



Northland Newsletter

November 2018

Words from the Branch Chair

Having just returned from two months in Europe I missed this year's Government Superannuitants Association Council meeting in Wellington in early September. This year's delegates to the Council from Northland were Rex Morris and Sandra Strachan. Tony Hamilton also attended as a member of the Board. My thanks to Sandra for stepping in for me, in my absence.

Events at the Council meeting have been summarized at the two "report back" meetings, the first in Whangarei and the second a week later in Mangonui. There is also a report in this newsletter. The Whangarei meeting was poorly attended, but the decision to move from the usual venue in Kerikeri to Mangonui was successful and attracted a number of members from the Kaitia area who had not previously attended. We will undertake to advertise these meetings more widely and closer to the event in future to hopefully improve attendance.

The item that created most interest was our successful nomination of Tony Hamilton to become National President of GSA. Our warmest congratulations to Tony on his successful election. This is the first time in the history of the GSA that a National President has been elected who resides outside Wellington!

Our Northland Branch continues to be active and in a sound financial position. We welcome to the Committee Deborah Foote who comes from a nursing background and provides further welcome diversity to the group. Any other members who are able to serve on our Committee are encouraged to

allow their names to go forward at our next AGM.

For prospective new members phone on 0800 888 472, or join on line www.gsa.org.nz

Roger Barber - Chairperson.

Council Report - 2018

There was an air of expectation as the Council meeting got underway. Having had the CoLA petition presented in Parliament by Greg O'Connor, and also having Greg attend the Council meeting as a guest speaker, gave a positive feeling about the future. The news of the GSA meeting with the Minister of Finance, first time in over nine years, also gave the feeling of good things happening.

The meeting was held at the West Plaza Hotel



in Wellington, a suitable venue with good facilities and a good location. Rex Morris and Sandra Strachan represented the Northland Branch as delegates, and Tony Hamilton as a Board member. The apologies, the obituaries and the 2017 minutes were adopted.

Reports on the various goals and activities were adopted. These covered communications, Advocacy, Organisation, Membership and recruitment and Finances.

The cost of communications has changed somewhat with the move to having newsletters all distributed from Wellington rather than each Branch sending out their own. This is reflected in a cost comparison where in 2014 the total expenditure across all branches was \$48,236 and \$25,812 for the National Office. In 2018 the cost to the Branches had reduced to \$15,199 and for the National Office it had increased to \$87,313. This movement of cost to the National Office also reflects the huge amount of time volunteers in each Branch gave.

Unlike the previous Government the new Government has actively demonstrated a willingness to engage with GSA. The Minister of Finance met with the President, Vice President and Board representatives Bill Robertson and Dallas Elvy on 21 June to discuss a range of matters, in particular the 100% CoLA issue. This was followed by a meeting with the Chair of the Finance and Expenditure Committee before the petition was presented to Parliament. The petition was presented to Parliament on 3 July and referred to the Finance and Expenditure Select Committee. The Board will also monitor developments from the Tax Working Group.

Board representatives (President, Vice President and Dallas Elvy) met with the State Services Commissioner and two Deputy Commissioners in February resulting in GSA communication via agency payroll sections to all GSF contributors who are currently employees in government agencies. Following this meeting and the agreed action by the Commissioner pre-annuitant and pre-annuitant spouse membership has increased markedly. A quarter of current contributors are from education sector.

Member count 31 March:

Total 2017 = 27976	2018 = 27311
2.4% change [665]	
Northland = 822	2018 = 803
2.3% change [19]	

An amended set of accounts was presented to the council meeting. There was some disappointment with the budget deficit that occurred but this was clearly explained -the centennial project had not been included in the budget.

-the change in way newsletters are distributed has led to cost increases.

-one off costs of employing a new Executive Officer and Office Manager.

The National Office budget was adopted which includes costs for the Centennial Project.

Funny Retirement Quotes

'The best time to start thinking about your retirement is before the boss does.' *Anonymous*

He attacked everything in life with a mix of extraordinary genius and naive incompetence, and it was often difficult to tell which was which. *Douglas Adams*

'I always arrive late at the office, but I make up for it by leaving early.' *Charles Lamb*.

