

Avena

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**SPCNM 50th Jubilee
2017 Conference & AGM
Pulse Testing - Richard Whelan
Saving a Sacred Fertility Herb**



NZAMH
New Zealand Association of
Medical Herbalists

SPCNM 50th Jubilee

By Danielle Whelan NZAMH Student & Herbal Apprentice

On Saturday March 25th 2017, Mary Allan and I attended the SPCNM 50th Jubilee on behalf of the NZAMH. It was a very memorable event, a real celebration made up of a broad range of people spanning decades - all of whom had been there as students and/or teachers. We were treated to amazing food, informative and entertaining speakers and lots of hugs!



When I woke up on the morning of the Jubilee I had no idea what my day had in store for me. I got ready for the South Pacific College of Natural Medicines 50th Jubilee thinking it was going to be a very formal event, well as soon as I arrived it felt as if I was home. There were smiles and heartfelt hugs from the get go and once everyone had arrived we began the day and our walk down memory lane. The day was filled with historical stories about the history of the college, its students and of course it's teachers. There was laughter, tears, learning, reflection and appreciation of the rich community of people gathering to celebrate natural medicine. Everyone that spoke was inspirational, and I especially loved hearing from the teachers that were a part of the college from its humble beginnings.

I have to say from where I was sitting, as a student of Herbal Medicine, sitting in a room filled with old-timers was the highlight for me. I learnt so much about the history of Natural Medicine in New Zealand. I want to thank all those that have carved a path for Naturopathy and Herbal Medicine in New

Zealand. There is a richly passionate group of men and woman that have pioneered a culture of Natural Medicine in our country and made it accessible to study at degree level within recognized colleges, and that was no small task. The stories I heard today from these amazing people were priceless, and left me so incredibly inspired. I had a few favourite speakers I will write about below.

For me, Angela Chadwick was the most entertaining speaker by far. I had never met nor heard of Angela before, but as soon as she walked through the doors and started talking we were all entertained! It was such a refreshing delight to hear story after story, and it was so evident that Angela held a strong long-lived passion for Herbal medicine. I thought to myself, if I'm half the woman she is when I'm her age I'll be doing ok. She has a knack for story telling and I don't think anyone would have ever have been bored in her classes! I wish she was still teaching so I could attend her lessons. What's more is when the Jubilee came to an end Angela took out her ukulele and starting playing for us! What a woman!



Simon James ran South Pacific between 1978-1980, and you could tell he would have been an amazing principal. Simon was a total inspiration. The first thing he did was get us all to stand up, form small groups, put our arms around each other, and then hum together. I tell you, what that did for the group was just magic. What was more magic was he then went into lengthily discussion about the science of humming, and then described how where science and intuition meet, that's where the truth lies. It was so refreshing hearing Simon reflect on the importance of scientific understanding and intuition. In fact it was extremely interesting to see a pattern among all the 'old-timers', they all talked about the marriage of Science and Intuition, and how it was a fundamental part of their training and the way they went on to teach the great subject of Naturopathy.

Simon Mills was the key note speaker, and Simon concluded the day of talks with a bang! He discussed and shared his latest project funded by the UK government and it is a study focused around 'Self-care' which essentially is based around the realities of the public and their reliance on Doctor Google. He provoked thoughts around not swimming up stream but going with the flow of the river and thus facing the realities that the public want to be involved in their healthcare to the point that they want to be empowered with knowledge themselves and will self medicate. So instead of becoming exclusive and taking the herbs and supplements off the public shelf, he encouraged our professional body to work within their own personal communities and become a pillar of knowledge to your own communities and be a place where the public can go to for sound advice and education. The comparison to a mechanic was made here, Simon shared his own personal relationship with his car and told us he will drive 20 minutes to his mechanic (I can't remember the guy's name sorry) because he knows Simon's car really well and he trusts this guy to help fix it when it's broke.

Simon James supported this advice by emphasising the wisdom that building a reputation as a practitioner entirely based on word-of-mouth is the only way to go really. So who wants to play a game of Simon says? I know I do.

So there is a summary of some highlights from speakers on the day, there were many more who were equally inspiring, and the whole gathering was a wonderful celebration.

I think overall the day gave me insight into the history of Naturopathy in New Zealand, and from that I gained some refreshing perspective about our profession. The most significant perspective was that given by the wise folk who have walked the block a few times, and they all sung the same song, learn your trade well and then become accessible in your communities and think local. Work with the current and dynamic changing flow in the river and adapt to best help those in need. Powerful stuff. I definitely left with full boots, and feel very honoured to be walking this path and learning from such wise pioneers. Thank you South Pacific! ❀



ABOVE: Current principal Patsy Paxton, receives a beautiful SPCNM sculpture from Peggy Lowndes



ABOVE: Tutors Karen Mees and Phil Dowling



ABOVE FROM LEFT: Patsy Paxton, Angela Chadwick, Peggy Lowndes

LEFT: Clockwise from top left - Danielle Whelan, Group hugs and hummmms, Celebration Cake, Erin Hudson, Wayne Hill & Robyn Carruthers

All images by Mary Allan (Editor).