



# **New Zealand Railway & Locomotive Society Inc. Minutes of 2024 Annual General Meeting**

**Held at the Cosmopolitan Club Upper Hutt  
2.00pm Saturday 19th October 2024**

The Chair, President Graeme Carter, welcomed all of those present, especially members and honorary members who have not been at an AGM for some time. The meeting was preceded by the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary luncheon which was enjoyed by 50 members and guests.

## **PRESENT:**

A total of 40 members & 8 guests were present.

## **BOARD MEMBERS:**

**President:** Graeme Carter.

**Secretary:** Bruce Taylor

**Directors:** David Cuthbert, Bill Prebble, Rob Merrifield and Glen Summers.

## **MEMBERS:**

David Barnes, Chris Benson, Robert Bevan Smith, Annette Boddy, John Bovis, Peter Beale, Graeme Berry, Len Chisholm, John Clayton, Graeme Clover, Ian Cotton, Grant Craig, Kevin Crosado, Ben Davidge, Mike Dutton, Stuart Hammond, Raymond Hill, Tony Hurst, Stu Ingram, Brian Jones, George Kroon, Graeme McClare, Keith McGavin, Gavin Malcolmson, Mike Mellor, Brian Mosen, Brian Pearce, David Rarity, Clark Simmonds, Alan Smith, Philip Smith, Jan Spencer (honorary member), Ray Thomson, Rod Winskill

## **GUESTS:**

Francisca Baay, Trevor Bettany, Brenda Carter, Amy Hill, Margaret Hurst, Barbara Ingram, Brendon Kroon, Delia McGavin

## **APOLOGIES:**

Hans-Henrik Fentz (Denmark), Keith Wakefield, Ken Lankshear, Floyd Hulena, Bill Cowan, Tim Wadams, John Fitzgerald, Paul Freeman, Tony Naughton, Tony Arcus, Warren Jones, Bill Rossiter, Greg Keay, Richard Croker, Bruce Shalders, Bill McGavin, Richard Stratford, Jon Shingleton, Ian Wylie, Demetrius Christoforou, Brent Efford, Ester Rudd (honorary member), Graeme Jupp

**Motion:** “That the apologies be accepted” **Moved:** Graeme Carter **Seconded:** Clark Simmonds Carried

## **PRESIDENT’S ADDRESS:**

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

**80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of NZRLS:** The 80<sup>th</sup> birthday was a time for reflection, a time to assess where we are at present and a time to look to the future.

**Reflection:** The NZ Railway Correspondence Society began in 1942 as an informal group of Tom McGavin, Jack Mahoney and Stan Rockliff. The first copy of the “Observer” was prepared in March 1944. A small committee was formed in November 1944 and the name changed to NZ Railway and Locomotive Society in April 1945.

The “Observer” is the fourth longest continual serial in NZ with the same name. The first booklet “New Zealand Railway Engines” was published in 1953. The first hardback was “Balloon Stacks and Sugar Cane” produced in 1961.

Membership has fluctuated growing to nearly 1300 in 1979 and gradually falling away after that. Over the last 20 years membership has been steady between 720 and 800.

At first the conduct of business was around the kitchen table in member’s homes, then in an old carriage at Ngaio and later we built the Thomas McGavin Building at North Street Petone and later doubled its size. Land was acquired at Silverstream North End and our workshop erected there.

“We have come a long way in the last 80 years”, the President reflected.

**The present:** Membership numbers were stable but we should not be complacent. “New Zealand Railways at Night” was a magnificent work, Graeme Carter said, and Bill Prebble should be congratulated on it. Uptake of the digital “Observer” subscription option had been quite small. There had been some teething problems. In particular, two members have complained about digital subscriber’s inability to download each digital version. “It was fair to say, the Board has agreed to disagree with the two members about downloading the digital Observer”, Graeme Carter reported.

**The future:** The society was still looking for a suitable person to promote the NZRLS and membership of it. The board has looked at three suitable buildings in Upper Hutt to replace the Ava building. We will keep looking, he said.

