

C-O-N-N-E-C-T-I-O-N-S

Newsletter of the Lower Hutt Memorial RSA — August 2019

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The Lower Hutt Memorial RSA meets on Friday from 4:30pm to 6:30pm upstairs in the Anzac Lounge at the Petone Workingmen's Club at 47 Udy Street, Petone

PRESIDENT'S UPDATE by Lars Millar

Welcome members, I hope this finds everyone well, and enjoying the downhill slide towards spring, although we seem to have missed the harshest of winter – with a bit of luck.

A short musing this time around, and I will focus on the recent changes at RNZ RSA, our upcoming AGM, our district AGM, the Trentham Hub, and EOFY admin.

It's been musical chairs at RNZ RSA of late, Support Services Manager Mark Compain, Board Chair Philip Meyer, CEO Jack Steer have all moved on. STOP! Mark Compain decided it wasn't his time yet and he withdrew his resignation, which was approved.

Corina Bruce has replaced Philip as board chair. Corina has many years of service in RNZN behind her, but we won't hold that against her. A replacement for Corina within the board will be appointed in due course.

Shane Ratt, Communication Manager is temporarily sitting in Jack Steer's seat, and the vacant position will be advertised shortly, if it hasn't already been – so if you know of any senior officers who are leaving NZDF soon let them know....

Sunday 22nd September sees our AGM in the Anzac Lounge, and in accordance with our rules, key cut off dates will be advised shortly.

This year, District has decided to hold this year's AGM on Father's Day in Wanganui. Neither I nor Norm will be in a position to attend this year, and not just because I don't want to miss out on breakfast in bed, and new socks..... As with many things it's a busy time of the year, and it's first in first served when it comes to booking weekends.

The establishment of a Trentham RSA Hub is being discussed again, and will follow the examples of the Burnham and Linton models. The idea of the Hub is to expose current serving personnel to the RSA movement, and what it has to offer. The current models in Burnham and Linton have worked extremely well, and has seen many current personnel benefit from the RSA movement.

Finally, our EOFY reporting is well underway and everything is where it needs to be, so with a bit of luck we won't get our reports back a few days before the AGM....

Until that time, look out for each other, and yourselves.

MEET YOUR SUPPORT SERVICES TEAM – Dennis Cheetham

Reaching the age of eighteen in February 1947 – and being declared A1 on the armed forces medical scale – I was at the time given the choice of being a coal miner or a member of the armed forces. My Dad, and most of my uncles were, or had been miners. Being fond of the outdoors, and wide open spaces, working in the dark bowels of the earth was a no no.

I received an O.H.M.S. letter instructing me to report to the regimental barracks of the Green Howards in North Yorkshire. 80% of that intake was made up of young lads from Glasgow.

We had six weeks of basic training, and then sat a series of tests to determine what additional training we were to be given. My previous employment had been maintaining industrial sewing machines. The selection tests showed that I should be an office clerk!!! After some discussion with the education officer it was decided that I should be posted to the R.E.M.E. and be trained to service anti-aircraft predictor control systems. My one and only rank attained was cfn. – craftsman. After training I was sent to Malaya. That part of the British Empire did not have any anti-aircraft defence systems. How did we win the war? I was de-mobbed in 1949, and was re-employed by the Singer Sewing Machine Co, industrial department.

Welfare Support Team

The support team are here to assist returned and service personnel to take advantage of our “Discretionary Funds,” which are there to help with payments in the many categories listed below. The funds are the accumulated “Poppy Day” donations from the generous people of Lower Hutt City. There are listed maximum amounts per category that can be applied for in a financial year.

To apply for assistance, forms are available at the PWMC’s reception desk. You can also use the contact phone number to make contact with the support team who will assist you.

We maintain contact with returned and service personnel by phone calls, and visits. We also assist you to apply for the many entitlements available from the RNZRSA.

For further information and contact details, see articles later in this newsletter.

MEET YOUR SUPPORT SERVICES TEAM – Peter Gooch

I joined the British Army at the age of 21 after serving my coach-building apprenticeship and married Margaret. My National Service of two years was spent in the British Sector of West Germany followed by five years in Army Reserve.

