



Secretary/Treasurer: Adrienne Dodge
Email: auckland@gsa.org.nz
Phone: 0800 888472
GSA website: www.gsa.org.nz

From the Chair

Hi everyone. Welcome to Auckland Team GSA!
 In the photo are your committee team and from left to right starting from the back row are Murray McElwain, Neil Carey, Rosemary Bell, Mark Leys, Ian Ramsay, Ron Garnett, Larry Robbins (Vice Chair), Brian Lewis (Chair), Eric Bowater, Margaret Garnett.



I came to Auckland Team GSA relatively recently and for my sins found myself elected as Chair at our last AGM having been nominated, seconded, hatched and dispatched before my brain could move from neutral to even 1st gear! It came as a rude shock when Mark decided not to continue as Chair after 10 years of dedicated service and the then potential loss of all his knowledge was more than concerning. He leaves big footprints to follow and although I too have served as in the Police his imprint from his size 14 shoes is massive and I do not intend to attempt to follow in his footsteps which really is mission impossible. I will have to be content to create my own footprints and bring a different leadership style to the committee team which may well be less hands on.

Briefly my background in the NZ public service dates from 1973 after I migrated from England. Initially, I joined the Customs Dept working in Lyttelton and Wellington before moving to a management role in Immigration Head Office in the Dept of Labour. My career extending over 37 years has been varied having been seconded to MFAT when serving at the NZ High Commission in Tonga (and for a short time in Samoa) and later with Internal Affairs when running Ministerial Offices on two occasions as an apolitical public servant serving Ministers in both Labour and National administrations. I have always had a deep

Newsletter

Auckland Branch

October 2019

C/- 26 Mount St John Ave

Epsom

Auckland 1051

interest in Refugees and in mid to late 1970's served on the then Interdepartmental Committee determining refugee applications from people at risk who had made it to New Zealand. At that time the Committee's role was to make recommendations to both the Minister of Immigration and the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Later I travelled to both Bangkok and Hong Kong to bring large contingents of refugees accepted for resettlement in NZ and both were incredible experiences. My last role before retirement was as Registrar of the Refugee Status Appeals Authority (RSAA) – an independent Judicial Tribunal based in Auckland but administered by the Department of Labour. I therefore have a range of experience covering the core public service including representing NZ overseas, experience within the Executive arm of Government from the Beehive and Parliamentary environments and the Judicial arm of Government from which, although dated, I can draw on in fulfilling my role as Chair of Auckland Team GSA which of course is a completely new experience.

Recently Mark, Adrienne and myself attended the 2019 GSA Council held in Wellington and a report on this will be found in the Annuity News. Mark and Adrienne were our delegates whilst I went along to learn the ropes. I want to warmly congratulate Mark on his award of Life Membership of the GSA – a tremendous and well deserved recognition of all his contributions to the GSA both at Board and Auckland Branch level and we are all extremely proud of him and his achievements.

As to how Auckland Team GSA operates going forward we are currently looking at extending the number of sub committees. They are in place in respect to the North Shore, Railways and Papakura sub branches but there is a considerable amount of work that cannot simply be allowed to devolve to one or two Committee team members. We are therefore considering the establishment of three more sub committees each headed by a convenor dealing with such matters as Finance, Admin, HR and Health and Safety, another dealing with Policy and a further one planning and managing Branch and AGM meetings. Hopefully by the time you read this publication a decision will have been made as to whether or not to move in this direction.

In drawing to a close my initial report to you I would like to say what a pleasure it is to meet members at Branch / AGM meetings. I will endeavour to attend meetings and events at North Shore, Railways and Papakura at least once during the year and I look forward to doing so.

We now have to fund the printing costs of this newsletter (formerly a National Office expense) but one way you can help GSA is to elect to receive the newsletter by email if you have such facilities or can have it sent to a family member or friend's email address who could print off a hard copy for you. If you are happy to do this please get in touch with Adrienne, our Secretary/Treasurer, to organise this on your behalf.

Speaking of Adrienne we are so fortunate to have her working for us. The passion, commitment, experience and knowledge she brings to the role is immense and she is absolutely pivotal to the success of Auckland Team GSA. As a person holding GSA membership rights herself as a spouse member we have now invited her to be co-opted onto the Committee and that is a major plus for us.

