



New Zealand Railway & Locomotive Society Inc. Minutes of 2023 Annual General Meeting

**Held at the Johnsonville Community Centre, Johnsonville
2.00pm Saturday 28th October 2023**

The Chair, President Graeme Carter, welcomed all of those present.

GUEST SPEAKER: Councillor Daran Ponter, Chair of the Greater Wellington Regional Council, was introduced by Bruce Taylor. Daran gave an interesting illustrated talk on “Metlink Rail Transport - Present Operations and Future Plans”. The presentation was well received and enjoyed by those present. Daran was thanked by Rob Merrifield.

PRESENT:

A total of 34 members & 5 guests were present.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

President: Graeme Carter.

Secretary: Bruce Taylor

Directors: David Cuthbert, Bill Prebble, Ken Lankshear (Treasurer), Rob Merrifield and Glen Summers.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Alan Smith, Stephen Brabender, Alan Brabender, John Bovis, Richard Stratford, Barry O'Donnell, Graeme Jupp, Stuart Hammond, Kevin Purchas, David Barnes, Annette Body, Demetrious Christoforou, Chris Benson, Clark Simmonds, David Rarity, David Sharp, Isiaiah Price, George Kroon, Antonio McDonald, Brent Efford, Peter Leitch, Keith McGavin, Bob Bevan Smith, Len Chisholm, Bill Hudson, Brian Jones, Rod Winskill.

GUESTS:

Brenda Carter, Brendon Kroon, Nerida Purchas, Kay Brabender, Sarah Burney.

APOLOGIES:

Howard Anderson, Colin Barry, David Black, Lindsay Benbrook, Grant Bowie, John Churchouse, John Clayton, Steve Cornwall, Bill Cowan, Ian Dawson, Mark Denne, Ralph Dunham (UK Representative), Mike Dutton, Hans-Henrik Fentz (Denmark), John Fitzgerald, Andy Helsby, Floyd and Ann Hulena, Stu Ingram, Robert John,

Peter Kerr, Bill McGavin, Ray Mathewson, Brian Pearce, Bill Rossiter, Jon Shingleton, Dave Turner, Keith Wakefield, Neville Wood, Ian Wylie.

Motion: “That the apologies be accepted” **Moved:** Clark Simmonds **Seconded:** Stephen Brabender
Carried

PRESIDENT’S ADDRESS:

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

In good shape: The President began by describing the society as in good shape overall. We have a good board who are intent on delivering what they believe the members want, he said. Membership has increased by a net 1% in the past year. This is an excellent result, Graeme Carter observed, when you consider that other organisations, such as a service club that he belonged to, which has had a 10% decline in members.

Moment of Silence: The President read the names of those 15 members lost to the society over the last twelve months as recorded on p. 8 of the Annual Report. He added the name of Murray Gowans. All present stood in silence for a minute as a mark of respect to those members who have passed away.

Observer: The publication and sale of the *Observer* every two months was another positive feature of the society’s past year, he said. The magazine is sent to all members and sold at retail outlets. The magazine distribution firm “ARE Direct” was reporting in every quarter of recent years a drop in total magazine retail sales of 8%, but the *Observer* has maintained its market share.

Trainfinda: Graeme Carter was enthusiastic about the digitisation of photographs project including the Trainfinda data base. He emphasized that more volunteers are needed to help with scanning and describing photos. Please see a Board member or Bob Bevan Smith, if you can help.

Challenges: There are four challenges facing the Board. The first is whether to produce a digital version of the *Observer*. Some members have asked for this. “Personally, I can see it coming”, Graeme said, “but I am concerned about the financial implications if digital copies were shared by people”.

Secondly, we need new premises as the Ava building is too small. Graeme said we have looked at two buildings for sale in the Porirua area and continue to look. There would be enough money from the sale of the Ava premise and in the building fund to purchase a new building.

The locomotive X442’s future is another matter to be decided by the Board. An approach has been made by another rail organization to move X442 to place it on public display where that organisation is based. It seems there is room for this move to be made, Graeme commented.

New Board members will need to be elected at the AGM next year because two members have indicated that they will stand down then. He is one of those who will retire then, the President concluded.

Arising from the report:

There was no discussion by members of the President's report.

Motion: "That the Presidents Report be received."

Moved: Graeme Carter **Seconded:** Len Chisholm.

Carried

MINUTES OF THE 2022 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING held on 19 October 2022:

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

Moved: David Cuthbert **Seconded:** Glen Summers

Carried.

Motion: "That the Minutes be taken as a true and correct record of the meeting".

Moved: Alan Smith **Seconded:** David Cuthbert

Carried

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE 2022 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES:

There were no matters arising.

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 30 JUNE 2023

Copies of the Annual Report had been distributed at the meeting and were available to members in the members section of the NZRLS website or on application to the Secretary. The annual report was opened for discussion.

Publications:

Bill Prebble explained that we print our books in China because it gives volume and lands the books in NZ at a reasonable cost and the society can then distribute them throughout the country. Challenges in publishing have been Covid-19 and increases in NZ Post costs. We have a very good book distributor in Oxford who distributes our books to the trade.

Two books have been produced this year: *My Life as a Locomotive Engineer* by Kevin Tasker and *NZR's Rebuilt G Class – The Phoenix That Failed* by Jon Singleton. Bill briefly described their contents. He said that in publishing you have to take gambles – try to print the right number and have a RRP that both sells the book and allows a discount to members.