The other concern was retail distribution of the “Observer”. Our distributor, ARE, has reported national magazine sales are down by 16% in the last 12 months. There has been a slight and lesser drop in retail sales of the “Observer”. What the future holds for the retail distribution of the “Observer” is unclear.

**People:** “We have good people in the NZRLS, a supportive membership and a good Board,” Graeme Carter continued. He thanked Board members for their work during the past year.

**Mark of respect:** The President read the names of those 14 members lost to the Society over the last twelve months as recorded on pages 5 and 6 of the Annual Report. All present stood in silence for a minute as a mark of respect to those members who have passed away.

**Board:** Two members of the Board had indicated that they wish to stand down. The retiring members were Glen Summers and Rob Merrifield whom the President thanked individually. A gift was presented to Rob Merrifield to acknowledge the work Rob has done in various roles for the NZRLS.

**Arising from the report:**

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

**Motion:** “That the President’s Report be received.”

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

**ADDRESS BY GRANT CRAIG, PRESIDENT of the FEDERATION of RAIL ORGANISATIONS of NEW ZEALAND**

The chair invited Grant Craig to address the meeting. The script of his speech follows.

“FRONZ and the NZR&LS have always had a strong relationship, NZR&LS was one of the attendees at our inaugural meeting in 1975 and have been a strong supporter of FRONZ over the years.

We forget that many of the branches of NZR&LS formed many of our first steps into operating preservation in NZ such as Ocean Beach Railway, Ferrymead Railway, Silver Stream Railway and Glenbrook Vintage Railway to name a few, we need to celebrate these early steps in preserving railway infrastructure many of them have or will be celebrating their own 60th anniversary celebrations.

Without these first steps we wouldn't have around 70 organisations that are now members of FRONZ that are preserving our railway and tramway heritage and NZR&LS leads the way in preserving at Ava this history that is so important and a great resource for members and the public.

From my home town of Dunedin the Otago Branch of the NZR&LS got Ocean Beach Railway operating in 1963 building from this lead to the formation of the Otago Excursion Train Trust and then to the Taieri Gorge Railway/ Dunedin Railways. All this started with like-minded members getting together to discuss railways and correspond with other members throughout the country and supplying articles and information from their area to the NZR&LS “Observer”.

Names that come to mind that were early Otago members were Stan and Arthur Rockliff, George Emerson, Cecil Bachop, Bill Lloyd and Alan Fraser to name a few, now all passed on, every province had their own movers and shakers and these guys need remembering as we celebrate 80 years of the NZR&LS.

(Grant at this point read out a letter to Stan Rockliff from the Secretary of the NZRLS awarding Stan life membership of the NZRLS. At the end of his speech Grant presented a framed copy of the letter to the NZRLS President, Graeme Carter.)

I joined the Society in 1979 as I was handed a membership form for both The Otago Branch and the NZR&LS by longtime member Ian Wylie as he noticed me sitting for a number of hours watching F111 plod up down the track on an operating day at Ocean Beach Railway.

As with many of you I always looked forward to the “Observer” turning up and I can say it did influence me in a number of ways, I always enjoyed the Derek Cross articles especially on his early trips into Southland to take photos of Q locos and U's on the line to Lumsden, trains on the Waimea Plains and names like Balfour, Croydon, Dipton, Lumsden etc. were etched in my mind so when I joined the railways I wanted to see the world {it ended up really just being the lower South Island!}, also the Russell Glendinning articles on his life on the railway was fascinating and what they recorded is now history and gave us all a look into what the railway used to be.

Next year is FRONZ's 50th anniversary to be based around the Ferrymead railway in Christchurch over Kings Birthday and I invite you to think about attending as we plan to celebrate railway preservation in NZ and what we have achieved over the last 50 years.

Congratulations NZR&LS on your 80th anniversary and you never know I might be around for the 100th which I will book up now so I don't forget.”

## **MINUTES OF 2023 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING held on 28 October 2023**

***Motion:*** “That the Minutes be taken as read.”

***Moved:*** David Cuthbert ***Seconded:*** Clark Simmonds

Carried.

