

NELSON BRANCH NEWSLETTER

December 2015

0800 888 472

nelson@gsa.org.nz

G government

S superannuitants

A association

PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF VENUE

Tuesday December 1st Commencing 12.15pm

Tosswill Restaurant, Suburban Club,

Tahunau Drive, Nelson



Welcome to all members and especially new members. You will see from the notice above that we are changing our venue for our social as the committee thought it was time for a change. Those of you who have been to the Suburban Club will know that they put on an excellent buffet and that the access to the club is flat so it's very suitable for people with mobility issues. Best of all is the price, \$20, so less than we have been paying to date. The restaurant will be decorated for Christmas with decorations and serviettes on each table. When Lois and I were looking at new venues we were most impressed with the ambience and service offered so we hope you are too.

Although we will be able to run a raffle we cannot provide wine in this or chocolates with alcohol in, but rest assured we will still have some lovely prizes. However we are going to change the way in which we run it with each person attending having a number which will be drawn at the usual time. This means that the money you put towards a raffle can now go towards purchasing a drink at the bar.

We trust that this will be an enjoyable occasion for members and if it proves to be successful we can use this venue in the future.

Christmas Social Information

Those of you who haven't previously been to one of our luncheons. Please do give it a go ... we have a very convivial time

MENU

Main selection

Hot carved ham with pineapple and orange glaze
Hot pasta dish

Vegetables

Vegetable medley (baby carrots, beans etc.)
Roast potatoes
Roast pumpkin

Cold Salads

Garden salad garnished with fresh herbs
Chefs Seasonal choice
Traditional coleslaw

Desserts

Pavlova with fresh fruit and cream
Fresh fruit salad
Rich chocolate mousses
Tea and coffee to finish



Sounds pretty yummy to me!

We welcome all members and you could also bring a friend or family members or someone you know who isn't a member but receiving a GSF annuity.

The cost will be **\$20 a head** which has been subsidised by the Branch by \$2. Please fill in the form below and send to **Denis Wastney, 13 Essex Terrace, Stoke 7011, Ph 545 7299** by Tuesday 17 November

We need to get numbers into the restaurant two weeks prior to the function so the cut off date is Tuesday 17 November. As it is a commercial restaurant all bookings will have to be paid for, so I am sorry that after this date we can give no refunds for cancellations.

Name

Address

Ph no.

Email Address

Former Dept

Special Diet meal required Yes/No

If yes please detail.

Please make cheques for \$20 a head payable to Government Superannuitants Assn and send to Denis Wastney as above by

Tuesday 17 November 2015

**Many thanks
we look forward to meeting you.**

Please Note

It is important to inform our secretary if you move house but even more so to inform Datacom who administer our scheme. If they cannot contact you they will stop the annuity until such time as you do contact them.

Datacom is 0800 654 761 and for

NPF members 0800 628 776

The recent AGM was successful in providing us with a new chairman, John Russell. Also new committee members Margaret Palermo, who has agreed to be the membership secretary, Nick Farr from Takaka, who will be the minute secretary and Mick Alder. Those remaining on the committee are John Rogers who is vice chairman, Denis Wastney, treasurer, Graeme Valpy, Lois Valpy, and Diane Ward. The chairman will also be producing the newsletter. My thanks to all of those.

At the Council in Wellington Nick Farr and Denis Wastney were the delegates and Diane attended as a Board member. Their reports follow on the last two pages. Due to lack of space I have put information about the Policy Objectives debated on Sunday from Nicks report below

" .. sadly, due to non communication with the Government, very little progress is being made in these areas.

** annuities are adjusted for tax reductions.*

** annuities are fully indexed to the CPI*

** the cost of employers contribution is borne by the employer*

** double tax on annuities paid overseas is removed*

**the delay in paying the CoLA adjustment is eliminated*

This was followed by the adoption of the 2016-2019 Strategic Plan which gives the GSA flexibility to develop plans to guide the GSA into the future. It was pleasing to note that at this stage there was no plan to increase subscriptions."

Annual Council Meeting 5/6 September 2015

I **attended** the above meeting accompanied by Acting Chairperson Diane Ward and Branch committee Delegate Nick Farr. The Council meeting commenced at 9.30am on September 5th, with the welcome by President Jim Turner, followed by the apologies, obituaries, and credentials with the minutes of the Special meeting (held in March 2015) following along. Minor adjustments to the minutes were made and approved

President Jim presented his report stating that it is proving difficult to maintain numbers of members but that the issue of declining membership has been recognised, and steps taken to try to keep membership up for as long as possible. The last member is expected to pass away around 2070. As numbers drop off we become less of an interest to Govt who even refuse to talk to our organisation now.

The reviewer cost for the National Office Accounts for 2014/15, was higher than expected and this is being looked into and may mean that another reviewer is used for the future. Even with newsletters being mailed out by Central office, which, also cover the cost of printing etc, they are still expecting to make a surplus in the coming year.

The meeting was addressed by Simon Tyler, Chief Executive of Govt Superannuation Authority. Simon explained that the GSFA was doing a very good job of maintaining very good returns on the finance allocated to the fund under difficult times. A very interesting talk followed by questions which were answered clearly and briefly.

