



Una Voce News Letter

RETIRED OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION OF PAPUA AND NEW GUINEA

36 Prince Albert Street, MOSMAN. N.S.W. 2088

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APRIL 1979

HULLO THERE ! FIRSTLY A REMINDER - DON'T FORGET

The Retired Officers' Association of P.N.G. Annual Dinner

To be held on Friday 4th May, 1979 at the Ex-P.O.W. Association Rooms

101 - 105 Clarence Street, Sydney at 6.30p.m. - \$9 per head.

Please send Cheques to Miss Joyce Oldroyd-Harris 2/18 Whitton Road, CHATSWOOD 2067. or phone her on 419 2426. TO ENSURE THAT ACCURATE CATERING ARRANGEMENTS CAN BE MADE IT IS MOST IMPORTANT THAT MEMBERS NOTIFY MISS OLDROYD-HARRIS OR PRESIDENT BILL SEALE 68 Phoenix Street, LANE COVE 2066, phone 428 3357, AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Held at the Air Force Association Rooms, Clarence St, Sydney on Friday 9th Feb. 1979

The Meeting was opened by the President, Mr.H.P.Seale at 8 p.m., with the following present, Vice President: D.Clifton-Bassett; Treasurer: Miss Oldroyd-Harris; Secretary: Mr.F.P.Kaad, Minute Secretary: Mrs.P.Foley; Committee Members: L.Clout, G.Keleny, Sir H.Niall, D.Parish, J.Judge and 28 Members. Apologies from Miss V.Bignold, Messrs Moncur, Williams, Jackman, Lawrie & Bosgard.

The Minutes of the 1978 Annual General Meeting were read. It was moved by Mr.Clout, seconded by Mr.Normoyle that they be accepted and confirmed.

The Secretary apologised that the detailed financial statement had not been included in those minutes although it had been tabled at the Meeting.

Business arising from the Minutes:

Triennial Review : The Secretary said that the question of just how much remained in the various funds at the time of the Commonwealth take-over in 1976 and the Triennial Review due in 1973 were separate matters but linked by changes in legislation which served to further confuse the issues. He had discussed the need for clarification with the Commissioner for Superannuation while he was in Canberra. The Commissioner had been sympathetic and said that he hoped the 1976 Annual Report now being prepared would clear the matter. This should go to the Minister in May and be tabled in Parliament in June/July and copies would then be sent to the Association.

There ensued some discussion in which Mr. Rudge said that many of the loans made by the old Board were on long term and if sold before maturity would be sold at a loss. Some loans did not mature until 2001.

Mr. Clifton-Bassett said that the P.N.G. Public Service as a whole had no part in what had happened and he felt the Government had a moral obligation to cover any losses. However, he was prepared to drop the matter if others would do so, but he warned that if, as an Association, we did nothing about this matter he hoped there would be no one to complain if in July there is an attempt to interfere with indexation rights.

The Secretary said that there was no doubt that the Board did not have the liquid reserves to meet its commitments in the self-government - independence period, but even if it had sufficient for those payments there would not have been enough to also meet the higher payments arising from indexation. The President concluded the discussion by saying that he felt that the 1976 Annual Report would resolve the matter.

Benefits

The Secretary reported that changes to our conditions as set out in the June Newsletter had been sought from the Minister for Finance. These would bring us in to line with the benefits applying to Commonwealth Superannuants, which we are not presently receiving. Both written and telephone communication with the Minister and/or his officers had continued. He had received the impression that our submissions were being treated sympathetically. However, because of the extensive statistical and actuarial work involved, it would possibly be May before firm advice could be expected. The changes would require Cabinet approval and possibly legislative changes, which would take further time.

Indexation of Superannuation

The Secretary said that the present position was satisfactory but there was no guarantee that there would not be an attempt to reduce the level of indexation if not cut it out completely. The latter was unlikely, but we must be prepared, and if necessary start another letter-to-your Member campaign.

Co-operation with Commonwealth Superannuated Officers' Association

The Secretary reported that the informal co-operation with this Association continued. Its President, Mr. R. Gurd, has been most helpful with information and advice, and Members were urged to continue their associate membership with this body. A member of our Committee attended their meetings but ordinary Members would also be most welcome. "United we stand, and divided we fall" remains as true in 1979 as it ever was. If there was any suggestion of changes to present indexation of superannuation it would most likely be applied to all superannuation paid by the Commonwealth and your Association was well aware of the need to work together with similar Associations in such an event.

President's Report

The President commenced with a tribute to the work being done by Freddie Kaad as Secretary, whom he considered to be the right person for the job. Thank were also due to Les Clout and his wife for their assistance with the Newsletter, and to Pam Foley in her difficult task of translating the Secretary's writing and then typing it, and to Joyce Oldroyd-Harris for her work as Treasurer. There was no doubt the new format Newsletter had regenerated interest among members, nevertheless there were over 100 superannuants eligible for membership who were not members of the Association and the President appealed to all to "recruit" any eligible members or associate members, as our strength lay in uniting and in numbers. In this regard he proposed that Mr. G. Keleny be appointed Honorary Research Officer for the Association, and his first task would be to increase our numbers.