As a final thought we are all having to adjust to major changes as organisations overlook or appear to care little for the needs of seniors and these are, and will be, challenging, but are not going to fade away and innovation is the key to finding solutions. Let us embrace and move with the times – however impacted and personally disdaining they may be.

Brian Lewis
Chair Auckland Team GSA

Writing Your Personal Memoirs or Writing Your Family History?

You may through your will be able to leave money and possessions to your descendants, but surely the most valuable legacy to hand on is the stories about yourself and your ancestors.

Some people conflate “Memoirs” with “Family History” but the two are best thought of as two distinct activities. Memoirs are your personal life history. You may use your own interior memories, your photo albums, any diaries you have kept, preserved documents about your work, activities and achievements, and anything else that jogs your memory.

Who is your target audience? Firstly, yourself. At this stage of your life you are like a tramp reaching a high pass after slogging your way up difficult terrain, and looking with satisfaction down the way you have come. You are able to reflect philosophically on your life and acknowledge the good and bad things that happened, the successes and failures. Secondly, your children and grandchildren and other related descendants, who will be fascinated to learn what you did and when, and what your thoughts and feelings were.

If you are well-equipped to write a long-form continuous narrative from birth to the present day, then do so. But an alternative format is a series of little

vignettes, “short stories” that you remember, with details showing your descendants your way of growing up and living as an adult. Print multiple copies of your memoir. What you write is your remembered story, so it doesn't matter too much if your recall is not academically accurate.

Your Family History, on the other hand, has you and your generation as the end-point, and needs to be as objective and accurate as you can make it. You are endeavouring to satisfy your curiosity about where you have come from, genetically and culturally. It is a much bigger project, and will almost certainly involve collaborating with fellow-descendants or building on what others have done before you. Begin with what you know of your parents' lives. Not just dates and places, but include what you know or can discover about them as people—before you were born, during your childhood and in their later lives. Be critical where necessary, but always try to put a kindly slant on things. Then, if you can, push back further into your ancestry: who arrived in New Zealand, what they did and when. “Family traditions” need to be corroborated by objective data, if at all possible. You need to be reasonably computer-literate to explore NZ electoral rolls, PapersPast archives, NZ Birth/Death/Marriage records, shipping records, and the census records and parish records of the British Isles and other countries. Even if you don't have your own computer or can't afford a subscription programme like Ancestry, the staff in family history sections in public libraries around the country are usually very willing to help you.

I like this genealogical quote from someone in 1943:

“In each family we are called to find the ancestors. To put flesh on their bones and make them live again. To tell the family story and to feel that somehow they know and approve... Those who have gone before cry out to us “Tell Our Story”. So we do. In finding them, we somehow find ourselves”.

I am basing the above suggestions on my own experience, as an excellent way in retirement years to keep one's brain cells in good working order.

Eric Bowater, GSA Auckland Branch Committee

She'll be right BUT will she?

Are you in a de facto relationship? Do you have a partner but no marriage certificate?

In recent weeks I have had contact with several female partners of recently deceased members who, because there is no marriage certificate, are either struggling to prove their entitlement or who are unable to prove it to Datacom's satisfaction.

While our Annuitant members have talked to their partners about remembering to contact Datacom to apply for their entitlement, no documentation has been

gathered to help them prove their case for to receive up to 50% of what the Annuitant received.

Datacom does not keep a file of spouses/partners therefore it is up to the partner to prove that the partnership was shared in all sense of the word. Please ensure that you collate the information that may assist with the application on the Annuitant's death. For example, at least one joint bank account or proof of shared finances, proof of shared property and/or assets, bill payments, correspondence addressed to both spouse and partner - for at least five years prior to the member's death. This information will assist the GSFA in processing the application.

Please note that if you do not have the above information it will become very hard for your partner to provide enough information to prove their entitlement to a portion of your Annuity.

It will also benefit your partner to add them to the GSA Database as a spouse member. There is no additional cost to you for this and if they contact us at the time of the Annuitants death we will be happy to provide information and support if required.

