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History

23rd July 2019

Deaf Aotearoa awarded the Vittorio Ieralla Memorial Award

Deaf Aotearoa is awarded the Vittorio Ieralla Memorial Award. This award is given to a national Deaf association that has made an outstanding contribution to the [World Federation of the Deaf](#) over the last four years. This award is in recognition of Deaf Aotearoa's achievements in promoting the human and linguistic rights of Deaf people and raising awareness of New Zealand Sign Language.

23rd July 2019

New Zealand bids to host the 2023 WFD Congress in Auckland

Deaf Aotearoa made a strong bid to host the next World Federation of the Deaf World Congress in 2023 with the support of the New Zealand Government. While New Zealand's bid was recognised by the WFD's site inspection team as the strongest of the four bids submitted, South Korea was successfully voted by the General Assembly as the host of the next Congress.



23rd July 2019

Mark Berry re-elected President for WFD Youth Section

Mark Berry, former Deaf Aotearoa Executive Board member, was re-elected as president of the World Federation of the Deaf Youth Section.

In 2015 Mark was elected as Vice-President for the Youth Section and was elevated to President in 2017 after the previous President stepped down from the role.

23rd July 2019

Victoria Manning elected to WFD Board for 2019-2023

General Manager-Strategy, Victoria Manning, was successfully elected to the World Federation of the Deaf Board 2019 – 2023. She was the second highest voted candidate, gaining 80 votes from the 88 voting countries. Deaf Aotearoa nominated Victoria as a highly-regarded leader and is the first New Zealander to serve on the WFD Board.

Victoria was also the inaugural chairperson of the [New Zealand Sign Language \(NZSL\) Board](#).

2015

DAHL restructure

2014



First Signs

DEAF AOTEAROA

First Signs launched

2013



Deaf View 3 in Wellington

2013

4th Maori Deaf Hui



2012

NZSL Week – theme “I Am Deaf – Let’s Talk”

Successful week with nearly 500 taster classes held throughout the country

2012

Deaf Aotearoa received the ‘Highly Commended’ Award at the Whanganui Health and Disability Awards.

Deaf Aotearoa received the ‘Highly Commended’ Award in the Excellence in Community Based and/or Older People Services section at the Whanganui Health and Disability Awards. This is the 2nd award Deaf Aotearoa has received for Deaf Access Centres



2012

Chief Executive: Lachlan Keating

9th September 2011

NZSL Sign Singers at the Rugby World Cup

Deaf Aotearoa and the Rugby World Cup 2011 organisers worked together to ensure that NZSL sign singers were part of the choir at the All Black's matches. Deaf Aotearoa also worked with Sky Television to encourage the broadcaster to capture the sign singers performing.

6th May 2011

5th Deaf Short Film Festival

Held in Christchurch, 6th – 8th May. The Theme was "The New Zealand Tomato Sauce"

2011

President: Kellye Bensley

Kellye was on the DANZ Board for 2 years before being elected President. Kellye was the first woman President since Karen Mahanga in 1995. Kellye represented Deaf Aotearoa at the WFD congress in Durban.



