

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

Newsletter of the Lower Hutt Memorial RSA — February 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

FUTURE PLANNING FOR THE LHMRSA: By Lars Millar (President)

Financial Transparency/Independence/Sustainability

Hi members, welcome to 2019, I trust we all had a well-earned break over Christmas and New Year. Welcome to the third instalment of the President's Soldiers Five series of articles. During this series I'll outline the way forward, as I see it, for us as an association. I have five key points I wish to address, and hopefully, get started during my first term. These are:

1. Engagement
2. Recruitment
3. Financial Transparency/Independence/Sustainability
4. Governance
5. Communication

There will be one instalment for each subject in our monthly *Connections* newsletter. This third article is on, Financial Transparency, Independence, and Sustainability. This will probably be the most contentious of all the articles, but one that is arguably the most important.

Financial Transparency

The executive has established a financial working group in order to conduct a full financial review of the LHMRSA. This will strip back our financial apparatus and review every aspect of it to ensure it is still fit for purpose and that we are doing the very best we can for the Association to grow. During the review we have a financial sub-committee that will include ex-trustees as well. Nobody has the monopoly on good ideas, and only through good robust discussion will we grow and fulfill our potential, and ensure that the LHMRSA light continues to burn brightly long after I am just a fond memory and topic of discussion on a Friday club night.

Ultimately the Executive Committee is responsible for the effective management of the financial running of the Association, with delegated authority to Trustees, and individual signatories on various accounts. However, it seems that the communication between all parties wasn't all it could have been.

Rest assured members, each party operated with the best intentions of the Association and its members in mind at all times. There have however been some minor administration items that have been tweaked to ensure everyone knows what everyone else is doing.

Previous Trustees; Peter Jacobs, Tony George, Innes McNeill, Peter Stitt and Alison Sexton, the past president, ran a good ship while they were in office. Unfortunately, they have all decided to move on, at around the same time. This

has meant that the “new crew” of Mike Collett, Sam Kahui and I, have had a rather stuttering start. However, I feel we have a good handle on things now, and have started the recruitment process for more trustees. These members will be advised in due course.

So financial transparency means that, Trustees, and the Executive will be aware of what each is doing, and what jobs are being planned. This simple activity will mean our financial operations will be much more focused and transparent to all involved.

Independence

Thought needs to be given by the LHMRSA Executive on how the Association intends to deal with unforeseen circumstances. This can be anything from a major earthquake destroying the PWMC premises, and the records retained within; to succession planning for the Executive, in case they are immobilised in an accident, or with health issues.

One of the aims of this review will be to monitor identified and emerging risks and the mitigation of these. This will be our Disaster Recovery (or business continuity) Plan as there will be a need for the LHMRSA to continue to be active and operational, even if the PWMC is not, in the case of a catastrophic event. We need to ensure the LHMRSA will carry on, to support our service and ex-service people, through the fellowship of physical Friday nights, and support services.

Good financial planning will see our independence ensured should the worse come to pass, it will also ensure that the LHMRSA has the ability to perhaps pay our way a bit more within our relationship with the PWMC.

Our relationship with the PWMC continues to strengthen, with a Joint Working Group already in place, and meeting regularly. But we also need to ensure that our own house remains in order.

Sustainability

The association is very fortunate to be in the current financial state it is in due to wise investments of the previous leadership. It is now up to the current leadership team to ensure our growth is sustainable over the long term.

Investment in traditional options that banks and other financial institutions offer only go part way to ensuring sustainability. I have proposed in previous installments that the Association invests in people as well. I feel that that is the key to sustainability, as it is no good if we have \$3million (as a random figure) in the bank and we have no members and the Association winds up because we've failed to invest across the board.

So, in layman terms, while our money earns interest the capital rolls over to earn more interest. The Interest will be used to invest in scholarships, and sponsorship grants etc. This will ensure we will be around for more years to come. Those who we invest in will hopefully carry on to evolve and grow the Association even more.

As long as we are responsible when it comes to the capital baseline, and the amount of investment we make in the right people and at the right time, the LHMRSA should be the gold standard that all other Local RSA's aspire to be like.

GOVERNANCE: By Tony Mort (Executive Member)

Periodically a need will exist through the medium of this Newsletter to incorporate articles of a Governance nature to meet the Executive Committee's legal obligations towards accountability, transparency and keeping members informed. This brief article addresses two key issues members need to be aware of as we move forward with the evolution of this Association.

