical perspectives and new directions for the future within the mental health nursing field. The technical program includes six keynote speakers, 4 invited speakers plus concurrent sessions providing approximately 80 presentations. There are also poster presentations.
The keynote speakers are:

- Dr Lorraine Nkonzo-Mtembu, Director, Human Resource Development and Nursing Services, Department of Health, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa
- Professor Kevin Gournay, Professor of Psychiatric Nursing, Institute of Psychiatry, London, United Kingdom
- Dr Peter Morrall, Senior Lecturer, School of Health Care Studies, University of Leeds, United Kingdom
- Professor Gail Wiscarz Stuart, Colleges of Nursing and Medicine, Centre for Health Care Research, Medical University of South Carolina
- Professor Michael Clinton, Professor of Nursing, Curtin University of Technology, Perth Western Australia
- Professor Beverley Raphael, Director of Mental Health, New South Wales.

The major sponsors include the Commonwealth National Mental Health Strategy, the Tasmanian Government, and Eli Lily Pharmaceuticals. Other sponsorship has been obtained from a variety of avenues including pharmaceutical companies, private health organizations, nursing boards, and branches of the College.

There will be pre-conference workshops conducted by Dr Peter Morrell, Professor Kevin Gournay and Dr Gerry Farrell on Thursday 9 September 1999. During the conference there will be brief ceremonies celebrating the launch of The History of the College which is being written by Dr Philippa Martyr, a monograph produced by the Board of Research, and announcing the Board of Clinical Practice and the appointed inaugural Director.

The Investiture and Oration will be held in the Albert Hall. This evening will witness new Fellows admitted to the College and an Oration delivered by Ms Gillian Biscoe. Ms Biscoe’s oration is titled *Nursing and the Health of People. Are We Going Forwards or Backwards?*

The great silver jubilee black tie celebration dinner will showcase some of the finest Tasmanian foods, wines and entertainment. The Partners Program of half and full day tours will include some of the most superb scenery and historical spots of Tasmania. Tasmania with its uniqueness, charm and beauty will give delegates to this conference a time never to be forgotten and an everlasting impression.

*Cecily Pollard*
*Convenor*

**2000 Conference, Gold Coast**

The 26th College Conference, *Voyaging into the new Millenium*, will be held on the Gold Coast from the 3–7 September at the Grand Mercure Hotel, Surf Parade, Broadbeach on the Gold Coast. The theme is *Mental Health Nursing for a Changing World: Not Just Surviving – Thriving.*
The Convenor is Linda Salomons. Dr Kim Usher is heading the technical program committee with Dr Maragaret Mc Allister. Dr Mc Allister is preparing a call for abstracts that will be circulated to all branches soon and will coordinate the abstracts selection process. Confirmed Speakers include Dr Holly Skodal Wilson, USA and Dr Megan Jane Johnstone, Australia. A speaker from New Zealand and an indigenous speaker are still to be confirmed.

Sponsorship is currently being negotiated and potential sponsors have expressed considerable interest. Pre conference workshops are being planned and will be negotiated with the College Boards and International guest speakers. There may also be opportunities for additional workshops to be held in other states.

The conference was promoted in June at the ICN conference in London and further promotions are planned for this year’s College conference in Tasmania. All is going well with planning. There will be a promotion booth at the Tasmanian Conference. Delegates will be able to pick up an abstract and conference information from the Queensland Conference Committee staffing the booth.

_Linda Salomons_  
Convenor

**College Web Site/ANZ–PSYCH**

The College web site has had a ‘facelift’ and improved navigation added into it in the last year. The site features a larger and improved conference web site, providing information and links to Tasmanian web sites, a list of scheduled events, and information on how to submit abstracts. The section ‘Links to other mental health sites’ is also continually expanding and being updated, with broken links being removed and new ones added as web sites are launched. One major area where extra sites have been added is that of cognitive behavioral therapy. The Research Forum is still under construction, as the TSON introduces a database-only server into its web presence. I hope to use this to run a searchable database of mental health nursing researchers.

ANZ-PSYCH continues to thrive; the list now has almost 200 subscribers (191 as of 26 June 1999). The only problems experienced this year were from faulty or defunct email addresses – members should remember to leave the list when they change their email address, and rejoin under their new address. You can contact me if you have any difficulties with this!