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

***Moved:*** Bill Prebble ***Seconded:*** Rob Merrifield

Carried

This motion was carried on the understanding that two member's names spelt incorrectly in the 2023 AGM minutes will be shown correctly in these minutes. The corrected names are: Annette Boddy and Demetrius Christoforou

## **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE 2023 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES:**

There were no matters arising.

## ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 30 JUNE 2024

Copies of the Annual Report were 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, the chairman of the Publications Committee, asked that if anybody is considering writing for NZRLS to let us know in advance so that we can talk about details, such as subject and size. It was advantageous to the NZRLS to have books in the pipeline moving towards publication. The last copies of “NZR’s Rebuilt G Class” are still available, Bill noted.

**DWG:** Alan Smith, the Convenor of the Digitisation Working Group, thanked Bob Bevan Smith, the convenor of the DWG since its inception for his work. He also thanked Graeme McClare, the Archivist, for his contributions. The intention of the group is that members will be able to browse online the “Trainfinda” photographic collection and a paper will go to the Board on this subject. There is a continual inflow of donated images. Alan reported that over 50,000 images are digitized, but we are only 20% through our collection.

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

**Moved:** Graeme Carter **Seconded:** Keith McGavin

Carried

## FINANCIAL REPORT (In the form of the “Performance Report for the year ended 30 June 2024”)

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. It was noted that the report was unaudited at the time of the meeting.

The Treasurer, Ken Lankshear, was unable to attend the meeting.

The Auditor, Keith McGavin, said that there were a number of errors on p.15 of the Performance Report apparently made in copying figures across. He read out the errors which are recorded below:

Re the Table on page 15 of Financial Assets and Financial Liabilities:

30 June 2024:

Cash and Cash Equivalents: Should be \$14,262 - not \$10,262 (2 places)

30 June 2023

Financial Assets at Amortised Cost, Total Should be \$550,610 - not \$537,004

Financial Liabilities - Payables and Accruals Should be \$13,605 - not \$14,050 (2 places)

The President commented that the NZRLS has had a good year financially. There was a surplus shown on p.5 but, if it was not for the bequests and donations also shown on that page, we would have made a loss. “We are very reliant on bequests and donations”, he said. Keith McGavin said most of the bequests and donations were transferred into other funds in the accounts.

**Motion:** “That the Performance Report and financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2024 be accepted, subject to audit and to the corrections noted in the minutes.”

**Moved:** Graeme Carter **Seconded:** Grant Craig  
Carried

## **SUBSCRIPTIONS 2025**

The Secretary announced that the Board had decided at its May 2024 meeting, using its delegated authority, to increase subscriptions for 2025 in line with inflation and the new subscription rates had been advised to members in “Turntable” and on the website.

## **APPOINTMENT OF AN AUDITOR**

Keith McGavin said he was available as Auditor for the 2025 Financial Year.

**Motion:** “That Keith McGavin be reappointed as Auditor”

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

## **ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 2024-2027**

The Secretary took the chair for the election of the **President**. He announced that one written nomination had been received: Graeme Carter nominated by Bruce Taylor. The Secretary declared Graeme elected as President for 2024 to 2027. Graeme noted that this year would be his 18th year as President.

Graeme resumed the chair.

The Secretary reported that the following written nominations had been received:

**Secretary** Bruce Taylor nominated by Bill Prebble

**Treasurer** Ken Lankshear nominated by Bruce Taylor

**Directors** (four required) Ian Cotton nominated by Graeme Carter

Bruce Shalders nominated by Bill Prebble

David Cuthbert nominated by Bruce Taylor

Bill Prebble nominated by Bruce Taylor

The above members were duly elected as officers for 2024 to 2027.

Two new directors had been elected to the Board: Ian Cotton, who was introduced to the meeting, and Bruce Shalders, who had sent his apologies. The President said he was looking forward to working with the new Board.

### **ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE 2025 AGM**

These arrangements were left to the Board to make.

### **GENERAL BUSINESS**

- Len Chisholm offered to give a ride to any members who wished to go to the Ava archives after the meeting.

The meeting was closed at 2.57pm. The President thanked everyone for their attendance.

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

Signed: G.T.Carter (President) .....

.....2025