2011

Interpreters on TV for Christchurch earthquake

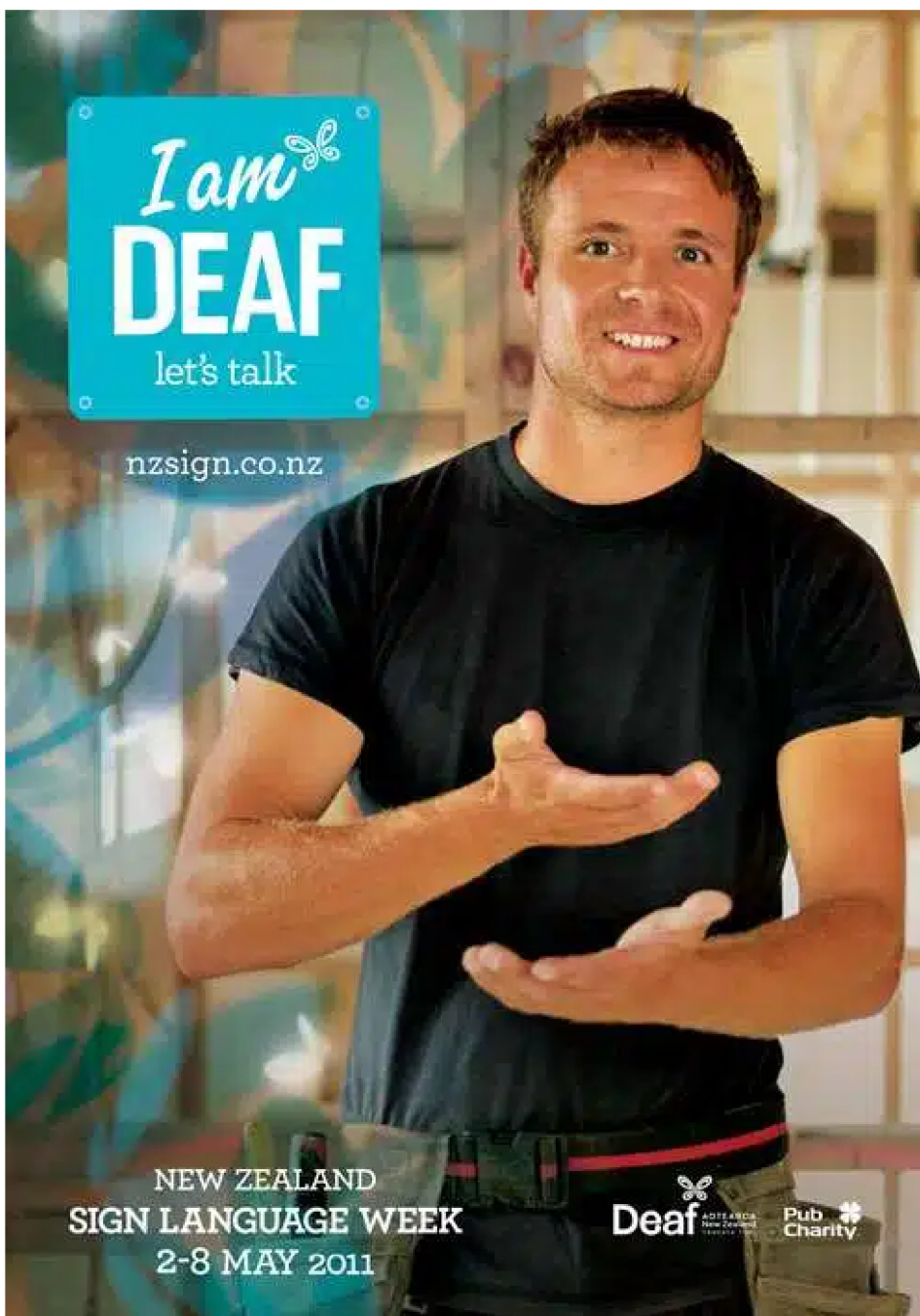
Jeremy Borland and Evelyn Pateman (Christchurch) become nationally recognised personalities following the Christchurch earthquake. The pair was instrumental in relaying news and updates to the Deaf community with their work at live media briefings as well as during special events and services after the devastating event. While the pair had their own worries following the earthquake, they worked tirelessly to ensure that the Deaf community were informed of vital information. They were awarded Interpreters of the Year in the 2011 NZSL In Action Awards

2011

DANZ received the Human Rights Commission Diversity Award for NZSL Week



2011



New series of educational booklets launched "I am Deaf, Let's Talk"

These new educational booklets were launched with 25 signs to know in three different settings, Work, Home, and on the Weekend.

- [Let's Talk - Work](#)

2011



Deaf Access Centre opened in Gisborne

2011

- Karen Pointon and Hemi Hema awarded QSM for services to the Deaf community

2011

- DANZ received NZFDIC 'Project of the Year 2011' awarded for Deaf Access Centres



2011

NZSL National Anthem DVD released

Every primary and secondary school throughout the country received a free DVD featuring God Defend NZ sung in all three official languages.

- [NZSL Video](#)

15th October 2010



Text 111 Service launched

Deaf and hearing impaired New Zealanders could contact emergency services thanks to the launch of the 111 text service on 15 October. This potentially life saving technology was developed from a collaboration between Deaf Aotearoa, the New Zealand Police, New Zealand Fire Service and the ambulance services, St

John and the Wellington Free Ambulance.

2010

NZSL Week – theme: “Think.Sign”

The first year that real Deaf people have been used in the design of the national campaign.

2010

Deaf Way Report

The report was written to describe the situation of Deaf people in NZ in 2010 and to plan for future services for the Deaf community. The report was funded by the ministry of health.

- [Deaf Way Report](#)



2010

Project Energise – research into Deaf Youth

The research provided a snapshot of the emotional and social well being of Deaf and hearing impaired youth in New Zealand. Previously Deaf youth groups had collapsed and there was concern of lack of leadership in young deaf people.

2010

First Deaf Access Centre opened in Whanganui

Deaf Access Centres are established in small towns where Deaf people are often isolated and can't access services they need. Through the Access Centre they can connect with DANZ and other services around the country.

