

Chairman's Report to SeniorNet Porirua AGM 2009

How can I describe my first year as chairman? Business as usual. Both challenging and frustrating at times!

It is difficult to best know how to serve our members. Needs and interests vary so much some are computer literate, others are just beginning: some have Windows XP, other have Windows Vista, (and windows 7 is now in the pipeline!); many have 97 – 03 software, and increasing numbers 2007+. This makes programming courses both challenging and frustrating. However, our classroom facilities at Ngati Toa School are great and we have been able to install Vista and Office 2007 on some of the computers. Over the summer holidays we installed 19" LCD monitors, which are much easier on the eyes.

Communicating with members and the general public is a continuing challenge. Newspaper advertising is expensive and difficult to evaluate. We planned to display in the North City Centre in January 2009. There was a moderate interest probably not the best time of the year for our age group. Open days get minimal response. One of our major challenges in 2009 is to "market our brand" and involve our members in 'developing new products.' Our website is developing thanks to Bob Pretty's work and we intend to extend this with regular emails to members about special offers and events. This works well in other parts of the country.

The Federation of SeniorNet Societies to which we and most other SeniorNets around the country belong is a real strength. You will see in the Treasurer's report how helpful it is to have a national body co-ordinating our funding requirements and other activities. In addition the federation has been able to obtain deals with insurance and other special offers. We are a small society in Porirua and it is great to be part of a large family that shares our goals and has many talents and resources, which we are all able to share.

Key to our operation is our team of volunteer tutors. SeniorNet could not operate without them. Theirs is a challenging task, with all the various requirements that I mentioned before, but it is also very rewarding. You learn more by being a tutor than by being a student and it is fun being part of a group of adults who are keen to learn new skills. We do need to increase our pool of tutors in 2009.

Our management team is an enthusiastic and hard working group. I think it is amazing how much has been achieved over the years. At our 08 AGM we paid tribute to Laurie Davies' initiative in launching SeniorNet Porirua and said, 'he was now taking a lighter work load'. How far from the truth that was! As Secretary he is our contact person for people in our city and in the wider SeniorNet community. He challenges us all. You will see from our financial report that we are in a sound position thanks to Graham Ellett's wise guidance and advice. During the year we welcomed Ron Dunbar from the far south and accepted the resignation of Ben Tredrea who has been a major contributor to our thinking. It would be good to welcome some new 'Movers and Shakers' to our team.

We look forward to the challenges that 2009 will bring. Business as usual!!

Hunt Dryburgh

Chairman