Adrienne Dodge, Auckland Branch Secretary



GSA Auckland Branch

Invite all Members and their Spouses/Partners to their Christmas Function
Kindly hosted by their North Shore Sub-Group

Friday 22 November 2019

At Birkenhead RSA, Recreation Drive, Birkenhead
Tea & Coffee, Mix and Mingle 10.30am, Lunch 12noon

\$19.00 per person

RSVP and payment before Saturday 16 November to
Auckland Branch Secretary, 26 Mount St John Ave, Epsom, Auckland 1051

No door sales

If paying by cheque please make cheque payable to 'GSA Auckland Branch' and enclose the form below,

or deposit via internet banking into Kiwibank Account no. 38-9010-0813532-00 giving your name and GSF/NPF Annuity number as reference, and then email auckland@gsa.org.nz with your GSF/NPF Annuity number, your address, telephone number and the name/s of those attending.

Menu

Main Course - Hot ham on bone, roast chicken, roast lamb, chilled seafood platter, assorted salads, roast potatoes, three vegetables

Dessert - Christmas pudding, apple shortcake, fresh fruit salad, pavlova, whipped cream

GSA Auckland Branch Christmas Function

Please complete this form and return with your cheque to 26 Mount St John Ave, Epsom, Auckland 1051

Attendees names

.....

Address.....

Phone no.....

Number attending.....

GSF/NPF Annuity No.

Your Committee

Brian Lewis (Chair)	MBIE	441 4654
Larry Robbins (Vice Chair)	Defence	478 4782
Adrienne Dodge (Secretary)		0800888472
Neil Carey	Railways	625 4058
Rosemary Bell	Defence	838 5575
Eric Bowater	Education	480 5753
Murray McElwain	Railways	266 9959
Ian Ramsay	Companies Office	378 6629
Mark Leys	Police	
Ron Garnett	Post Office	298 7812
Margaret Garnett		298 7812

Honorary Life Members

Mr Hugh Dickinson, Mrs Ruth McLay, Mr Mark Leys

Auckland Branch Meetings, Horticultural Hall, 990 Great North Road, Western Springs 10.30am

22 November 2019** Christmas function on North Shore – see Page 3 for details	2 June 2020 AGM
3 March 2020	

Committee Meetings Horticultural Hall, 990 Great North Rd Western Springs

29 October 2019	28 April 2020
26 November 2019	26 May 2020
28 January 2020	30 June 2020
25 February 2020	28 July 2020

North Shore Sub-Group Meetings **Birkenhead RSA, Recreation Drive, Birkenhead (4th Friday March, June & November 10.00am)**

22 November 2019 ** see Page 3 for details of function	26 June 2020 AGM
27 March 2020	27 November 2020

Papakura Sub-Group Meetings **Papakura Anglican Church Hall, opposite the Council Chambers, Coles Crescent, Papakura (Mar, June, Sept 10.00am)**

26 March 2020	24 September 2020
25 June 2020 AGM	

The inevitable demise of the cheque book

Financial institutions and Government Departments - Kiwibank specifically - are phasing out cheques as a means of payment.

As from 30 September 2019 Kiwibank will cease issuing replacement cheque books and as at 28 February 2020 Kiwibank will no longer accept cheques as legal tender.

What this means for you is that even if you do not bank with Kiwibank, should you write out a cheque for a Kiwibank customer they will be unable to deposit it into their Kiwibank account.

The IRD and ACC have advised that they will not be accepting cheques as from March 2020 but more information on this is unclear at this stage.



Auckland Retired Railways Group

Invite all Members, Partners, Friends of the GSA to their Christmas Function
Thursday 21 November 2019
Manurewa Cosmopolitan Club, 6 Alfriston Road, Manurewa

Mix & Mingle 11.30a.m. Lunch 12.30
\$15 per person (note price increase)

RSVP and payment by
Thursday 12 November 2019 to
Murray McElwain (Ph 266 9959)
Villa 136, Acacia Cove Village, 131 Wattle Farm Road, Manurewa 2103

Make cheques payable to 'Government Superannuitants Association'

Please enter by Car Park Door
If a member of RSA or Cosmopolitan Club, enter your name and membership number on sheet with Lynne
(Liquor Law Requirement)