



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

Newsletter of the Lower Hutt Memorial RSA — **July / August 2022**

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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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### ***LHM RSA BIDS SAD FAREWELL TO A PAST PRESIDENT***



This issue of 'Connections' marks with extreme sadness the passing of Innes Roy McNeil QSM on 13 July at Bob Scott Retirement Village, Lower Hutt. Innes was 97 years old.

In an interview with a Ryman Village ANZAC Day commemoration last year, Innes recorded his personal wartime experiences, which is now reproduced here. "Born in Auckland on 23 January 1925, he was educated at Auckland Grammar and belonged to the cadet unit at school. On leaving school in 1940, Innes worked at the St Helier's Post Office and in 1941 joined the St Helier's Home Guard.

He applied to join the air force soon after turning 18 and started basic training at Linton Camp, near Palmerston North, where he was selected to take a flight rigger's course at Nelson Air Base.

A flight rigger has the responsibility to check that the aeroplane is fit to fly in all respects except for the engine, which is certified by a flight mechanic.

In later years Innes reflected on the immense responsibility of that job. They were all highly trained and knew what was at stake – near enough was certainly not good enough! After a posting to an operational training unit at Ardmore, and a six week commando course, Innes now 19, was given final leave before heading to the Pacific Theatre.

Innes served in the Pacific for about sixteen months, servicing and repairing aircraft. His first posting was Nasouri, Fiji working on PV1 Ventura bombers. Following that he served in Santos, Guadalcanal, and for a year he was in Bougainville at Piva North Strip. He stayed on in the rear party at the end of the war, cleaning up and attending to visiting aircraft.

During this time Innes helped to crate up a Japanese Zeke (Zero) fighter that had been captured and was being prepared for shipping back to New Zealand.

He chuckled as he wondered if his initials are still engraved on that aircraft that is now on display at the Auckland War Memorial Museum!"

Innes has given wonderful service to our association over many years. After serving in World War Two, Innes initially joined the Auckland RSA in 1946 before transferring to the Wellington RSA in 1957 and then to the Lower Hutt Memorial RSA in 1969. Here he served on the Executive Committee for 18 years, was elected Vice President then President for four years from 1993 to 1997, and provided Funeral Tributes for 16 years from 1999 to 2015.

Innes continued his service as a Trustee in 2011 right up to April 2018. As recognition for his unstinting service to veterans he was made a Life Member in 1998, was awarded the LHMRSA Merit Badge in 2001, the Queen's Service Medal (QSM) for services to the community in 2005 and the RNZRSA Gold Star Badge in 2015.

Innes was involved in welfare from 1985 to 2001, a hospital visitor between 1986 to 2012 and carried out Veteran Affairs New Zealand (VANZ) Cemetery Inspections from 1986 to 2015.

Although Innes stepped aside as a Trustee in 2018, after many years of service to the RSA, we continued to enjoy his company for many years at our regular Friday meetings. Our thoughts are with Innes' family.

Innes' funeral will be at St Peter and Paul's Church 60 Knights Road, Lower Hutt at 11.00am on Monday 18 July.

### ***JULY / AUGUST IN NEW ZEALAND MILITARY HISTORY... by Keith Garwood***

#### **Operation Cascade**

In 1942 Britain inaugurated a deception scheme codenamed 'Cascade' in an attempt to mislead the Africa Corps commander Generalleutnant (Lieutenant General, later Field Marshal) Erwin Rommel and the German High Command into thinking that the Allied presence in the Middle East was much stronger than it actually was. Britain was concerned that German knowledge of the true strength of allied forces in the Middle East would embolden them to become more offensive.

Cascade was an audacious plan intended to convince Germany that the allied order of battle included three more armoured and eleven more infantry divisions than actually existed.

In each case the new unit had to be given a convincing back story, insignia, and order of battle. Its route to the Middle East had to be mapped out, and when it 'arrived' false camps and training

areas were needed. Each fake unit needed false radio traffic, and several specialised units were set up to deal with this problem. From a distance the notional units had to look just as convincing as the real thing<sup>1</sup>

New Zealand was asked to participate in Operation Cascade, and in the words of the 2 NZEF official war history, and reflective of attitudes of the day:

The scheme, named Cascade, had a certain fascination, and we agreed to play<sup>2</sup>

The New Zealand contribution to Operation Cascade was inaugurated on the **6<sup>th</sup> of July 1942** and consisted of the 2 NZEF garrison and base at Maadi Camp outside Cairo being renamed the 6<sup>th</sup> New Zealand Division as well as giving units within the camp names that were suggestive of fighting units rather than training or administrative ones. The Infantry Training Depot became 9 NZ Infantry Brigade<sup>3</sup> and its three training companies 31, 32 and 33 Battalions, the camp works section became 25 NZ Field Company (an engineer unit), the camp hospital 23 NZ Field Ambulance and so on.