As a result of his visit to Perth, the President felt there was some worth in the idea of creating "cells" in various centres and he would commend this idea to the incoming Committee. If accepted, further details would appear in the next Newsletter.

The President also outlined the scheme originally suggested by Mrs. Parrish and supported by your Committee. He felt the concept of the "Caring Committee" had great potential and would vigorously support it. It was not a welfare committee in the old sense, but a caring group which would express its concern for other members by such things as perhaps going shopping for anyone unable to do so, or visiting Members who were lonely. We tend to think that this is already being done but experience shows that this is not always the case.

The President went on to say that there had been talk of a change of venue and/or time for both the Annual General Meeting and the Annual Dinner, and proposed those for discussion later in the Meeting. He concluded by thanking the Committee and other officers for their help and suggested that the honorarium paid to the Secretary and to Mrs. Foley be increased. The Secretary said he did not want to receive any honorarium.

It was moved by Mr. Clifton-Bassett, seconded by Sir Horace Riall, that a vote of thanks be recorded for the work done by Mr. Kaad, Mr. and Mrs. Clout and Mrs. Foley, that Mr. Keleny be appointed Honorary Research Officer, and that the matter of an honorarium be left to the Committee.
Carried unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

The Financial Statement to the 31st December 1978 was read by the Treasurer.

Financial Statement

Receipts

Balance brought forward from 1977	\$3447
Cash in hand brought forward from 1977	34
Members subscriptions 1978	2063
Subscriptions social evening	472
Interest on investments	267
Bank Interest	17
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	6300

Expenditure

Catering, Social Evening	\$ 575
Hall Hire	12
Honorarium	100
Printing	400
Stationery	28
Petty Cash	60
Typing and copying	57
Stamps	283
Cash in hand	165
Savings Bank balance	300
Current Bank Balance	218
Investments	3965
Short Fall	137
	<hr/>
	6300

Checked and is a true statement based on documents examined
and information provided.

(Sgd) T.G. Aitchison.

The President drew attention to a shortfall in the accounts of \$137, and
the Secretary read the following letter from the Honorary Auditor, Mr.
T. Aitchison:

Mr. H.P. Seale,
President,
Retired Officers' Association PNG
68 Phoenix St,
Lane Cove NSW

Dear Bill,

Enclosed is Statement of Receipts & Expenditures for the year
1978. It has been compiled from an examination of the documents re-
lating and from information from your Secretary and Treasurer.

It appears there is a shortfall of some \$137 which I expect
is an arithmetic error somewhere along the line, but which has evaded

me despite the time spent on the exercise.

It is quite impossible to pinpoint some errors in the present system of bookkeeping and I recommend that the savings account be closed immediately and all transactions be channeled through the current account with investments being made as funds accumulate.

I further recommend that all payments (excepting petty cash transactions) be made by the Treasurer by cheque.

Best regards,

Tom Hitchison.

It was moved by Mr. Donaldson and seconded by Mr. Rudge that the Treasurer's Report be adopted, that the changes suggested by the Hon Auditor be introduced.

The Secretary said that much of what he wished to say had been included in Business Arising from the Minutes of last year's A.G.M. In January he had visited the Australian Government Retirement Benefits Office in Canberra and discussed some outstanding matters with the Commissioner for Superannuation and another senior officer. The talks had been wide-ranging, and apart from the subjects already covered, they had included having superannuation cheques sent in the same way as Social Service cheques during mail strikes and the possibility of ex-gratia payments to the few remaining widows of pre war Papuan officers whose husbands had elected not to pay for spouses superannuation. The question of the Association being informed of the deaths and/or changed of address of superannuants had been raised but because of recent rulings on privacy and confidentiality such information could not be officially given out.

The Secretary went on to say that this highlighted the need for Members to notify the Association of deaths and/or changes of address. About 20 December Newsletters had been returned because he had not received any notice of such changes. This represented a double loss to the Association, firstly on initial postage and then on surcharge for returning letters.

The Secretary concluded by supporting the President's remarks about the help given by Mr. and Mrs. Clout, Mrs. Foley and the Committee, and particularly mentioned Members out of Sydney such as Mr. M.B. Orken.

Correspondence

The Secretary tabled several files of correspondence. He pointed out that the bulk of the letters were routine and that anything important was discussed with the Committee and/or the President, depending upon its urgency. He then suggested that although all correspondence should be

tabled at the A.G.M. for inspection by Members if so desired, only important correspondence since the last Committee meeting or correspondence arising from that meeting should be actually read. At present there was only one outstanding letter in the latter categories as the Committee had only recently met. This was from a widow who married after her spouse had retired, and sought the Association's help. The matter was included in the log of claims sent to the Minister last year and the widow had been advised to write through her local Federal Member of Parliament asking that an early decision be made. The Secretary also wished to place on record his regret that although urgent or important letters had been answered, many letters of a more social or routine nature had not been replied to because of time demands. However he hoped to recruit another Member to assist him with such correspondence.

Finally the Secretary paid tribute to the legal advice given him on behalf of Members by Mr. J. Lemaire, Mr. J. Lynch and Mr. J. Mattes.

