



## NELSON BRANCH NEWSLETTER

**December 2023**

### **COMMITTEE 2023/24.**

**Chairman** John Russell (currently)

**Vice Chairman** Tony Greep

**Treasurer** Denis Wastney

**Secretary** Donna Abrams

**Committee Members:** Alec Waugh, Monty Tahwai, Phil Horn, David Cook, David Pluck, Dulcie Carson, Michael Berry, Neil Brown

**Nelson Branch:** [nelson@gsa.org.nz](mailto:nelson@gsa.org.nz)

**Secretary:** Donna Abrams

**Contact:** 021 150 9111

### **2023 AGM held in April**

Firstly the 2022/23 committee would like to take this opportunity of thanking those of you who put their names forward for the new committee. It was very much

appreciated. We thank Donna Abrams, Phil Horn, David Cook, David Pluck, Dulcie Carson, Michael Berry, and Neil Brown who were nominated for the committee. We congratulate Donna as our new Secretary.

However, we still need a CHAIRMAN. Due to health reasons John will be leaving the committee after the next social or even before, so a replacement chairman is now urgent. I also understand that the treasurer will also be finishing at the AGM next. Its time for some new people at the top.

### **CHRISTMAS LUNCH**

This will be held at Club Waimea, Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> December commencing 11.30am. Phil has given us a great menu and the committee are to subsidise our meal so the cost will be \$20.00.

Could you please contact Denis at [wastneyd@xtra.co.nz](mailto:wastneyd@xtra.co.nz) or phone **545 7299 or 027 616 6071** to register for our lunch or internet banking to GSA account **031 354 0027969 00**.

If you are paying by cash Denis's address is 13 Essex Drive, Stoke. He has a lock on his Sletterbox. Could you please register by 7 December. Unfortunately, if you register and do not attend, we apologise, but we cannot reimburse you as we will have already paid the caterer.

### **TRANSPORT TO CHRISTMAS LUNCH.**

We are asking our members that if transport is a problem to get to our lunch would you please let us know. Please contact Donna at [nelson@gsa.org.nz](mailto:nelson@gsa.org.nz).

**The Christmas function is being held on**

Tuesday 12 December commencing

11.30am at Club Waimea

Lower Queen Street, Richmond.

**REVIEWER**

Our condolences go to Kathleen McBride on the passing of our dear friend Mike who has been reviewing our finances for many years. We are asking if any of our members could help us out to review our Financial Report for the AGM to contact Denis at [deniswastneyd@xtra.co.nz](mailto:deniswastneyd@xtra.co.nz). Many thanks.

**GONE NO ADDRESS**

Every year after the newsletters have been delivered, we receive return mail, those members who have left their address and not advised the secretary of new address so we can update our database.

*The members we would like to know their new address for are:*

Mrs. E.A. MacGredie who used to live at The Ernest Rutherford Retirement Village,

Mr. and Mrs P. Holden who used to live at Andrews Street, Stoke

Mr. and Mrs P Burton who also lived at The Ernest Rutherford Retirement Village

*It is very important you notify us of a change in circumstances using the information below.*

**CHANGE OF ADDRESS. EMAIL ADDRESS OR DEATH**

It would be much appreciated if you have a COA or other notifications that you contact the secretary at [nelson@gsa.org.nz](mailto:nelson@gsa.org.nz) or phone 0800 888 472. It is very important that we keep our database up to date.

When a member dies contact Datacom (GSF) 0800 654 731 or [gsa@datacom.co.nz](mailto:gsa@datacom.co.nz)  
Datacom (NPF) 0800 628 776 [npfenquiries@datacom.co.nz](mailto:npfenquiries@datacom.co.nz) and please have the persons membership number on hand.

**CHAIRMANS REPORT**

This report is a short one as we want to make room available for our delegates report from Conference. Unfortunately, Tony Greep was unable to attend conference due to ill health, however Alec Waugh represented the Nelson branch. Alec has written a very comprehensive report.

I would like to thank those of you emailed with an interest of being on the committee. The committee have had three meetings this year and all are working out really

well. Unfortunately, during the year, a long-standing committee member Mick Alder passed away. We send our condolences to his family.

Hopefully we will see as many members as possible attend our Christmas lunch.

*John Russell*

Chairman

## **COUNCIL 2023 REPORT**

I attended the Council GSA Annual meeting at the West Plaza Hotel on September 9/10. Due to a health issue, Tony Greep was unable to accompany me, so I was the lone Nelson voice at the meeting. It was a calm Council meeting, with an air of reflection, with no significant political issue, more an emerging focus on what was the future structure of the GSA.

