



Newsletter Wellington Branch November 2019

Chair

Ian Clunies-Ross

Deputy Chair

Peter Chambers

Branch Committee

Kevin Duggan, Graham Hill, Kay Monks, Alan Peck, Elizabeth Smaal, Mike Smith, Bryan Whisker, and Ray Woolhouse.

Life Members

Virginia Breen, Marie Byrne, Peter Chambers, Janice Campbell, 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 .

Branch Office:

Level 1, Anvil House,
138 Wakefield Street,
Wellington.

Contact Branch Secretary

Jirayu Brennan

Phone: 04 472 7006

Email: wellington@gsa.org.nz

Post:

The Secretary
PO Box 11993
Manners Street
Wellington, 6142

GSA National Office -

Call Free 0800 888 472

www.gsa.org.nz

2019 AGM and Luncheon

A combined Annual General Meeting and luncheon was held at the Petone Working Men's Club on 29 May 2019. Forty nine members attended. Through the year 3 committee members, Colin MacIntosh, Janice Campbell and Wilf Haskell had resigned. All three were thanked for their valuable contributions over a number of years. The committee now stands at 9, including the Chair and Deputy Chair, as no new members were nominated. Bryan Whisker has been co-opted to represent the Wairarapa. Any member interested in joining the committee would be very welcome.

Wellington branch membership as at 31 March 2019 is 5,245, a decline of 130 or 2.4% from the previous year. This is slightly better than the national membership with a 3% decline.

The financial report for the year ending 31 March 2019 showed a surplus of \$10,997. This can be attributed to an increase in the GSA subscription from \$1.65 to \$2 and the National Office in 2018 taking over the \$3,000 printing cost of producing two branch newsletters. With this surplus, the branch committee decided to reduce the cost from \$29 to \$10 for members wishing to attend the AGM



Ian Clunies-Ross, Chair, welcomed GSA members at 2019 AGM a Petone Working Men's Club.

and luncheon and the Wairarapa function as both these meetings are seen as business meetings and members are encouraged to attend. The Chairman thanked the SuperTravel Fund enabling members to access a free bus to events. The Mackenzie Trust is also able to support individual members who have difficulty in accessing the current transport provisions. If requested, a taxi can be provided either directly to the venue or to the bus being used by other members.



Some Wellington Committee members (left to right): Peter Chambers (sitting), Ray Woolhouse, Elizabeth Smaal, Graham Hill, Kevin Duggan, and Alan Peck.

2020 – A Special Year

In 2020 GSA will celebrate its centennial. A history of our association has been written by Professor Roger Openshaw. The Wellington branch will hold a special event to mark the centennial and the launch of the history. Details will be advised in the May 2020 newsletter.

2020 Annual General Meeting

In the meantime please mark in your diary the date of the **2020 AGM to be held on 3 June 2020**. The current GSA President Tony Hamilton has expressed a wish to attend our AGM and to speak to our Wellington members. Your committee hopes many members will make a special effort to attend this meeting.

Mid-Winter Luncheon

The Wellington Branch was host to the Honorable Tracey Martin at its Mid-Winter function at The Pines, Island Bay on July 24. Amidst her very busy parliamentary schedule the Minister found time to join us for lunch and then speak about a vision for Seniors that will extend into the future for the next 15 years. Addressing the sixty GSA members attending the Minister described her wide-ranging portfolio that in addition to Minister for Seniors, included her being Minister for Internal Affairs, Minister for Children, and Associate Minister for Education. She quipped that she had responsibility for diverse areas such as racing and boxing right through to gambling as well as the census.

It was important that the new strategy reflected the profound changes happening within society she explained, particularly relating to the increase in the population of those over 65 years where in 10 years' time, this group will outnumber all under 15 year olds. This trend will continue further with seniors

living longer healthier lives. The five key aims of the government's "**Better Later Life**" draft strategy are:

1. Prepare for financial and economic security: NZ Superannuation is an inviolate social contract but often it is not sufficient. Currently 48% of those over 55 years do not own their own home and as this trend extends to retirees then the need for accommodation supplements will increasingly stretch government resources. Therefore more people will need or want to work beyond 65 and this is to be encouraged.

