ROYAL MARINES ASSOCIATION (NZ)

NOVEMBER 2008

LOCAL PATRON: HIS EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE ANAND SATYANAND, THE GOVERNOR GENERAL OF N.Z.

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Presidents Comments.

I was delighted to hear the positive feed back about the new format of the last newsletter. Colleen did an excellent job setting up and printing it, Congratulations Colleen.
The Corp Birthday Celebration held at the Birkenhead RSA on Sunday 2 Nov.08. was well attended and a great success. The function was certainly livened up by Brendon Johnson when he gave his after dinner talk. He proved to be a very accomplished and entertaining speaker, giving us plenty of laughs and personal information. Seated next to the Padre did not inhibit him, it appeared that the Padre enjoyed the banter just as much as we did.
Dennis Wilkinson (here from Australia) and our MC .David Glen were working well together with their unique quips & banter which helped the raffle to raise $425.00. and went to make the function a success. Thanks to all those who provided such generous gifts.
The late Joe Adams sister Dorothy Mortimer was present at the function and I was pleased to be able to give her Joe's service medals. He had been a sterling, benevolent and popular member for years. Other guests were Angus McKenna-President Pt Chevalier RSA, Padre James Withers, and our Auditor Ian Pallas. We were also pleased to have members of the Guards Assoc. present, Pat Cully-President & Joe McKenna-Secretary.
Ticker Ayling did well to set up the décor in the restaurant and Phillip although not present had as usual made the superbly decorated place mats depicting Corp uniforms. Which were emailed to our members after the function along with the Order of Service.
Our Association was represented at the Armistice Day Parade and a service was held at St Matthews Church in Hobson St. Auckland on Sunday 9th ov.2008. Ticker Ayling and a number of our members with our standard paraded and attended the service.
Peter Collins & Colleen has been busy lately handling inquiries with various Australian RMA's concerning the set up of a Web Site. A number of the Australian RMA are already connected. I would imagine such a link up would be of great interest to members wanting to keep in touch.
It was Peter and Gill's intention to travel to UK and join their family for the Christmas period, but a change of plans now means the family are coming here to be with them.
We have a member rejoining Max Beare RMB, we're pleased to have him aboard and hope to see him at our meetings as he lives in the Auckland area.
Edwin Barton has had his eye surgerys and is now mobile again, driving his car. He now has to use glasses for a few things and has found life hard recently, no reading, driving or TV. I called on Eddie Edwardson at his home, he is still mobile out in his immaculate garden snipping with his shears.
On a sad note, you've received the obituary's of 2 more ex Royals.
Walter (Wally) May. PO/x 117882. passed on 18.10.08.aged 85 yrs. He was a long standing member of our Association. Dennis Harvey represented the Association and took part in the service reading the Soldier's Prayer... Wally's family were appreciative of him participating in the service R.G.Brown. (Ron)PLY/x 3760. 203089. Major. TF. 7th Hauraki Battalion, passed on in Tauranga on 19.10.08. His Funeral service on 23rd October was attended by Bill Hale, George McLeod & George Wooton. Ron although not a member of our association was well known to many of our members. Ron was a sea service marine originally serving on various ships, he later became S.B.S.

Now on a more cheerful note, some will have received the email, I've arranged for a **pre Christmas get together at the Pt Chevalier RSA , Gt North Rd , Pt Chev, Auckland. from 1500 hrs to 17.30 hrs on Sunday 7th December '08.** Nibbles will be supplied by the RMA but all refreshments are your care. We made it for the Sunday as many can't attend on week days or Saturdays, and for many, night meetings are out. Also it is more convenient for the RSA who deserve the consideration when they do not charge us for the use of their facility. If you require transport please contact our Secretary and we'll see what can be arranged.
Take note this is a get together, **NOT** a committee meeting.
As this is the last newsletter for the year, from me, and on behalf of the Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Committee*, I wish you all an enjoyable Christmas and a Happy & rewarding New Year.* *Bob Reay.*

Humour…….

