

THE BULLETIN AUGUST 2023

Newsletter of the Wellington
Returned & Services Association Inc
Established 1916



OUTGOING PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Since our last newsletter in December, a great deal has happened, most significantly our annual street appeal (Poppy Day) on 21 April, Anzac Day on Tuesday 25 April and the AGM held in the KRSA clubrooms on Saturday 24 June.



We set a target of raising \$50,000 on Poppy Day. We were therefore pleasantly surprised with the outcome as we raised almost \$69,000. I extend a big thankyou to those of you who gave up your time to collect on the streets of Wellington. The large number of NZDF collectors once again did a sterling job covering the Wellington CBD. The support provided by cadets, who gave up their free time during their Term 1 school holidays to collect in places such as the railway station and the stadium must also be acknowledged. The money raised will enable us to continue to meet one of our core roles, of providing comprehensive welfare services to WRSA members and the Wellington veteran community in the short to medium term.

ANZAC Day was a fine day which resulted in good attendance at the national and citizen services that fall in our catchment area: Pukeahu National War Memorial Park, Wellington Cenotaph, Karori, Brooklyn and Makara. I was proud to deliver the ode and the ANZAC Dedication at the National Dawn Service at Pukeahu. Along with Kevin Arlidge, I laid a wreath on behalf of the WRSA at the 9.00 AM Citizens Service at the Cenotaph (adjacent to Parliament). For those of you who were at the well-attended Karori Citizens service at Karori Normal School you would have enjoyed listening to the band and John Crawford - NZDF historian, who delivered a very pertinent ANZAC Day address. Much of the success can be attributed to the organisation and MC skills of Karori RSA President - Bruce Johnston.

The 107th WRSA AGM, was attended by about 25 'hardy souls' and the key outcome was the unopposed election of the WRSA executive and the election of Kevin Arlidge as your new President. Glenda Ramsay resigned after several years on the committee. I want to acknowledge her sage advice on welfare matters and her contribution to organising Poppy Day collection in the eastern suburbs. Glenda will continue to be involved in the WRSA, albeit from the sidelines. While our 2022 financial accounts had not been audited at the time of the AGM, members passed the 2022 WRSA Welfare Trust Fund and the 2022 WRSA Incorporated Performance Reports, presented by Treasurer - Phillip Bolton, subject to auditor sign off later this year.

There were no notices of motion to be considered, but under general business there was discussion on several topics ranging from; the focus and priority at RSA national level going forward, updates provided by Clint Libby on the proposed Boer War/South Africa War memorial at Ben Burn Park and by Jane Campbell on the options to protect the more than 30 historical plaques, currently on the seaward side of Frank Kitts Park, when it is developed.

After 6 years as your President, I made the difficult decision to stand down at the AGM. I have enjoyed being your President but feel now is the right time to step down, thereby creating the opportunity for someone else to take on this challenging but gratifying role. That person is my friend - Kevin Arlidge and I am really pleased that he accepted his nomination being forwarded. I am happy to remain on the executive and support Kevin in any way I can. While the WRSA is in in sound financial shape our new President will be confronted by the challenge of turning around a declining membership. Closely linked to this is demonstrating the relevance of the RSA today, when current serving and recently retired veterans are not joining us. I wish him well.

I hope you enjoy the contents of the newsletter, in particularly the interview undertaken by editor - Carey Clements, of new President Kevin Arlidge.

I hope to see many of you at our monthly luncheons and of course our Xmas function planned for The Pines Tuesday 28 November.

Kind regards

Theo Kuper

(Outgoing President)

INCOMING PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It was a great honour for me to be elected President of the Wellington RSA at our Annual General Meeting on 24 June at the Karori RSA Club Rooms.



I served for 35 years in the New Zealand Defence Force. I graduated from the Royal Military College, Duntroon, Australia in 1977 and had a career in the Royal NZ Infantry Regiment and then the New Zealand Intelligence Corps. I retired as a colonel in 2010 after five years as Director of Defence Intelligence and Security. There was life after the Army and I served for nine years in the New Zealand Customs Service as National Manager Intelligence and then Director of the National Maritime Coordination Centre at Headquarters Joint Forces New Zealand.

