

DEVONPORT RSA

Established 1927

Presidents Newsletter Jun 2023

Kia ora all, we are now in the middle of the winter months with many continuing to deal with the fall out of flooding and road closures. The Executive committee has been providing support when asked so if you need any assistance let us know.

Recent Events

Poppy Day Collection 21 Apr

A total of **\$26,216.52** was raised. This was a fantastic effort and thanks to everyone that helped with the collection.

Open Day 23 April

The weather kept people away but those that visited were very interested in the RSA and the kids enjoyed colouring in the picture of an untidy soldier designed by Tony McNeight. Thanks to Gail and the team that set it up and the banners promoting the RSA looked great. A display of family military memorabilia from member, Michael Greig, was also a hit.

Anzac Day 25 Apr

The community of Devonport turned out for the parade and we have received lots of great feedback. I have highlighted to the council events team that the sound system could be better and they have agreed to provide improved coverage next year.



Image courtesy of: [@photography_by_emma](#)

The Anzac Day article in the Flagstaff is available to be seen on their website, www.devonportflagstaff.co.nz, May 2023 page 5. At the request of some members a copy of the Anzac Day speech given by Commander Richard Walker is included with this newsletter.

RSA Day with the North Shore Aero Club 14 May.

A visit to the North Shore Aero Club and a flight to Whenuapa was attended by several members who have told me it was a fantastic day out. Keep your eye out for next years event.

Upcoming Events and Activities

Go to <https://www.devonportrsa.co.nz/events.html> for see the full Calendar.

Club Nights: Originally we were holding club nights on a Thursday however feedback from members was the Friday nights would be better. Club nights have now been moved to one Friday a month, the next one being Friday 21 Jul. I encourage all members to come along bring partners friends and family to enjoy a game of indoor bowls, pool or darts, or just a catch-up. We will also look to provide some form of entertainment. The last club night pool competition was won by the nephew of a member and the poem readings from Clive were excellent. The next club night will include an indoor bowls competition.

Further feedback received has been that it would be good if a meal was available. We are interested in member's feedback on this idea and if you would be more likely to attend club night if a meal was available. Please email the manager manager@devonportrsa.co.nz, with your view.

Every Friday at 1pm - Helena from Dance Haven will be running her class, only \$5 for RSA Members. No partner required, it should be fun, and it keeps you fit! Dance yourself Happy! Contact Helena on 022 093 2623 or info@dancehaven.nz

Monday 10 July 1100 – Members Lunch

Monday 10 July 1900 – Executive Meeting

Fri 21 July 1600 – Club night

Monday 24 July 1100 - Members lunch

Mid-Winter Event - Sunday 30th July 1pm

Don't forget to get your tickets

We are celebrating all things American – Thought we would change things up a bit this year and have a bit of fun.



Tickets: Members and family \$30; Children U12 \$15; Non – Member Guest \$45.00 and include Entertainment, Photo Booth for that lasting memento and an American themed menu by local Caterers from Chateaubriant .



Spot and door prizes

Prizes for best dressed in an American Theme

Bring your Dancing Shoes

Payment can be made to the following account –

Devonport RSA Inc 38-9019-0712797-00 please use your surname as reference.

Get your names into Stephen or Gail by the 4th of July as we are limited in numbers and expect this to sell out quickly.

If anyone requires transport, or have any specific dietary requirements please let Gail or Stephen know at the time of booking your tickets.

Winter Beanies

Thanks to Marilyn Glover from the Takapuna Rotary and her knitter Jane who provided the members with free winter beanies. Marilyn is happy to arrange further bennies in your favourite colours, please email your requirements to Stephen and he will pass them on.



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Finally, I want to take the opportunity to provide you an update on some of the activities and issues we have been involved in recently.

Memorial Drive: Chris Mullane and I attended the Auckland Council hearing to represent the RSA position on the heritage classification of Memorial Drive under plan change 82. Chris provided an extensive overview of the history of the drive and made an argument for the Heritage Classification to remain as an “A” vis the proposed “B” classification. We are now waiting on the board’s recommendation.