It was moved by Mr. Parrish and seconded by Mr. Pearsall that suggestions and actions taken by the Secretary regarding correspondence be approved and continued.

Election of Officers

The President relinquished the chair, and indicated that he was available for re-nomination.

The Secretary called for nominations for the position of President.

Mr. Seale was nominated by Mr. Champion, seconded Sir Horace Niall. There being no further nominations, the Secretary declared Mr. Seale elected and he resumed the Chair.

Mr. Clifton-Bassett was elected unopposed to the position of Vice-President.

Mr. Kaad was elected unopposed to the position of Secretary.

Miss Oldroyd-Harris was elected unopposed to the position of Treasurer.

Mr. Aitchison was elected unopposed to the position of Auditor.

It was proposed by Mr. Clifton-Bassett, seconded by Mr. Parrish that a position of Assistant Secretary be created, and Mrs. Foley was elected unopposed to this position.

Nominations for Committee Members were called for. Mr. Champion moved, seconded by Mr. Aitchison, that the present Committee be re-elected. There were no further nominations, and the following Members were duly re-elected :

Miss U. Bignold
Mr. L. Clout
Mr. G. Keleny

Sir Horace Niall
Mr D. Parrish
Mr. J. Rudge

It was proposed by Mr. Clifton-Bassett and seconded by Mr. Parrish that Mr. Keleny's position as Research Officer make him ex officio a member of the Committee. This would create a vacant position on the Committee. The motion was carried without dissent and the President suggested that the appointment of a new member be left to the incoming Committee.

General Business

A general discussion on the time and place of the next Annual General Meeting took place, the Secretary quoting from several letters received favouring a daytime meeting. Mr. Smith suggested that it should be held at 11 a.m. with light refreshments to follow; another suggestion, which did not receive much support, was Saturday afternoon; another Member said that if a daytime Meeting was held then it should be later in the year in the cooler weather. Some suggestions were also made about venue and finally on the proposal of Mr. Normoyle it was decided that the matter be left to the Committee, bearing in mind the preferences expressed for a daytime Meeting.

Widows of Papuan Officers

The Secretary said that the Papuan Officers as a whole had opted not to pay extra for widows' pensions. Whilst there may have been good reason for that decision in those days he felt that the Association should see what could be done for these ladies once our present claims had been settled. Any benefits would have to be ex gratia, but because of the small number involved he thought that favourable consideration might be given. There was general agreement with this proposal.

Payment of Fees

The Treasurer reported that although there had been an increase in members paying Life Membership and in new Members, many Members were two years or more overdue, despite annual notices. There followed a general discussion on fees during which it was suggested that

- a list of those more than 12 months overdue be published in the Newsletter;
- that reminders to pay be published in the Newsletter;
- that Life Membership fees be 10 times the annual subscription, i.e. \$40.00
- that the position of widows in regard to payment of fees should be made clear. Mr. Champion, a former Secretary, said that he believed that widows did not have to pay fees. The present Secretary said that he agreed with this policy for Papuan widows and others on low incomes but he felt the others could afford to pay. Although we were reasonably financial, with over \$4,000 in credit, most of this was from Life Membership fees and our costs were increasing. However this was a matter of checking the Constitution in the first place.

Amendment to the Constitution

Mr. Ritchison said that several matters which had been mentioned during the Meeting were of a constitutional nature. Further, there had been no changes in the Constitution for at least 15 years. He therefore moved that the incoming Committee should undertake such a review, so that any amendments, if required, could be made in the proper manner, and with due notice to Members. Seconded by Mr. Parrish and carried without dissent.

Venue of the Annual Dinner

The President said he had been asked to raise the possibility of holding the Annual Dinner in another place. There was a good deal of discussion during which the good work of the Ex-P.O.W. Association was commended, whilst others felt that for various reasons we should try for another place. Members were reminded that many were not well off financially and it was important to keep costs down. Mr. Donaldson said the most important thing was that Members come together socially. Finally it was moved by Sir Horace Riall and seconded by Mr. Donaldson that the Dinner should be held at the usual place. This was agreed to but the Committee was asked to bear in mind the possibility of a new venue.

Tax Concession

Mr. Meehan said that because we had worked and contributed to our superannuation we were now being penalised. Other men who had made no provision for their retirement received the old age pension once they were 65. He did not ask for the pension but felt that we had a good argument for seeking a tax deduction after 65 of \$2000 or the equivalent of the pension. Others supported this move and the President said he would explore the possibilities of such a deduction with other Associations.

Caring Society

Further details of the Caring Society idea were given by Mr. Parrish. There was a general expression that the Association should pursue this matter.

There being no further business the Meeting was closed by the President at 9.55 p.m.

F.P. Kaad
Hon Secretary.

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It is regretted that those of you intending to come to the Annual Dinner will receive only 10 days notice, but problems caused by the postal strike have made this inevitable.

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The next Newsletter, due mid-June, will continue our normal coverage of both Association and Members' affairs. Hopefully it will have good news in regard to our claim for improved benefits. Sincerely, Fred Kaad.