



Newsletter

Manawatu Branch

April 2025

Branch Secretary
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Branch Committee

Chair: Roger Openshaw

Secretary/Treasurer: Graham Poucher

Committee: Don Barrett (Dep Chair), Annette Beasley, John Lowen, Sid Murdie, Chris Saunders and Bob Wolfenden.

Reviewer: Don Scott

Notice of AGM

The 2025 Annual General Meeting of the Manawatu Branch of the GSA will be held at The Verdict Function Room on Tuesday 27th May 2025 at 11:00am. The AGM will be followed by a luncheon. All members, spouses and partners are welcome to attend our Annual General Meeting and luncheon, as outlined below.

Date: Tuesday, 27th May 2025

Meeting Start Time: 11:00am

Lunch: 12.00pm

Venue: Function Room, Verdict Café, 32A The Square, Palmerston North

AGM Agenda

- Opening, Welcome and Apologies
- Previous AGM Minutes – Tuesday 28th May 2024 (Copy attached).
- Chairperson's Report
- Secretary / Treasurer's Report
- Election of Chairperson and Committee Members
- General Business:
 - 2025/26 Annual Plan (Copy attached)
- Any Other Business

Report from the Chair, March 2025

First, I do hope that you have all enjoyed a great Christmas and New Years break. The weather was not always kind to us over Christmas and in early January but has since settled down with some clear sunny days and the promise of more to come.

Partly due to the long summer break, this report will of necessity be relatively brief. Reports for branch chairs are due at the end of this month to be received in good time for the National Office deadline of 4 April. The meetings for 2025 start with the GSA Board in Wellington on 4 March and our own Manawatu branch committee will hold its initial meeting on Thursday 6 March with a follow up meeting on Thursday 3 April. In this newsletter you will find details of our forthcoming AGM which will be held on Tuesday 27 May. I urge you to consider attending this meeting which provides an opportunity to provide your input to the committee and have your questions answered. As usual the meeting will be followed by an excellent luncheon provided by The Verdict Café.

The GSA has now been registered under the new Incorporated Societies Act and our redrafted Constitution has been accepted as compliant with the requirements of the Act. This is a significant accomplishment given that there are nearly 30,000 organisations that need to complete the same action. The efforts of your board have ensured that we were at the front of the list.

Our committee this year is listed at the head of this newsletter. We will have a busy year ahead. For example, we will be actioning the many tasks detailed in our Annual Plan.

As was the case last year I will continue to serve on the GSA Board for 2025. At the time of writing the GSA Board consisted of the following members: Alan Straker (President), Sandie Guscott (Vice President), John Beckham, Anne Grover, Tony Gooding, Alan Peck and myself. Lyn Buxton, our GSA Executive Officer will also be in attendance at our meetings during the course of this year. In addition to being the Manawatu Branch Board liaison person, I will be reporting on Board matters at the Horowhenua-Kapiti Branch AGM (29 May) and the Wellington Branch AGM (24 June). As was the case in 2024, the Board has quite a busy year ahead of it. For example, late last year the Board arranged to meet with representatives from the GSF to discuss any matters of concern to us and this meeting will take place in due course. We currently enjoy a good relationship with GSF, and I am sure that this will continue to be the case in 2025.

In the meantime, I wish all of you the very best for 2025 and I look forward to meeting some of you at this year's branch AGM.

Roger Openshaw
Branch Chair

Secretary/Treasurer's Report

The cost of living continues to rise and presents challenges to us all. The stresses for those dependent on fixed incomes, such as pensioners and superannuitants, are a significant concern to many. By the time you read this you will have received the 2.2% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) to your Annuity and this may have gone some small way towards ameliorating the effect of rising costs.

The contents of this newsletter should give you a clearer picture of the finances and activities of your Branch. As you can see from the enclosed budget and annual plan there is much to do and there are sufficient funds to do it. I look forward to feedback from those members who attend the Annual General Meeting on Tuesday 27th May.

The committee continues to meet at The Verdict conference room which has again been generously provided to us at no cost. This represents a saving of \$300 per year for the Branch. The Branch Committee is in good heart but we are always looking for new members.