The deception scheme ended in 1944 and was apparently successful. Documents captured after the second battle of El Alamein showed that German intelligence had overestimated British armoured and infantry strengths by about 45 percent.

### **Guarding the Home Front**

The creation of New Zealand's World War 2 Home Guard was one of the provisions introduced by the Emergency Reserve Corps Regulations on the **16<sup>th</sup> of August 1940** along with all Emergency Precautions Scheme (EPS) organizations (renamed Civil Defence later in the war) and The Women's War Service Auxiliary.

### **The Home Guard**

The Home Guard was formed on 8 October 1940 to serve as a vital defence force should New Zealand be invaded. In April 1942 it was decided that Home Guard numbers must be increased by compulsion meaning that all civilian men between 35 and 50 years had to enrol despite perhaps already being in the EPS. There were certain exceptions with prison inmates and invalids being obvious ones as well as members of certain occupational groups.

The Home Guard became increasingly aligned with Army administration and organisation. No fixed strength was prescribed, but it was to consist of two divisions: Division 1 of about 50,000 fit men organised into battalions and platoons and equipped and trained for combat duty; and Division 2, to be given as much training as possible with available equipment and to serve as a reserve pool for Division 1. The less fit were to be politely invited to transfer to the EPS. At its peak strength the Home Guard included about 120,000 men or 7.5 percent of the population, making it the largest force that New Zealand had ever seen.

The Home Guard suffered from a shortage of uniforms and weapons until well into 1942 with distinctive armbands being worn with civilian clothing. Boots and uniforms were finally distributed in May 1942, and by 1943 training and resources had improved so that almost 100,000 guardsmen had uniforms.

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<sup>1</sup> [Operation Cascade \(1942\) \(historyofwar.org\)](http://historyofwar.org)

<sup>2</sup> [Chapter 4 — Defeat and Victory | NZETC \(victoria.ac.nz\)](http://victoria.ac.nz)

<sup>3</sup> A 'real' 9<sup>th</sup> NZ Infantry Brigade was formed late in the war and took part in the closing stages of the Italian campaign under the command of Brigadier William Gentry



The accompanying picture of the Christchurch West Platoon parading in January 1942<sup>4</sup> shows some variety of clothing and weapons including at least two types of rifle and the 1907 pattern 17 inch bayonet. Also apparent is the wide age range of the Guardsmen from the two young men on the right to others on parade who were possibly World War One veterans.

By the latter half of 1943 the Pacific war seemed safely distant, and plans were underway to scale back the Home Guard. It was placed on reserve on the 1st of January 1944, and not liable to resume training or service unless a change in the military situation demanded such a course. Home Guardsmen were required to hand back weapons and most items of uniform but would be allowed to retain the boots issued to them<sup>5</sup>.

Members of the Home Guard who served for 28 days full-time or 6 months part-time became eligible for the New Zealand War Service Medal.

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<sup>4</sup> Ref: DA-00473. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. /records/22878807

<sup>5</sup> [Papers Past | Newspapers | Evening Post | 13 December 1943 | HOME GUARD \(natlib.govt.nz\)](#)

### ***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](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.



**LHM RSA SUPPORT SERVICES**  
**Discretionary Funds Application**

Email: [lhmrsa@gmail.com](mailto:lhmrsa@gmail.com) — Website: [www.lowerhuttrsa.co.nz](http://www.lowerhuttrsa.co.nz)

**Assistance may be available for Returned or Services personnel, or their qualifying families or dependents.**

*(Please provide proof of Military Service if not a financial member of the Lower Hutt Memorial RSA)*

Name:.....

Service No:.....

Address:.....

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Phone No.:.....

Email:.....

**I wish to apply for LHM RSA financial assistance towards the cost of approved Support Services benefits, which has been directly incurred by myself.**

Total expenditure incurred / assistance sought \$.....

*(Please attach original receipts and details of expenditure incurred)*

Bank Account No.:.....

Signature:..... Date:.....

***If you need to contact LHM RSA Support Services: Phone 568-5404 and leave contact details.***

Approved for Payment by:..... Date:.....

Payment Actioned by:..... Date:.....