



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

Newsletter of the Lower Hutt Memorial RSA — **September 2021**

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PO Box 38-905 Wellington Mail Centre, Lower Hutt

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

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## **2021 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING RE-SCHEDULED FOR OCTOBER**

Due to Alert level 3 restrictions on gathering numbers, the PWMC remained closed. Therefore we had to cancel our scheduled 19<sup>th</sup> September AGM. The *NEW* date is:

**11:00am, Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> October, 2021**

In the ANZAC lounge

At the Petone Workingmen's Club

47 Udy Street, Petone

Currently there are a number of vacancies that need to be filled on our Executive Committee. We urge you to give serious thought to allowing your name to be proposed as a candidate to help run your RSA. The work is not onerous, but is important to ensure your RSA continues to function in supporting fellow members and arranging the few observances that are expected of us, namely Poppy Day and ANZAC Day.

Prior to lockdown Nomination and Notice of Motion Forms were available from PWMC Reception, but they have been included in this issue of 'Connections' to assist members.

The agenda will be as follows:

*Apologies*

*Minutes of the 2020 AGM*

*Reports:*

*President*

*Support*

*Darts Adjunct*

*Trustees*

*Financial*

*Notices of Motion*

*Election of Executive Officers*

*General Business*

*Nominations* for the Executive Committee close at 5:00pm on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> October.

Nomination forms will also be available at Reception and the sealed box for completed forms is also at Reception.

*Notices of Motion* need to be in a sealed envelope and posted in the sealed box at Reception no later than 5:00pm on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> October, 2021. Notice of Motion forms are also available at Reception.

Only financial members of the LHMRSA for 2021 are eligible to attend this meeting.

### ***REACH OUT FOR GOVERNMENT HELP AT ALERT LEVEL 3***

It's understandable to feel lonely, overwhelmed, upset or frustrated right now, and there is help available if you feel you need it.

Wellbeing, support, mental health and addiction services are available at Alert Level 3. Some services may be delivered in different ways, such as video link or over the phone.

The Ministry of Health and the Unite Against Covid-19 websites list lots of free resources to help you manage your mental wellbeing.

There are a number of helplines you can call:

- **1737** free call or text to connect with a trained counsellor.
- Young people can contact Youthline, **0800-376 633** or by **free texting 234**.
- Pacific communities can call this dedicated number **0800-Ola Lelei — 0800-652 535**.

Family violence and sexual violence services also continue to be available. If you feel like you are in an unsafe environment, you do not need to stay home or in your bubble. If you feel in danger, call **111**.

If you or someone you know is in danger and it is not safe to talk, you can **phone 111** and if you do not speak, you will get the option of **pressing 55**. You can then listen to the call-taker's questions and instructions so they can arrange assistance for you.

### ***GETTING GOVERNMENT HELP WITH FOOD AND OTHER ESSENTIALS AT ALERT LEVEL 3***

There is support in place for those who need it to access food and medicines.

If you are unable to afford food call Work and Income on **0800-559 009** to see if you are eligible for assistance.

If you are at home isolating or having problems accessing food, you can order online or ask family and friends if they can help to deliver food to you. Delivery should be contactless and kept local.

For those in self-isolation or have no other way to access food, including the older members of our community who are staying home, the Student Volunteer Army have restarted their grocery delivery service. To place an order visit [www.shop.sva.org.nz](http://www.shop.sva.org.nz)

### ***GOVERNMENT CONTACT INFORMATION AT ALERT LEVEL 3***

Call your doctor or Healthline **0800-358 5453** about getting tested if you have cold or flu-like symptoms.

Need to talk? For mental health help call or text **1737**.

Free helpline for businesses, offering advice and access to Government business support, HR and general business advice and access to online resources and webinars, call **0800-500 362** for North Island, or **0800-505 096** for South Island.

### ***PARAPROSDOKIANS***

Paraprosdokians are figures of speech in which the latter part of a sentence or phrase is surprising or unexpected. Here are just a few...

To be sure of hitting the target, shoot first and call whatever you hit the target.

You do not need a parachute to sky dive. You only need a parachute to skydive twice.

To steal ideas from one person is plagiarism. To steal from many is research.

In filling out an application, where it says, 'In case of emergency, notify.' I put "Doctor."

They begin the evening news with, "Good Evening," then proceed to tell you why it isn't.

Knowledge is knowing a tomato is a fruit. Wisdom is not putting it in a fruit salad.

