

ETAS PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2020

An AGM is always the time to reflect on the events of the previous year, and what a year it's been! This year has certainly been a challenge for all our members in one way or another. Some of us had to struggle with converting all our lessons for online teaching, whilst others lost almost all their income over night.

A shining light during the initial stages of the pandemic was Markus's newsletter highlighting all the options for those of us new to online teaching. The newsletter's impact reached beyond Switzerland and other associations contacted us to ask for permission to forward the content to their members. So, huge congratulations to Markus.

The heavy workload created by COVID also had an effect on the Publications Team. It soon became obvious that producing three Journals a year was impossible for our new Editor, Matt Firth and his team. Along with Publications Chair Hannah McCulloch, the team decided to go forward with two bumper editions each year and the results are certainly impressive.

Our National Events also became victims of the pandemic and huge thanks go to Jayne Kyte, Annegret Richmond, Ben Hoyt and their team of volunteers for organising the first ever online Professional Development Day. Those who attended the event were full of praise, and I'm sure tomorrow's Annual Conference will also be a great success.

The Executive Committee managed to meet a couple of times before lockdown. At our February meeting, we were delighted to welcome Rose Travers as PR Chair, a post that had been vacant for some time. Since March, all our meetings have been online and even once the crisis is over, I imagine that some meetings will still take place online.

The Executive Committee faced several challenges this year. The first of these was that our Statutes didn't permit online General Meetings. However, the Federal Government permitted exceptions to this requirement for the first half of the year. As a result, we held our first online Extraordinary General Meeting in June, and I'd like to thank Laura Kennedy and Annette Leimer for their help and advice in putting the revised Statutes together. The online meeting was well-attended and the Executive Committee now have the option to hold future General Meetings online or in-person.

Having dealt with the Statutes, our thoughts turned to financial matters. It became clear that several of our Members would have problems paying their annual membership fees and we decided to set up a Hardship Fund. My thanks at this point go to Rose Travers for all her hard work in setting up and administrating this initiative as well as the extraordinary generosity of our Members.

It wasn't only our Members who suffered financially this year. For the year to the end of June 2020, we were back in profit, although not by enough to cancel out the loss from the previous year. The whole budget was called into question and our new Treasurer, Eric Bertoud-Jury was instrumental in keeping us on track. On a positive note, the Executive Committee made a much-appreciated goodwill gesture by cutting their expenses significantly. However, the cancellation of our annual events has meant a big drop in income and Annegret, Eric and the Executive Committee have kept a close eye on our finances this year and will continue to do so in the future.

I first joined the Executive Committee as National Events Coordinator six year ago. After two years, I followed the irreplaceable JoAnn Salvisberg as President. My term of office was due to end last year, but we were unable to find a new President. So, I agreed to stay on for an additional year, on the understanding that I would step down at the beginning of 2021. I'd like to thank everyone I've worked with on the Executive Committee over the years, especially Antoinette Breutel, who is also stepping down this year. It's been a honour to serve ETAS ,and meeting and working alongside so many enthusiastic and dedicated volunteers has certainly given me many highlights over the years.

I'm delighted to say that Ben Hoyt has been nominated to take over as President. Ben has been involved with ETAs for many years and was instrumental in the launch of the existing website. As Webchair, he has been involved with many key projects and in particular, co-ordinating with the Administration, Publications and National Events. Not only is Ben the best man for the job, he will be ETAS's first ever male president! I'm sure you'll join me in wishing him and his new Executive Committee every success in the months and years ahead.

Sue Wood

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