Nominations for Chair and Members of the Branch Committee

The current Chairperson and all current Committee Members have accepted nomination for the 2025/26 committee. If, however, anyone wishes to be nominated for either the Chairperson or as a Committee Member, please submit the nomination form at the end of this newsletter to the Secretary. Nominations will also be accepted from the floor at the AGM, providing the nominee is present to accept such nomination.

Membership

Our numbers continue to decline, although we are still getting a few new members moving into the district. The figures below illustrate the movement in membership numbers in each category since 24 January 2024. It is pleasing to note an increase in Pre-Annuitant numbers.

Manawatu Branch Membership as at 16 January 2025

<u>Total</u>	<u>Annuitant</u>	<u>Annuitant Spouse</u>	<u>Surviving Spouse</u>	<u>Pre Annuitant</u>	<u>Pre Annuitant Spouse</u>
740 (-41)	395 (-22)	220 (-12)	106 (-15)	10 (+4)	9 (+4)

Financial

The Branch continues to be in a very sound financial state, with provisional figures for our Accumulated Funds at 31 March 2025 totalling \$18,200. These holdings comply with the GSA policy on reserves and provide sufficient funds to operate the branch over the financial year. Funds held in individual Branch accounts are:

Operating Account **\$ 4,700**

Term Deposits (2) **\$13,500**

The final figures will be presented at the AGM following a review by our Financial Reviewer, Don Scott.

Audit

With the GSA's re-registration under the new Incorporated Societies Act, the accounts for the GSA are required to be audited and that is in addition to the local review of individual Branch accounts. The formal audit will be actioned by National Office based on detailed financial information provided by branches.

Budget

The budget, presented below, is based on a worst case scenario and it is likely that income will be higher than shown and expenditure will be lower. For example the figure for the new computer is effectively a contingency amount as it has yet to be determined whether or not we need to replace the existing computer to run Windows 11.

The budget shows that we have sufficient funds to administer the branch and to complete the activities necessary to support our members.

Graham Poucher
Secretary/Treasurer

Budget for 2025/26

OPENING	\$4,750.00	\$4,892.00	\$4,939.00	\$4,016.00	\$2,523.00	\$2,535.00	\$2,982.00	\$3,489.00	\$3,896.00	\$1,418.00	\$1,925.00	\$2,432.00
	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
INCOME												
Disbursements	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$1,000.00	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00
TD2 Interest	\$33.00	\$33.00	\$33.00	\$33.00	\$33.00	\$33.00	\$33.00	\$33.00	\$33.00	\$33.00	\$33.00	\$33.00
TD3 Interest	\$24.00	\$24.00	\$24.00	\$24.00	\$24.00	\$24.00	\$24.00	\$24.00	\$24.00	\$24.00	\$24.00	\$24.00
Total Income	\$557.00	\$557.00	\$557.00	\$1,057.00	\$557.00	\$557.00	\$557.00	\$557.00	\$557.00	\$557.00	\$557.00	\$557.00
EXPENDITURE												
Stationery:												
Toner	-\$130.00				-\$130.00				-\$130.00			
Envelopes (2 packs)	-\$160.00				-\$160.00				-\$160.00			
Paper	-\$65.00				-\$65.00				-\$65.00			
Labels												-\$200.00
Stamps					-\$40.00							
Sympathy Cards					-\$40.00							
Committee	-\$60.00		-\$60.00		-\$60.00	-\$60.00						-\$60.00
Communication:												
Newsletters		-\$500.00							-\$500.00			
Mobile Phone Con				-\$50.00	-\$50.00	-\$50.00	-\$50.00	-\$50.00	-\$50.00	-\$50.00	-\$50.00	-\$50.00
Functions:												
AGM (40)			-\$1,200.00									
Christmas (60)									-\$1,800.00			
Extras:												
Drinks			-\$220.00						-\$330.00			
Decorations		-\$10.00	\$0.00					-\$100.00				
Hardware:												
Computer				-\$2,000.00								
Printer				\$0.00								
Mobile Phone				-\$500.00								
Total Expend	-\$415.00	-\$510.00	-\$1,480.00	-\$2,550.00	-\$545.00	-\$110.00	-\$50.00	-\$150.00	-\$3,035.00	-\$50.00	-\$50.00	-\$310.00
CLOSING	\$4,892.00	\$4,939.00	\$4,016.00	\$2,523.00	\$2,535.00	\$2,982.00	\$3,489.00	\$3,896.00	\$1,418.00	\$1,925.00	\$2,432.00	\$2,679.00

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Government Superannuitants Association Manawatu Branch held at the Verdict Cafe, 32a The Square, Palmerston North on Tuesday, 28th May 2024

Before opening the meeting, the Chairman invited members present to observe a minutes silence to reflect on those members of the Branch who had passed away since our AGM in May 2023.