The other major problem was in the sending of attachments to the list; an attachment contaminated with a virus was sent to the list, and several subscribers reported infection of their hard drives as a result. This serves to reinforce the ‘no-attachments’ rule; subscribers are asked to check all their outgoing mail for attachments before sending it to ANZ-PSYCH.
We are still working on archiving ANZ-PSYCH by the time the Conference comes to Launceston; I hope to have this in place shortly. I hope that College members find these electronic facilities helpful in building networks and improving practice and education in mental health nursing.

P.J. Martyr  
Webmistress

Clinical Indicators for Mental Health Nursing

The clinical indicators and the research report for their development and validation were launched by Ms Judith Meppem, Head Nurse, NSW Health Department, at the Annual General Meeting of the NSW Branch on the 20 May 1998. The indicators support compliance with the ANZCMHN Standards of Practice, revised in 1995.

The study established a national data set and preliminary thresholds. The success of the study encouraged the College to support a National Benchmarking Movement and Georgina Skews, Chief Investigator became National Thresholds Officer, a voluntary position that supports the National Benchmarking Movement. The National Benchmarking Movement membership includes the Clinical Indicator Survey Manual, a set of audit sheets and advisory support during the survey period. A National Thresholds Report for the Clinical Indicators will be published at regular intervals with data aggregated from the many sites joining the National Benchmarking Movement.

The Indicators, used as a monitoring tool, inform nurses about nursing practice and nursing outcomes. Low compliance areas are easily identified and changed. Evidence of best practice is available for accreditation reviews. The project is the first of its kind and it is exciting to see its potential taking form. In 14 months over 300 sets of books (the research report and the survey manual) have been given as complimentary copies to Heads of Government Departments, Heads of University Nursing Faculties/Departments and Heads of Health Care organizations on request. Some 300 sets have been sold ($40 a set). Sixteen sites are members of the Benchmarking Movement and more are in the pipeline. More than 400 inquiries have been received and responded to. Inquiries continue to be received as far afield as the US, UK and NZ as well as from Australia. The Standards and the Indicators are being used in the setting up of new mental health units in General Hospitals and as a guide to senior nursing staff in staff reviews and policy development.

The web site (http://www.ozemail.com.au/~thresholds) continues to provide background information to the project as many of the inquiries are via email (jskews@sia.net.au). A Newsletter has been established and may also be downloaded from the web page. A replication study is in progress in New Zealand. It is hoped to have the first National Thresholds Report by June 2000. What a way to celebrate the millennium!

Georgina Skews  
National Thresholds Officer
College Publications

- Towards Ethical Mental Health Nursing Practice, 1999 (monograph)
- Evaluating the Outcomes of Mental Health Care: An Introduction, 1998 (monograph)
- Clinical Indicators for Standards of Practice: Development and Validation, 1998
- Getting up to Speed with Evidence Based Practice, 1997 (monograph)
- Standards of Practice for Mental Health Nurses in Australia, May 1995
- The Australian & New Zealand College of Mental Health Nursing (journal)

College Position Statements

- Mental Health Course Content of undergraduate Nursing Curricula in Australia
- Regulatory Practices for Mental Health Nursing
- Model of Professional Self Regulation of Mental Health Nurses in Australia and New Zealand
- Self Regulation and Credentialling
- Education (Postgraduate Mental Health Nursing)

Position Statements Under Development

Work has progressed during the past year on the following position statements.

- Rural and Remote Mental Health Nursing Education
- Affiliation with other Organizations Policy and Procedure
- Code of Professional Conduct for Office Bearers of the College
- Unregulated Health Workers
- Aboriginal Position Statement

Affiliated Organisations

- The College is affiliated with the Royal College of Nursing, Australia.
- The College has representation on the Professional Reference Group of the Australian Nursing Council.
- The College is a full member of the Mental Health Council of Australia – founding member (1998) with a seat on the governing board.
Branch Reports

ACT Branch Report

President and Councilor  Vice President
Steve Hartnett          Mark Ryan

Secretary  Treasurer
Sheryl Hall            Kerin O’Brien

Committee Members
Don Wilson               Irene Bagnell
Ellie Miller            Jan Haskell
Donna Hodgson

The ACT Branch sadly reports that its former Treasurer, President and now College President Mr Jon Chesterson has moved on to greener fields in the Hunter in NSW. Good luck Jon!