2. Improving access to health and social services: Implementing the "Healthy Aging Strategy" is an important start and this must go hand-in-hand with improving access for vulnerable older people to those services.

3. Providing housing choices: Provide more housing is vital as well as enabling seniors to age in the community with less emphasis on moving to separate villages.

4. Enhancing opportunities for social connection and participation: Changing societal attitudes towards older citizens to combat age discrimination and elder abuse is an imperative. One initiative is a \$600,000 fund for learning digital skills to enable seniors to be better connected.

5. Accessible built environments: Creating age friendly communities that are built to encourage seniors to get out and about.



Hon. Tracey Martin at Mid-Winter Luncheon, The Pines, Island Bay

The Minister spoke passionately about seniors staying active and continuing to participate in what can be described as a 'portfolio' life style, a mixture of work, family support and volunteering. She would make sure she was part of the government's 'Future of Work Planning

Committee' because of her belief that barriers to continuing work must be reduced and that too many seniors leave the world of work prematurely or unnecessarily. Part-time work and casual workers are needed and seniors have skills and knowledge that should not be lost simply because the age of 65 is reached. "Retire the word retirement" is her motto.

Those attending did not get the impression the Minister was saying that we all should be working rather that there needs to be more flexibility and perhaps 'retirement' would be better replaced by 'transition'. (Cont' on page 3)

The Minister has won a \$7.7 million fund to enhance the SuperGold card. The SuperGold card web-site will be redesigned and a phone app developed that



GSA members listening to Hon. Tracey Martin at the Mid-Winter Luncheon

will locate discounts near the current location of the phone. The possible discounts might include travel dental care, insurance and trade offers. The "Better Later Life" final document was released on International Seniors Day on 1 October 2019.

It was a pleasure to host the Minister and the meeting was encouraged by her enthusiasm for her role as Minister for Seniors.

Wairarapa Luncheon

The luncheon was held on Thursday 26 September at the Masterton Club. As agreed at the AGM, the forty six members who attended each paid \$10 for the two course meal. The meal and the service were both excellent.



Ian Clunies-Ross, Chair, spoke to GSA members living in Wairarapa about the Council Meeting

This annual luncheon is an opportunity specifically for GSA members living in Wairarapa to be brought up to date on GSA matters discussed at the national Council meeting which was held in Wellington in the first weekend of September. It was also a chance for members to ask questions of Wellington Committee members present on any issue relating to their annuities.

Ian Clunies-Ross, the branch Chair, advised members that Alan Peck and Mike Smith, two Wellington branch committee members, and Dllas Elvy, the branch member were elected as Board members. He also acknowledged the two long standing Wellington branch Board members, Bill Robertson and Bryan Whisker, who had stepped down from the Board after many years of valuable service to GSA and acknowledging that their institutional knowledge could well be called upon in

the years ahead. Bryan has agreed to represent Wairarapa as a co-opted member on the Wellington branch committee.

Other issues commented upon at the meeting and relating to the Council meeting included a defeated proposal to increase the membership fee, the CoLA (Cost of Living Adjustment) petition and some GSA constitutional amendments. The Annuity News which is circulated to you with this newsletter, will provide the detail from the Council meeting.



Kay Monks, Committee Member, enjoyed the luncheon at Masterton Club

Recruitment and Retention

Recently the Wellington Branch, in partnership with GSA National Office, produced a recruiting poster.



Recruitment Poster

These will be placed on notice boards in places frequented by members of the Government Superannuation Fund. For example clubs, libraries, associations, community notice boards, schools,

hospitals, voluntary groups and government departments. The Wellington Branch is using a list of sites drawn up from directories of community organisations and is calling for volunteers to help distribute the posters. The plan is to visit each place to ensure the poster is appropriately positioned after which these will be periodically checked and updated. If you are able to assist with this task please contact the Secretary at GSA Phone 472 7006.