Hot off the Secretary's desk …In the near future we're hoping to receive an email version of the Bootneck Bugle from the NSW RMA and in addition, the Queensland RMA, will email their monthly booklet called The Sea and Land (you will have received the November edition recently). Even further afield, we've been advised that Jim Ellard of the London branch will commence emailing their newsletters very shortly. This networking within branches is not only interesting but valuable if you decide to travel overseas. We'll email on to all our financial members.

We would like to have a birthday cake for the Corp Birthday 2009. Our Secretary Colleen will make the fruit cake but we're looking for someone to ice it with the Corp colours and logo. A photo will be supplied. Can you help, do you know anyone who can assist, if so please contact Colleen.

Networking…..The RMA in Australia have got together to create a combined website … Have a look http://www.royalmarinesassociation.org/ You sill be able to access them from the links within this newsletter or from that site. The following links will take you directly to their sites….

Queensland http://www.rmaq.com.au/
Use this link to go through to it and if you click on the headings at the bottom of the page e.g. Our Home Contact Nominal Roll etc, the information will come up for you.
NSW http://www.royalmarinesassociation.org/nsw/rma_nsw_home.html & if you put your pointer over the toolbar e.g. *RMA Menu Calendar & News etc* then click it will bring up that heading of interest for you.
Victoria http://www.royalmarinesassociation.org/vic/rma_vic_home.html
Gold Coast http://www.royalmarinesassociation.org/gc/rma_gc_home.html
Western, South Australia and the Gold Coast RMA's do not publish a newsletter.

Some of the sites above are still 'a work in progress', their site designer is working hard (no charge) to get them all sorted out a.s.a.p. & maintain them.

Graham Beeson,1 of our members from Whangaparoa, has been building historical model warships since age 16 including models of warships which served in the Royal NZ Navy and naval ships which had a connection with the Royal Navy.

HMS Neptune was seconded by the Navy and was steaming to NZ when she sailed from Alexandria on 19 December 1941 into a German minefield off Tripoli, North Africa.

Out of a total crew of 764, 150 New Zealanders were on board. Able Seaman Norman Walton was the sole British survivor. The tragic story of Neptune's loss inspired Graham to honour the memory of her Crew by building a replica model. The model is to 1/96th scale, i.e. 96 times smaller than the actual ship is 5'9" long and weighs about 12 pounds. It's constructed with a fiberglass hull, wooden decks, Superstructure of wood and is covered in metal plate and various other materials. The fittings are made of metal. Included in the detailing of the model of Neptune, there are 150 crew painted figures representing all the New Zealanders who died. There was also a Royal marine Band on board; the Royal Marines will be represented by a contingent of Royal Marines with fixed bayonets paraded on the quarter deck of the model warship.

Graham and his wife have been invited to a new public Neptune Memorial unveiling in Dunedin on Friday 12th December 2008. The model of Neptune will be displayed in the main hall at HMNZS Toroa along with displays from the Otago Museum and the NZ Navy Museum.

It's worth mentioning that Graham has built a "fleet" of 16 :-

Museum Standard static warships 7, Radio Control Warships 4, Other Warships 5.

Graham's future projects include models of H.M.S. New Zealand Battle Cruiser 1918, H.M.S Chatham Light Cruiser 1929, H.M.S Dunedin Light Cruiser 1935, H.M.N.Z.S Leander 1942 and H.M.N.Z.S Achilles 1946.

Graham Beeson & Model: HMS Neptune 19th December 1941

The success of the Corp Luncheon is because of the donors, and the MC's of course!!! 1 of our members, Philip Ayling donated 1 x gift box Selleys Products as well as organised for all these companies to donate prizes for the Raffle, our only annual fund raising event and what a magnanimous effort Philip !!! We are most thankful to Philip and the following companies …..