I would like to again acknowledge Theo Kuper's six years as President of the Wellington RSA and his work to meet the needs of our members and their families. Theo has been very active in representing the Wellington RSA at National Dawn Services at Pukeahu National War Memorial Park, national and district RSA level and various functions in Wellington. Glenda Ramsay completed her service with the Wellington RSA Executive just prior to the Annual General Meeting. Glenda has been a dedicated member of the Wellington RSA Executive and her service is greatly appreciated. Glenda has been a key member of the Poppy Day Committee and her work in helping to organise Poppy Day collection has been critical to the success of our Poppy Day Appeal. Clint, Phillip, Bruce, and Chris have agreed to stay on the Executive and it would be impossible to run the Wellington/Karori RSAs without their support. Zenetta continues to hold the fort at the WRSA Office and ensures that our day to day administration is looked after.

I intend to continue the great work of the Wellington RSA Executive in support of our members and their families. The basic functions of the RSA – Remembrance, Welfare and Advocacy - remain the guiding principles for our ongoing work.

ANZAC Day and tributes to our fallen members are the corner stones of our remembrance role. ANZAC Day ensures that we remember the sacrifice made by our service personnel and their families over the last 183 years. ANZAC Day ensures that we do not forget the tragedy and cost of war. Our welfare system is unique within the RSA and we will continue to fund our welfare scheme from our investments and the Poppy Day Appeal.

Michelle and Kay continue to lead and execute our welfare support function and their work is appreciated. The Executive will continue to advocate for our members through engagement with the RNZRSA National Office and any decision makers that we get the opportunity to influence.

The challenges for the year ahead are recruiting new members for the Executive, encouraging retired and current NZDF personnel to join the RSA, advocating for our members and drafting a new constitution so that we conform with the new Incorporated Societies Act 2022. So with that, there is plenty to do.

Kevin Arlidge

LAST POST

- Robert M Stewart, Returned member, died 26 June 2022 aged 89
- Rodger Barrington Haworth, Returned member, died 25 August 2022 aged 80
- Peter Shearer, Associate member, died 9 September 2022 aged 83
- Elizabeth Anne Pearson, Returned Widow died 22 November 2022 aged 92
- Elva Porteous, Returned Widow, died 15 November 2022 aged 99
- Ronald Burgess Returned member, died 19 February 2022 aged 93
- William Henry Alcock, Service member, died 19 February 2023 aged 75
- Rear Admiral (Retired) Ian Alexander Hunter, Returned member died 8 December 2022 aged 83
- Isabella (Jean)McGilvery, Service member Died 1 March 2023 aged 94
- Henry Francis Prendergast, Returned member, died 3 March 2023 aged 84

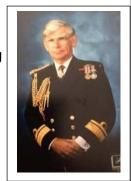
- Lorna Crewdson, Returned Widow, died 8 March 2023, aged 97
- Marie Jon Byrne, Returned Widow, died 8 March 2023 aged 96
- Robert Cyril Wrighton, Returned member, died 8 March 2023 aged 86
- Brett Wilson Pierce, Service member, died 24 April 2023 aged 83
- John Keith Alexander, Life Member died 26 April 2023 aged 84

OBITUARIES

REAR ADMIRAL, IAN HUNTER, CB

The 21st Chief of Naval Staff between March 1991 and April 1994, Admiral Hunter was born in Dunedin in 1939, before being educated at Christchurch Boys High School.

After leaving school in 1957, he joined the Royal New Zealand Navy as a Cadet.



After training at the Britannia Royal Naval College Dartmouth, he served in a variety of HMNZ Ships and HM Submarines as well as in exchange posts ashore and afloat with the Royal Navy. He qualified as a submarine watch keeping Officer as well as a specialist in antisubmarine warfare. He was also a naval diver. He spent the summer season of 1962/63 in the Antarctic including visits to the South Pole and Eights Station and then was Navigating and Communications Officer of HMNZS ROTOITI carrying out weather picket duties at latitude 60 south.

In 1965/66 he was the Royal Navy Diving Officer and Bomb and Mine Disposal Officer for Northern Ireland, and on the instructional staff of the joint RN/RAF Antisubmarine School. He was the last Executive Officer of HMNZS BLACKPOOL for that ships return to the Royal Navy. He then awaited the completion of HMNZS CANTERBURY which was being built at Glasgow. Admiral Hunter was HMNZS CANTERBURY'S first Operations Officer.

