

Chairperson's Report - June 2021



Last year was a most unusual year for the Auckland Branch – not just because of Covid 19, which meant that we have had to cancel a number of Branch meetings, but also because we were threatened with merging or amalgamating with another Branch, since there were not enough committee members. Our President, Tony Hamilton, sent out a 'call for action' which resonated with a number of us. We didn't want our Branch, one of the largest in New Zealand, to close. As a result we now have eight new members and five existing members.

There is huge potential to recruit new members and so please contact anyone you know who receives the government superannuation and encourage them to join if not a member. At present there are 4,300 members in the Auckland Branch and it is estimated that there is potential to recruit that number again. The GSA is the only organisation dedicated to protecting their annuity. The more members that we have the stronger is our case to Parliament. Even though there is a Parliamentary Act regarding the fund, less and less Parliamentarians understand how the fund works. The GSA is dedicated to ensuring that our fund is protected so that we can continue to receive our annuity.

Financially the Branch is in a strong position and gaining new members will help to maintain that position.

Adrienne Dodge, our Branch Secretary/Treasurer of 8 years, resigned in November and I very much appreciate that she continued in her role until the end of March. She has given our branch exemplary service, and nothing has been beyond her capabilities.

We welcome Andrea Beechey as our new Secretary/Treasurer after receiving a good response from our January email to our members regarding the position. Andrea has a background in payroll accounting, and customer service.

The document *The Future of GSA – A Long Term Perspective (2017)* described failure at the Branch level, stating that 'over time amalgamation or mergers are inevitable', little realising the reality could be so close. As a result of a call to action the response from our Auckland members has been extremely encouraging.

It is a great privilege to be your new Chairperson and after spending a number of years since retirement, in governance and leadership roles both in and out of the government sector, I am excited to bring my skills to this new role.

Your committee is as follows:

Sandie Gusscott – Chairperson

Rosemary Bell – Defence

Murray McElwain – Railways

Neil Carey – Railways

Keith Rawlings – Army

Bret Bestic - Army

Nancy de Freitas – Tertiary education

Craig Jensen – Vice-Chairperson

Eric Bowater – Education and North Shore

Margaret (Peggy) Nepia – Education

Peter Buchanan – DSIR

Max Thomson – Post Office

Claire Couch – Education

Sandie Gusscott
Chairperson