

PAST PRESIDENTS' PANEL

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Before serving as President, I was on the Executive as Chair of Scientific Committee when Maria Teresa was President, and then Vice President to Frances Salo. Nine years is a significant commitment, but I would like to endorse Maria Teresa's point that the greatest satisfaction is working with colleagues, some of whom I might not have had much to do with during the year. Struggling with the many issues coming to the Executive forges lasting friendships

Much of the work of an Executive is administrative and maintenance of work already done. But some is very challenging and some of necessity must remain confidential. But difficult matters can one addressed by the whole membership at the annual Conference if the setting is appropriately established. The section of "Society Matters" was set up for contentious matters to be fully aired and discussed, before being brought to the AGM for voting. This protected the AGM from being invaded by controversy and division.

In a similar vein, during my presidency Frances Salo, as Chair of Ethics, facilitated two meetings to discuss ethical issues that affected us all. Those of us there remember them as very moving and helpful. My point is that this requires careful setting up and management.

A particular interest of mine has been developing Outreach activities in Sydney and then at the annual Conference. So I thought I would give a short account of this development.

Up to the time I graduated in 1988 there was no formal outreach. Visiting analysts were for members only. This was partly the result of a small number of analysts consumed with training and so limiting their ability to have a more public face. But as I graduated a cohort of us formed and we could take up such activities

At around this time, three events of cosmic significance fell into alignment. I watched with awe as a vast low pressure system full of rain traversed the continent from the Kimberley to the south east, breaking at last a serious and long lasting drought. At the same time in 1985 Bob Hawke became about Prime Minister, breaking another drought. And Neville and Joan Symington arrived in Sydney to stir us into new life. With his experience at the Tavistock, Neville took it for granted we would establish outreach activities. This culminated in his bold plan to hold as a series of public lectures, the 3 year course of theoretical seminars for our candidates. We all gulped, steadied our faint hearts, and got down to it. I think this set the scene of more to come, in particular the development of the Open Day events, which involved the visiting analyst, selected other speakers, and our own members. This is now a well-respected and well attended annual event.

In my time as President, we took this to the limit by hosting the Tustin Conference in Sydney. A massive undertaking but hugely successful

In Sydney the initial set of talks "Engaging with Psychoanalytic Ideas" has developed into PPC@SIP, thanks to the enterprise of Mark Howard. In Melbourne "Models of the Mind" is a well-established yearly activity

I will finish by reflecting that being asked to address the many and varied challenges coming to the President and Executive has been a great privilege and satisfaction, and it is one of the many avenues for personal growth that we have in our group, as well as providing the opportunity of helping our Society to bloom.