A graduate of the Royal New Zealand Air Force Command and Staff College in 1973 he then became Executive Officer of HMNZS CANTERBURY and subsequently commanded HMNZ Ships WAIKATO and SOUTHLAND.

In 1978 he was a member of the New Zealand Delegation conducting fisheries' negotiations with Korea, Japan and the Soviet Union on the introduction of the New Zealand 200 nautical mile Exclusive Economic Zone.

He was RNZN representative to the Harbours Association and a member of the Shipbuilding Industry Review Committee and Outlying Islands Committee. In 1982/3 as the first Commanding Officer of HMNZS SOUTHLAND he was involved in overseeing the refit and conversion of the ship to New Zealand requirements in the United Kingdom.

In 1985 he attended the Royal College of **Defence Studies in London, and in 1987 was** promoted to Commodore, and appointed Assistant Chief of Defence Staff (Development Plans). From 1988 to 1991 he Commodore Auckland (Maritime Commander, New Zealand) and was also Patron of the Royal Akarana Yacht Club, Trustee and Member of the Management Committee of the Auckland Maritime Museum, Executive Trustee of the RNZN Museum. Patron of the North Shore Association Football Club and President of the Auckland Anniversary Regatta Committee. He was involved with the organisation for the stopover for the Whitbread race and many other 1990 activities and was an additional Aide de Camp to the late Queen Elizabeth II.

He commanded the RNZN Task Group carrying out Operation Big Talk the peace negotiations between Papua New Guinea and Bougainville separatists. He was awarded the 1990 Commemoration Medal Promoted to Rear Admiral in 1991, he was Chief of Naval Staff until his retirement in April 1994. During the period 1988 to 1994 he was involved from a senior management perspective in the implementation of government financial reform and the of **HMNZ** restructuring Dockyard, culminating in it being leased to a facilities manager. In 1993 he was made a Companion of the Order of the Bath in the Queen's Birthday Honours.

Since retirement he had been a Trustee of the Wellington Civic Trust and Chairman of it 1996-1999 and Deputy Chairman until 2004 and was a life member of the Trust. In 1994 he was a member of the Wellington City Council Museums Working Party which led to the establishment of the Wellington Museums Trust in 1995 and was a Trustee until 2001.

He chaired the redevelopment of the Wellington Maritime Museum to the Museum of Wellington, City and Sea, a \$12.5 million project which completed in November 1999.

He was a member of the Community Consultative Committee on Lambton Harbour. He was a member of the Royal New Zealand Returned and Services Association Protocol, Ceremonial and Medallic Committee and Defence Committee and was Patron of the Wellington RSA. From 1995 until 2002 he regularly crewed on the Spirit of New Zealand.

In June 1998 he was elected National President of the Sea Cadet Association of New Zealand. He is a past President of the Friends of the Maritime Museum and a life member of the RNZN Museum. He was a member of the Wellington City Council Environmental Reference group since its inception in 2003. He was a Trustee of the Sink F69 Trust which sank the former HMNZS WELLINGTON as an artificial marine habitat in Houghton Bay. He was a Trustee of the United Services Medal Collection Trust.

He was a member of the Tararua Tramping Club, the Karori Sanctuary, the Karori RSA and the Victoria Bridge Club.

After moving to Waikanae in 2021, he died at the Charles Fleming Retirement Home in December 2022 following a lengthy illness. He was aged 83.

JOHN KEITH ALEXANDER

A Life Member of the Wellington RSA, John had a very varied life, but was known too few outside his immediate friends.

After attending Mahora primary school in Hastings between 1943 and 1951, John went to Hastings Boys High School, before leaving in 1956. A good student academically speaking, he went straight to Victoria University and completed a Bachelor of Chemical Engineering in 1962.

After graduation, he began working life as an assistant engineer, before moving up the ranks at the New Zealand Railways Chief Mechanical Engineers Office in Wellington. After seven years, he then opted to join the Royal New Zealand Navy reserve in 1967, at HMNZS Olphert, Wakefield and Philomel before then transferring to the Regular Force the following year.

