

## **The First Travelling Fellowship for Primary Principals.**

The oldest, most prestigious - and most valuable – travelling fellowship that primary principals of Auckland and Northland can apply for is that of the ASB-APPA-TTPA [1] Travelling Fellowships managed by the APPA Trust Board. The Trust Board's objective is to select two principals in their region to travel in New Zealand or overseas to do research into significant educational issues of concern to schools. The "two term" award enables one principal to travel on full pay and to receive a grant of \$35,000 to help with accommodation and travel expenses. The "one term" award fellow receives full pay and a travelling grant of \$20,000. The travel grants are sponsored by the ASB. It is of historical interest to note that this sponsorship is the longest partnership between a sponsor and a Trust Board in New Zealand - from 1967 to 2016 is a magnificent 49 years. The ASB in the 1960s was the ASB Savings Bank and operated primarily in the Auckland area – later expanding into Northland. In 1990 the ASB Savings Bank was acquired by the Commonwealth Bank and became a nationwide bank providing full services to New Zealanders. The Ministry of Education pays for the fellows' salaries as well as for the funding for the salaries for the people "stepping up" in the Fellows' schools.

On 17 March 1967 the inaugural meeting of the Trust Board controlling the original Auckland Primary Schools Headmasters Travelling Fellowship was held in the boardroom of the Auckland Education Board. The establishment of the travelling fellowship for Auckland headmasters – at this time there were no female heads of schools in Auckland – was initiated by two well-known identities of the headmasters' Association – Mr Dare and Mr Aitken. Sadly, one week after the inaugural meeting, one of the trustees – Mr Kedgely [Papatotoe Intermediate – now Kedgley Intermediate] died. Mr Aitken was appointed by the APPA to replace Mr Kedgely. The then General Manager of the Auckland Education Board, Mr Lyn McCarthy, became the secretary as did successive general managers of the AEB until the start of Tomorrows Schools when Education Boards were abolished.

In 1981 the name of the Headmasters Association was changed to "Principals Association" with the acknowledgement that times were changing and women were winning principalships of larger Auckland schools. The Trust Board also changed its name to reflect the change.

When this Fellowship was set up in 1967 it was the very first Prestigious Award for primary principals in NZ. It was many years before any other prestigious award was granted to any principals' group. Fellows have reported many times that colleagues in other countries have been very envious of such an award and this, so it was reported, has resulted in moves overseas to have such awards being instituted either at state level [USA] or country level.

Interestingly, a study of the earliest minutes shows that the APPA negotiated the Award directly with the then Minister of Education, Hon Arthur Kinsella [National 1963-1969] and then with the Department of Education. The trustees negotiated the travel grant with the then general manager of the ASB Savings Bank, Mr Barrett.

When the Trust was first set up there was only one two-term [6 month] award and Fellows were selected from the Auckland urban area – the APPA's membership area. However, in 1977 the three-month [one term] Fellowship was successfully negotiated with the then Department of Education. This one-term award was known as the "Rural Award" and was directed towards the Northland area – part of both the ASB banking area and also within the authority of the Auckland Education Board – the employer of all principals in Auckland and Northland. In due course, the urban and rural nature of the Fellowships was abolished and principals anywhere in the Auckland Education Board region could apply for either Fellowship.

One month after the inaugural meeting of the Trust in March 1967 the trustees created their first Fellow – Mr Hugh Francis of Remuera Intermediate whose study topic was "Continuity of education: primers to form three". Mr Francis returned from his travels in December 1967. The second fellow who would travel in 1968 was selected in October 1967 and the principal selected was Mr Fred Dare.

The original criteria shows the Fellowship was aimed at principals with long service in NZ teaching. The minutes of 17 March 1967 state that applicants must have “no less than 20 years teaching experience in NZ state schools” and that the Fellow must remain in service for “not less than 3 years” after their travels. Over the years the criteria has been extensively discussed and modified to adjust to the differing educational and social environment. It was not until 1988 when the first women became Fellows and in that year not one, but two became Fellows – Mrs Joan Scanlan [2 terms] and Mrs Val Robinson [1 term]. The current criteria is to be found on the application form so potential applicants can see how they may match up with the criteria.