Cook Books and 4 magazines with years free subscription included from Editor Essentially Foods, Tamara Rubanowski; 4 x 1 litre Cabotts Deck Stain Dulux Account Manager, Darren Newland (his Dad is an ex Bootneck); 2 x pots full of Yates garden products, Yates Distribution Manager, Ben Moore (also donated last year); 6 x Gift Packs of Turtle Wax car care products, Turtle Wax Account Manager, Paul Goodall (also donated last year, 2 x Dozen Cartons(4 packs) of Bunderberg Ginger Beer (non alcoholic); Neil Cropper Co Ltd Importers, Brand Manager, Mark Harris; 1 x Brita Life Pak, 2 x Pilates DVDs, Lunch Bag, Pedometer NZ Sales Manager, Mrs Robyn Kurth. Another big thank you to Dennis & Maria Harvey who supplied a huge food hamper filled with Heinz Wattie products; Colleen Ellis who supplied a 2009 Diary, 2009 Calendars & a Queen Aircell Blanket; A large bottle of Whisky from Peter & Gill Collins and lastly but by no means least, 3 x $20.00 book tokens from our member Mark Owen.

Royal Navy in firefight with Somali pirates.....

www.timesonline.**co.uk**/tol/news/world/africa/article5141745.ece *Have a look at this article on line.*

Thank you **Puja Singh- Owner of Cardale's Stationery City, 6 Campbell Road, Royal Oak, Auckland** for their generous sponsorship of all the Royal Marines Association photocopying.

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We ask our members to support them where possible.

The parents of young new Royal Marines are being told to buy body armour for their children because it is better than standard issue kit, an MP has claimed. Desmond Swayne, the Conservative MP for New Forest West in Hampshire, said senior officers in charge of training at Lympstone in Devon had been passing on the advice as the marines prepared for active service in Afghanistan. He made the claim in the House of Commons during a debate on defence training.
He questioned Defence Secretary John Hutton, alleging he had been told the information by the family of a recruit. He demanded to know why the Osprey standard-issue body armour for troops on active duty in war zones was not the best available. "At a recent open day at Lympstone, the parents of young men who are shortly to emerge as fully fledged Royal Marines were advised by a senior officer to purchase a piece of equipment – body armour – of a better, more suitable specification than what is currently issued," he told the House. "If senior officers consider equipment important enough for parents to buy it for their sons, should not quartermasters be in a position to issue it? In answering that question, will the Secretary of State ensure that no aspersions are cast on the senior officer involved?"
There has been much criticism in recent years over the quality and amount of equipment being supplied to British forces. Sergeant Steven Roberts died in 2003 in Iraq in a "friendly fire" incident. Before he died he had been ordered to give up his body armour because there were not enough sets to go around. Mr Hutton said that he would ask the MP for more information and look into the issue. "I hope that the honourable gentleman will give me more information about the circumstances that he has described," he said. "We have invested significant resources in improving the body armour available to our forces and I think that the Osprey body kit is pretty good stuff." BBC News.
This site was referred to the Assoc from our member Dennis Harvey, thank you for bringing this to our attention, well worth it. The website was emailed immediately to all who are on the list.

The following was sent to Bill Houston from his friend Danny, a retired Marine (Warrant Officer) of 22 years service in the Signals Branch. Danny takes a keen interest in the welfare of the present day marine and his problems.
Danny's perception is shared by a large sector of the population and the lobby effect is starting to produce results" The MoD has really been getting stick, hundreds of us write to them, sign petitions etc, also now the British Legion is now attacking them.
With my family and families' friends we are worth about 200 letters and signatures. We hit them all the time. I just eMail them and away they go. The female side of the family are the best. The politicians are now realizing that we are a powerful Voting bloc. Also a family is now suing the MoD over the death of their son as he was in a land rover and a soldier has the right to have the best equipment available to protect his life. Now 700 heavily armoured vehicles have been ordered. So we keep hacking away at them.

Have a look at the UK Governent's site …. http://petitions.number10.gov.uk?silvergold/
This is a site you can have your say either as an expat or Armed Services. The "Latest News" is interesting as is the site in general, but I particularly suggest you enter "medals" in the search box on the top right hand side under the large **10** and see all the petitions about medals.

A tearful final reunion for last of the old boys by Jon Rosamond Defence correspondent, The News, UK. jon.rosamond@thenews.co.uk
Tears were shed as Royal Marines who fought in the Second World War's biggest amphibious operations wound up their veterans' association. Almost 100 old soldiers came to Portsmouth with their loved ones for the final reunion of the Landing Craft Gun and Flak Association (LCGFA). An emotional week-long programme of events was organized for members who are now all aged between 80 and 90. There was a poignant memorial service at the Garrison Church in Old Portsmouth. And the association handed over its roll of honour for safekeeping to the Royal Museum Museum in South-sea. The ambitious programme, which included a boat trip to Hamble and a visit to the Royal Armouries museum at Portsdown – was made possible thanks to a 6,000 pound grant from the National Lottery. The LCGFA was formed in 1991 after a small group of veterans met at an open day at a commando base in Poole.