The Cola issue for the pre1985 annuitants, is still active. The Govt this year had provisionally written in a \$30 million Budget figure, but post Cyclone Bola, this was taken out. An exchange of letters between the President and Government had since taken place, and a meeting with Treasury was planned, to ensure all parties were operating from the same costing figures.

The future of the GSA was a topic which took some workshop time, and the group I was involved with, agreed with the principal of a planned retreat from the current branch structure, towards a Regional Hub approach, Northern, Central, Southern, with data-based work principally handled by the Regional Hub. I would emphasize this topic is at a very early stage of discussion, but Nelsons idea first raised last year, already has council members discussing future proofing. How that would operate, within the Regional Hubs was frequently mentioned without any daily operations details. Keeping the Branch secretarial role simple, and avoiding contractual arrangements, over normal reimbursement methods for meeting expenses was also raised. Currently there is still no details or policy approach on future branch operations, but watch this space.

I met Lyn Buxton CEO and Rachel Starkey, Office Manager, everybody is hoping for stability at National office, and first impressions were favorable.

I discussed the omission of our Nelson life member Graeme Valpy from the circulated list, and was advised only living life members are shown on the circulated list. Following a life members death, his/her name remains for a year after death on the circulated Council document, with the full list available from National office. A memorial wall is being considered located at National office of all life members. For this meeting there was no nominations for life membership received.

Alan Straker was appointed President, Tony Hamilton suitable thanked, he will remain active on the Whangarei Branch committee. Vice president is Sandie Guscott Board member from Auckland.

Board members are Alan Peck, Michael Law, Anne Gover, Robert Beckham, and Roger Openshaw.

The New computer system is a Microsoft application, I was advised the change in system came from the GSFA approach, seeking assurances from our organization that their information was safe in our system, and meeting the necessary security standards. The old system did not meet that threshold, hence the change. Rachel (Office Manager) told me she was not that enthused by the new application, but it was common to many organizations, and she personally was committed to helping

any users to get conversant with the functionality. She specifically mentioned 1/1 training to secretaries was to be offered.

The two Guest speakers were interesting. Jane Wrightson Retirement Commissioner gave a fascinating address, her observations will be available and circulated to branches post the Council meeting. The new GSFA CEO Tim Mitchell introduced himself, talked about their management structure, and the solid 9% return over the last 10 yrs., with their investment portfolio.

The meeting without dissent approved the new sub, effective from April 2024, an increase of 0.50 per pay, \$39 annually. Michael Laws made the point that the increase in the sub was off-set by members deaths, and branches with deficits must address this issue. Reserves are for contingencies, and membership reduction is not a contingency.

Recruitment and Retention of members was a discussion topic, with a variety of ideas and suggestions. Personal contact (phone and e-mail trees) to existing members, inviting them to functions was one method, the emphasis was on an organized contact approach, rather than hoping members will appear, following newsletter notification. Low AGM turnouts is common and a worry, but some provincial groups still getting solid turn outs

All present agreed the main purpose of the GSA existence -Protect the Annuity- was also the message for non-members (Those who get the annuity but do not join the GSA). Annuitants who have not joined the GSA, should join to protect their retirement income stream, with the GSA voice the insurance blanket to achieve that principle.

The Strategic plan was adopted in the context of being 1yr 2023/24, with next year's Council "following branch discussion" to adopt a 2024-2027 Strategic plan. We need to assess the circulated draft Strategic Plan, and respond accordingly. At the end of Council Tony Hamilton briefly raised current and future discussion topics

1. The current Constitution requires amendment to meet the new Incorporated Societies Act requirements.
2. Is the current Board size appropriate?
3. Branch AGM Quorums are important. Should Annual Council be bi-annual, could one year be by Zoom, the other in personal attendance.
4. The Executive officer had ultimate responsibility for Secretaries contractual responsibilities, noting the lack of consistency in remuneration and arrangements within in the current branches' arrangements. This must be addressed.
5. The relationship with the GSFA was very important, this also should be maintained and nourished.

Thank you, Nelson members, for allowing me the privilege of being your Council delegate.

*Alec Waugh*, September 2023

*I have enjoyed helping the secretary with the newsletter production but this will be my last one. So best wishes to everyone for Christmas and the New Year 2024.*

*Diane*