The branch is offering a scholarship for the Tasmanian conference this year of $1,000. Advertising is about to go out. Branch Members continue to represent the College in consultations with the local health service on proposals for Clubhouse development and in fundraising activities for the Schizophrenia Fellowship.

Sheryl Hall attended the launch of the *Need For Cultural Sensitivity Report* and represented the College at a meeting of the Mental Health Council Of Australia when College office bearers could not attend. She also attended the annual *ANC Professional Reference Group* meeting in Canberra on behalf of the College.

Steve Hartnett attended a professional reference group called by the Red Cross to look at mental health courses they might run parallel to First Aid Training.

Clinical Supervision remains an issue here in the ACT as the local Mental Health Service recognizes that all professional groups, including nursing, require quality clinical supervision. Current plans within the service focus on reflective practice and acknowledge the ACT Branch initiative and documentation. The current shape of the developing policy resembles very strongly the model proposed by the branch in previous years.

The role and function of the Professional Head for Mental Health Nurses is also an issue that is coming onto the Branch’s agenda as the local service makes various new proposals concerning this key position. The Branch is watching developments closely.

The Branch has recovered one of the two original paintings commissioned for the 1995 Conference from the Canberra Hospital where it has been on display. The Branch will be offering a signed art print of the painting to the hospital for permanent display there. The Branch is in the process of deciding on the social fund-raiser event for this year. Last year we sponsored the Mental Health Black Tie Ball. This year we will probably have a cocktail evening and/or a dinner dance. Plans are yet to be formalized.

*Steve Hartnett*

*ACT Branch President*
New South Wales Branch Report

President
Scott Fanker
Secretry
Ian Wilson

Councilor
Dennise Allen
Vice President
Jem Masters

Vice President (Sub-branch president)
Roger Edmunds, Central Coast
Vice President (Sub-branch president)
Di Marchoni, Hunter

Vice President (Sub-branch president)
Sylvia Fitzgerald, Southern NSW
Treasurer
Barry Hunter

Committee Members
Cynthia Stuhlmiller
Geoff Dulhunty
Natalie Cutler
Antony Mullen

Branch Activities 1998–1999

Over the past twelve months the Branch, and its sub-branches, have continued to progress a number of valuable initiatives or projects, and provide both presence and informed input in a number of key forums in New South Wales. Limitations on available space only permit a dot-point précis of the Branch’s activities during the year. Unfortunately a bulleted list does not adequately convey the scope of these activities, nor give a true indication of the commitment of time and effort of those Branch members who have contributed their energies during the year. Having said this, the following list describes some of the Branch’s activities or ‘highlights’ throughout the year.

- Representation to the NSW Nurses’ Registration Board Nurse Practitioner Accreditation Committee.
- Secured representation on the Board of the NSW Institute of Psychiatry.
- Representation to the Research and Clinical Committees of the Evidence-based Practice Guidelines for the Schizophrenia Projectæa projected conducted by the Schizophrenia Fellowship of NSW and funded by the NSW Department of Health.
- Secured representation on the PDEC Mental Health Committee of the NSW Nurses’ Association.
- Presentation of an invited paper addressing the future of mental health nursing at a local mental health nursing symposium.
- Secured a 12-month Ministerial Seeding Grant for the provision of skills-based continuing education programs for mental health nurses.
- Representation on a curriculum development committee for the University of Western Sydney, Macarthur.
- Preparation of a written submission to the Scoping Study of Mental Health Nursing in Australia.
- Introduction of monthly continuing education seminars.
- Hosting of a Clinical Supervision workshop(s) facilitated by Mike Consedine.
• Provision of clinical practice and ethical advice to mental health services in NSW.
• Collaboration with the NSW Nurses’ Association in relation to co-hosting a mental health nursing seminar.
• Development and preparation of a formal bid in respect of hosting a College conference.
• Successful membership drive on the Central Coast of NSW.
• Formation of a Central Coast sub-branch.
• Development of a Branch display for the 25th Annual College Conference.
• Successful and well-attended one-day mental health nursing conference convened by the Hunter sub-branch.
• Planning in collaboration with the Nursing Branch of the NSW Health Department to convene a mental health nursing “think tank”, as a means of addressing and actioning local mental health nursing issues or challenges.
• Maintained regular meetings with Ms Judith Meppen, Chief Nursing Officer and Director, Nursing Branch, NSW Department of Health.
• Maintained regular meetings with Professor Beverley Raphael, Director, Mental Health Branch, NSW Department of Health.

