

G	government
S	superannuitants
A	association

Newsletter Wellington Branch November 2018

Chair

Ian Clunies-Ross

Deputy Chair

Peter Chambers

Branch Committee

Kevin Duggan, Wilf Haskell, Graham Hill, Colin Macintosh, Kay Monks, Alan Peck, Elizabeth Smaal, Mike Smith, Ray Woolhouse.

Life Members

Virginia Breen, Marie Byrne, Peter Chambers, Janice Campbel, Allen Hair, Howard Halley, Bruce Kelly, Brian McKeown, Alan McMaster, George McMillan, Gray Nelson, Jack Price, Bill Robertson, Elizabeth Smaal, Mike Smith, Leicester Stewart, Peter Stewart, Terence Stock, Ian Swift, David Thorp, Bryan Whisker, Priscilla Williams, Ray Woolhouse .

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- GSA Council -

The 2018 GSA Annual Council was held at Wellington’s West Plaza hotel over the weekend of 1/2 September. It was notable for firstly the wide ranging discussion of the future of the GSA especially regarding the future funding of the organization and the need for the organization to conserve its financial reserves. Presently around a half of these reserves are held at the national office and a half within the 19 branches around the country. Total reserves stand at just over one million dollars and whilst that is a large sum, projections indicate that reserves will be exhausted by 2030 as membership declines. Suggestions that the annual subscription be more regularly raised were rejected as it was felt this would negatively impact on our goals of recruiting and retaining members. Another strategy was considered to ensure the health

of the organization and enable better support for regional branches that will face future viability problems. The strategy was for all GSA reserve funds to be centralized at National Office. This was not adopted as council delegates believed, at present, there are too many unanswered questions around how this would be managed and that more work was needed before branches gave up some of their funds and financial independence.

Secondly the leadership of the association changed. Janice Campbell, our wonderful



Bryan Whisker (Vice President) and Janice Campbell (President) complete their distinguished tenure at the 2018 Council Meeting

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president of the last 3 years, stood down and Tony Hamilton of Northland defeated Bryan Whisker for the presidency. The vice-president position remains vacant for the time being. Both Janice and Bryan were warmly thanked for their contributions over many years and the Council duly elected Janice to GSA Life membership.

Throughout the weekend delegates heard addresses from three speakers. The first speaker was Greg O'Connor MP for Ohariu. He had helped GSA with the COLA petition in July by receiving the petition and taking it to parliament. In between his amusing stories he assured us he well understood the purpose of the petition and he assured delegates that he would follow through helping GSA achieving equity for those disadvantaged annuitants who retired in the 1980s.

The second speaker was Cecilia Tarrant, chair of the Government Superannuation Fund Board who gave a presentation on the investment role of the fund and how it manages its \$4 billion. In response to a question from the floor, Cecilia explained the relationship between this fund and annuity payments. Delegates were surprised to learn that only 20% of the sum required to pay annuitants came from the funds invested through GSFA with the remaining 80% being contributed annually by the government of the day.

The third speaker was Professor Roger Openshaw who spoke about the centenary history project and his research. The proposed title of the manuscript is *The Justice of Our Cause. A Centennial History of the Government Superannuitants' Association, 1920-2020*. We all look forward to reading what will be a fascinating story.

The Wellington Branch social sub committee, headed by Kay Monks, had put together a programme for partners of delegates. It is hoped that this initiative will draw more partners to Council in the years ahead.

Council Delegates:

Ian Clunies-Ross, Peter Chambers.

Council Observer:

Kay Monks

Life Members attending:

Elizabeth Smaal, David Thorpe, Ray Woolhouse

AGM and Luncheon 2018

A combined Annual General Meeting and luncheon was held at the Petone Working Men's Club on 23 May 2018. We welcomed Alan Peck to the Branch committee.



Wellington Branch Committee 2018/2019

Standing left to right: Peter Chambers, Ray Woolhouse, Graham Hill, Mike Smith, Colin Macintosh

Seated left to right: Kevin Duggan, Elizabeth Smaal, Ian Clunies-Ross, Kay Monks, Alan Peck Absent Wilf Haskell

The financial report highlighted a surplus of \$7,748.00, a result of good stewardship. The branch has assets of over \$40,000. Membership stood at over 5,300. Wellington remains the largest branch in the country. During the year SuperTravels wound up and, as required by the terms of incorporation, its funds were transferred to the Wellington branch to be used to assist members' travel to and from social events. It is also hoped that these funds could contribute towards local outings arranged by the newly formed social subcommittee of the Wellington branch committee. Seventy members attended the AGM and luncheon which followed.

AGM Next Year

Please note in your diaries that our next AGM will be held on Wednesday 29 May 2019 at the Petone Working Mens' Club commencing at 11 am and with lunch to follow. We will provide booking details in the May 2019 Branch newsletter.

Light Luncheon

A light lunch was provided at Anvil House in central Wellington on 14 June. This was an informal finger food affair that took place after a branch committee meeting. Members met with the committee and with one another but with only 12 members attending it has been decided to review this event for the next year.

