



Wanganui Branch Newsletter

October 2022

End of Year - Christmas Meeting

This meeting is set down to be held at the Wanganui East Club, Wakefield Street Wanganui East on **Thursday 24th November 2022 commencing at 11:15 a.m.**

The meeting will feature a report on Council meeting highlights, entertainment and a two-course meal. We hope that our meal will commence around 12:30 pm.

The menu will provide a choice of roast meat, baked ham and battered fish. A range of hot vegetables and cold salads will be available from the self-service buffet. There will be a choice of deserts to complete the meal. Tea and coffee will be available, free of charge.

A range of refreshments purchased at your own cost are available from the bar.

The cost to you will be \$15.00 payable at the door. The Branch is heavily subsidising the balance of the cost of the meal. The costs are increasing and to meet the subsidy guideline requirements as promulgated by the GSA Board, the costs to members will be increased in the future. The Branch committee believes that members will still be getting good value for the meal costs even with an increase at the door charges.

RSVP please to Marian Barclay on 06 343 2789 or to Marian's email address jmbarclay10@gmail.com by **Friday the 18th of November 2022** to inform her that you are coming to the lunch. We would appreciate receiving any apologies.

Please leave a message on Marian's answerphone or on her email. Any message left will be acknowledged if you leave your contact details.

Our guest speaker for this November meeting is Jonathan Sykes who is the leader of strategy and marketing at Wanganui and Partners. This organization is set up to promote Whanganui in a range of activities, venues and locations. This is an opportunity for GSA members to find out more about the actual work of this organization if you are anything like me – read about, heard about it but know very little about it.

National Office has continued with the mailing out of our newsletters. This may mean you receive very advanced notice of this End of Year – Christmas meeting so mark the date on your calendars and be prepared to join members of the GSA in another Branch meeting and hopefully catch up with past work buddies and gain more information about the workings of the GSA's organisation.

If you change your address, please advise Datacom. Freephone 0800 654 731 or email gsf@datacom.co.nz

Also contact your Branch secretary Neil Elgar – phone (06) 345 7139 or mail your information to Villa 74 Summerset Village, 40 Burton Avenue, Wanganui East, Wanganui, 4500; or email wanganui@gsa.org.nz or raglen411@gmail.com.

Wanganui GSA – Chairpersons’ Report for November 2022

Brian Algar and I represented the branch at the Council Annual meeting in Wellington. There were a number of new delegates attending plus our new Executive Officer, Gabe Pang. President Tony Hamilton set out clear meeting protocols that allowed business to flow smoothly throughout the weekend.

The minutes of the last meeting (2020) and the (2021) financial reports were confirmed and discussed. The matter of branch meeting quorums was a hot topic. Rule 6.5 states that 20 members are required for a quorum at an AGM. Without this a branch is unable to operate. Smaller branches have already had to postpone their AGM due to lack of numbers. The importance of signing up spouses after the death of an annuitant was emphasised in order to help keep the GSA as a viable organisation.

The Board has recently undertaken a revision of the GSA constitution in order to allow members to join a meeting by virtual or electronic means. They shall be recorded as being personally present. This was agreed to by Council. Virtual minutes are kept as per normal meetings.

The question of what percentage of funds Branches should hold in reserve was a topic for discussion and it is recommended by the Board that Branches hold a maximum of twice our annual subscription income, and transfer the rest back to National Office. We think that figure is way too low.

Our first guest speaker was Simon Tyler, the CEO of the Government Super Fund, the organisation that is accountable to the Minister of Finance, who invests our contributions (approx. \$5 billion) in order to get the best possible returns without undue risk. At the same time the GSF must pay our entitlement accurately and regularly. Datacom is contracted by the GSF to administer the scheme. Currently there are about 48 thousand annuitants. This is reducing by about a thousand a year with only 1300 current contributors yet to retire.

The GSF has 6 Board members appointed by the Minister of Finance. His letter of expectation is for a decent return on investments in order to lessen the Government contribution. Last year \$900 million was paid out to annuitants, 40% coming from our fund and 60% from the Government.

Quite a lot of time was spent on discussing our current GSA strategic plan. We currently have about 16 thousand fee paying members. Our key aim of our organisation is keeping our members informed through our website, Annuity News (2 a year) and the telephone at National Office. The Board intends to examine how the website experience can be enhanced.

There has been no further progress with the COLA issue. 4000 members would benefit from this payment reducing by about 600 a year. The Board has been in contact with the Minister of Finance over this. Branch liaison and support is a vital task of our organisation. Board members have visited all branches during the year.

Recruiting new Branch members is vital for our future. Hopefully our Wanganui Branch will be able to have an active committee for years to come.

Our current Constitution is largely compliant with the new Incorporated Societies Act due in 2024/25. Some amendment will be discussed at the Council meeting in 2023.

It was pleasing to see that we needed an election for the new Board – 7 candidates stood for 5 positions. The President and Vice-President were elected unopposed.

The second guest speaker was the new Deputy Speaker of the House, Greg O’Connor. It was pleasing to hear from him that there was no talk in government circles of making any changes to our annuity. Long may that continue. He emphasised the importance of our organisation – if we weren’t here a government may decide to change our scheme as there would be little, if any, opposition.

I hope our Branch will continue to be healthy, strong and robust. We need to play our part for this to happen. Please recruit new members and continue to support our committee.

Enjoy Christmas and all the best for the New Year
Trevor Hall
Chairperson