While the above list is by no means exhaustive, it provides a sense of the type and range of activities undertaken by the Branch, and our sub-branches, during the past year. These activities speak to the fact that, as a result of the combined efforts of our committed members, the Branch continues to mature and prosper.

Scott Fanker, NSW Branch President
South Western Sydney Area Health Service
and University of Western Sydney Macarthur

Aotearoa/New Zealand Branch Report

President
Brian Pickering
Acting Vice President
Neil McNulty
Secretary
Christine Watson
Treasurer
George O’Brien
Councilor
Kate Prebble
Kai Whakahaere
Tio Sewell
Committee Members
Lin Morrison-Ngatai
Laurie Hakiwai
Chris Hattan, Assistant Registrar

The branch has four sub-branches with the following contact people.

Auckland
Christine Palmer
Welington
Ngaire Cook
Christchurch
Brent Doncliffe
Waikato
Chris Hattan
Internal Branch Matters

- Iona Edmunds resigned as Kai Whakahaere. Iona was the original holder of this Office. Iona was honored at the Branch AGM in April. Tio Sewell has since assumed the role of Kai Whakahaere and has attended one Council meeting so far.

- We are within budget – a success! A balanced budget is important to enable the Branch to continue actioning the professional purposes of the College.

- I understand Branch members made their presence felt at the 24th College Annual Conference in Fremantle last year which unfortunately I was not able to attend. I hope the Branch continues to make its presence felt in Launceston in Tasmania in September this year.

- The review of our Standards has continued and a project to verify the Clinical Indicators for New Zealand has commenced. This is an extremely important project as our Standards are our most important external statement of who we are and what we stand for.

- The Branch continues to grow and prosper. We now have well over 300 members and membership forms continue to arrive.

- There have been a variety of regional gatherings including those in Christchurch, Wellington, Hawkes Bay, Palmerston North and Auckland. The membership is active at sub-branch level.

External Matters

- The Branch has interacted with a variety of groups across New Zealand.

- The Branch has been involved with representing mental health nursing interests with the Clinical Training Agency, Ministry of Health (including the Ministerial Taskforce on Nursing) and Nursing Council amongst other organizations.

- I am not attempting to report external contacts in detail but to indicate that the Branch has had input into some important projects at a National level.

The Future

- The Branch needs to continue to actively maintain and enhance its membership base. Whilst this assists in ensuring our financial viability I consider it more important to ensure that we have a credible mandate to speak for and about mental health nursing issues. Recruit your colleagues for this reason if no other.

- We need to ensure that collectively we take every opportunity to push the issues of mental health nursing to every relevant forum, local and regional as well as nationally.

Finally I would like to acknowledge and thank the committee members, sub-branch committee members and other members who have been active and involved in the activities of the Branch over the last 12 months.

Brian Pickering
NZ Branch President
Northern Territory Branch Report

Branch President
Pat Bradley

Branch Vice President
Neil Spencer

Branch Secretary
Denis Blackford

Branch Treasurer
Gerry Hoogenboom

Councillor
Denise Gilchrist

The Branch after a lot of effort was unable to organize the one-day seminar as planned. May be we will succeed this year. The Branch continues to be small with approximately 25 current members with the potential for 120 plus membership. Our aims continue to be the raising of Branch and College profile in the Northern Territory and increasing the membership of the Branch.

As members may notice the new President is Pat Bradley, who comes with new ideas, old contacts and enthusiasm in achieving the aims the Branch has set. In summary the Branch continues with its aims and with support of the members it is envisaged that the Branch will become an active entity for Mental Health nurses in the Northern Territory.

Neil Spencer
Outgoing NT Branch President

Queensland Branch Report

President
Therese Fitzgerald

Secretary
John Quinn

Assistant Secretary
Kathy Critchley

Treasurer
Graeme Browne

Councillor
Kim Usher

Education Officer
Margaret Dunlop

There are two active sub-branches with the following contact people.