As a Commissioned Lieutenant, he spent 12 months at the Royal Naval Engineering College in Mandon, Plymouth in England before becoming a Marine Engineering Officer for HMNZS Taranaki Far East station. After being diagnosed with an ear condition when he was young as John got older his hearing got worse, not helped by spending years in engine rooms. He was medically discharged from the Navy in December 1970, but like many ex service personnel got involved in the RSA many years later where his work towards welfare was much valued and later rewarded with a Life Membership.

MICHELLE'S MESSAGE

Kay and I continue to provide welfare support to many of our members, through home visits, rest home visits, assistance with transport to and from appointments as well as advocacy and practical assistance from setting up a disability allowances or putting in claims to Veterans Affairs. There continues to be ongoing delays for Veterans to access services through Veterans Affairs. This sadly is a nationwide problem, with at least a three-month waiting list for applications to be processed.

I continue my fortnightly visits to Trentham Camp, and I am happy to report I have been given a flag/banner for the Trentham Hub to display outside when I am based at the Camp. This year there has been a steady consistent flow of people needing the RSA's assistance.

In April this year I accepted an eight-month contract with NZRSA to be a Veteran Employment Advisor. This is a pilot programme that NZRSA are running for a year in conjunction with MSD. The project named Āwhinatanga Toa is a one-year trial where RNZRSA will put Veteran Employment Advisors in selected regions (5 across the country) to assist veterans transitioning to civilian life. The project is based on evidence that a successful transition from military service to civilian life will lead to better mental and overall wellbeing outcomes for the veteran and their whānau.

Project Purpose: To assist veterans and their whanau to:

- Transition from the military to civilian life through an employment and wellbeing lens.
- Remain in gainful employment through an employment and wellbeing lens.
- Find career pathways by building on the skills and capabilities that military service for New Zealand provided them with, so that they can continue to contribute purposefully to the fabric of New Zealand life.

I will be doing this role in conjunction with my existing role as local support advisor for the wellington RSA.

From 1st July if you are eligible, you can claim a rates rebate for 2023-24 year. Please contact me if you have any questions about welfare matters, medical claims, or general enquiries. You can email me on michelle@wrsa.org.nz or ring through the office on 04 3851191 or directly on my cell phone 0211936261. Zenetta is in the office Monday – Thursday from 10am until 2.30pm and can also assist with enquiries and medical claims. Lastly, I look forward to seeing many of you at our monthly member's luncheon.

Michelle Tebbutt Support Advisor

2023 ANZAC DAY SERVICES AND POPPY DAY IMAGES FROM WELLINGTON, MAKARA & KARORI



Wellington RSA Life Member and Korean War veteran Chris Nevill shares a laugh with Willie Apiata, VC after Dawn Service...



The tireless Wellington RSA Life Member and K Force Vet, Phil Wallace, takes it all in his stride...



Karori RSA President Bruce Johnston and member Wally Potts get stuck into cutting up rosemary prior to the annual Poppy and rosemary laying at Makara Cemetery



This year's Cranzac biscuit fundraiser brought \$20.000.00 with a big thanks again going out to Thorndon New World. \$10,000 each went to the Southcombe family and RSA Wellington's the National Gabrielle Appeal.



It may seem hard to believe, but two of Bruce Johnston's Presidential predecessors are still around. One of them is Murray Sherlock (left), who held the Karori RSA Presidency, before Bruce (right) took over in mid-1997



Age shall not weary them... Perhaps New Zealand's oldest Poppy Day ever collector and World War Two veteran, Noeline Ritson (105 years not out), takes donations at the Malvina Major Retirement Home alongside the Karori RSA Treasurer, Carey Clements



Military historian, John Crawford, gives the midmorning address at the Karori Anzac Day service – NZDF photograph



A rare look at Captain Todd Skilton as he acts as flag bearer at the Karori midmorning Anzac Day service – NZDF photograph



Former 1998-2002 Chief of Army, Major General (Retired) Maurice Dodson CBE, MC (middle) lays a poppy down following the Karori mid-morning Anzac Day service. NZDF photograph





Karori RSA members (from left): Kit Withers, Derek Smith and David Parry wait before the start of the Makara mid-morning Anzac Day service

Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) Kevin Arlidge, interview

Q: Thanks for the time to do an interview. Can you tell me whereabouts you grew up and what schools you attended.