They decided to organize a formal get-together and for the past 14 years reunions have been held at the Royal Sailors' Home Club in Portsmouth. At it's peak, the Association boasted nearly 500 old soldiers from as far afield as New Zealand, Canada and the U.S. Vernon Copeland, it's secretary, said: "Our first reunion was packed out. You couldn't get anyone else into the club. It was like that for the first 3 years before numbers started dropping off. We've still got over 200 members but this is our final official reunion. As we're all over 80 now, organizing events becomes a bit of a gamble. There are always a few tears at times like this, but we'll also have a rollicking good sing-song." The roll of honour, which was presented to museum director Chris Newbery, lists the names of every member who has died since the association was formed. As advancing years take their toll on the survivors, their families will be able to contact the museum and get names added to the book. Mr Copeland, 81, said: "We did our gunnery training at Southsea and took part in the landings at Dieppe, North Africa, Sicily, Italy, Corsica, Normandy and Yugoslavia. My landing craft hit a mine off Elba in 1945. The stern was damaged and had to be towed to Taranto. We never lost anybody. Continued…….
The WWII Landing Craft consisted of Landing Craft Gun (Large) were armed with 2x 4.7in guns & up to 4 x 20mm quick-firing canons on a reinforced deck. They were manned by 47 sailors & marines. Landing Craft (Medium) had a crew of 31 operating 2 x 25-pounder or 2 x 17 pounders. The first Landing Craft Flak had twin 2in anti-aircraft guns plus several 20mm cannons, while other versions had 12 light AA guns. Each one had a 50-strong crew. 10 of all types were sunk in action during WWII, often with few survivors.
This article was sent in by a member.

Editorial Comment…

(From The Globe & Laurel Sept/Oct 2008 edition.)
We start this issue with the announcement that Brigadier G K Messenger DSO OBE has replaced Brigadier F H R Howes OBE as the Commander of 3 Commando Brigade Royal Marines. This is due to an injury sustained by Brigadier Howes whilst off duty which has meant that he is unable to deploy on the forthcoming tour. This change of Command will have no operational impact on 3 Commando Brigade's deployment. The Brigade's confirmatory Mission Rehearsal Exercise has been completed and Units are in the process of conducting a 'Relief in Place' with 16 Air Assault Brigade to complete the handover by 8 October. Our best wishes go to the Brigade as a whole but in particular to Brigadier Howes for his recovery and to Brigadier Messenger for a successful deployment. As 'pier head jumps' go, this one certainly takes some beating!
In addition to the Brigade deployment, Major General A Salmon OBE now commands the Multinational Division (South East) in Iraq. He is supported by most of the UKAMPHIBFOR Staff, who now form the core of his Headquarters. It is indeed a busy time for the Corps but those deployed will be sustained by the thought that they have the support of the whole Corps Family and many others from all walks of life behind them. The RMA is already gearing up for its next shoe box appeal as positive proof of this.
Away from operational matters, another successful Royal Marines Association Reunion Weekend has taken place at Lympstone with the Commandant General Royal Marines as the Guest of Honour. In what was expected to be a quiet year, the hall was packed to the rafters for the band concert on the Saturday evening and over 1500 people attended the drumhead service on the Sunday with over 500 marching on parade. Congratulations go to Marty Power from the Reading Branch for winning a close fought Standard Bearers' competition and with it, the honour of carrying the National Standard.
Full reports on the weekend will be included in the next issue of the G & L.

There's a few photos in this edition, page **405, try your local library or have a flick through at your local magazine shop!**
If you can source this edition somehow, check out the Association News on pages 406 – 419. The articles from our Association are there along with others.

The next bi monthly meeting will be 14th February 2008 at the Pt Chevalier RSA, 2pm to approx 3.30 - see you there !!!