Changes to LHMRSA Rules

At the 2018 Annual General Meeting in September last year members gave approval to change specific elements of the Association's Rules to:

1. Enable future Rule changes to be processed at ANY General Meeting of the Association rather than only via an Annual General Meeting. (This provides greater flexibility and timeliness for the Executive to implement reforms requiring changes to the Associations Governance framework); and
2. Remove all elements of the Rules, which made reference to the supply and/or sale of alcoholic beverages to Members. (The Association is no longer in the business of dispensing or supplying alcoholic beverages to Members, as this is now the responsibility of the Petone Club (PWMC). Hence to avoid any confusion over this issue, all reference to this activity has now been formally removed from LHMRSA Rules).

The abovementioned Rule changes were approved by Members at the 2018 AGM; approved by RNZRSA; and were formally registered with the Registrar of Incorporated Societies in October 2018. Accordingly these changes have now been legally integrated into the Association's current Rules with immediate effect.

LHMRSA Memorabilia

Since the 2018 AGM significant time and effort has been expended on trying to locate, examine and catalogue all known archived records, assets and memorabilia of the Association. Following sale of the Association's building in Cornwall Street, Lower Hutt various assets were gifted or sold to the PWMC as part of the amalgamation agreement. Other items, namely archival records; sporting trophies; wall hangings; various items of personal and corporate memorabilia; and the Association's Library materials were placed in various forms of storage.

The Executive Committee is undertaking a systematic search for ALL known items originally placed in storage and to consolidate them into a central storage facility. As part of this process all items are being catalogued and damaged items assessed and repaired where possible. Items are then being re-packaged before temporarily returning to secure storage. Upon completion of the search, locate and retrieve exercise decisions will be made as to the future disposition of each individual item.

It is possible some LHMRSA items of archival materials and memorabilia are being held at private residences or storage facilities for safe keeping, on behalf of the Association. If this is the case and if members are storing such items privately it would be appreciated if you could contact any member of the Executive Committee as soon as possible so that arrangements can be made to retrieve and preserve such materials.

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 568-8588 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

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 568-8588 and leave your contact details with the office

“THROUGH THE EYES OF SOLDIERS” — A PRESENTATION BY JEFFREY RUSSELL:

Make a diary note not to miss Jeffrey Russell's half hour Ayun Kara presentation!

When: 1700 hours; Friday 15th February

Where: ANZAC Lounge

“Through the eyes of soldiers” tells the story of the NZ Mounted Rifles, in the Battle of Ayun Kara on 14 November 1917... described as “a most desperate battle.”

This presentation, by Jeffrey Russell of Hutt City Libraries, will follow four soldiers who were in the battle using letters and diaries together with excerpts from official military histories to tell the story through their eyes.

The Ayun Kara engagement is notable because it was the only occasion during the Sinai and Palestine Campaign that the New Zealand Mounted Rifle Brigade acted in isolation from the ANZAC Mounted Division to which it belonged.

GRAVE RESTORATION PROJECT

Ex-servicemen Simon Strombom has initiated a grave restoration project that started off in Porirua after he witnessed the state of many of the servicemens' graves in the area. This project now has the backing of RNZRSA with the hope of restoring all servicemens' graves by 2020.

To this end, Simon is holding a Lower Hutt workshop/workingbee:

When: 12pm on 16th February, 2019

Where: Taita Lawn Cemetery

Given there are approx 8000 graves in the plot, not including those individual graves outside the area, and the original servicemens' plot at the top of the hill, it'll likely be a long slog and will require a certain level of fitness.

Members are not required to register their interest with Simon, but only need to turn up on the day. For further information members can 'Google': *Simon Strombom - Graves Restoration Project*.

SAD NEWS:

On 11 January 2019, Noeline Margaret McNeil passed away peacefully with her family beside her, at Bob Scott Retirement Village, Lower Hutt, aged 93 years. Much loved wife of Innes for 70 wonderful years. Treasured mother of Brian and Shelly, Karen and James, Grey and Vivian, Margie and Mark, Stew and Tineke, Ewen and Sally. Loved grandmother of all her grand and great-grandchildren. Heartfelt thanks to the exemplary staff at Bob Scott Retirement Village for their loving care. A Requiem Mass was celebrated in Ss Peter and Paul Catholic Church, Lower Hutt on Monday 14 January 2019.

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