



## **New Zealand Railway & Locomotive Society Inc. Minutes of 2021 Annual General Meeting**

**Held at Johnsonville Community Centre**

**2.00pm Saturday 16th October 2021**

### **PRESENT:**

A total of 17 members & 2 guests were present. The Chair, President Graeme Carter, welcomed all those present and thanked them for attending.

### **BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

**President:** Graeme Carter.

**Secretary (Interim):** Bruce Taylor

**Directors:** David Cuthbert, Bill Prebble, Graeme Jupp and Rob Merrifield.

### **MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Len Chisholm, Chris Benson, John Bovis, Alan Smith, Ray Thomson, Tony Hurst, Brent Efford, Murray Gowans, Demetrius Christoforou, Lindsay Gear, Bill Hudson.

**GUESTS:** Brenda Carter, Marcus (Johnsonville)

### **APOLOGIES:**

Tony Arcus, Robin Boddy, David Boldt, Alan Brabender, Colin Barry, John Clayton, Steve Cornwall, Bill Cowan, Mark Denne, Ralph Dunham, Hans-Henrik Fentz, John Holmes, Floyd and Ann Hulena, Stu Ingram, Warren Jones, Bill McGavin, Derek Mills, Tony Naughton, Russell Roberts, Jon Shingleton, Philip Smith, Brian Wannell, Guy Wellwood, Neville Wood, Ken Lankshear, Graeme McClare, Dave Turner, Glen Summers, Grant Craig, Brian Pearce, Rob Martin, David Rarity.

**Motion:** "That the apologies be accepted" **Moved:** David Cuthbert **Seconded:** Murray Gowans  
Carried

### **PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS:**

*The President, Graeme Carter, gave a verbal report on the past year. The following is a summary of his address:*

It is good to be able to address you today, he began. There was uncertainty whether we could meet because of Covid. Many meetings have been cancelled. A "Zoom" virtual AGM has been a real possibility.

Overall, the Society is in good heart. It has been a busy year. Our financial balance is strong. Some overseas colleagues are in a different situation. For example, the Australian Railway Historical Society NSW have had to close their bookshop on Sydney Central Station and are seeking donations from members to keep going. One issue of their bi-monthly magazine has been suspended.

The passing in May this year of Mark Cole is the end of an era. Mark was a loyal member and keen volunteer. From the time he retired after 40 years service to the NZR he did regular volunteer work for the NZRLS. Volunteers like Mark are less common these days as employment patterns have changed so much. This is a challenge for the society.

Four years ago, because volunteers were becoming hard to find, the Board saw a need to employ people to carry out various roles. Not all the Board were convinced. We have now come through that issue. I am proud of our team: both our contractors and volunteers and the work they do. A lot of daily issues are solved quickly by the team. Contractors are Sandra, Bill, Ken, Keith and Graeme.

Turning to the Society's publications, Graeme said that the *Observer* has come out "miraculously" every two months. A good range of publications has been produced. The President thanked Bill Prebble for his hard work with publications

Membership of the NZRLS and the future of the Ava building were two challenges ahead. Membership has been reasonably static around the 800 mark over the last decade. In 1962 membership reached a high point of 1250. We need to be aware of the need for new members and the need to give them something that makes them want to belong to the NZRLS.

The Ava building is receiving more and more archival material. There are four options for the future of the archive: 1. Do nothing. 2. Build on a second storey. 3. Acquire land in North Street and build another adjacent building. However, all available land is owned by KiwiRail and they would only lease land with conditions. 4. New premises somewhere in the Hutt Valley on a site by a railway and close to public transport. To fund this we would sell the Ava building and draw on our building fund. We are expecting a significant bequest which will be added to the fund.

In his concluding remarks Graeme thanked members for being a part of the society and the Board members for their work. The society has a good future, he concluded.