A: I grew mainly in Palmerston North and attended Winchester Primary, Ross Intermediate and Freyberg High School. Then we moved to Hamilton and I went to Fairfield College.

Q: Are you the only sibling

A: No. I have two brothers and two sisters. I am the oldest of the five.

Q: Do you come from a military family

A: No. My dad was a builder, but he did national service in the early 1950s. He served as a Territorial Force trooper in the 1st Armoured Car Regiment, New Zealand Scottish (RNZAC). At the time the RNZAC had the Ferret and Daimler armoured cars and Valentine and General Stuart tanks. My Grandfather was a captain in the New Zealand Electrical and Mechanical Engineers in the Second World War.

Q: When you were at Freyberg, was there a cadet unit? Is that what motivated you towards joining the army

A: Yes, we had the Freyberg High School Cadet Unit and I was a sergeant. Before joining the Cadet Corps, I had already decided that I wanted to go to the Royal Military College Duntroon. I passed my Regular Officer Selection Course in 1973. I went to the Royal Military College, Duntroon in 1974 for four years.

Q: That is quite a rarity as I thought at RMC Duntroon, you had to have a degree first.

A: No, we did our degrees at RMC Duntroon. We did military training and I did a Bachelor of Arts majoring in History and Government. The final year was full time military studies.

Q: What was the initial reason for you to joining the Army? Was it the adventure or was it more than that A: I really liked the outdoors and liked adventure, shooting and hunting. So I got paid to do what I enjoyed and graduated from RMC Duntroon in 1977.

Q: Were there any notable officers on the same course as you

A: Some of my Australian classmates became senior officers in the Australian Army. We graduated as full Lieutenants and I graduated into the Royal New Zealand Armoured Corps. However, I quite quickly changed corps to infantry.

Q: Were you posted to 2/1st or 1st Battalion, RNZIR A: I was posted to 2/1 RNZIR and then to 1 RNZIR in Singapore. I was there for two years between 1980 and 1982. During my first year I was 2IC of Alpha Company as a Captain and then in my second year I was the Battalion Intelligence Officer.

Q: Did you go any exercises with the Gurkhas

A: No. We mainly operated with the Singaporeans and Malaysians. Our most notable exercise was called Exercise Willie Away which involved a month long deployment to the Malaysian jungle. The CO thought if we were in the jungle for that period there would be no discipline or medical problems in the battalion. Most of our exercises involved counter insurgency operations with some conventional warfare operations.

Serving with 1 RNZIR in Singapore was a unique experience. I have consequently had a soft spot for Singapore. I have been lucky enough to go back to Singapore a few times on Command Post Exercises and intelligence exchanges when I was Director of Defence Intelligence.

Q: Did you play sport for your company, or Battalion

A: I formed the New Zealand Force South East Asia Pistol Club. We used Browning 9mm pistols at the time and I had a .357 Colt Python revolver. Other than club shoots we shot in an annual competition against the Singaporeans. They always got first and second and we managed to go up from fourth to third.

Q: Where was your first posting when you got back home

A: I was posted to Headquarters Army Training Group as SO3 Logistics and then I was posted to the School of Infantry as the Senior Instructor in Tactics. I enjoyed both jobs, especially SI Tactics and the opportunity to teach infantry minor tactics. Q: When were you promoted to Major

A: In 1986 I left the Army for a year to do my Overseas Experience with my wife. We spent time in Africa, the Middle East and Europe. We ended up driving from London to Istanbul and back which was a great adventure. I re-joined the Army at the end of 1986 and was promoted to Major upon re-entry.

Q: What was your first posting as a Major

A: My first posting was as SO2 Logistics at Headquarters, 3 Task Force Group in Christchurch and then I became the Brigade Major for six months. From there I went to Papakura to command the Army Intelligence Centre and to work on the development of the New Zealand Intelligence Corps. This was an interesting job because I had several roles. I was OC NZ Army Intelligence Centre, Director of Military Intelligence (Corps Director), G2 Intelligence for Land Force Command and Intelligence Officer for the NZ Special Air Service for Counter Terrorist Operations. I was there for two years and then in 1990 I went to command and staff college at Queenscliff, Australia. From there I came back to command what was known as the Force Intelligence Group. The reorganisation of the NZIC that I had developed was being implemented and I commanded the operational intelligence unit that supported Headquarters Land Forces and supported the Ready Reaction Force.