2010

Social Enterprise (Think.Deaf.Discover & Think.Sign.Connect) launched



Social Enterprise (Think.Deaf.Discover & Think.Sign.Connect) launched to provide Deaf Awareness and NZSL classes.

4th September 2009

Name changed to Deaf Aotearoa

2009

4th Deaf Short Film Festival

Held in Wellington at the Town Hall as part of [NZSL Week](#). The theme was “Butterflies”

2009



**NZSL In
Action
Awards
launched**

2009

NZSL Week theme: “New Zealand Sign Language is in Your Hands”

The theme was developed to help encourage people to take responsibility for learning NZSL and to ensure information and NZSL Interpreters are available when Deaf people need to access employment, education, health and justice services. Free NZSL taster classes were also delivered around the country.



2009

WFD board visit Deaf Association

2008

NZSL Week – Theme: “The Freedom to Sign is our Freedom of Expression”



2008

DANZ became a foundation member of the Convention Coalition

DANZ became a foundation member of the Convention Coalition set up to monitor the UN [Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#)

**2008**

iSign Interpreter Booking Service was launched

[iSign](#) was launched from recommendations from the Interpreter Service Redesign Report written by Tricia Fitzgerald to establish a more independent service



2008

President: Kim Robinson

17th September 2007

3rd Deaf Short Film Festival

Held on 17th September at the Crowne Plaza, Auckland. The theme was "Sign of the Times"

2007

First NZSL Week

First NZSL Week. Aimed to raise awareness that New Zealand Sign Language is an official language and is part of New Zealand's culture



2006

NZSL becomes an official language

Deaf Association and many others were involved in the advocacy at Government level for NZSL to become an official language. An active group of Christchurch Deaf community members approached Ruth Dyson, MP, which prompted the Office of Disability Issues to write the Act.

2006

CEO: Rachel Noble

Rachel was on the Executive Board before applying for the role of Chief Executive. In her years as Chief Executive, Rachel was given the task of raising the profile of Deaf Aotearoa and Deaf people across new Zealand and successfully achieved this.

2006

Patron: Hilary McCormack

17th September 2005

2nd Deaf Short Film Festival

Theme “Planet of The Deaf”, 17th September at the Christchurch Town Hall



2005

Second National Hui for Maori Deaf at Orakei Marae

18th July 2004

First Deaf Short Film Festival

Held at the Waipuna Conference Centre in Auckland on 18th July, the theme was “To promote NZSL in Deaf Culture”

16th July 2004

Deaf View II

Held in Auckland from 16 – 18 July the theme was “Together We Prosper – The Way Forward” The keynote speaker was Breda Carty from Renwick College in Australia

2004

President: Kevin Stokes



2002

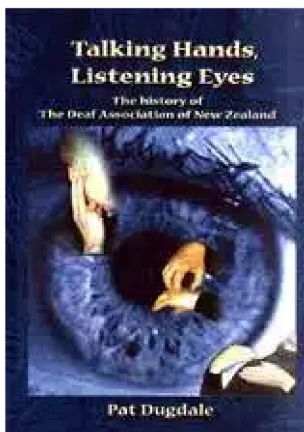
Hosted the 2nd Asia Pacific Deaf Youth Camp

The 2nd Asia Pacific Deaf Youth camp (APDYC) was held from 12-19 January 2002 at the Sir Edmund Hillary Outdoor Pursuits Centre in Turangi. Altogether, there were 43 Deaf youths from 12 different countries, 15 youth leaders, 10 interpreters and a couple of guest speakers present.

2002

Acting President: Karen Mahanga

Karen (now Pointon) has championed Maori Deaf rights and developments for many years. She has also had a long association with Deaf sport organisations, both regionally and nationally

2001

Talking Hands, Listening Eyes (the history of Deaf Association of NZ) published

Talking Hands, Listening Eyes published. This important book outlines the history of the Deaf Association and its services to the Deaf community, listing important events year-by-year from 1975 – 1999.

