

# **Jim Ross**

## **The First Secretary of the Steering Committee**

*The information that I have is of a very limited nature. When I completed my terms of being an "Office Bearer" I passed all of the minute books etc. on to the incoming Secretary, whose name I am not sure of, but one name that I have recorded is that of the Chairman at the time. His name is Merv Robinson, who is a Primary Producer near a town by the name of Whyte Yarcowie in South Australia.*

\*\*\*\*\*

The year was 1987 and advice was sent to the Bendigo Steam and Oil Engine Group that there was to be a Seminar held in the Founders Room at the Lake Goldsmith Spring Rally.

It was decided by our club that some of our members should be in attendance. I was chosen to be one of those members. There were a couple of our members also going to this Rally, so they also attended the first meeting.

At this meeting there was much discussion as to the best method of getting some sort of organisation up and running. The up-shot of the meeting was that a Steering Committee be formed and to meet on a regular basis until something could be agreed upon.

The original members to be appointed to the Steering Committee were as follows:  
Geoff Wishart and John Norris, Lake Goldsmith; Alan Eatts, South Australia; John Glynn, Victoria; Jim Ross, Bendigo Steam and Oil Pres. Group; Reg Schuster, Qld; Ian Gibbs, Victoria.

Their mandate was a very simple one. Get some sort of common grounds to obtain a Public Risk insurance that did not cost the earth for each individual Club or Organisation to run their rallies or events, where the general public could gain entry to these events.

The first meeting of this new steering committee was held on 6<sup>th</sup> February 1988 in the Founders Room at Lake Goldsmith. Mr. Geoff Wishart was elected as the first Chairman and R.J. (Jim) Ross as the first Secretary.

After much discussion it was decided that the name for the combined group should be called the National Historical Machinery Association. Then came the duty of contacting other groups who indicated they could be interested in some sort of proposal. The job then fell to the Secretary to send out as many invitations as was possible to obtain addresses for. In all, 68 clubs were invited to reply, and the replies numbered 26. This gave us enough correspondence to assess the direction we should be taking and bulk Insurance seemed the most popular way to go.

Next step was to find an insurance company that would hold a Public Risk Insurance for the amount we required. Several Insurance Brokers were contacted and all advised that they would in NO way consider any such proposal. The main point of contention was that this group was not incorporated. Then came another problem, we did not have a constitution in place. To have a constitution put in place, the Victorian constitution that was commonly used amongst

# **Jim Ross**

## **The First Secretary of the Steering Committee**

clubs was presented to clubs wishing to join the NHMA, but these could not be used by clubs operating in other States. Each State has different requirements under their Act or Incorporation Association. This matter had to be resolved. Letters were sent off to the Minister, Mr. Steve Crab, seeking a way around this dilemma. Eventually permission was granted to use the Victorian Incorporation Act to cover all Clubs that were covered by the NHMA Insurance. Now the NHMA could become incorporated under the umbrella of the V.A.C. Act.

The following meetings were taken up by seeking out an insurance Broker who would take us on under our terms and conditions of bulk billing for the NHMA, now Incorporated, and obtaining a satisfactory premium.

This matter was eventually resolved. The NHMA to pay the up-front premium on the \$50,000,000; and in return collect from the affiliated groups. This led to an enormous amount of work on the head of the Secretary.

It was then decided to fix a date for an Annual General Meeting. A date was chosen to coincide with the Lake Goldsmith Rally that in effect was the first National Rally. At that meeting some of the original Steering Committee members were elected to form the new committee of the now new group known as the National Historical Machinery Association Inc. They then had the mandate to implement policy and safety guidelines that would be satisfactory to an Insurer that would hold the Public Risk Insurance to protect all Member Groups that affiliated with the NHMA. Also it was decided at this meeting that there should be an Annual General meeting every TWO years to be held in conjunction with any club wishing to host the National event.

Out of all of this, in summing up is the fact that there is in place a set of Safety Guidelines, which I am glad to say are being constantly reviewed and updated.

The method of bulk insurance has been a great success. I am very proud to have been one of the original founders of a great organisation. On looking back, I am sad to see so few of the original Members of that former Steering Committee still with us.

*Jim Ross.*

\*\*\*\*\*