



AUCKLAND BRANCH NEWSLETTER APRIL 2024

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Report from the Chair



This is the third year that I have been Chair and I am privileged to be able to lead the Auckland Branch. We are not quite the largest Branch in New Zealand, but with over 3,500 members, we want to provide support and social opportunities for our members. We hold four Branch meetings every year and I encourage you to take the opportunity to attend these. We have some great guest speakers this year on ageing well both physically and emotionally. Have a look at the details later in this newsletter. I have noticed over the last few years that those who regularly attend these functions are able to make connections with colleagues from their previous work life and make new connections with like-minded people.

Increase to Subscription

From 1 April 2024 the annual subscription will increase to \$39.00 – this is an increase of 50 cents per pay day. This has been necessary because if we do nothing to increase our income our financial reserves will be depleted by around 2035. At the same time, we are hoping to recruit more members through a letter from our President which is being sent to non-members with the annual letter we all receive from Datacom. We would appreciate it if you would also encourage people, you know who are non-members of GSA but have contributed to the Government Superannuation Fund, to join our organisation. There is strength in numbers when it comes to protecting our annuity.

GSA Constitution

At present the Board has been revising our Constitution as we are required to re-register with the Registrar of Incorporated Societies by 5 April 2026. Our aim is to have a final version ready for approval at this year's Council. The draft contains all the relevant items from

the current one and we don't anticipate any significant changes from what we are doing at present.

Rectifying CoLa Anomaly

We are still focused on CoLa to rectify the anomaly for those members who retired before 1985 and did not receive their full entitlement as promised by the Government. Our President, Alan Straker, has written to the new Minister of Finance the Honourable Nicola Willis, outlining the fact that the select committee have already made a strong recommendation to Government to rectify this anomaly and we seek urgent action from them.

Here are the members of your Board and your Auckland Branch committee:

GSA Board Members

President – Alan Straker (Marlborough)

Vice President – Sandie Gusscott (Auckland)

Board Members:

Robert John Beckham (Southland)

Anne Gover (Southland)

Michael Law (Waikato)

Roger Openshaw (Manawatu)

Alan Peck (Wellington)

Auckland Branch Committee

Chair Sandie Gusscott – Education

Vice Chair Craig Jensen – Science

Committee Members

Rosemary Bell – Defence

Eric Bowater – Education & North Shore Sub Branch

Neil Carey - Railways

Murray McElwain – Railways and 80 Plus

Claire Couch – Education

Denise Greenwood – University

Keith Rawlings – Army

Max Thomson – Post Office

Andrea Beechey – Secretary

Sandie Gusscott

Chairperson

Presentation from Professor Ngaire Kerse at the March Branch Meeting

Thank you to everyone who attended this meeting. It was a thought-provoking presentation on the results of many years of research that Ngaire has led and been involved in on the ageing experience for a range of ethnic groups in Aotearoa, New Zealand. Ngaire is currently the Joyce Cook Chair in Ageing Well at the University of Auckland. The goal of her research is to help older people plan for good health and wellbeing in later life, to allow older New Zealanders to share their knowledge with future generations and to inform the development of local and national policies which benefit older people.

If you would like to know more there is a lot of information about Ngaire's research on the internet. Also, to those of you who would like to try the Ronnie Gardiner cognitive method (Ngaire took us through this at the meeting), here is the link: <https://rgm-nz.auckland.ac.nz/> If you would like to be involved in Ngaire's collaborative research project please have a look at this website <https://ccreateage.auckland.ac.nz/>. As requested, we donated Ngaire's speaking fee to the Auckland City Mission where she works part time at the Calder Centre as a GP.

Neil Eric George Carey

Neil has represented NZ Railway annuitants for 24 years over two committees. His knowledge and contribution to the Auckland Branch is invaluable. He has provided this fascinating summary of his life and work for our newsletter.

"I was born in Mt Eden in December 1941 (3 days after the bombing of Pearl Harbour to be precise!). I was raised in Mt Roskill and attended Dominion Road Primary, Balmoral Intermediate and Mt Roskill Grammar schools.

As a youngster I always had a keen interest in trains and wanted to be a railway engine driver when I left school. So, in 1957, as soon as I turned 15, I joined the NZ Railways (NZR) locomotive branch at the old downtown steam locomotive depot on Quay Street as an engine cleaner. I earned 2 shillings and 4 pence an hour. In late 1959 I was promoted to be a steam locomotive fireman and this was the start of my 6-year apprenticeship to becoming an engine driver. I qualified to drive express passenger trains in 1969.

One of the many highlights of my railway career that comes to mind was firing the last steam locomotive in Auckland Station in 1972. Another was 13 years later, in 1985, when I had the honour of driving the same restored locomotive at the head of the North Island Main Trunk Construction Centennial train out of the old Auckland Beach Road Station (now the Strand Station). In 1999, after 42 years of NZR service I decided to take early retirement.

On the matrimonial scene, Eileen and I got married in the Onehunga Methodist Church in September 1966. We have 3 children and 2 grandchildren and we have lived in the same house in Hillsborough for the past 57 years.

Soon after retiring from NZR, I became a member of the NZ Railway Superannuitants Association (NZRSA) and in



2001 I was elected to the office of Chairman of the Auckland Branch and held that position until the merger of the NZRSA with the GSA in 2014. Since then, I have been on the Auckland Branch committee as a co convenor for the Railways sub-group.