## *THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER IN NEW ZEALAND MILITARY HISTORY... by Keith Garwood*

### **The Desert Railway<sup>1</sup>**

For almost three years beginning in September 1940 a 1400-strong Railway Construction and Maintenance Group of the New Zealand Engineers built, maintained and operated a desert railway in North Africa and the Western Desert. Apart from headquarters elements, the Group consisted of a survey company, two construction companies and two railway operating companies. They were non-divisional troops and therefore not under the command of 2 NZEF – an arrangement that apparently sometimes rankled Lieutenant General Freyberg.

Nor surprisingly, the men of the Group were for the most part volunteers from the New Zealand Railways Department, and the extent to which the Railways Department contributed men to the Group and other New Zealand military units was to lead to the Group's disbandment in 1943 (see below).

The major contribution of the Group to the North African campaign, (as illustrated by the two photos<sup>2</sup>) was the near 400 kilometre extension and subsequent operation of the Western Desert Railway from Mersa Matruh in Egypt to Bel Hamed near the Libyan port town of Tobruk, over which the operating companies moved about 75 trains a week. The Group Also operated lighters in the besieged port of Tobruk and operated the narrow-gauge railway from Benghazi to Soluk that they had taken over from the retreating Italians.

The group operated a variety of British and



*A New Zealand Construction Company in the Western Desert*



*A day in the life of a New Zealand Operating Company*

European steam and diesel shunting locomotives and rolling stock and later American diesel locomotives obtained under the lend-lease policy. The American diesels were used on the main-line to alleviate the water problems created by the thirsty steam locomotives in areas where water was not plentiful.

Running the trains was dangerous work as the enemy was keen to disrupt this strategically important supply line. One of the means used by the enemy was to land light aircraft beside the track and destroy

sections of it with explosives. During one such attempt the enemy was disturbed by men of the Group, and while the aviators avoided capture by fleeing into the desert the same was not true of their aircraft which was handed over to the RAF by the railwaymen.

<sup>1</sup> Much of the material for this story was taken from Brendon Judd's 1998 thesis, 'The New Zealand Railway Group', submitted in partial fulfilment of the degree of Master of Arts in History at Massey University, and his 2004 publication, 'The Desert Railway', The Railway Book Committee.

<sup>2</sup> Photo credits: DA-00433-F. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand /records/23237382; and 1/2-066139-F. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. /records/22318540.

Following the end of the North African campaign in May 1943 the decision was made to disband the Group and return the men to take up their former employment in New Zealand. Seven thousand men (27 percent of the Railways' pre-war staff) were serving in military duties and the Railways Department was not coping at home – caused in no small part by the presence of American troops in New Zealand and greatly increased rail traffic.

Most of the Group left from Port Tewfik on the SS Niew Amsterdam on the 15<sup>th</sup> of June 1943; coincidentally the same voyage as the men of the Ruapehu furlough draft that was featured in the Military History section of the June 2021 'Connections'.

### **Bosnia and Herzegovina (the former Yugoslavia)**

**September 1994** saw the deployment of the first of three 250-strong reinforced rifle companies to Bosnia and Herzegovina as part of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR). This was New Zealand's largest overseas mission and first deployment of combat troops since the Vietnam war.

The rifle companies (each known as Kiwi Company) were attached to the British infantry battalions of the British force (BRITFOR), but brought with them much of their own equipment including M113A1 (M113) Armoured Personnel Carriers, Unimog trucks, landrovers and field kitchens. The M113s were upgraded with Belly armour and sponson armour borrowed from Australia prior to deployment to provide extra protection. While this improved crew survivability it adversely affected the vehicle's mobility and performance in roles such as convoy protection and was part of the justification for the purchase of the wheeled New Zealand Light Armoured Vehicle (NZLAV), the delivery of which began in August 2003.<sup>3</sup>



*A Kiwi Company M113 'at home' in the snow of Bosnia and Herzegovina*

Among the achievements of the Kiwi Companies were the building of schools and dwellings, the improvement of water supplies, and bringing warring Croats and Muslims to the conference table.

The 15-month involvement of the Kiwi Companies was part of an overall 15-year New Zealand commitment to the peace and stability of Bosnia and Herzegovina which began with the placement of United Nations Observers in February 1992. Following the withdrawal of the last Kiwi Company in December 1995 a small number of observers and other personnel remained attached to EU and NATO operations for more than a decade. The New Zealand flag was lowered on the 29<sup>th</sup> of June 2007 at a ceremony in Sarajevo.

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<sup>3</sup> Peter Greener, 'Timing is Everything: The Politics and Processes of New Zealand Defence Acquisition Decision Making' ANU Press 2008.

Reproduced below is the new Support Services Funding Application Form. This form and the application itself has been streamlined to be more user-friendly for all concerned.



