



NELSON BRANCH NEWSLETTER

September 2024

<p><u>Committee 2024 – 2025</u></p> <p>Chairman – Michael Berry</p> <p>Vice Chairman – Alec Waugh</p> <p>Secretary – Donna Horn</p> <p>Treasurer – Denis Wastney</p> <p>Committee members –</p> <p>Tony Greep, Monty Tawhai, Neil Brown, Dulcie Carson, David Cook, Phil Horn</p>	<p><u>Nelson Branch</u></p> <p><u>point of contact:</u></p> <p>Secretary – Donna Horn</p> <p>Telephone – 0800 888 472</p> <p>or 021 150 9111</p> <p>Email - nelson@gsa.org.nz</p>
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From The Chairman

Hello, Nelson Branch GSA members and spouses. It is just over one year since I joined the committee and subsequently became the chairman following the retirement of our previous chairman, John Russell, who sadly passed away in May.

The past year has been a learning experience for me and many of the committee members who joined the committee at the same time. My thanks are due to our stalwart committee members Denis Wastney, Tony Greep, Monty Tawhai and Alec Waugh for their wisdom and experience to keep the Nelson Branch on course whilst I learn the ropes. Having attended my first GSA Council Meeting this month, I am now better versed in guiding the Branch to meet its objectives.

I can understand that to many members, nothing seems to happen between newsletters, but I can assure you that the Committee has been working on various things required to keep the branch afloat. Your participation in the events that we organise is our incentive for our efforts.

Michael Berry

Chairman

GSA Nelson Branch

Christmas Lunch

Tuesday, 10th December 2024

Arrive 11-30 to 11-45 am. Concludes approx. 1-45pm

Come along and gather with your fellow Nelson GSA members.



The classic Christmas Buffet - choice of mains and dessert (any or all!) then coffee or tea. Drinks available at the adjacent bar.

Complimentary Raffle Ticket

Club Waimea

345 Lower Queen Street, Richmond

Free Car Parking at Venue. Bus stops close by.

We need you there! We have a large local membership so would love to see you in person.

The (subsidised) price this year is an attractive **\$15 per person.**

Please register for the lunch before Thursday, 5 December 2024.

Contact our treasurer, Denis Wastney, by email at wastneyd@xtra.co.nz or by telephone on 545 7299 or 027 616 6071. Payment can be made either

- by internet banking to the GSA a/c No. 03 1354 0027969 00 or
- by cash to Denis's locked letterbox at 13 Essex Terrace, Stoke 7011.

Transport to Christmas Lunch

If you have no transport to Club Waimea for the Christmas Lunch, would you please let us know, so that we can see if something can be arranged. Please contact our Secretary, Donna, at 0800 888 472 or nelson@gsa.org.nz

Note that the Nelson eBus Routes 1 and 5 travel along Lower Queen Street and stop outside the nearby Oakwood Retirement Village. Use your Bee Card, which if linked to your Super Gold card, will give you free travel in the off-peak. Route 1 is half-hourly to and from Nelson via Waimea Road. You can use Route 2 from Nelson via Tahunanui and change at Stoke or Richmond to Route 1. Route 5 has one service to and from Motueka that is suitable for this event. Unfortunately, Route 6 from Wakefield does not run at a suitable time.

Branch Activities

The Committee has discussed adding further activities beyond the AGM and Christmas Lunch. The GSA head office can send out additional notices of an event but at a cost to the Branch. We will use email where members have this facility but recognise that those without email must not be excluded from notification of events. In addition, the Nelson Branch section of the GSA website will carry notices of events when they have been organised. Members are welcome to offer suggestions for activities or venues to the Secretary for consideration by the Committee.

GSA Council Meeting 2024

The annual meeting of the GSA Council was held in Wellington on 7 & 8 September. The Council is the supreme ruling body of our organisation and comprises the GSA President and two delegates from each Branch. Also present are the GSA Board and Life Members. Michael Berry and Phil Horn represented the Nelson Branch this year. For both, it was their first time at a Council Meeting and so they were able to meet the Board and the representatives from all the other branches around the country. In addition, it was important that they met the two Head Office Staff, Lyn Buxton and Rachel Starkey, who run GSA's day-to-day business and who did a splendid job of organising the meeting.

Annuity News, the national GSA newsletter, will cover the business aspects of the meeting so this note will just report on a few observations.

- The Board made the point that the GSA is a Branch-led organisation, so its aim is to keep the branches strong and active. To this end, workshops were held where

Branches were asked to consider how they can retain members, how they can support members and to devise a strategic annual plan.