Takapuna Memorial: You may have seen an article in the Rangitoto Observer reporting on an interview with the Devonport – Takapuna Board Chair about the moving of the memorial to another location. On 24 May Myself, Ron (VP) and Chris attended a workshop with board members, Eke-Panuka and others to discuss the move. For many reasons there was general consensus that moving the memorial to the Waiwharariki Anzac Square was not suitable and it was agreed that a study will be undertaken to ascertain the suitability of a location at the top of Hurstmere Green opposite the entrance to the square. We are expecting a report back within the next six months at which time further discussions will be held.

Constitution rewrite: With changes to the Societies Act, passed on 5 Apr 2022, our Constitution needs review. National RSA directed that no constitutions were to be submitted until they had finished their review with all RSAs expected to align with the National Constitution to be released in 2025. Syd Dewes has done some great work in reviewing the Devonport RSA constitution and has also provided feedback to RNZRSA Constitution Working Group and will continue to do so. Thanks to the work Syd has done we will be well place to apply the final touches once National have published their Model Constitution.

This Month in History - American invasion, 1942–1944



First American soldier steps on NZ soil

The ‘invasion’ began in Auckland on 12 June 1942, when five transport ships carrying ‘doughboys’ of the US Army sailed into Waitematā Harbour. Two days later Marines (‘leathernecks’) landed in Wellington. They had arrived as a result of the outbreak of war in the Pacific six months before. From a New Zealand perspective, the Americans strengthened New Zealand’s defences against possible Japanese attack; for their part, the Americans saw New Zealand as both a valuable source of supplies and a staging post for operations against the Japanese in the Pacific.

American life in New Zealand between 1942 and 1944 was centred on the camps, most of which were within marching distance or a short train journey from Wellington or Auckland. Some of the soldiers were here to train for forthcoming battles on Pacific islands. They

practised landings and jungle marches. Others had returned from the front and were here for rest and recreation or to recover their health; and there were some whose job was to provide the supplies for a modern army.

The American forces worked hard and men craved time off. New Zealand leisure habits were very different to American ones, so the visitors devised their own forms of entertainment and established enclaves of American culture. They played baseball and enjoyed jazz concerts and dances. Five Red Cross clubs served them cheap hamburgers, doughnuts and Coca-Cola.



[American servicemen at a milk bar](#)

The presence of thousands of well-paid Americans as part of a large army brought about a minor economic boom in New Zealand and affected local patterns of commerce. Dry cleaners, taxi drivers and milk bars did well; there was increased activity on the wharves; market gardeners came under pressure to grow more cabbages for the soldiers in the Pacific.

For many people of both nations, the most memorable aspect of the American invasion was the home visits. Often these were arranged formally, with families signing up to offer Americans a weekend at home. New Zealanders generally warmed to their extroverted guests, while the Americans appreciated the home comforts and genuine kindness offered by their hosts.

Romantic liaisons between American servicemen and New Zealand women inevitably developed. The soldiers were starved of female company, and many Kiwi women appreciated the Americans' good manners and their offers of taxi rides, ice-cream sodas and flowers. About 1400 New Zealand women married American servicemen in these years. This was not universally welcomed, especially by Kiwi men, and there were a number of fights and plenty of muttering about 'bedroom commandos'.



[American officer and Tainui kuia, 1943](#)

There was also occasional friction between American servicemen and Māori. As a result, strenuous efforts were made to build inter-racial bridges – Te Puea Hērangi arranged a series of visits to Ngāruawāhia in Waikato, and Americans were also welcomed by Ngāti Pōneke Young Māori Club in Wellington and onto a marae in Gisborne.

This feature was written by Jock Phillips and produced by the NZHistory.net.nz team. It was revised by Gareth Phipps in 2011.

Ngā mihi
Muzz Kennett
President