[Buy this book from Arty Bees](#)

1999

Health Funding Authority grant of \$630,000 to improve psychiatric services for Deaf people

1999

Bridgman proposal for national Deaf Mental Health Survey

Victoria Manning and Geoff Bridgman had worked in mental health for many years and advocated for better Deaf mental health services. Their drafted plan for a Deaf Mental Health Service was not accepted by the National Mental Health Planning Committee, as the Health Funding Agency wanted to spread any funding for Deaf services nationally and within mainstream services. So they proposed running a survey through branch offices to collect data on about 200 Deaf people nationwide. The survey involved questionnaires, recorded client data and interviews with selected DCMs



1999

First Deaf CEO appointed: Jennifer Brain



1998

Tony Walton

Tony helped to link the work of the Deaf clubs, the NZDASA and the development of the NZAD. He believed that the different groups for “the Deaf” should work together. Born deaf to a hearing family, Tony joined the Wellington Deaf Club in 1967, quickly becoming

involved in both community and national work, as president of the WDS and appointed on the Executive of the NZDASA – he later became the first Deaf male president. Actively involved in a range of sports, Tony helped to organise the World Deaf Games in Christchurch in 1989 and was the President of the NZ Deaf Golf Association. In 2001, Tony became the second Deaf person to receive the high award, the Companion of the Order of Merit (CNZM)

1998

Hilary McCormack awarded NZCM for services to the Deaf community

Hilary was involved in the establishment of the NZSL Dictionary and advocated for Government funding for a [NZ Relay Service](#). She was awarded NZCM for services to the Deaf community in 1998.





1998

○ Northland branch office opened

1998

○ Southland Outreach office opened in Invercargill

**1997**

○ **NZSL Dictionary published**

Dictionary launch. After years of successfully collaboration between Victoria University's English Language Institute and Deaf community members, the NZSL Dictionary was published. Lead by Graeme Kennedy, the project team produced and coordinated thousands of signs to feature in the dictionary. Since then the dictionary has been updated and is now on-line

1997

○ **First Deaf Counsellor: Victoria Manning starts in Wellington**



1997

○ **CEO: Francesca Holloway**

1997

○ **Jennifer Brain appointed Council Development Manager**

1996

Literacy Programme set up

○ After years of research and planning, Literacy Programme Coordinators were appointed to oversee the Adult Literacy Programme. This programme aimed to have adult reading and writing with training that works for Deaf available in every city in NZ. It looked at ways to train people to become skilled literacy teachers and ways to train literacy teachers so that they can teach NZSL. Classes were started around the country



1996

Patron: Judy Bailey, TV1 personality and news presenter

1996

Appointment of Interpreting Systems Manager

1996

Taranaki office opened

1995

Tautoko Tangata Turi: the Ako report on needs of Maori Deaf

1995 Regional Hui for the Ako Report. The report was commissioned by Te Puni Kokiri and reported that Maori Deaf suffer on two levels, because of their dual status of being both Deaf and Maori. Acknowledgment had to be made of this dual status for Maori Deaf to fully exercise their tino rangatiratanga and to enable them to fulfil their aspirations in both the Maori and Deaf communities. The report made a number of



recommendations around education programmes, coordination of services, access to information and the development of NZSL to incorporate Maori concepts

1995

President: Susan Hamilton



1995

Appointment of first Interpreter Coordinator

1995

First Maori Deaf Vice-President: Karen Mahanga

1995

Two Literacy Tutors appointed: Suzan Townshend and Helen Keane

1994**8 interpreters graduated from AIT**

Dr Rachel Locker McKee and Dr David McKee directed the first two-year full-time interpreting training course at AIT, which began in 1992. The first 8 students graduated in 1994, with four joining Deaf Association offices and the rest becoming freelance or educational interpreters

1994**Name change to Deaf Association of New Zealand Inc**

DEAF ASSOCIATION OF NEW ZEALAND (INC)
Te Roopu Tari o Aotearoa

**1994****First Maori Deaf Service Coordinator in Auckland****1994****Deaf Language Nest set up at KDEC****1994****Patron: Lance Cairns****1994****National Relay Service set up with Telecom**

1993**First National Hui for Maori Deaf at Orakei Marae: Three Maori Councillors elected**

The aims of the Hui were to identify Maori Deaf needs and wants and how the Deaf Association could best service them and to elect three Maori Councillors. The Hui would also discuss the Maori and Deaf cultural issues that are important for Maori Deaf

1993**President: Angela Sew Hoy****1993****Jennifer Brain appointed Leadership Tutor****1992****Second 5 year plan formulated****1992****NZSL Tutors Association founded**

The Deaf Association has always known the need for NZSL to be taught to hearing people – the families, friends and workmates of Deaf people and also staff and teachers

in deaf education. NZSLTA was formed in 1992 with a membership of 20 tutors and one aim was to develop a national curriculum to teach NZSL.

1992

Interpreter training started at the Auckland Institute of Technology (AIT)

Directors of AIT Interpreter Training Course – Rachel & David McKee

1992

Jaffe Report presented

Written by Russell Jaffe. The report looked at the history of Deaf people in New Zealand, finding that in many ways it was like the history of the Maori people with “tales of oppression and injustice”. Russell recommended that a Maori Liaison Worker be appointed to give specific support to Deaf Maori.