'When a man retires and time is no longer a matter of urgent importance, his colleagues generally present him with a watch.' *R C Sherriff*.

'Half our life is spent trying to find something to do with the time we have rushed through life trying to save.' *Will Rogers, Autobiography, 1949*.

The Board is keeping a watching brief over Branches. This is to pre-empt any difficulties that Branches may come up against such as not being able to form a committee or not able to fill roles within the committee.

The Board has been focusing on the Future of the GSA with a sub-committee led by Tony Hamilton. A second working paper has been developed (first one presented at the 2017 Council) and reported on at the Council meeting. Some issues that arose included a motion from Hawkes Bay that "That Board member liaison visits to Branches be made as and when necessary". This motion, supported by Northland was agreed to.

The Auckland Branch moved “That Council rescind its decision of 2017 to pool the reserves at the National level and affirm that it is the responsibility of Branches and National Office to work within their budgets”. Northland did not support this motion but the Council passed it.

The policy on the Investment of Financial Reserves was deferred so the Board could further develop various aspects around the procedures for this.

The Board elections saw a change of leadership with Tony Hamilton elected as the President. As Tony was the only nomination for Vice President, this position has been held over and will be considered by the Board, as the meeting was unable to take nominations from the floor. The seven nominations for Board members included Tony. Tony’s election as President left six nominations for five positions. At the Board meeting immediately after the Council meeting, the unsuccessful candidate was appointed to the Board.

The Board has established a new Audit and Risk committee. With the changes to the GSA it is important that the Board keep a watching brief over all its operations.

Your Current Committee

Chairperson

Roger Barber, 435 0785

tudorwoodnz@gmail.com

Secretary

Rex Morris, 4354628 or 0800 888 472

northland@gsa.org.nz

Treasurer

Tony Hamilton, 929 9772

tah3524@gmail.com

Committee

Jack Kerr, 4373035

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Deborah Foote, 4361739

phoenixrae56@gmail.com

Robin Shepherd, 09 4084192

rlshepherd@orcon.net.nz

Harris Shortland, 4347550

h.shortland@xtra.co.nz

Sandra Strachan, 4362532

sandrastra@hotmail.com

Two guest speakers gave presentations to the Council meeting. Greg O’Connor gave a fascinating talk as a new member of Parliament and was able to thread his talk with interesting commentary around superannuation. Cecilia Tarrant, Chairperson, gave an overview of the role and function of the GSFA.

Roger Openshaw, Emeritus Professor History Massey University, is writing the history of the GSA. Roger is also an active member of the GSA from the Manawatu Branch. The project is well underway with drafts of the book due in December.

Janice Campbell, retiring President, Wellington, and John Fitzgerald, Waikato King Country, were made life members of the GSA.

Delegates: Rex Morris & Sandra Strachan

Contact your Association at any
time by dialling
0800 888 472





Christmas Luncheon

will be held on
Thursday 22 November 2018
at the Kamo Club (Meldrum Street)

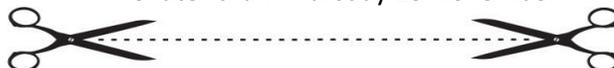
11.15 Gather and socialise
11.45 Chairman's Chat
12.00 Entertainment by Totara Grove School
12.30 Luncheon
Juice provided
Other drinks at own expense

Please complete and return the form below if you intend to be present for this event.

*Note: \$15 per person
Superannuitant non-members welcome too*

Please return to
Tony Hamilton
PO Box 3286, Onerahi
Whangarei 0142

no later than Thursday 15 November



Northland Branch G.S.A
End-Year Luncheon

Enclosed is \$..... for Luncheon Booking/s
(\$15 per person – our Branch will provide a subsidy)

Phone number:

Email address:

(Please include email and phone so we can confirm our records are correct.)

Cheques should be made payable to
'Government Superannuitants Assoc - Northland'

Or pay to online bank account:

GSA Northland, 11-5000-0724650-11

If paying online please email names and phone no to: tah3524@gmail.com

NAMES FOR LABELS PLEASE

First and last name