Christmas Function 2019



Following good feedback from last year, we are again holding this end of year luncheon at the **Te Marua Golf Club rooms, State HW 2, Upper Hutt on Tuesday 26 November 2019** from midday to 2:00 pm approximately. 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. We hope you will be able to join us for this Christmas function. Please note that you are welcome to bring a friend to the luncheon; it is not restricted to members.

A free bus will be provided to the venue from Platform 9 at the Wellington Railway Station leaving at 10.30am. If required, it will make stops at Waterloo Station bus stop at 10.45am and Upper Hutt station at 10.55am. Look out for the Transit bus. The bus will be provided for the return trip. Please see the slip at the end of this Newsletter to advise us that you are coming, if you need to catch the bus, if the MacKenzie Trust could assist you further with transport and for making payment to the Branch.

Booking is essential. Please return the booking form (last page of this newsletter), or telephone or email Jirayu by 19 November 2019.

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.

Wellington Branch Railway Social Club Christmas Luncheon

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

Our Christmas luncheon will be held at Petone Workingmen's Club on Wednesday 13th November 2019. Those attending need to be seated by 12 noon. The cost of the meal has increased to \$25.00 per person due to increases in catering but will be partially subsidised if we are able to have in excess of 25 people attending.

Because of the pricing structure **bookings are essential and must be made no later than Monday 4th November 2019.**

Please contact Leicester Stewart, Wellington (ph. 04 567 2484) to register your booking. Late bookings cannot be not accepted.

Contacts for Annuity Matters

GSA enquiries

GSA 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.datacomnpf.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.

Kiwibank & Cheques

The Wellington branch of GSA banks with Kiwibank. The bank has announced that 28 February 2020 will be the last day we can deposit a cheque with this bank. We are very aware that this will inconvenience a number of our members who regularly send in a cheque to pay for functions they wish to attend. The Christmas luncheon can be paid for by cheque but we suggest that if you are able to use an alternative method of payment, then please do so. We understand that banks in general are able and willing to hold workshops designed to answer any questions you have and to give you confidence about using alternative methods of payment such as online or phone banking. You could always go to your bank and ask them to make the payment from your account to the GSA Kiwibank account however there is likely to be a cost involved. Jirayu, our secretary, will keep a watchful eye on payments and the branch will do all it can to help those who find this change challenging.



The GSA Wellington Branch Committee wishes you and your family a very Happy Christmas and a wonderful New Year to follow.

BOOKING FORM

Cut here- 

Christmas Lunch – 12 Noon Tuesday 26 November 2019

I/We shall be attending the lunch at the Te Marua Golf Club, 675 Main Road (SH2), Te Marua, Upper Hutt.

Names _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Email _____

Number attending _____ Cost will be \$29.00 per person. Please pay \$ _____ by either:

Direct credit account 38 9014 0085421 00 **by 19 November**. Quote name, annuity number and the reference XMAS, or:

Enclose a cheque payable to GSA Wellington with this page and return it to the Secretary, GSA Wellington Branch, PO Box 11993, Manners Street, Wellington 6142 by **19 November**.

Please tick for MacKenzie Trust Extra Help Request

A free bus will depart from Platform 9, Wellington Railway Station at 10.30 am

It will stop at Waterloo Station at approximately 10.50 am and Upper Hutt station at approximately 11.15am

Please Tick **ONE** box to indicate the station where you wish to join the bus.

From **Wgtn Station Platform 9** - **Waterloo Station** - **Upper Hutt Station**-

If you have paid by direct credit but wish to travel by bus, please return this completed page to the Secretary, GSA Wellington Branch, PO Box 11993, Manners Street, Wellington 6142 by **19 November**.