## **LHMRSA**

### **Discretionary Funds Application**

**Only applies to Returned/Service personnel or Widow/Widower/Partner of a Returned/Service person residing in the Lower Hutt Memorial RSA area (Proof of service is required by non-members of the Lower Hutt Memorial RSA).**

Name:.....

Service No:.....

Address:.....

.....

Phone No:.....

Being a Returned/Service person I wish to apply for a grant in respect of Dental/Optometrlist/Specialist/X-ray/Hearing aids/ Doctor/ expenditure by myself.

Amount of expenditure \$..... Original receipts & details attached

Bank details

Email

Address.....

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Signature:.....

Date:.....

Approved:.....

Date:.....

**Support Officer: Ph. 568 5404 & leave contact details.**

### ***LHM RSA SUPPORT SERVICES***

The LHM RSA offers Support Services for all Returned and Service personnel (and their spouse/partner, or dependants). Assistance can be tailored to individual needs via grants or assistance with expenses for:

- Doctors' visits and prescriptions
- Dental
- Optical
- Audio impairment
- Specialist visits
- Funeral expenses (conditions apply)
- Mental Health

As well as home and hospital visits, assistance with a variety of home help services may also be available. Step-by-step assistance with understanding and using Internet Banking is offered too. If you require assistance from the LHM RSA Support Services Team for any contingencies other agencies cannot assist with, phone PWMC Reception on 0-4-568 5404, and ask for an appointment with the LHM RSA Support Services Team, and leave your contact details.

### ***WELFARE OFFICER***

The PWMC have allocated funding for a Welfare Officer. Dale Ansell of the MAF Committee will be available to assist all Members with their welfare concerns. Office space has been established for Dale in the LHM RSA Office/Library, which is situated downstairs, off the Members Lounge. Appointments can be made to see Dale for Tuesday 9am to 1pm; Wednesday 9am to 4pm; and Thursday 9am to 1pm, at Reception on 0-4-568 5404.

### ***ASSISTANCE FOR VETERANS FROM VETERANS' AFFAIRS NEW ZEALAND***

Veterans can get the following assistance from VANZ to help with quality of life issues, including:

- Lawns and gardens
- House cleaning
- Gutters cleaned
- Windows and external house washing
- Help may be available for internal windows
- Home modifications to assist entry and exit (e.g. 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 (conditions apply)
- Assistance with medical costs and 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 in various theatres since Vietnam.

For further information or clarification, contact your Veterans' Affairs Case Manager directly on 0800 483 8372, or e-mail [veterans@nzdf.mil.nz](mailto:veterans@nzdf.mil.nz)

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



Lower Hutt Memorial RSA (Inc)  
**NOMINATION**  
**Executive Committee 2021/22**

NAME OF  
NOMINEE:.....

ADDRESS:.....

MEMBERSHIP No..... MEMBERSHIP TYPE:..... DATE JOINED LHMRSA.....

NOMINEE ACCEPTANCE:  
(Signature required). .....

*POSITION NOMINATED FOR (Indicate with a tick, within the brackets, for the position nominated)*

**PRESIDENT** [ ]

**VICE PRESIDENT** [ ]

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER** [ ]

PROPOSED BY:..... SECONDED BY:.....  
(Signature) (Signature)

NAME..... NAME:.....

MEMBERSHIP No..... MEMBERSHIP No.....

SIGNATURE:..... SIGNATURE:.....

1. All signatories must be financial members of the LHMRSA for 2021 to participate.
2. All Nominations must be placed in the sealed box at PWMC Reception and submitted **NO LATER than 5:00pm FRIDAY 1<sup>st</sup> OCTOBER 2021.**
3. Failure to provide all information and comply with the above will render the Nomination invalid.



Lower Hutt Memorial RSA (Inc)  
**NOTICE of MOTION**  
**2021/22**

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**NOTICE OF MOTION:**

**RATIONALE:**

**RULES AFFECTED BY NOTICE OF MOTION (Where relevant):**

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**PROPOSED BY:** ..... **SECONDED BY:**.....

**MEMBERSHIP No**..... **MEMBERSHIP No**.....

**SIGNATURE:**..... **SIGNATURE:**.....

- 1 All signatories must be financial members of the Association for 2021
2. All Notices of Motion must be placed in an envelope and deposited in the sealed box at PWMC Reception and submitted **NO LATER than 5:00pm FRIDAY 1<sup>st</sup> OCTOBER 2021**
3. No Notice of Motion may be vindictive, vexatious, frivolous or IMPROPER to be considered at a General Meeting.
4. No Notice of Motion may be submitted or processed on behalf of a third party not qualified as a financial member of the Association.
5. The Executive Committee may consider such Notices of Motion and provide recommendations to members.
6. Failure to provide all information and comply with the above will render the Notice of Motion invalid.



