

THE ROYAL MARINES ASSOCIATION – NZ BRANCH

Minutes of the regular meeting (bi-monthly) held on Saturday 13th June 2009
@ 2pm at Pt Chevalier R.S.A.

Meeting Commenced at 2.00 with the President, Peter Collins, proposing the Loyal Toast and asked David Glenn to recite the Royal Marines Prayer.

A minute of silence was held for absent friends.

Members in attendance : P. Collins, P. Ayling, N. Harker, C. Ellis, B. Reay, D. Ayling (Ticker), H. Robinson, G & G Moore, B. Battersby, S. Ritson, M. Kavanagh, M. Beare, R. Morrice, J. Simms, C. McRae.

Apologies: Keith Annis, Eddie Edwardson, John Glaze, Peter Walton, Edwin Barton.

Minutes of the previous meeting April 18th 2008. The President moved the minutes as appeared in the Newsletter be adopted.

Proposed and seconded – M. Beare/B. Reay

Sick Bay: Edwin Barton has come back from his sojourn to the Normandy Veterans Commemorations in Wellington with the flu and then suffered a small accident at home to add insult to injury requiring stitches to his black eye !!! Beware of projectiles flying from high cupboards is his advice to all and see you at the next meeting.

Peter had visited an ex Royal, who although is not a member of our Association, is terminally ill in Auckland Hospital. His name is Charles (Jock) Fraser) Ward 64, Room 9, Level 6. Please visit him if you can. Phone first though as at some point he may be sent back to his home town of Whangarei.

Our member Bill Houston advised us he had a close association with Prince Charles and served as his nursery footman for a while; Bill sent an email to Clarence House advising them of the situation which was most appreciated.

Sick Visitor Report: Ticker Reports....He visits Charles & Celia Lashmar on a regular basis and they always have a good old chin wag. He visited Colin Campbell after his knee surgery and he's doing very well. Ticker is going to phone Peter Gosling and get back to us. Please advise Ticker or Colleen of anyone needing a visit.

Matters Arising.

Peter Coombes is going to try to attend an Auckland meeting and bring more goodies for the raffle. We look forward to seeing Peter.

Karen Saunders from the RSA Review advised the new ad will be placed at no charge to the Association and will be inserted at the beginning of the Reunion Diary.

Rob Morrice advised he has 3 new people to talk to about joining up – keep it up Rob.

Martin Kavanagh also advised he had 1 person interested from Malta and the website was generating interest. That's great feedback.

Peter revisited the generous offer of the Onehunga RSA office in helping to collate our paperwork, newsletter etc and mail it to assist Colleen. This is an example of "the wider service family" working.

Peter thanked Ian Pallas, our Association Auditor for this continued support, it is very much appreciated.

Peter handed out copies of the Presidents Report that is on the front page of our website to the attendees.

Re: The Corps Birthday, our member, Gloria Moore is waiting for a special decorative centre piece for the Corps cake and will then ice the cake for us. Dennis Emerton of the NSW RMA has very kindly created this for us. Once a Marine Always a Marine.

With regard to the guests of honour, Peter has received a letter from the outgoing C.O. of the NZ SAS, Lt Col James Blackwell. He has passed the invitation on to his successor and indicated that they generally like to support this type of event.

Bob Reay advised that the Manager of the Birkenhead RSA is the Son of one of our members. They are always so generous by allowing us to use their rooms for our functions at no charge. Bob advised all is well with our booking with the same conditions of payment, menu and cost as last year, namely \$20.00 per person. Bob also spoke to Padre James Withers who has again agreed to officiate for us.

Philip Ayling will produce the laminated Placemats and Order of Service for the Birthday, as he always does, most generously, at no cost to the Association. Raffle prizes and numbers are now sought with an rsvp date to be confirmed at the next meeting.

Incoming Mail

Buster Brown from the Queensland RMA sent a letter of thanks to Dennis Ayling for travelling to their “neck of the woods” and training the lads for Anzac Day again. Well done Ticker.

Colleen Ellis advised that the Associations RSA Review arrived today, this is the first of our subscription for the review to keep on top of noteworthy events around NZ for the calendar on our website.

Peter advised he had a letter from Cpl Willy Apiata VC’s C.O. advising he was unavailable for our Corps luncheon but would pass this on.

Outgoing Mail. Nil.

Globe & Laurel. The submission, by Peter Collins, for the latest Globe and Laurel is in the next newsletter. A copy was handed out to all at the meeting.

