



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

Newsletter of the Lower Hutt Memorial RSA — November / December 2021

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PO Box 38-905 Wellington Mail Centre, Lower Hutt

*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*

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE... By Norm Rosser

Welcome members to another year. At our AGM on Sunday 17 October, I was elected as your new President with Tony Mort as Vice President.

Members who volunteered to sit on the committee are Martyn Robey, Ash Ansell and Dale Ansell with Jim Hogg as Immediate Past President.

We also have some members not sitting on the committee but who work hard to help in the background such as Keith Garwood who attends RSA members' funerals and provides a summary of their service records. Keith and Martyn Robey together organise our ANZAC Day commitments. Ian Robertson has also volunteered to help with Poppy Day organisation. Dennis Cheetham and David Weston are assisting Dale Ansell (PWMC/RSA Support Liaison Officer) to maintain the support side of the RSA. Mike Collett is our contact between the RSA and the army, navy and air cadets in our area. The assistance from these members is greatly appreciated.

This year we hope to get our rules updated and registered which will mean that we will have rules that will be relevant to our operation going forward. At present we are operating on some rules dating back to 2002.

The end of the year is coming up very fast and it is great to see some sun! I wish all members a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Norm Rosser
President LHMRSA

FUTURE CLUB CVC ENTRY REQUIREMENTS... By Iain Crow, General Manager, PWMC

Good afternoon LHMRSA members,

I trust this finds everyone well during these challenging times.

It is unfortunate that the current Government restrictions continue to impact on our members' activities and with no end in sight, this looks to continue for some time yet. We hope – like everyone else – that the country reaches the Government's magical 90% vaccination rate so we can all welcome the relaxation of the current alert level restrictions.

The PWMC Executive Committee met on the evening of 26 October and it was resolved that the Petone Club will be adopting the Government's recently announced **Covid Vaccination Certificate** (CVC) as part of their wider **Covid-19 Protection Framework** (traffic light system). Having recently completed an internal risk assessment and being a large hospitality venue, we believe that it is in the best interests of our membership, staff and wider community that we implement the Government's recommendations in order to limit the spread of Covid-19 whilst allowing us to open and trade with fewer restrictions.

Covid Protection Framework: <https://covid19.govt.nz/alert-levels-and-updates/covid-19-protection/>

The Club's position was announced by the President at the PWMC's 24 October AGM and recently endorsed by Clubs NZ – see attached. What this means for the Club is that **all** Petone Club members, visiting members, staff, contractors, suppliers and guests will be required to be **fully vaccinated** before entering the Club premises. There will be no exceptions to this mandate except on medical grounds.

Mandatory Vaccinations: <https://covid19.govt.nz/covid-19-vaccines/vaccinations-and-work/mandatory-vaccinations-for-workers/>

*The Club's advice at this stage is for our various committees to communicate the above information and engage with your respective members, encouraging any who are not currently vaccinated to get **fully vaccinated** in the interim.* This will mean that everyone will be able to use the Club and facilities when the CVC comes into effect and current restrictions are lifted.

More information will be advised to our general membership as the Government announces timelines and further details, with the next planned update on the topic scheduled for 29 November.

In the meantime, please let me know if you have any questions and take care of yourselves and those around you.

Kind Regards,
Iain Crow
General Manager

PETONE BEACH CLEAN.... By Mike Collett, LHMRSA Cadet Liaison Officer

On Saturday, 6 November approximately 30 cadets from Lower Hutt and Upper Hutt supported by personnel from Keep Hutt Valley Beautiful, Sustainable Coastlines and the LHMRSA carried out a rubbish collection of Petone Beach from Hikoikoi Park to the rowing sheds in the western end of the beach. Over 30 sugar bag sized rubbish bags were collected and disposed of. At the completion of the skirmish the LHMRSA put on a sausage sizzle for all



participants. Most cadets were in uniform and received many favourable comments for their efforts. For those doing the Duke of Edinburgh Awards they received five hours Community Service. For those cadets needing extra Community Service for their DOE awards KHVB have agreed to supervise further beach cleaning as this is an on-going activity.

The next Community Activity planned in conjunction with the LHMRSA and the cadets will be the headstone cleaning at Taita in April next year.

The Veterans' Salute

Many believe that the placing of the right palm over the left breast as a form of salute or act of remembrance by people not in uniform is of American origin. But according to a number of British Commonwealth veterans' and military association websites it may be of British origin. The oft-quoted support for this view is along the lines of the version given on the Returned Services League Australia website¹:



In London on Armistice Day 1920, during the ceremony to unveil and dedicate the Cenotaph in Whitehall, a funeral procession accompanying the remains of The Unknown Soldier, which had arrived from France the previous day, was to halt at the Cenotaph during the ceremony before proceeding to Westminster Abbey for interment.