North Queensland

Branch President
Roberta Porter

Vice President
Craig Moffitt

Secretary
Mark Quadrell

Treasurer
Fran Gallagher

Gold Coast

President
Roe Mitchell

Vice President
Ursula Cooper

Secretary
Fiona Whitecross

Treasurer
Garry Scott

The Queensland Branch holds meetings on the second Wednesday of the month in teleconference with the North Queensland sub-branch in Townsville. The venue in Brisbane
is usually Wolston Park Hospital, Wacol and followed by an educational session. The Gold Coast and North Queensland sub-branches also hold regular meetings and educational sessions.

Presenters for our Queensland Branch educationals have included Helen Trenerry, Tom Meehan, Debra Creedy, Denny Cowell, and Donna Bowman on a wide range of topics from medication side effects to post traumatic stress disorder following childbirth to risk management of suicide.

The major events for the last twelve months include the ongoing success of the membership drive. An active sub-branch on the Gold Coast with over 30 members exists. Thanks must go to Linda Salomons, Fiona Whitecross, Roe Mitchell and all the Gold Coast people (including Syd Bryant and Arthur Bubb) who have helped make the sub-branch a great success with symposiums and regular meetings.

The North Queensland sub-branch continues to be active and there is an improving network developing between Townsville, Cairns, Mackay and other settings. The sub-branch has been particularly active in promoting College membership. With the increasing decentralization and localization of mental health services it is important that networks of individuals band together in the name of professionalism and good mental health nursing.

The Queensland branch membership number has gone past 200 for the first time with a 25% growth over the last twelve months. This has been achieved by the activity of the Gold Coast and North Queensland members, Royal Brisbane Hospital District members (in particular John Carr), Redcliffe Caboolture members (Gerry Dares) and members from the Sunshine Coast (Lesley and Lester Jerman). We now have payroll deduction systems in place in seven QH Districts. A College introductory letter compiled by Denny Cowell and myself was circulated to over 70 mental health services along with information about the Launceston Conference and membership application forms.

The Policy Sub Committee continues to be the most active mechanism of the Branch in contributing to debate and reform of the state’s mental health services. We have made a significant contribution to progressing the importance of education of future mental health nurses. A scholarship system is about to be introduced. This, along with a number of other for shadowed initiatives should encourage more RNs to specialize in mental health nursing.

Similarly we have been major participants in the ongoing debate about the state’s innovative approach to the treatment of the forensic mentally ill. We have also appreciated the partnership approach that the Queensland Nursing Council takes with our College through our ongoing input to variety of regulatory and educational issues. Similarly we have been able to work collaboratively with the Principal Nurse Advisor in Queensland Health.

The Queensland Branch held its first major social function for a number of years with a successful dinner at Belmont Private Hospital earlier this year with the Minister for Families Anna Bligh. The College is also about to re-launch a bi-monthly newsletter.
Our major challenge over the next twelve months will be the successful organization of the College’s Conference 2000 (3–7 September) to be held next year at Broadbeach on the Gold Coast. Linda Salomons and the organizing committee are going to need a lot of support from the membership to make it happen.

Joanne King
QLD Branch President, 1999–2000

South Australian Branch Report

President
Fran Sutton

Vice President
Jacky Talmet

Secretary
Irene Henley

Treasurer
Rob Iverson

Councilor
Jacky Talmet

Proxy Councilor
Eimear Muir-Cochrane

Committee Members
Ann Crago

Ann Martin

Steve Harding

Ken Walsh

Pat Buckley

In presenting the report for 1999 I would at the outset like to express my thanks to all members of the Branch Management Group. This year has seemed particularly difficult for everyone with increased work demands taking their toll on the effort that individuals can contribute to the activities of the College. Each member has worked hard throughout the year in their individual capacities and has been supportive of the work that has been undertaken. This is important to acknowledge because all of us who work within health care systems are aware of the current and increasing pressures on all employees. Management committee members’ work hard throughout each day as does everyone, but they go that bit further to contribute to the life of the Branch and the College. This latter range of activities is such that they are deserving of many thanks.

The 1998–1999 year proved to be a busy one for the Branch. It has included involvement in the NuPrac project – a ministerial advisory committee established in South Australia to advise the Minister of Health on how best to advance the Nurse Practitioner role in this state. This will prove to be an important initiative for mental health nurses wherein their capacity to function in advanced practice nursing roles will be acknowledged and recognised.