Delegates were allocated to one of four workshop groups, **1.** Recruiting Pre-Annuitants, **2.** Recruiting Annuitants, **3.** Dealing with individual member's issues, **4.** Looking at branches into the future. All workshops reported back to the meeting on what they had discussed and any items that maybe of use to branches in the future. Some of these suggestions will be talked at the next Branch committee meeting. Branch delegates spoke on what their branch had worked on during the past year to gain new members and tracking down Pre-Annuitants.

Elections

Janice Campbell was elected to the position of **President**.

Bryan Whisker was elected to the position of **Vice President**

Saturday night delegates, (and partners where present), attended pre dinner drinks in the bar then enjoyed an excellent meal. It was a great night which National office organisers should be very proud of. It was good to catch up and put names to faces. The following day;

Tony Hamilton (Northland), **Mark Leys** (Auckland), **Bill Robertson** (Wellington), **Jim Turner** (Wellington), **DIANE WARD** (Nelson) were elected to the board for the 2015/2016 year.

Delegates of the South Island informed council on progress of recruitment of new members as had the North Island the previous day.

Life Members approved by council were **Diana Pye** (Marlborough), (Great to see our neighbour Diana recognised, see photo and delegates) **Ron Salmons** (Bay of Plenty), **Jim Turner** (Wellington), **Alan Ferris** (South Canterbury), **Leith Power** (Wanganui), and **Paul Gardner** (Horowhenua/Kapiti)

A very enjoyable conference made all the more so by delegates being a bit more relaxed and the company of **NEW** member and minute secretary Nick Farr and acting chair Diane Ward.

Denis Wastney 2015



Report from GSA Annual Council Meeting 5/6 September 2015 – Brentwood Hotel Wellington.

I **attended** this meeting with Acting Chairperson Diane Ward and Branch Treasurer Denis Wastney. As it was my first time at a GSA Council Annual Meeting I was impressed with the friendly and welcoming atmosphere there. The Friday night was a good chance to meet with other representatives and have a meal together. I was pleased to catch up with South Canterbury Rep Warren Iggo at this time.

The meeting began on Saturday morning with a warm welcome from President Jim Turner. After the minutes for the 2014 Annual Meeting and the Special Council Meeting of the 30 March 2015 had been passed, a roll call of those present was made and a minute silence was taken for those who are not with us anymore. We were soon discussing the Annual Report and I have listed some main points as I saw them.

The Annual Report:

4.1 From the President: * He showed concern at how we are or are not maintaining GSA membership

* He appreciated the value of how the GSA cares for its membership.

* He indicated his disappointment in lack of progress with some GSA issues – not due to lack of effort from Council. * He thanked all members for their efforts during the 2014/15 year.

4.2 Communications: * Very positive response from Branches that National Office now distributing Branch Newsletters with the Annuity News. As this cost was born by Nation Office Branches appreciated saving that money. * A better timing for Branch Newsletters to get to National Office was promised.

4.3 Advocacy: *Concern was raised at the lack of interest from Government to talk with the GSA over many matters .

4.4 Annuity Administration: * Datacom being helpful in ‘tracing’ lost annuitants.

* The need for annuitants spouses to be officially signed up.

* GSA needs to develop much clearer procedures to ensure that spouses are not lost in the system.

4.5 Organisation: * The Board had met monthly with 6 elected members and 2 appointed members.

* A new constitution has been adopted and registered with the Registrar of Incorporated Societies.

* Changes made include: The Wellington residency requirement for Board membership is removed, and the number of elected Board members in addition to president and vice president increases from 4 to 5 with a reduction of appointed members from 3 to 2.

4.6 Membership, Recruiting and Member services: * This was a key concern from all Branches to keep our numbers up as we are now moving in to a decline of numbers as our GSA membership ages.

* Each Branch reported back to the full meeting on just how they were dealing with dropping membership. These ideas will be very useful for our Branch.

4.7 Finance: * At this stage the Associations funds are in a healthy position with most showing sizable balances in accumulated funds.

Simon Tyler Chief Executive of the GSFA spoke to us Saturday morning on the administration of the Superannuation schemes. **Main points were:** The upgrade of the GSF business system with new technology was hoped to be more sustainable and had the potential to function better. That 2014/15 had been a good year for investments with a return of 13.3% after fees and before tax. The Fund had achieved an average of 15% after fees and before tax over the last 3 years. **Some future challenges were:**

A seamless introduction of the new business system where members were not affected. Datacom to improve its service to members. The high investment returns of the past few years cannot continue.

Board Elections: President: Janice Campbell. Vice President: Bryan Whisker. Members: Tony Hamilton, Mark Leys, Bill Robertson, Jim Turner and Diane Ward. I was very pleased to see Diane re-elected and wish her well for the next twelve months of hard work for us all.

During the afternoon we split into four workshop groups. I attended the workshop which was looking at Branches into the future. The main points were: Advance personal contact with members, update member information and keep track of members through a telephone/email tree, bi-monthly meetings, meetings in homes - retirement homes - RSA's, activities such as: bus trips, good speakers, organise transport for members etc. It was clear that as membership drops there will be a need to consider Branch amalgamations and sharing of resources eg secretarial services.

On the Saturday evening we attended a very enjoyable Conference Dinner.

I would like to thank the Nelson Branch for giving me the opportunity to attend this year's GSA Annual Meeting. I learned much and enjoyed the company of Branch Treasurer Denis Wastney and acting chair Diane Ward.

Nick Farr