The official party included the Empire's senior soldiers, sailors and politicians and as many Victoria Cross winners as could be assembled. The ceremony concluded with a march past. The Regimental Sergeant Major of the Guards Regiment conducting the ceremony, faced with a gathering of highly decorated and high ranking military men (including the Victoria Cross winners), all wearing rows of medals, decreed that all would salute the Cenotaph as they marched past by placing their hand over their medals, signifying that "No matter what honours we may have been awarded they are as nothing compared with the honour due to those who paid the supreme sacrifice."

The RSL maintains that tradition to honour the dead by placing the right hand over medals (not our heart, our medals) during a march-past at a ceremonial occasion, or at a wreath laying ceremony.

Other sources disagree and cite the opinions of researchers including one from the Royal British Legion as well as historical film footage of the parade through London on the **11th of November 1920** leading to the laying to rest of the Unknown Warrior in Westminster Abbey². And extensive contemporary coverage by one of Britain's major daily newspapers made no mention of the unique tribute³. Among the alternative views is that the placing of the hand over the heart is a copying of the American gesture known as 'the Memorial Day Salute'. Which version do you prefer? While that relating to the return of the Unknown Warrior to Westminster Abbey on Armistice Day 1920 has appeal because of the pomp and pathos surrounding it – and of course, because it is British – the evidence for it appears doubtful.

¹ [RSL Symbolism — RSL Australia.](#)

² [Remembrance Salute \(cgtownsend.id.au\).](#)

³ 'A Nation's Remembrance and Devotion', The Manchester Guardian, Friday November 12, 1920.

HMNZS South Sea

An unfortunate prelude to the festive season was the sinking of the 322-tonne minesweeper HMNZS *South Sea* in broad daylight in Wellington Harbour on the morning of the **19th of December 1942**.

While crossing the harbour along a picket line from Somes/Matiu Island the *South Sea* was run down off Point Halswell by the Union Company Steamer *Wahine*. All 22 men of the *South Sea*'s crew were saved, while the *Wahine*, having suffered only minor damage, continued on to Lyttelton.



HMNZS South Sea

No attempt was made to salvage the *South Sea*, but the forward gun and some radio equipment and depth charges were removed. Because she sank upright in the main shipping channel the superstructure above the main deck was blasted away by a lowered depth charge to minimise any possible hazard to shipping.

News of the sinking of the *South Sea* was suppressed at the time and no court of inquiry was ever held, although the commander of the *South Sea* is thought to have been at fault. One wonders how secrecy was maintained given that the *Wahine* was on a Wellington to Lyttelton run and undoubtedly carrying many passengers in the lead up to Christmas.

The *South Sea* wreck has been a popular dive site over the years, but at a depth of 22 metres it is considered to be a 'deep dive' and not for the inexperienced. Divers report the presence of fishing line, hooks and small boat anchors at the wreck site testifying to the presence of marine life around the wreck and its consequent popularity with recreational fishers.

The Battle of the River Plate

The scuttling of the German pocket battleship *Admiral Graf Spee* in the River Plate Estuary on the **17th of December 1939** was met with great jubilation in New Zealand. HMS *Achilles*, which took part in the action leading to the *Admiral Graf Spee* seeking refuge in the Port of Montevideo, was one of two cruisers of the New Zealand Division of the Royal Navy and was more than half crewed by New Zealand men. It is not the intention to go over this well-known episode in New Zealand's military history here, but you may wish to remember it by viewing the excellent series of photos on the RNZN Museum website. See [Images from Battle of the River Plate — National Museum of the Royal New Zealand Navy \(navymuseum.co.nz\)](https://www.navymuseum.co.nz/images-from-battle-of-the-river-plate)

LHM RSA SUPPORT SERVICES LETTERBOX

This is a reminder that to streamline the processing of welfare/support applications we now have a LHM RSA/MAF letterbox which is behind the PWMC Raffles Desk in the members' lounge downstairs. All applications handed in, including those received at Reception will, from here on in, be placed in this letterbox for our Support Liaison Officer, Dale Ansell, to process and prepare for further action.



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:.....

Email.....

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 Account No.....

Signature:.....

Date:.....

Approved:.....

Date:.....

If you need to contact a Support Officer: Ph. 568 5404 and 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 LHM RSA and the PWMC jointly fund 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

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.

