

PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – JUNE 2020

I find myself in the strange position of writing the Presidential report for a period during which I was not the President! I took up the role of your elected President in April during a time that much needed work was being frustrated by the onset and restrictions of the recent virus that beset the world.

In May last year I was persuaded to return to the Executive team to take up the role of Vice President. And it took some time to pick up the reins again after departing from the team about three years earlier. However, with the huge support of Dick Williams and Anton Cootzee I was able to get myself into catch-up mode.

In the ensuing months I came to realise that the organisation had grown, was benefitting from and employing an active and energetic part-time manager, supporting a number of regions that were trying to grow the business and actively entice more members into the fold. Without numerical strength and wide geographic spread the organisation cannot survive. Several regions were undertaking splendid work however the original powerhouse of the organisation, Auckland, was grinding almost to a halt. This was most surprising so in January this year a number of us from outside the Auckland region arranged two large-number meetings in Browns Bay and Manurewa. Wherein we explained again what we are attempting to achieve and to stimulate growth.

Meanwhile I embarked on a number of explanatory meetings in villages utilising a Powerpoint programme – which presentations appear to have been well received.

During February and March, while on holiday, I visited the regions in Otago, Canterbury and Wellington to ensure that they remained enthusiastic and focussed. It became clear that there was much more work to do in this regard. However I am grateful to those in the three areas that took time to meet with me and explain their local problems.

During March the then President Colin Porter indicated that he was electing to stand down from the role and I record the Executive's appreciation of his many years of service since what can be described as the 'early days'.

Financially we were clearly in need of membership growth and worthwhile sponsorship. This coupled with an increase in subscription fee as it was clear that the hitherto amount individually was far too low. That has been rectified for the coming year including the opportunity for members to take up a lifetime (at least 10 years) membership. This type of membership is very popular in Queensland.

I recognise that this report only encompasses activities up to 31 March. At the next AGM I will expand upon a large amount of innovative work that has taken place since that date.

In addition to the continued professional work of Secretary Dick Williams, I record my appreciation of the input of two other hard-working volunteers encompassing legal (Anton Cootzee) and membership registration (Doug Little). These three people have served you extremely well and are truly dedicated.

We attended the annual CFFC forum – this year held in Christchurch in November. The turnout from senior village company management was disappointing. However, we were addressed in a most refreshing manner by the CEO of Consumer NZ who has agreed that her organisation will be undertaking some worthwhile work commenting upon the state of the retirement village industry. While mentioning the CFFC we are grateful for the continued friendly and professional input from Troy Churton and, three days after the close of the year, we had a very worthwhile meeting with the new Retirement Commission Jane Wrightson. It would be fair to say that Jane, unlike her predecessors, has taken an early and firm interest in matters pertaining to the industry.