President’s Report:

We need information for the newsletters, please submit to Colleen please.

All submissions are very welcome.

Our Entertainment Officer, Brendan Johnson is overseas for approximately 6 months but we will be looking to the summer for some outdoor events e.g. BBQ’s.

Suggestions please?

A colour photo of Lt G D Dowell’s VC’s grave was shown to all at the meeting with the special Royal Marine plaque in place. Dennis Ayling will write up a short brief about it’s placement on the grave at Purewa, Auckland.

A reminder that 27th of June is Armed Forces Day and 10th of June was the 88th birthday of the Captain General. *Happy Birthday.*

- Welcome to our new members Ted Downes, Chalky Carr, Ben Curry, Maria Harvey & Jacqui Mellamphy. Peter is going to catch up with Chalky next time he’s in Christchurch.

On a disturbing note, we have had a written, complaint from a SNCO from the NZ Defense Force, about a Royal Marine, in full uniform with a “chest full of medals” at an Anzac Service this year, who advised this SNCO he was there “representing the NZ RMA and was attending another ceremony in the near future also on behalf of the NZ RMA”. This person is not a member of the NZ RMA and has not been a member for a

number of years I believe. The NZDF SNCO has thoroughly investigated some of the medals worn – they are not valid and the so called Marine – “no such person served – requiring deeper investigation”.

I have also tried to contact this non member to no avail and also as the President have made my own investigations into a service history to also come up with, it would seem, “no such person served”.

Vice President's Report:

As you know, the website is run by an Australian Webmaster, Tony Smith who is not an ex Royal, just a great guy giving endless hours of his time, voluntarily, (he also works full time) to the Australian and NZ RMA. He set up and maintains the website. Philip Ayling has donated a fantastic book of NZ Scenery to Tony on behalf of the NZ RMA as a token of thanks for all his efforts in setting up and maintaining our site. There was a huge round of applause for Tony Smith and we can't say enough to thank him.

We need more photos for the website please. Send them through the email or post them We want the site to be really interesting.

Treasurer's Report:

The bank balance is at \$8714.88 and \$2641.57 . Just over half of the members(43) have paid their subs which are due on the 1st of April each year.

It was suggested by Noel Harker that \$5,000.00 be put on term deposit for 90 days to earn the Association a few dollars rather than it sitting in the account doing virtually nothing. Proposed B Reay Seconded G Moore.

Secretary's Report:

There's a huge email turnover which is incredible where it's gone in the last 12 months from 0 to sometimes 20 plus a day. The website contact is starting to show and there are people contacting us via the site with all types of requests and providing information. The information and newsletters from overseas are invaluable, the repatriations, updates of UK governmental, petitions etc is fascinating – we are in the loop here down under.

We received a large anonymous donation of approximately \$2,500.00 which has boosted the Association. It will open up new ways of assisting all our members.

Any suggestions are welcomed please.

General Business.

Peter Collins suggested that the Royal Marines cabinet of memorabilia at the Pt Chevalier RSA be enhanced or perhaps replaced to create a centerpiece. Peter will approach the RSA President/Committee to check if the cabinet/contents are insured. Philip Ayling offered to help store the RM memorabilia at his home and was appointed Project Manager to look into the Association's valuables and see what there is and how to store it. Philip agreed to get the paperwork onto DVD if it does get stored at his home. Bob Reay made the suggestion to subsidise the Corps luncheon and this may be discussed further at the next meeting. It was generally agreed that the money in the bank account needs to be spent to the benefit of all members.

The special weekend at Taupo, organized with Jock Munro was brought up and

weekends like this need to be looked into for future outings. Peter was to approach Jock with a view to doing something similar in Taupo.

Jacqui Mellampy suggested the Association subsidise a movie afternoon costing the members \$5.00 to attend. This is to be investigated by Jacqui.

All members – please put your thinking caps on, we need ideas for any subsidized outings, social events, entertainment.

Harold Robinson asked that we no longer use plastic flowers on any wreaths, Anzac etc as they look dreadful. We all agreed.

Colleen asked if we could have a small token for the Association members to give to their RM friends who visit to/from overseas for example the red small banners from yesteryear.

Ticker said he had about 10 and would give them to Colleen and Philip agreed to look into the cost of getting these produced.

The meeting closed at 4.00 p.m.

The next meeting will be at the Pt Chevalier RSA @ 2pm on 8th August 2009. Please mark your calendar or diary.