The family came to New Zealand in June 1966 and within three years I had joined the RSA. We enjoy visiting RSAs around the country and the welcome we receive in the various clubrooms.

I was asked to join the Welfare/Support Team to keep in touch with the older members and also to help ensure that the ‘Poppy Fund’ is spent as intended.

MEET YOUR SUPPORT SERVICES TEAM – David Weston

I was brought up in a military environment as my father served in the RNZAF until I was 18 years old – living in Auckland (Whenuapai and Hobsonville), Fiji and Wellington.

After completing National Service Whole-Time training in 1966 as a Second Lieutenant, I joined the Regular Force on a 3-year engagement to serve in Vietnam with 161 Field Battery RNZA. I completed Young Officer and pre-deployment training, and flew to Vietnam in June 1968.

I spent 4 months as a Section Commander, commanding 3 of the 6 guns of the battery, and acting as a Command Post Officer on a rostered basis. In October I was appointed as Forward Observer with A Coy, 3 RAR (and later C Coy, 9RAR) controlling artillery and mortar fire, and directing offensive air support. I also spent 3 weeks in November as an Artillery Liaison Officer with the US Advisory Team attached to 18 ARVN Division.

On return to NZ I was granted a Regular Commission and then served in 161 Battery Depot in Papakura, 3 Field Regiment (a Territorial artillery regiment in the South Island), HQ Burnham Camp and as a Recruiting Officer for the East Coast of the North Island. After a short posting to Defence HQ, I attended the RNZAF Command and Staff College in 1977, and returned to Wellington in the Training Directorate in Army General Staff.

In late 1979, I returned to 3 Field Regiment, initially as Battery Commander 32 (E) Battery, which was an integrated RF/TF unit responsible for the initial specialist training of all Artillery recruits (RF and TF). I became Second in Command of the Regiment in early 1981 before returning to Army GS as the ABCA Standardisation Officer, and then to my final appointment as Assistant Military Secretary.

On retirement in 1985, I worked in the computer industry as an HR manager, and as a partner in a consultancy business before going to the Open Polytechnic in the Course Design and Development area. In 2010 I moved to Weltec on a 1-year contract as the Student Registrar, finally retiring in April 2011.

My interests cover tramping in the Wellington region, and military history, primarily WW1 and Vietnam. I live in Waterloo with my partner Elizabeth, and have two adult children – Sarah who works for a Canterbury electricity lines company as the Legal and Compliance Manager, and Matthew who is an officer in the NZ Army. I also have 3 grand-daughters and 1 grandson.

My interest in the support and welfare side of the RSA comes from my own experience in accessing VANZ support for medical issues resulting from my service, and seeing the problems that other veterans have faced as a result of their service. I am also actively involved in the RNZA Association (the longest operating regimental association in NZ) and in the RNZA Historic Trust which works to maintain and preserve the historic artefacts and information of the Regiment.

ASSISTANCE FOR ALL VETERANS FROM VANZ:

Veterans did you know that you could get the following assistance to help you in your daily life, and also a possible payment to help you enjoy your leisure times, and help you stay in your own home?

Assistance with, and at no cost to you:

- Lawns and gardens
- House cleaning
- Gutters cleaned
- Windows and house washing (external only).
- Help may be available for internal windows
- Home modifications to assist entry and exit (ramps)
- Furniture modifications
- Attendant care (short term basis only)
- Adaptive clothing and footwear
- Personal alarms (in case of falls, etc)
- Assistance with applications for funding of mobility scooters
- Travel allowances (certain conditions apply)
- Medical costs
- Hearing loss

The above is available to all who served prior to 1 April, 1974 and includes all operational deployments and routine service deployments. This also covers those who served after 1 April 1974 and served in many theatres, or had routine service since Vietnam.