The Chairman, Professor Roger Openshaw, welcomed all present, and opened the meeting at 10.40 am.

Attendance

34 Branch members were in attendance and there were two guests (Suzanne Andrews from House of Travel in The Square and Don Scott, our reviewer.).

Apologies

No apologies were received prior to the meeting or from the floor at the meeting.

Minutes of the previous AGM held on Wednesday, 30th May 2023

The Minutes were read by the Secretary (Graham Poucher). Don Barrett moved that they be accepted as a true record. Seconded: Annette Beasley. Carried.

Chairmans/Board Representative Report

Roger advised that as he was now a member of the GSA Board he would add to his Chairman's Report published in the April Newsletter with additional comments as both Chairman and as Board representative. Roger spoke on the following points:

The 100 per cent CoLA for pre-1985 retirees: Roger reported that our president, Alan Straker, has written to the Minister of Finance and Associate Ministers, reminding them of the findings of the 2019 Finance and Expenditure Committee. Thus far, there has been no response but we will keep trying.

The Subscription Increase: Research conducted at Board level over the last few years indicates the necessity of GSA to compensate for reduced income from subscriptions and increased costs through inflation. The current increase will hopefully enable us to continue operating through the next decade.

Return of Excess Accumulated funds to National Office: Roger reminded members that money held by branches is substantially above that required to ensure 24 months of normal branch operations. Council resolved in 2023 that funds in excess of this amount should ideally be managed by the National Office to invest for the benefit of all GSA members.

Incorporated Societies Legislation: The existence of this legislation has necessitated the production of a new Strategic Plan. A draft is being sent to all branches for their consideration subsequent to ratification at Council.

Attendance at AGMs: Roger pointed out that the AGM constitutes a central aspect of branch continuation. Hence, reaching a quorum is vital. Our branch is fortunate in being able to achieve this. There was a suggestion from the floor that the AGM meetings could have Zoom attendance provided; a straw poll of those present indicated that there was not much enthusiasm for this option.

Secretary/Treasurers Report

Secretarial – Graham referred the meeting to his Secretarial Report in the April Newsletter. He noted that it is intended to circulate the minutes from AGM's with the April Newsletter issued in following years. This will ensure that all Branch members have the opportunity to read the minutes and hopefully lead to a few more members attending our AGM.

Finance – Graham noted his appreciation and thanks to Don Scott for reviewing our accounts for the last financial year.

Graham then updated the meeting on the Branch accounts. Due to his being overseas for most of March and April this year, the Financial Statement was published in the April Newsletter using provisional account figures. The final reviewed Financial Statement was presented to the meeting and it was noted that the Branch is approximately two hundred dollars better off than the provisional estimate.

As noted by Roger the GSA Board have been discussing the return of excess accumulated funds to National Office. Graham reiterated that all funds, be that at National Office or individual Branches, are held on behalf of and for the benefit of all the members of the GSA. The GSA policy for Branch reserves is to hold the equivalent of 24 months of annual subscriptions in reserve and a balance equivalent to approximately 6 months of subscriptions in the operating account. With this in mind, and the fact that we make little interest on our operating account, Graham will be presenting to the new committee a proposal to transfer our Branch reserve funds to an appropriate Term Deposit Account (an amount of \$13,500), reduce the balance in our operating account to approximately \$3,500 and transfer the surplus (\$10,000) to National Office for investment. Going forward, it is intended that these figures will be reviewed annually, adjusted if necessary and further excess funds returned to National Office as appropriate.

Graham moved that the reviewed accounts, as presented, were accepted. Seconded: John Lowen. Carried.

Election of Chairperson.

Roger Openshaw vacated the Chair and invited Don Barrett, Deputy Chair, to assume the Chair for the election of Chairperson.

There was only one nomination for Chairperson, namely Professor Roger Openshaw. (*Proposed by Graham Poucher and Seconded by Don Barrett*). Don called for any nominations from the floor. As there were no further nominations Roger Openshaw was duly elected Chairperson.