In 1975 Nigel Langston won a two-term award to study the concept of “community schools” as his own school, Freyberg Memorial was to become the pilot for a new type of primary school – a “community school” that, amongst other things, was to provide a community centre managed by the school. The community centre would run courses for parents and other adults in the locality. The success of Nigel’s study and his report led to the opening of more such schools including Auckland Normal Intermediate’s community centre. With the advent of Tomorrow’s Schools the adult courses gave way to children’s after-school activities.

In 1979 Jim Kelly, then principal at Edmund Hillary Primary, studied “Teachers Centres and Educational Resources”. This provided an impetus for centres to be established such as the RED Centre [South Auckland], Arney Rd in Central Auckland that became Kohia Education Centre, Manukau Education Centre and the North Shore Teachers Centre. These centres focused on providing courses for teachers using visiting experts, advisers and teachers with expertise. They became well known for providing essential developmental courses for teachers in their first two years of service and helping them become fully registered teachers. The centres also became a focus for teaching and learning resources carrying stock that commercial booksellers would never dream of stocking. With the advent of Tomorrow’s Schools these centres became merged with the Auckland Teachers College and with the merger of that institution with the University of Auckland, all of these centres were closed apart from Kohia Education Centre, which is still a busy, bustling place selling resources and mounting courses for the whole Auckland region.

In 1984 Ron McDonald, then principal at Mangere East School studied “Assessing and improving teacher effectiveness.” One of the main findings that emerged via the USA from this study was that of the Principals’ Centre based at a university. Ron established a relationship between the APPA and the University of Auckland to create a centre at the university, which quickly expanded to include secondary principals. No facilities were built – the Centre used the existing facilities in the Old Clock Tower building in Princes St. The Advisory Committee would arrange suitable speakers who were often educational experts on study fellowships from their overseas universities – most commonly from Australia, the UK or the USA. While at first attended only by principals these seminars proved so valuable that within a few years anybody from a school’s management team would be welcome. The concept has now evolved in more recent times beyond Ron’s original vision. The Principals Centre is now the Centre for Educational Leadership – reflecting the memberships expansion into all levels of school management. It is now a more sophisticated organisation that positions itself as the “Nottingham centre” of the South Pacific – in homage, if you like, to the world famous centre in England. It is the centre where first-time principals develop their leadership abilities and where experienced principals can experience professional development suited to their particular needs. Hundreds of Auckland educational leaders owe their professional growth to this Centre. And it all came about because one principal in 1984 saw something overseas that he thought could be transplanted to good effect in NZ. Ron passed away in 2009.

Principals applying for Fellowships have, over the years, tried to anticipate policy changes that will impact on schools and their abilities to deliver education to their pupils. A returning Fellow is thus in a good position to have an influence on the delivery of that policy and often, since 1990, have become resource people for the Ministry of Education. A few of these studies follow as examples of successful anticipation and application.

In 1986 Dr. Laurie Thew won a Fellowship to study “Mainstreaming Special Education” – a philosophy that was being implemented in the USA. Within a few years the NZ Government, through the Department of Education, began to implement mainstreaming – now known as “inclusive education” Laurie’s report was very useful for principals with children with special needs in their schools. Using the report, principals could make a case - before Tomorrow’s Schools - to the Department of Education for equipment, resources and personnel by using overseas models as “best practice” in mainstreaming. There is no doubt that Laurie’s study was most helpful for everyone involved with the implementation of this policy.

In 1989 Madeleine East – just after the release of the Picot Report – won a two-term Fellowship to study “Community involvement in the administration of schools” and in the following year Brian Pittams studied “Collaborative management in schools” – a natural pairing on the theme of self-management of schools. These principals became resource people for principals coming to grips with the concept of the principal becoming the CEO of a school reporting to their Board of Trustees.

Fellows’ research since the 1990s have continued to provide useful information to a wide range of New Zealand educational organisations and Ministers of Education. Reports have been written on a wide variety of issues that interest and influence principals including digital and e-learning [Owen Alexander, David Rogers], gifted and talented [Roger Harnett], inclusive education [Paul Shepherd], education leadership [Dallas Graham], professional standards [Frances Nelson], student voice [Maree Bathurst], modern learning environments [Sandra Jenkins], appraisal [Margaret Harris], transience [Murray Neighbour], professional development [Roween Higgie], Maori education [Ann Milne] and many more. Recent reports may be found on the APPA website – [www.appa.org.nz](http://www.appa.org.nz).

[1] ASB - Auckland Primary Principals Association - Tai Tokerau Principals Association.

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