For further information or clarification, you may contact your Veterans' Affairs Case Manager directly on 0800 483 8372, or e-mail veterans@nzdf.mil.nz Alternatively, you may make an appointment through PWMC/LHM RSA Reception on 568-5404 for one of our Support Team to discuss your circumstances and complete a short "Needs Assessment" form.
Support Team: Dennis Cheetham, Peter Gooch, and David Weston

HOW TO FIND A FOXHOLE

The Lieutenant Colonel and his sergeant were inspecting a training exercise when they spotted a Second Lieutenant ambling about. "Where is your foxhole, Lieutenant?" asked the Lieutenant Colonel.

The junior officer saluted smartly and replied, "I don't know, Sir!" Turning to the Sergeant, he asked, "Sergeant, where is my foxhole?"

"You're standing in it, Sir," said the Sergeant. "All you have to do is remove the dirt."

A MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVE AVAILABLE FROM YOUR SUPPORT SERVICES:

The LHMRSA Trustees in concert with the Executive have allocated funding from the Poppy Day fund to investigate to what extent members and their families are suffering from mental illness and how the LHMRSA can be of assistance to them. It has been acknowledged for some time that mental health issues are on the rise with the last Government budget allocating many millions of dollars to attack the problem.

The LHMRSA has established a relationship with local counsellors who have proven very effective in assisting members in alleviating some of the issues.

This is a new initiative within the LHMRSA but we need your help. We are not medical experts in this field, but we are prepared to seek the help and advice from those who are.

If you and/or your family, or if you know of members and their families who may need our assistance, then please in all confidence make contact with a support committee member. Your discussions will be completely in confidence and if we can help, we will.

If you are a veteran already dealing with VANZ and are having to wait a long time to see an appropriate professional, please make contact, and if we can speed up the process we will.

Please phone the LHMRSA Support Team on 568-5404 and leave your contact details with the office.

NEED SOME HELP? CONTACT OUR SUPPORT SERVICES:

The Lower Hutt Memorial RSA offers support services for all Returned and Service members (or their widow / widower, spouse, children, or dependant) and they can apply for a grant for assistance with:

- Doctors' Visits and Prescriptions
- Dental
- Optical
- Hearing Aids
- Specialist Visits
- Funeral Expenses
- As well as home and hospital visits there are a number of Home Help services available too

If you need support, financial or otherwise, from the Support Team for any contingencies that Government agencies cannot assist you with, please phone 568-5404 and leave your contact details with the office.

LHM RSA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – 11:00am Sunday, 22nd September, 2019

The AGM of the LHM RSA will be held in the Anzac Lounge in the PWMC, 47 Udy Street, Petone. Only financial members of the LHM RSA can attend and there will be a Card Check at the door. A quorum of 30 members is required.

- All Executive Committee positions will be up for re-election.
- There is a vacancy on the Executive Committee and nominations for that position close at 5:00pm on Friday, 6th September, 2019.
- Nomination Forms are available at Reception and the sealed box for completed forms is also at Reception.
- Any Notice of Motion needs to be with the President in a sealed envelope no later than 5:00pm on Friday 6th September, 2019.

Tea and Coffee will be available prior to the meeting – and there will be the “President’s Shout” at the conclusion of the AGM.

‘ARMISTICE DAY-100’ STREET BANNERS... Yours for \$5 (Limited supply)



In recognition of our valued association, the Hutt City Council has ‘gifted’ the LHM RSA the commemorative street banners marking 100 years since the Armistice of World War One.

Worth well over \$75, these RSA banners are made of top quality material by Flagmakers Ltd and measure 183cm (6ft) X 89cm (2ft 11in) and are collectable items for your den or your own flag pole.

Be advised; there is only a limited supply. The banners will be available at our Friday night meetings, or until supply runs out.

WHAT ‘MASTER KEY’ MEANS IN THE MILITARY:

During basic training our sergeant stated that if anyone lost his locker key to see him, as he kept a master key in the office. Sure enough, a few weeks later, someone had lost their key. He walked into the orderly’s room and asked Sarge if he could borrow his master key.

“Why certainly, young man,” he said, as he reached under his desk and handed the luckless trainee a large pair of bolt cutters.