***Motion:*** "That the Presidents Report be accepted."

***Moved:*** Graeme Carter ***Seconded:*** Ray Thomson.

Carried

#### **MINUTES OF THE 2020 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING held on 31 October 2020:**

***Motion:*** "That the Minutes be taken as read."

***Moved:*** David Cuthbert ***Seconded:*** Rob Merrifield

Carried.

***Motion:*** "That the Minutes are a true and correct record of the 2020 AGM".

***Moved:*** Ray Thomson ***Seconded:*** Bill Prebble

Carried

#### **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE 2020 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES:**

1. **Affiliation with overseas organisations:** Brent Efford raised this matter. The President said we still have affiliations with similar overseas organisations, which mainly consists of receiving their magazines and newsletters. In the past we have reduced our affiliations. David Cuthbert said we receive 10 to 12 overseas magazines and newsletters; they go to the magazine groups or stay at Ava.

## ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 30 JUNE 2021

**Moment Of Silence:** The President read the names of those lost to the society over the last twelve months as recorded on p. 3 of the report. All present stood in silence as a mark of respect to those members who have passed away.

The annual report was opened for discussion.

### **Society Administration and Membership:**

David Cuthbert highlighted the enrollment of 74 new members.

Rob Merrifield, editor of *Turntable*, said that the electronic version of the society newsletter had continued this year and “has been a marvel”. Better presentation of *Turntable* and more pages are now possible compared to the hard copy version. There was an ongoing request to members to supply their email address. As editor, Rob is always open to comments and suggestions.

### **Publications:**

Bill Prebble reported that *Alpine Thunder* has been well received and after delays is at last published. The author Jon Shingleton has spent 9 months at sea due to the Covid emergency which had pushed out publication timelines. A Hong Kong printer was used for this book. Tony Hurst’s *Retro Reds To The Rescue* helped fill a gap in the society’s new offerings. Next is Graham Stewart’s “very last book” *Trams Still Around New Zealand*, followed by *Steam Trails*, an account from the back of the train by a guard, and *NZR At Night* by Bill Prebble. Members wanting a signed copy of Graham Stewart’s new book should contact Bill Prebble.

### **Silverstream North End Premises:**

Rob Merrifield described work this year at North End as slow due to a shortage of volunteers, Covid and winter weather. Rob described recent work on the WMR car 48. Doors, lights and fittings are all work still to be completed. He said the team needs people with specific skills to join them. The building itself is in good order with the new sign at the end gable. Photos of work on WMR car 48 were displayed for inspection during afternoon tea.

### **Digitization Working Group:**

Alan Smith spoke positively about the digitization project. It was proceeding well, he said. Alan commended the work of Len Chisholm building the *Trainfinda*, digital data sharing system. A first edition of a guide to *Trainfinda* has also been completed.

**Motion:** “That the Annual Report be received”

**Moved:** Graeme Carter **Seconded:** Bill Prebble

Carried

## **FINANCIAL REPORT (In the form of the “Performance Report for the year ended 30 June 2021)**

The treasurer, Ken Lankshear, was unable to attend the AGM due to a road accident. Copies of the report were distributed at the meeting, placed in the members section of the NZRLS website and sent to members as an email attachment. The President noted that the report is still to be audited.

**Building Fund (p.18):** Attention was drawn by Graeme Carter to the \$111,459 in the fund.

**Assets (p.6):** Alan Smith expressed “great objection” to the values of rolling stock given on p.6 of the report as \$3 and \$4 for the 20/21 and 19/20 financial years respectively. He argued it “trivialized the accounts” and said the amounts should be rolled into furniture and equipment. Keith McGavin, the NZRLS auditor explained that the figures were a historical result of the depreciation policy being “slavishly followed”. The amounts for rolling stock should be written off, he said. David Cuthbert asked Keith whether those amounts would be altered in the audit process.