Mid-Winter Luncheon

The mid-winter luncheon was held on Wednesday 25 July at The Pines, Houghton Bay. A total of 73 attended this enjoyable function. On a nice clear sunny day the members took in great views over Cook Strait, listened to an address by new Wellington City Councillor Fleur Fitzsimmons and enjoyed good food and pleasant company. The free bus provided to and from the railway station made it even more enjoyable and relaxing for those attending.

Wairarapa Luncheon

The Wairarapa social function was held on Thursday 27 September at the Masterton Club. It was a small but convivial group get-together with members very much enjoying the elegant surroundings and the excellent meal provided.



Bryan Whisker speaking at the Wairarapa luncheon.

In 1993, after an approach by those who had retired to Waikanae, the Wellington Branch agreed to transfer over 300 members in Waikanae to form the establishment of a Horowhenua/Kapiti Branch. Wairarapa was offered a similar arrangement but members there decided not to break off from Wellington on the condition that they had representation on the Wellington Branch committee. Since the Wellington Branch AGM in May this year, when Bryan Whisker did not seek re-election, there has not been a representative from the Wairarapa. If there is anyone in the Wairarapa interested in joining the Wellington Committee, please contact the Secretary, after 11 October, on 04 472 7006.

Christmas Function 2018 at Te Marua Golf Club

We hope you will be able to join us for the Christmas function. Please note that you are welcome to bring a friend to the luncheon; it is not restricted to members. The luncheon

will, this year, be held at the Te Marua Golf Club Rooms, SH2, Upper Hutt on Thursday 22 November 2018, from midday to approximately 2 pm. The price is \$29 per person. There is parking available at the Club. If you are driving, the golf club is clearly sign posted on the left of the main road (SH2 to the Wairarapa) 3.5 km north of the turn off to Waikanae via Akatarawa Road.

A free bus will be provided from Platform 9 at the Wellington Railway Station. **If required, this bus will stop at Waterloo Station at approximately 10.45 am and at Upper Hutt Station at approximately 10.55 am.** Look out for a **Transit bus**. Please see the insert sheet to make payment for the luncheon and to advise us that you will use the bus and at which stop you plan to join the free transport. It is essential to have made a bus booking as the seating capacity will depend on the number of members who have booked.

New Secretary/Treasurer

Jirayu Brennan will start with us on 11 October replacing Maggie Lee who has retired after nearly 4 years of service to the Wellington Branch. Jirayu has a wealth of experience working with people having served in various capacities with NZ Commerce Commission, NZ Red Cross, Volunteer Wellington, Wellington City Council and Ministry of Justice. She says

"I was born and bred in busy Bangkok,

Thailand. In 2002, I came to NZ as an international student at Victoria University Wellington. Ever since I spent a lot of my time working, and visiting different parts of beautiful



NZ, and overseas. I currently live on a rural property outside Featherston with my husband and young daughter. I am a long-term yoga practitioner, and enjoy spending my free time with my family and catching up with some friends."

Recruitment and Retention

Retention of our membership is as vital as recruitment therefore over much of this year we have been busy contacting lapsed members. This involved Maggie identifying, writing to and endeavouring to make direct contact with those we have not heard from. Many lapsed members just forget to renew their membership. By far the easiest way to avoid that problem is to authorise our pay authority, the Government Superannuation Fund, that you wish to have your GSA subscription automatically deducted from your 4 weekly annuity payment. This amounts to only \$2 per pay. If you are not already availing yourself of this sensible option and wish to do so please call the Branch secretary (ph. 04 4727006) for further information.

Wellington Branch Railway Social Club

This is an informal group of former employees of Railways and GSA members wishing to attend our functions. You will be most welcome.

Our Christmas luncheon will be held at Petone Working Men's Club on Wednesday 31 October 2018 at 12.15pm. Cost \$18.50 per person.

For bookings please contact Leicester Stewart, Wellington (ph.04 567 2484 or mob. 027 345 5030).

A booking is essential and must be made at least two days before the function – late bookings are not accepted.

Change of Address

Please let the secretary know if there are any changes to your personal details. You can enter these yourself at www.gsa.org.nz From the homepage select 'Update Details' and enter your annuity number and last name, then select the "update details" box. Note that while your changes will be recorded, they will **not** be updated immediately as they will be checked for consistency before being implemented.

It is very important to advise Datacom immediately of any changes to your address and/or bank account details. Where mail is returned "gone no address", or bank accounts are closed, Datacom will make reasonable efforts to try to locate you. If you cannot be located, your annuity may be suspended until contact is re-established.

Contacts for Annuity Matters

GSF enquiries

GSF Administrator, Datacom Employer Services Ltd, PO Box 3614, Wellington 6140

Phones: 04 470 6348

0800 654 731

Email gsf@datacom.co.nz

Website www.datacomgsf.co.nz

NPF enquiries

NPF Administrator, Datacom Employer Services Ltd, PO Box 1036, Wellington 6140

Phones: 04 381 0650

0800 628 776

Email npfenquiries@datacom.co.nz

Website www.datacomnfp.co.nz

It is a good idea to have your annuity number handy when you make any enquiries. It can be found on any Datacom letter addressed to the annuitant.

Baby boomers hit the Net

There is a new website called OverSixty NZ www.oversixty.co.nz It is described as the one-stop destination to keep New Zealanders over-60 in the know. It boasts content on a range of topics as well as special offers and deals.