The Branch has also co-hosted workshops by Professor Phil Barker and established regular educational presentations by mental health nurses working in a variety of contexts. An emphasis on membership has been a regular feature of the year but it seems to be becoming increasingly difficult to find nurses willing to give time to activities outside of work and home.

Throughout the year the Committee has had a number of significant papers to respond to at State level. These have been in association with the New Nurses Bill now introduced in South Australia; the Nurse Practitioner Project with a final report for the minister having
been completed and Clinical privilleging for Nurses and Midwives. This latter activity has been endorsed by the Department of Human Services and the Branch is represented on the Department’s Clinical Privileges Committee.

As I stated earlier life is busy for all of us but I urge all members to maintain their level of interest in the College and its activities and to seek to encourage new membership.

*Fran Pagdin (formerly Sutton)*  
*SA Branch President*

**Tasmanian Branch Report**

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The Branch’s monthly meetings, held on the first Tuesday, at Campbell Town have been attracting between 8 and 12 members, some who travel great distances. The majority of the meetings commence with a guest speaker and the topics cover a wide span of clinical, managerial, educational, research and political issues. The Branch’s major activity for the year has been the final stage planning of the 25th Annual Conference which is being held in Launceston at the Albert Hall from 9–12 September. This conference is titled *Looking Forward, Looking Back*.

The Branch has held two very successful one-day seminars during the last year. *Depression Don’t Let It Get You Down* was held in November 1998. The program covered topics such as Depression in all stages of life, models and methods of treatment, and the Health Professional. The most recent was held in May 1999, titled *Flying High, Drugs and Mental Health*. This day’s program included topics relating to the Poppy Industry in Tasmania, drug usage in relation to women’s health and prison settings. These seminars obtain sponsorship from health organizations and pharmaceutical companies. The seminars are attracting between 50 and 120 registrations from mental health and general health fields.

The Branch also conducted a membership survey and launched to new awards. The Best Performance in Theory and Practice in the Graduate Diploma Nursing/Mental Health/Psychiatric will be presented at the first statewide seminar held in 2000. This award consists of $200.00 plus the first year full membership to the College. The second award being full member sponsorship to a statewide seminar. This sponsorship is made up of 15% of the net profit from the previously held seminar. The Branch is small in relation to membership numbers; the commitment of those members is huge.

*Cecily Pollard*  
*TAS Branch President*
Victorian Branch Report

President
Ann Benson

Vice President
Mani Busittal

Secretary
Andrew Crowther

Assistant Secretary
David Bailey

Treasurer
Greg Logan

Councillor
Stephen Elsom

One of the major changes in the Victorian branch this year followed a decision taken early in the financial year to change the branch format to quarterly meetings. These were held at an independent venue, the Schizophrenia Fellowship of Victoria, and guest speakers were invited. The change of venue provided a meeting place close to the city and with ample parking. All speakers were well received and provided presentations that were both interesting and stimulating. The Executive continued to meet more frequently.

The branch successfully bid for the 2001 Annual Conference. The venue is to be the Sofitel Hotel and a conference organizer has been appointed. The membership has increased by approximately 10% this financial year in Victoria.

Many thanks to all those who have worked toward the further development of the College this financial year, with a special thank you to the Executive and the Schizophrenia Fellowship for their generosity in providing the venue for branch meetings. I am hopeful the next twelve months will see a further strengthening of the Victorian branch, a collegiate atmosphere and the welcoming of many new members.

Alicia Evans
VIC Branch President, 1999–2000

Western Australian Branch Report

President and Councillor
Liz Marsh

Vice President
Chris Bone and Michael Finn

Secretary
Gary Phillips

Treasurer
Lyn Sykes

Membership Secretary
Sharon Bartsch

Education Convenor
Megan Byrne

Newsletter Editor
Roy Dobson

Publicity
Michael Finn

The main effort of the WA Branch this year has been to recover from organizing the annual International Conference held in Fremantle. Members of the Executive Committee and other members who formed the conference committee were delighted to have produced a conference, that whilst being challenging and rewarding, was accessible and meaningful to the audience. After all it was aimed at health professionals with a common goal of quality mental health care for all people using a collaborative approach. The conference committee now well rested and looking for new challenges!

Liz Marsh
WA Branch President