**Observer Magazine Postage and Packaging (p.10):** Bruce Taylor read to the meeting a question sent in by member, Tony Arcus, about the increase year on year between 2019/20 and 2020/21 in *Observer* Magazine postage and packaging expenses. The increase is 44% and is unexplained, Tony said. Bruce then relayed the response from the Treasurer, Ken Lankshear: the difference is because of improvements in how we allocate postage and packing costs for the *Observer*. The allocation has been more accurate. Graeme Carter said that the increase is also a timing issue. The June/July 2020 issue of *Observer* was delayed by lockdown and didn’t go out till the 2020/21 financial year.

**Motion:** “That the Financial Performance Report be accepted subject to audit.”

**Moved:** Graeme Carter **Seconded:** David Cuthbert  
Carried

## **SUBSCRIPTIONS 2022 RATES**

The Board had recommended the following:

**Motion:** “That subscriptions for the 2022 year be \$92.00 for New Zealand members and \$110.00 for overseas members.”

**Moved :** Graeme Carter **Seconded:** Ray Thomson  
Carried

Discussion of the motion:

- Demetrius Christoforou favoured encouraging members to make a donation instead of making subscription increases; donations are tax deductible, he said.
- Rob Merrifield recalled “two savage subscription increases” in the past to bring income to a sufficient level to run the society. Donations were unpredictable whereas subscription income was predictable.

## **ELECTION OF OFFICERS 2021/2024**

**President:** Graeme Carter nominated by Bill Prebble (Graeme relinquished the chair to Bruce Taylor for this part of the election)

**Secretary:** Bruce Taylor nominated by Bill Prebble

**Treasurer:** Ken Lankshear nominated by Bruce Taylor

**Directors (four required):** David Cuthbert nominated by Bill Prebble

Rob Merrifield nominated by Chris Benson

Bill Prebble nominated by David Cuthbert

Glen Summers nominated by Rob Merrifield

The above members were declared elected to the Board by the chair, there being no further nominations received than those required to fill each position. The President thanked those standing down from the Board for their services – Graeme Jupp and Colin Barry.

## **APPOINTMENT OF AUDITOR**

Keith McGavin was elected unopposed as auditor for the 2022 year on the motion of David Cuthbert and Alan Smith.

## **ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE 2022 AGM**

It was agreed that the Board be given power to decide on these arrangements.

## **GENERAL BUSINESS**

**1. Authority to increase subscriptions:** The Board had recommended the following: **Motion** “That the Board be given authority to authority to increase subscriptions annually by the rate of inflation in the previous year”.

**Moved:** Graeme Carter **Seconded:** Ray Thomson

**Carried** - one vote against (Demetrius Christoforou).

Discussion of the motion:

- Graeme Carter explained that the motion gives the Board authority to automatically increase subscriptions up to the rate of inflation. If it wanted to an increase above the rate of inflation, the Board would have to come to an AGM for approval.
- Ray Thomson asked whether the Board would report an increase in subscriptions to an AGM? Answer by President Graeme Carter: yes, definitely.
- Bill Prebble asked if the rate of inflation will be as reported by the Reserve Bank? Answer: yes.
- Len Chisholm asked if the increase will be rounded to the nearest dollar? Answer: yes.
- Demetrius Christoforou was against what he described as “membership subscription creep”. He preferred an emphasis on donations from members.
- Alan Smith said the board is being given the ability to increase subscriptions, but it does not have to do so.
- Ray Thomson observed that the Society has never been able to predict donations; the only reliable income sources are subscriptions and sales of publications,
- Chris Benson said we have to allow for rising costs in the current economy – for example, rising freight costs.

2. **Withdrawal of cheques:** Len Chisholm asked about the impact on the NZRLS of the withdrawal by banks of cheques. David Cuthbert replied that it was early days to assess the impact, but by and large the change has been accommodated so far. A few members had sent in cash as payment which David discouraged.

The President thanked everyone for their attendance and David Cuthbert for making the venue and afternoon tea arrangements. He declared the meeting closed at 3.15pm.