The next books to be published will be his own "New Zealand Railways at Night" and a book on NZR's refreshment operations. In preparation are "The NZ Midland Railway Engineering and Construction" by Peter Kerr and "NZR

Railcars” by Tony Hurst. “So, there is good positive reading coming”, Bill concluded.

Presentation to “*Observer*” Editor, Graeme Carter:

Bill Prebble then turned to discuss the NZRLS magazine *The New Zealand Railway Observer*, which he said was the glue that holds us together and is well looked forward to by members. The *Observer* has been produced under the same masthead for 79 years. Graeme Carter started as Editor with No 233 and he has produced 148 issues. Bill pointed out there has only been only two editors, Graeme and Tom McGavin. To acknowledge 25 years of service as Editor of the *Observer*, Bill on behalf of the Board and the members presented Graeme Carter with a 1/64 model of a twin-set railcar RM 123, with our thanks.

Administration and Membership:

David Cuthbert highlighted the excellent work of two contractors, Bill McGavin and Sandra Knight. He said the contributions that contractors and volunteers made to the administration of the NZRLS are outlined in the Administration section of the report.

Silverstream Preservation:

Rob Merrifield briefly described work of volunteers in Silverstream and in Christchurch. Rob had prepared a PowerPoint on the restoration of the WMRC cars, which the chair asked him to speak to at the conclusion of the formal business (see below)

Motion: “That the Annual Report be received”

Moved: Graeme Carter **Seconded:** Alan Smith

Carried

FINANCIAL REPORT (In the form of the “Performance Report for the year ended 30 June 2023”)

Copies of the Performance Report were distributed at the meeting and were available to members in the member’s section of the NZRLS website or on application to the Secretary.

The Treasurer, Ken Lankshear, told the meeting that in terms of income and expenditure we are trucking along the way we have always been in recent years. We are in a healthy financial position because of bequests and we are managing to hold expenses, the Treasurer said. The big spending item in the last year was repainting the Ava building.

There was no further discussion of the financial report.

Motion: “That the Performance Report and financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2023 be accepted, subject to audit.”

Moved: Ken Lankshear **Seconded:** Graeme Jupp

Carried

SUBSCRIPTIONS 2024

The Board had already set the rate of subscriptions for 2023/24. Graeme Carter explained that the Board would review subscriptions in the light of increases in the cost of living. There had not yet been a serious discussion about subscriptions for the 2024/25 year. He assured the meeting that any increase would not be more than the rate of inflation.

APPOINTMENT OF AUDITOR

Keith McGavin said that he was prepared to carry on in the role.

Motion: “That Keith McGavin be reappointed as Auditor”

Moved: Clark Simmonds **Seconded:** Stephen Brabender

Carried

NOTICES OF MOTION

There were no notices of motion received by the Secretary.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE 2024 AGM

The President said the Board wanted to do something special as it will be the society’s 80th AGM. We are open to all ideas, he said.

Demetrious Christoforou suggested a public hall in Mount Victoria, Wellington, would accommodate a crowd at the AGM and would cost \$200.

GENERAL BUSINESS

- **“Observer” production and sales:**

Len Chisholm asked how many “Observers” were produced? Graeme Carter replied that it was 2,100. All Observers sold by retailers were on a “sale or return” basis. Income from sales is received 4 months later.

- **Digitisation:**

Len reported that there were now 46,880 images available in Trainfinda. He was not sure about free access to it, but members can get access through him.

Bob Bevan Smith, the Convenor of the Digitisation Working Group made an appeal for voluntary help by members with the digitisation project. He said anyone who could pick up pictures from Ava and return them after scanning them would be welcomed. Also, there is a need for help in writing descriptions

of information captured in pictures. The more people we have to do the work the faster it will be done, Bob said.

The President thanked everyone for their attendance. Particular thanks were expressed to David Cuthbert and Bruce Taylor for organising the meeting. He declared the meeting closed at 3.45pm.

Notes of PowerPoint presentation by Rob Merrifield:

Following the close of formal business, Rob Merrifield spoke to a PowerPoint presentation showing progress on restoring our three Wellington & Manawatu Railway carriages. N. 48 is the most advanced; restoring No 52 has begun.

Since the illustrated history of this project published in the *Observer* for April - May 2020, the main windows and the restored entry doors have been fitted to No 48. Bruce Shadbolt and Ian Close in Christchurch are making the window latches needed for all three carriages. They have made the reproduction kerosene lamps to go in the saloons of 48 and are working on those for the other two cars. Safety gates have been completed and fitted on the end balconies. Electric lighting cables have been run, with second fix to follow later.

Work has begun to separate the roof and walls of No 52 from its floor structure. A lot of decayed wood is going to have to be replaced, mostly using wood bought earlier.

Grants are being applied for the cost of iron castings from which the dead buffers will be made. A member has offered to machine the castings before assembly of the buffers. Another member has donated the estimated cost of labour by a joiner to make the interior doors for 48.

Rob said we are very grateful for these generous offers and for the other donations that help to make restoration work possible. His thanks go to our restoration team, all volunteers, who live from Christchurch to Foxton, the farthestmost ones working remotely. New volunteer workers and more donations make further work on our project possible. Our objective is to have a rake of three WMR carriages restored to as near their original condition as possible, he said.

These minutes are duly signed as a true and accurate record of the proceedings:

Signed : G.T.Carter (President)

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