1992

CEO: Tricia Fitzgerald

1991

Captioning on TV1 News at 6pm commenced

The News at Six Subtitling launch

1991

Deaf View Conference held in Auckland

The Deaf View Conference was the first national Conference organised by Deaf people

1991

NZ On Air Report on Television Preferences of the Deaf

1991

National Editorial Board formed to work on NZSL dictionary

1991

Hamilton branch office opened

1991

Russell Jaffe review of NZAD organisation and services

1991

Patron: Lady Shirley McKenzie

1991

President: Jennifer Brain of Auckland

Jennifer was instrumental in proposing and organising the Deaf View Conference

1990

First CEO: Ken Jillings

1990

NZ on Air Survey of Deaf people's priorities for TV services

1990

NZAD Life Skills Trust set up

1990

NZSL Dictionary national meeting held

1988

Social Welfare special grant of \$200,000 for 'communication skills and services'

1988

First Life Skills Centre opened in Auckland by Ken Jillings

President: Hilary McCormack of Christchurch

1987

Manawatu and Hawkes Bay offices opened

1987

First NZAD Living Skills Centre opened in Auckland

1986

Patron: Governor General Sir Paul Reeves

1986

New office opened in Dunedin

1985

First training course for NZSL interpreters held by Dan Levitt in Auckland

Dan Levitt organised this training on the basis that NZSL was the language to be used. As part of their training, the students had to go out and meet Deaf people and record their

signs and the signs that were being used. The lecture notes were saved as a resource for future courses. Graduation was on 12th September 1985 after 14 weeks of training.

1985

First 5 year plan drawn up

1985

Interpreters appointed in Field offices (Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch)

1985

First National Services Coordinator: Ken Jillings

As Service Coordinator, Ken developed the work of the Field Offices in Auckland, Christchurch and Wellington. Ken handled all the administration and finance and supervised the Field Offices.

1985

First Deaf President: Gwen Rapley of Taranaki Deaf Society

1984

Teletext and captions service started

1984

President: Ken Jillings

1983

First National Deaf Awareness Week

Held in April, Deaf Awareness Week was an opportunity to promote “Deaf Awareness” which for the Deaf Association is educating hearing people to support Deaf people by way of changing attitudes, accepting that Deaf people are are part of a culture rather than a disabled group.

1983

Teletext information service launched

Prior to teletext, very little television news and programmes were accessible for Deaf people. There were excuses from government and TVNZ in favour of hearing people for not making technical innovations to support Deaf people eg. Interpreters on screen, interviews showing both people involved. \$800,000 was put into setting up a National Information Service for all disabled people. Teletext was expected to help all disabled groups, not only deaf people, by providing easy access to news and information for people who might have limited access to the wider community.

1983

Government announced permanent funding of 75% of Field Officer salaries

1981

Patron: Governor General Sir David Beattie

1981

Field Office opened in Christchurch and Wellington

David Chilwell and Pat Dugdale with a consultant, Don Manning. Field Office opened in Christchurch with Field Officer David Chilwell and in Wellington with Field Officer Pat Dugdale.

1980

First NZAD Field Officer in Auckland: John Hunt

Thanks to an anonymous donation, the NZ Association of the Deaf was able to appoint John Hunt as the first Field Officer. This was so successful it led to further Field Officers being appointed. The Field Officers were the first service coordination workers. John was proficient in English and sign language and was able to assist many Deaf people.

1979

Bruce McHattie awarded MBE for service to Deaf people

Bruce was a passionate advocate for the rights of Deaf people. A hearing child of Deaf people, he was motivated to change the attitude of hearing people towards his parents and their Deaf friends realising that at the time NZ provided education for Deaf children but did nothing for Deaf adults. He was on the Board of the Auckland Deaf Society for 20 years, gave many hours to voluntary interpreting and social work and became the first NZ Association of the Deaf President.

1978

First Deaf Awareness Week held in Auckland

The Deaf Awareness Week movement started in Auckland when the Quota Club organised events for the first week of May 1978. It was the first time in New Zealand that

so many services for Deaf people had united for a common cause and the week hummed with activities.

1977

First president: Bruce McHattie

1977

First Patron: Governor General Sir Keith Holyoake

1977

Inaugural Meeting of NZ Association of the Deaf (NZAD)

Social work and interpreting, helping with employment, caring for the aged, lobbying for funding and awareness, and helping Deaf young people and their families were some of the main reasons for setting up a national association to represent Deaf adults and provide the services they needed.

The slogan was "Deafness – Let's Face It"

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GENERAL ENQUIRIES

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Freetext: [8223](tel:8223)

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