- The Constitution's purpose is to protect the members and is usually employed at a Branch AGM level rather than at GSA Council level.
- The Board has undertaken a financial projection that revealed that income from subscriptions is running 'close to the wind' so that an increase can be expected every three years to keep up with inflation.
- The average age of GSA members is 82.

Change to The Constitution

Legislation changing the Incorporated Societies Act has meant that organisations, such as ours, have had to update their constitution to comply with the new Act. Branches were asked to submit changes that they feel should be made to the Board for consideration. The Nelson Branch committee submitted a proposal for seven changes, but only two were adopted by the Board. The Board felt that only changes necessary for compliance with the new Act should be incorporated at this stage rather than a wholesale review of the constitution. The proposed draft was approved by The Council at the meeting.

Alec Waugh awarded Life Membership

It was a delight to have our Vice-Chairman, Alec Waugh, recognised for his service to the GSA by being awarded Life Membership at the Council Meeting. Alec was overseas so could not receive his award in person, but Michael Berry and Phil Horn were pleased to accept it on Alec's behalf.

Alec had a distinguished career in New Zealand Police from which he retired as a Police Superintendent. He has continuously served for 18 years on the committees of the Wellington, Auckland and Nelson Branches, often in leading roles. In addition, he also served as a Board Member whilst with the Auckland Branch.

Alec Waugh has been a champion for Superannuitants from early in his career in the New Zealand Police and remains dedicated to protecting the rights of Superannuitants both within the GSA and in a wider New Zealand context.

The Committee congratulates Alec on this significant achievement and is pleased to have the benefit of his wide knowledge and experience.

New Zealand Superannuation Issues and Options

Contributed by Alec Waugh

In 2024, The Retirement Commission produced a booklet with the name ***New Zealand Superannuation Issues and Options***. The conclusions reached and the options given make interesting reading. They are reproduced below for our member's interest.

{Note: This article is not about the monthly GSF annuity that we each receive due to our own foresight to join and make payment to a pension scheme (GSF or NPF). Our GSF is, of course, a very useful additional payment to the fortnightly New Zealand Superannuation that each senior NZ citizen does receive.}

- a. New Zealand Superannuation ('NZ Super') is the Government's primary contribution to financial security for a person's later life and ensures an adequate standard of living for older New Zealanders.
- b. The system needs to be fair, stable, and affordable.
- c. NZ Super is the eighth least expensive pension in the OECD, as a proportion of GDP.
- d. NZ expenditure would continue to be well below the OECD average in 40 years without any change to the age of eligibility.
- e. The current age of eligibility for NZ Super is not low relative to other OECD countries: 70% currently have a pension age of 65 or below, reducing to 53% by the 2060s.
- f. Discussion around changes to NZ Super needs to consider a wide range of data to inform decisions.
- g. Any change to the age of eligibility would disproportionately disadvantage manual workers, carers, and those they care for, and those with poor health, due to differences in savings and wealth and ability to remain in paid work after the age of 65. Women, Māori, and Pacific Peoples are overrepresented in those groups.
- h. Extra benefits to support people through to a later age of eligibility would reduce fiscal savings from raising the age.
- i. Introducing income-testing would be fairer than raising the age of eligibility.
- j. Political support for a stable long-term system is crucial. We recommend:

A long-term political accord is important to best serve citizens and there is an opportunity to secure this. The Government should encourage *Te Ara*

Ahunga Ora Retirement Commission to investigate the possibility of a new cross-party accord on the retirement income system to provide stability and certainty for future generations of retirees.

- k. At the very least, the number of parties who have made a political commitment under the *New Zealand Superannuation and Retirement Income Act 2001* could be expanded. This would signal their ongoing commitment to current policy settings and impose special obligations on the Government to disclose whether consultation has taken place with other listed parties and the results of the consultation.
- l. The age of entitlement to NZ Superannuation should remain at 65.

*Source document: *NZ Super Issues and Options 2024* published by Retirement Commission Te Ara Ahunga Ora.

The full 48 page version can be found at this website address:

<https://assets.retirement.govt.nz/public/Uploads/Policy/TAAO-RRIP-NZ-Super-issues-paper.pdf>

Please Notify the Secretary of Changes

One way that we “lose” members is when they change address. Amongst the many other items on your mind when you move, please contact Donna, our secretary, to let her know your new address. Please also advise her if any of your contact details change such as your telephone number or email address even when you haven’t moved. Some of you may have given up Spark’s Xtra email, now that they are charging for it, and moved to another provider. If so, please let the Secretary know so that you will still receive emailed messages from the GSA.

Telephone 0800 888 472 or email nelson@gsa.org.nz