

## Chairpersons Report.

2023 the first year in several years that trading was not directly affected by COVID, but with a challenge of increased living expenses. A year of change for the operation and management of the Club, although our trading surplus is reduced the Club remains in a strong financial position, with funds held in Term deposit and income producing Assets.

The first year for the Secretary Manager, Mr Stephen Hodge, who came to us with a wealth of experience in Club Management in NSW and Victoria, has been a year of change; fresh ideas for improving the Club asset for our members, improving our community engagement opportunities, especially through major sponsorship of the Wellington Race Club for the 2024 Wellington Boot Carnival and Wellington Golf Club tournaments and regular competitions.

We have introduced the Courtesy bus to assist our patrons to attend the Club and return home safely, and the Club has updated the Utility, both of which boost our community presence as mobile advertisements.

We continue to provide entertainment for the members each week including Raffles, Bingo, and music. Our Asian/Australian caterer's continue to provide a first class menu and dining experience, we are expecting an upgrade to the dining and auditorium spaces in the very near future.

The Club, having detected a substantial fraud, have revised and updated the accounting and cash handling procedures and we believe that a robust and transparent procedure is now in place to reduce the opportunity for systemic fraud occurring undetected. The current fraud issue has been reported to Police and the Club's insurers and remains under investigation.

Projects to commence and continue in 2024 and beyond is the acquisition of land for the provision of rental accommodation close to major Wellington services, doctors, and the supermarkets. We have put out an expression of interest for amalgamation which remains in the negotiation stage. As a Club we want to continue and build a community footprint for the benefit of our members, our staff and visitors to the beautiful Wellington Valley.

I take this opportunity to thank the Board of Directors for their continued efforts to present new ideas and identify opportunities to improve our Club – the members Club.

A big thankyou to our valued and loyal Staff. Change is never easy, but the changes to the what, when and how you work are necessary for the long term viability and financial security of the Club and our staff.

Lastly, a huge thankyou to you, our members, for your continued patronage in a difficult economic climate.

Looking forward to seeing you at the Wellington Soldiers Memorial Club.

  
Robyn Edwards

Chairperson.