

BALINT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND
AGM TUESDAY AUGUST 7TH 2012

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

During the 2011/12 year, since the last AGM, the Balint Society of Australia and New Zealand (BSANZ) has made a number of significant improvements in its structure and function.

The website has been significantly revitalised. The Leadership accreditation policy and programme are now essentially in place. The Balint Bulletin is back up and running in a more engaging and lively format.

Currently in planning is a visit from London based psychiatrist Dr Peter Shoenberg for September 2012, who has extensive experience in running Balint groups for medical students and also expertise in the study of psychosomatic medicine. Dr Shoenberg will present along with several Australian colleagues in both Melbourne and Sydney venues, with the backing of various University educators in both states.

The preparations for an Intensive to be held in Noosa in Queensland in October 2012 are well underway. This is the first Intensive held by the BSANZ to be run fully by our own leaders.

A number of new Balint groups have commenced, particularly in certain states of Australia and in various regions in New Zealand. Others continue their work which in some groups is now a number of years in duration. There is as a consequence an increasing need for trained group leaders, an area presently being addressed further by the Board.

We have maintained strong links as a Society with the International Balint Federation of which we are a member organisation. A number of the BSANZ members have participated in, and contributed to, IBF meetings and conferences in the past 12 months.

Overall the Board has worked quite smoothly in the past year. The input from each member has been significant and effective with the range of viewpoints generally resulting in well formulated outcomes.

The Board has continued to meet by teleconference and latterly, with financial advantages for the Society, by group conversation on Skype.

Board retreats are held once or twice annually allowing Board members to meet and work together personally.

At this time membership numbers are somewhat reduced due largely to the alteration of the policy of obligatory Society membership for all Intensive participants. As a significant amount of our Society's income is derived from membership fees, I believe this situation needs to be addressed proactively.

It would also seem timely to begin now to seek extra sources of funding for the Society in order to provide a more robust financial base.

I wish to make note of the resignation from tonight's AGM of Penny Love, who has been Vice President for the past 2 years. Penny has given much thought and consideration over her years on the committee / Board to its ongoing development, and particularly in recent times to policy formation. She is a very experienced Balint practitioner who has contributed a great deal both in her local state of Queensland and across Australia and New Zealand generally. I extend thanks to Penny, also on behalf of my colleagues, for all that she has done to date in contribution to the BSANZ, and wish her well in her continued work.

After two years as President of the committee / Board I tender my resignation from this role and also from the Board tonight. It has generally been an interesting and positive experience working on the Board. I thank each current Board member and also past committee / Board members from the last 2 years for their significant contributions to the work over this time.

My aim when taking on the role of President was to more fully utilise each Board member's capabilities through developing smoother and more efficient running of the Board than I had experienced in my time prior to becoming President. I believe my approach has been vindicated by the many achievements we have made over the last two years. We are in a much more productive and professional place than we were two years ago.

My resignation is of a mixed nature and I leave with some disappointment and sadness at the way certain recent events have unfolded within the Board.

However I do wish the incoming President, Frank Meumann, and the Board members with whom he will work, an effective and successful forthcoming period in terms of continuing to build the Balint Society of Australia and New Zealand.

Sally Manuell
August 2012