Roger Openshaw resumed the Chair.

Election of Branch Committee.

The following outgoing 2023/24 Committee Members: Don Barrett, Annette Beasley, John Lowen, Sidney Murdie, Graham Poucher, Chris Saunders and Bob Wolfenden, having agreed to continue on the Committee were duly nominated to serve on the 2024/25 Committee. Roger called for any additional nominations from the floor.

There being no further nominations Roger Openshaw moved that the seven nominees be duly elected to be the Committee for 2024/25. Seconded: Don Barrett. Carried

Reviewer for 2024/25

Roger advised that Don Scott had agreed to continue as the Reviewer for 2024/25 year and moved that Don Scott be appointed Reviewer. Seconded: Don Barrett. Carried.

General Business

Roger called for any General Business items from the floor. None were submitted.

Closing

There being no further business Roger thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 11:15.

Guest Speaker – Ms Suzanne Andrews

Roger Openshaw introduced Suzanne and thanked her for making herself available to address our AGM. Roger then briefly outlined Suzanne's ownership of the House of Travel in the Square and experience in the travel industry.

Suzanne gave a more detailed outline of her experience and how she and her husband came to buy the House of Travel business in 2019. She talked about the struggles they had coping with the close down of the travel industry during the Covid Pandemic in 2020 and 2021.

Suzanne talked on the advantages of using a Travel Agent to book travel and noted that, other than some minor fees associated with airfares; all other costs were covered by the companies that the travel agents deal with for accommodation, tours, cruises, etc. So there is no additional cost to their clients. She talked on the various

forms of travel and noted advantages and disadvantages of each. She had many potential horror stories all of which were resolved by having the assistance of a travel agent available and travel insurance.

She also mentioned a number of pitfalls and risks in individuals booking travel products online. She answered many questions from members and it certainly seemed that there was much more that she could talk about, given more time.

Roger thanked her for her useful and very interesting presentation.

Members then adjourned for an excellent lunch.

Annual Plan 2025/26

The 2024 Council Meeting confirmed the Strategic Plan for the GSA and required each Branch to develop an Annual Plan based on the 5 Strategic Goals.

The following plan was developed by the Manawatu Branch for implementation over the 2025/26 Financial Year. The plan will provide a basis for reporting to the members of the Manawatu Branch in the future.

MANAWATU BRANCH

Annual Plan for 2025/26 FY

[Note: To be updated in March each year.]

Goal 1	Strategies
Communication Members and interested parties are kept informed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Branches, the Board and National Office maintain effective communication. • National Office and Branches publish newsletters at least twice a year. • The GSA website is relevant and up to date.

We will:	How	Who	By	Progress
Issue Newsletters twice a year in April and October.	Forwarded to NO to be distributed with the Annuity News.	Secretary and Chair	Draft forwarded to NO by 04/04/25 and 30/09/25.	
Review GSA Website to determine appropriate and up-to-date Branch content.	Access and review information on GSA Website.	Committee Member(s) to be determined.	31/08/25	
Establish Branch mobile phone for better communication.	Purchase mobile phone through NO and add number to all communications.	Secretary	30/04/25	
Send Birthday Cards.	To members over 90	Secretary	As required.	
Send Sympathy Cards.	To partners of non-annuitant members.	Secretary	As required.	

Goal 2	Strategies
Advocacy The GSA is proactive in referring deficiencies and anomalies in the current provisions of the GSF schemes to the relevant authorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The GSA acts to ensure that Government and all political parties recognise the GSA as the authoritative voice of government superannuitants. • The Board lobbies Party leaders, Members of Parliament, election candidates and Government officials necessary on GSA issues. • The Board reports annually to the Council regarding advocacy on outstanding issues • The GSA maintains a constructive relationship with the Government Superannuation Fund Authority (GSFA).

Board and National Office will undertake activities associated with Goal 2.

Goal 3	Strategies
Organisation The GSA works effectively in maintaining quality services to members and remains viable, flexible and committed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The GSA has a rolling three-year strategic plan • Branches operate under the Strategic Plan and report annually to Branch members. • The GSA is responsive to members and keeps them informed about issues they raise and about GSA activities. • Branches promote fellowship among members through planned social activity. • National Office and Branches prepare annual budgets and monitor financial performance.

