

CHAIRMANS REPORT for 2021

Dear members

I opened my report last year with a comment about hoping the trials and tribulations of 2020 and 2021 were behind us as we had settled back into our relatively normal lives. However, it was not to be and in August last year we were again facing a further long lockdown that trailed its way into the beginning of 2022. Hopefully this time

This is my sixth and last report as President of the NZ Model Railway Guild. I had indicated last year that I thought the current Executive may have another year to run – in the end, with the delay to the Convention, we have worked through another eighteen months.

The has Journal continued to be published in a regular and timely manner under Alex Smith's guidance throughout 2021 and into the beginning of 2022. However, as has been widely circulated amongst the membership, we are now at a crossroads where having only one person responsible for the Journal – from editorial through to production – is too big an ask of any one person.

We have probably known this for some time; however, it has been challenging to put a team together without so easily falling back to the old ways. Club newsletters have always been the province of a hard-working club member, and when they got tired they passed it on to someone else. We cannot continue to do this. Our Journal may have started as a club newsletter 75 years ago – today it is a high-quality publication with a worldwide circulation.

It needs the professional input from an editorial team – comprising an overall managing editor with a team of people to provide articles, photographs, advertising etc – and a technical person (a production editor) to prepare the final product for the printers.

I believe we have the production editor identified, someone with good experience in print layout and who also has a wide understanding of the hobby. This is a paid position. We have identified some individuals who will bring together various aspects of the magazine content – however we are yet to identify someone who will take overall responsibility for the editorial decisions and liaise with the production editor. We are of the view that this will now need to have some level of remuneration if it is to attract the right person.

I am going to be really frank here and say that while we are able to produce the December issue of the Journal before the end of the year, without a new managing editor, publication of the Journal will cease.

As I noted above, the current Executive members have been in place for over six years, and we are now seeking replacements. This task is not at all onerous as the Executive is effectively the governing body with oversight of the Guild's publishing activities and its financial management. The Rules require a minimum of five and a maximum of seven. The only officers are the President, the Secretary, and the Treasurer. We have identified someone who will take up the role of Secretary/Treasurer in the coming year. All we need now is someone to be the President and a couple more to make up the numbers.

We are continuing to maintain our nearly breakeven operational financial position, although that will certainly come under pressure in the future.

I am very appreciative of the work done by the team that have been the Executive for the last six years and commend the enormous satisfaction of being part of the hobby as it continues to go from strength to strength. Of course we also owe a special thanks to our members for your continuing support.

Lexi Browne
President, NZMRG
1st October 2022