Q: When were you promoted to Lieutenant Colonel
A: In 1994 I went down to Headquarters 3 Land Force
Group at Burnham Camp and became SO2 Personnel
and then Brigade Major again. From there I went to
Angola on promotion as Senior National Officer of the
NZDF UNAVEM III Contingent. I was in Angola for six
months where I commanded a UN Observer Team in
the central highlands plus I was CO for our Demining
Team in Luanda.

Q: Was it an interesting time? What was happening in Angola at that stage

A: We were trying to demobilise UNITA for the third time in the history of the Angola peace process. UNITA was a guerrilla force opposing the Angolan Government. The process did not work and UNITA and the Angolan Forces went back to war after I left. From Angola I went back to Waiouru to command the Land Operations Training Centre until the end of 1999.

In 2000 I was posted to Army General Staff as GSO1 Command and Control Systems. My task was to develop a strategic plan for the digitisation of Army operational command and control systems. This plan became Plan Athena. Army information systems was reorganised at this time as well and I ended up with the Army's New Zealand Information Technology as well, so an interesting experience. In 2002 I went to London for three years as the Military Advisor to the NZ Defence Advisor, Commodore Alan Peck RNZN. At the same time, I was accredited as Defence Attaché to Belgium and to NATO.

Q: Any highlights while you held these posts

A: I enjoyed interacting with the British Army and providing information of interest back to New Zealand. Basically, The Defence Advisor made me responsible for our UK part of our commitments to Afghanistan, Iraq and Bosnia. I went to Bosnia twice and that was interesting and our commitment was appreciated by the British and the Europeans. I also headed the London based team that organised the return to New Zealand of the Unknown Warrior from Longaeval, France. New Zealanders are treated well by our British colleagues and as a result we attended the Diplomats Ball at Buckingham Palace, the Garden Party at Buckingham Palace, Queens Birthday Parade, and numerous other events which were unique.

Q: Did Defence priorities change after 9/11

A: Yes, priorities changed from the cold war to counter terrorist operations against Al Qaeda in Afghanistan and then operations in Iraq. My involvement was through liaison with the British Ministry of Defence and with the NATO SHAPE Headquarters in Mons. The NZDF was providing support to ISAF and I attended Force Generation Conferences at NATO and supported the NZ Ambassador in Turkey when Turkey took over command of ISAF. NZ also had two deployments to Iraq and I liaised with the British 3rd Division who sponsored our deployments.

Q: At this stage was there much intelligence sharing
A: There was enough. The British kept us well briefed.
I came home from London in early 2005 and became
J2 (Chief of Intelligence) at Headquarters Joint Forces
New Zealand. During this time, I was asked to lead a
team to look at reorganising Defence Intelligence and
Security. We presented the plan to the Chiefs of Staff
Committee in December 2005. I was directed by CDF
to implement the plan and I became the Director of
Defence Intelligence and Security on promotion to
Colonel. I did that job for five years before leaving the
Army in 2010. In total I did 35 years in the NZDF.

Q: What did you do then

A: I became National Manager of Intelligence for NZ Customs Service for four years before doing five years as Director of the National Maritime Coordination Centre at Headquarters Joint Forces New Zealand. I retired from Customs nearly four years ago.

Q: Is that when you joined the RSA

A: Yes, it was around that time Theo Kuper shoulder tapped me to step in as the Vice President.

Q: What will your new job as President be.

A: We certainly need to start getting better recruitment around what I call the post 1990 veterans and basically convince them that they are in fact veterans. The three pillars of the RSA: Remembrance, Welfare and Advocacy are still sound and need to be reinforced. The Wellington RSA will continue to support these pillars through Poppy Day, ANZAC Day, remembrance activities and tributes to ex-servicemen, our welfare system and advocacy for our members. Our RSA is in a good position but we need to get some new members for our executive committee to ensure succession and sustainability.

WRSA KEY CONTACTS

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Open Fridays 7.30pm – 10.00pm

Movie nights are held on the last Friday of each month