We will:	How	Who	By	Progress
Develop the Branch Annual Plan to present to members at AGM.	Attach to April Branch Newsletter.	Secretary	31 March each year.	
Develop the Branch Budget to present to members at AGM.	Attach to April Branch Newsletter.	Secretary	31 March each year.	

Goal 3 Continued:

We will:	How	Who	By	Progress
Review financial position annually to determine level of excess funds to be returned to National Office	By comparing requirements for following financial year (the budget) against current holdings.	Branch Committee.	31 March annually.	
Arrange for a subsidised Lunch following the AGM.	Hold AGM at an appropriate venue.	Secretary	May each year.	
Arrange a subsidised Christmas Lunch.	Organise appropriate venue.	Secretary	November each year.	
Investigate the potential for Area Meetings at outlying centres.	Define meeting format and survey members to establish if there is any interest.	Branch Committee.	31/08/25 to advertise in October Newsletter.	
Develop Branch Committee Succession Plan	Confirm commitment of current committee and develop targeted approach to members e.g. younger members	Branch Committee	31/08/25 to comment on in October Newsletter.	

Goal 4	Strategies
Support for Members The GSA is committed to the support of its members to ensure that their annuity is protected into the future.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Office and Branches ensure that members are treated fairly and with respect. • Branches provide advice in relation to their annuity to spouses and families after a bereavement.

We will:	How	Who	By	Progress
Review local obituaries to identify members who have died.	Search obituaries published in Manawatu Standard weekly.	Secretary	Each week.	
Provide advice in relation to their annuity to spouses and families after annuitant death.	Formal Letter	Secretary	As required.	
Respond to requests from members for information.	Email or letter	Secretary	As required.	

Goal 5	Strategies
Recruiting The GSA actively pursues the recruitment of new members and retention of existing members to ensure its continuing survival as an influential and relevant organisation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Branches initiate local activity in support of the national recruiting plan of non-GSA members (surviving spouses, annuitant non-members in GSF and NPF, pre-annuitants and lapsed members).

We will:	How	Who	By	Progress
Follow up with surviving spouses (pending members) to offer membership of GSA.	Formal letter, GSA pamphlet and self addressed envelope for return.	Secretary	Within 2 months of bereavement.	
Follow up with lapsed members.	Phone call and/or letter.	Branch Committee	End of 2025	

AGM Luncheon at The Verdict Cafe

At the conclusion of the formal part of the AGM, lunch will be served. The full cost of the lunch is \$60.00, however, the Committee has agreed to subsidise this cost in accordance with GSA policy, thereby reducing the cost to members attending to just \$30.00 per person. The menu for the lunch is detailed below.

If you wish to attend the AGM Lunch, please complete the form below and return to the Secretary at 10 Madison Avenue, Palmerston North 4414 by **no later than Monday 19th May 2025** or E-mail details to Manawatu@gsa.org.nz.

Allow at least five days if forwarding form by post.

I/We will be attending the Luncheon on Tuesday, 27th May at The Verdict Cafe, The Square, Palmerston North

Name(s).....

Address:.....

Phone ().....

Number Attending (Cost \$30.00 per person)

Dietary Requirements:.....

Payment may be made by:

Internet Banking: WESTPAC Acct "Manawatu Br GSA",

Account No: **03-0726-0578952-00**, (please ensure you enter your name in the Particulars Panel) Or

At your Bank by **Bank Deposit** (Account details as above); please ensure your name is included as Depositor.

LUNCHEON MENU

Main Course:

Champagne ham on the bone served with mustard fruits
Rosemary infused lamb with mint jelly
Mini minted baby potatoes
Hot roast vegetable salad with balsamic dressing
Steamed vegetable medley with hollandaise drizzle
Crunchy slaw
Basket of farmhouse breads and buns

Dessert:

Fresh fruit salad
Tiramisu log
Lemon meringue pie
Whipped cream

GOVERNMENT SUPERANNUITANTS ASSOCIATION OF NZ (Inc)

Manawatu Branch

Nomination Form

Date:_____

I, _____ wish to nominate _____
for the position of (tick as appropriate)

Chairperson		Committee Member	
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Seconded by _____ Accepted by Nominee_____