I was led to believe that your pastimes and hobbies should be divorced from your day job but for me it didn't actually work out that way. With the establishment of the Glenbrook Vintage Railway near Waiuku in 1970 I became actively involved with the operation of the Railway and also served as General Manager for a number of years. Eileen thought "if you can't beat 'em, join 'em" and so she became the refreshment supervisor at the Glenbrook Station for several years. After 50 years of continuous service at Glenbrook I decided to take my second retirement from a railway in 2019.

My other hobby with a passion is building large Meccano models of steam locomotives that I have either worked on in my railway career or have had some connection with. That's me in the photo in 2022 at Glenbrook with a Meccano model steam locomotive.

I trust the foregoing is of interest to GSA members."

Neil Carey

2024 Member Events

Auckland Branch Annual General Meeting – Tuesday, 4th June 2024

Please join your committee at 10.30am at the Western Springs Garden Community Hall 2, 956 Great North Road, Western Springs for the AGM. We will commence with morning tea and then Sandie Gusscott will chair the AGM which will include an address from our President, Alan Straker. Then our speaker, who is from **The Third Age Foundation**, will give the following presentation:

Forming Flourishing Groups in the Community

The Third Age Foundation is a registered charity who believe that emotional wellbeing plays a big role in in our overall health and longevity. They assist people in their third age to form Flourishing Groups and then encourage participants to embrace all the benefits of becoming older. Once the participant is comfortable, they can share some of their own personal experiences with the group. It's a very safe place to make friends, share and learn. Our guest speaker is a facilitator of a Flourishing Group which currently meets in a central Auckland suburb.

The event concludes at 12 midday. Please bring your spouse or a guest and register attendees with our Secretary, Andrea by phoning 0800 888 472 or emailing auckland@gsa.org.nz

Auckland Branch Meeting – Tuesday, 17th September 2024

We have invited a representative from Audika to talk to members about:

Hearing Loss and Dementia

Audika has been accredited by Alzheimer's NZ as Dementia Friendly. This talk will explain how hearing loss can affect quality of life and psychological wellbeing. It covers how monitoring and managing hearing loss is important as we age. We have a special guest who is going to share her own hearing loss journey with you.

It is being held at the Western Springs Garden Community Hall 2 starting at 10.30am. A catered morning tea will be provided. Please bring your spouse or a guest and register attendees with our Secretary, Andrea by phoning 0800 888 472 or emailing auckland@gsa.org.nz No apologies are required for this meeting.

Auckland Retired Railways Group Mid-Year Function

All GSA members, partners and friends of the GSA are invited to the mid-year function on Thursday, 20th June 2024 at the Manurewa Cosmopolitan Club, Manurewa

- ❖ Doors open at 11am and lunch will be served at 12.30pm
- ❖ RSVP by Monday, 10th June to Murray McElwain Ph 09 266 9959 or email murraymc2018@gmail.com
- ❖ Members and partners please provide \$15 (non-GSA members \$27) cash per person in an envelope with the names of those attending. Sorry, no change will be given and cheques won't be accepted.

North Shore Sub Group Annual General Meeting

Please join us at the Birkenhead RSA on Friday, 12 July 2024 commencing at 10am with a morning tea. Your committee will then conduct the AGM and bring you up to date with GSA business.

- ❖ At 11 am we introduce our speaker, Peter Marshall who is a former NZ Police Commissioner and former High Commissioner to the Cook Islands
- ❖ At 12 midday a light luncheon will be served.
- ❖ Please register by emailing Jack Harris on jack4andmary@gmail.com or Ph 09 2145729.

Have you let the GSA know your new contact details?

If your circumstances change and you move to another house or into a retirement village, please let us know so that we can continue to support you. You can record or update your contact details by accessing our database through the GSA website <https://www.gsa.org.nz> or contact our Branch Secretary directly by phone or email.

Auckland Branch
Draft Financial Statement for Year Ended 31 March 2024

31 March 2023	31 March 2024	Financial performance (Profit/Loss)
		Income
31,650.91	28,778.35	Subscriptions (deducted GSF)
2,195.18	2,026.79	Subscriptions (deducted NPF)
1,368.36	1,015.36	Subscriptions (paid direct)
1,380.00	1,726.00	Functions Received
2,669.11	3,778.24	Interest Received
		Donations
39,263.56	37,324.74	Total Income
		Expenses
4,626.43	5,557.66	Functions
7,028.59	6,761.67	Communications
2,543.03	3,498.65	Organisation
17,274.10	18,265.44	Remuneration
		Office function
18.75	20.50	Financial
708.96	1,747.13	Income tax
		General
32,199.86	35,851.05	Total Expenses
7,063.70	1,473.69	surplus (deficit) for year
31 March 2022	31 March 2023	Financial position (Balance Sheet)
115,640.94	122,704.64	Accumulated funds 1 April (previous year)
7,063.70	1,473.69	Surplus/Deficit (current)
(20,000.00)	(34,000.00)	Distributions paid to National Office
102,704.64	90,178.33	Total (Accumulated Funds current)
		Represented by
		Assets
12,172.65	11,698.37	Cash account
18,917.86	5,643.53	Savings account
71,844.74	72,934.15	Term deposits
130.00	130.00	Petty Cash
103,065.25	90,406.05	total cash/bank
		Accrued interest
		Less liabilities
		Sundry accruals
360.61	227.72	Kiwibank Credit Card
102,704.64	90,178.33	

Disclaimer: This is an interim financial statement and as such has yet to be examined by our Reviewer. The reviewed financial statement will be published on our website prior to the AGM on 4th June 2024.