



Lest we forget

3 Veterans' Affairs in Whangārei and Tairāwhiti/Gisborne



4 Leaving Afghanistan



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About VA News

VA News is published four times a year by Veterans' Affairs New Zealand—Te Tira Ahu Ika a Whiro.

Our team takes care in writing great content and—to the best of our knowledge—has sourced accurate information.

The views expressed in VA News are not necessarily those of Veterans' Affairs or the New Zealand Defence Force.

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Main cover image: Anzac Day, Burnham.



New Zealand Government

From the Head of Veterans' Affairs

Tēnā koutou katoa

Welcome to the winter edition of VA News. Since our last communication, many of you from across New Zealand attended dawn services on Anzac Day. The ability to attend a Dawn Service was certainly welcomed by many following the restrictions in 2020 due to COVID-19. Anzac Day remains an important one on the commemorative calendar where we take a moment to reflect, honour and acknowledge the service of so many New Zealanders, both past and present, in the defence of our country.

The commemorative calendar has also been a busy one for our Minister for Veterans, Hon Meka Whaitiri. In April, she jointly presented 67 medals to the families of soldiers who served in C Company 28th (Maori) Battalion who had never received their medals. We have a bit more about this special occasion further on in VA News.

Some of our VA team continue to meet with veterans and whānau as part of our ongoing outreach programme and recently this included a veterans' forum in the Tairāwhiti/Gisborne region. As this goes to print, we will be conducting another forum in Hamilton for those in the Waikato region. Our forums continue to bring together many veterans who haven't seen each other in quite some time and the camaraderie amongst old mates is always something special to see.



Bernadine Mackenzie,
Head of Veterans' Affairs

The independent client satisfaction survey through our partners, Public Voice, continues by phone and I would like to thank those who have provided feedback. We will provide the client satisfaction survey results in our next issue of VA News.

Please also stay tuned for an announcement in coming weeks about the Veterans' Independence Programme. We are certainly excited and it will help improve our service delivery to you.

Stay safe, stay kind and please do let us know if there is anything we can do to help you.

Ngā mihi

Bernadine

Auckland case management clinics

Case management clinics are a chance to book a one-on-one appointment with a Veterans' Affairs case manager.

These clinics are designed for:

- current clients – veterans and whānau
- veterans who are not already getting support from us.

Appointments are available between 10am and 2pm for up to 40 minutes.

Upcoming clinics

JUN	JUL	AUG
29	27	24
Tuesday, 29 June*	Tuesday, 27 July*	Tuesday, 24 August

*These dates have changed from previously published dates.

 Ranfurly Veterans' Centre,
37 Warren Avenue,
Three Kings, Auckland 1042

To book an appointment:

 **0800 483 8372**

 veterans@nzdf.mil.nz



Reaching out to veterans and their whānau

In the last few months the Veterans' Affairs and Ranfurly Veterans' Trust teams have caught up with veterans from Northland and the Tairāwhiti/Gisborne regions.

In the endless summer of Northland, about 130 veterans and their whānau came along to the forum and met with Veterans' Affairs staff, other support organisations and agencies, including suppliers of home independence products.

Hon. Meka Whaitiri, Minister for Veterans, dropped in to the forum and met briefly with some of those in attendance, including the many exhibitors. The wellbeing of veterans was at the forefront of the discussions and the Minister was able to hear first-hand how the services and supports available to veterans have helped maintain their independence, especially in the home.

Just like Northland, the Tairāwhiti/Gisborne forum attracted over 100 veterans. Given it was the school holidays, many of the veterans brought along their mokopuna, reminding all present of the importance of family and whānau.

George Brown, kaiāwhina of Turanga Health, was at the Tairāwhiti/Gisborne forum.

George is currently connecting with veterans and other men's groups in Tairāwhiti to encourage them to talk about their wellbeing. George hopes that through these discussions, veterans will encourage each other to go for regular check-ups. He wants our veterans to do it for themselves and for their whānau.

"Sometimes they hide things from their families. They want to protect them but this often makes it worse for the people closest to them."

Turanga Health takes a holistic approach to wellbeing. One that includes family and their community.

Connecting with whānau is important. Veterans' Affairs is able to offer some financial support for dependents and surviving spouses.

For further information, please give us a call on Freephone 0800 483 8372.

They make it easy and simple to access health and well-being check-ups and support for men and their families.

George would like to hear from any veterans group that meets in Tairāwhiti. He can be contacted at george.brown@turangahealth.co.nz.



Lowering the flag.



End of the Afghanistan deployment

The remaining New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) personnel in Afghanistan have returned home, having lowered the flag on the NZDF's 20-year deployment to the country.

More than 3,500 NZDF personnel have served in Afghanistan, in what has been one of the NZDF's longest-running deployments. Ten New Zealanders lost their lives while serving there.

Colonel Ben Bagley, the Senior National Officer for the final contingent, said his six personnel had made a significant contribution.

"While small in number, we had sizeable tasks ahead of us when we first arrived in Afghanistan last year. When we lowered the New Zealand flag, we were all proud to be the last Kiwis to represent our country in Afghanistan."

Colonel Bagley was based at the NATO-led Resolute Support Mission headquarters in Kabul. Resolute Support is a non-combat mission to train, advise and assist the Afghan

National Defence and Security Forces (ANDSF) and comprises around 9,500 personnel from 36 NATO allies and partners.

His role included planning, liaison and preparation for the transition of security, camps and bases; setting the conditions for the change in footprint of coalition forces in line with Afghan peace processes.

Three NZDF personnel were supporting the United Kingdom-led mentoring for the Afghan National Army Officers' Academy (ANAOA).

Over time, the NZDF's role at the ANAOA changed from training cadets to one of mentoring Afghan trainers. The academy has now reached a point of self-sufficiency where New Zealand's contribution is no longer needed.



The two NZDF gender advisors at the Resolute Support Mission headquarters were leading projects such as the construction of a Women's Police training village that could accommodate families, and the creation of a career progression model for all females in the ANDSF. Colonel Bagley said work on those projects would continue at the RSM headquarters.

During the deployment, there was another handover of significance to the NZDF. A New Zealand camp, located within Harmid Karzai International Airport and named after Corporal Douglas Grant, who was killed in Afghanistan, was handed over to the United Kingdom defence forces to use. "It's good to see it being used, and that they have retained the name Camp Grant in Doug's memory," he said.

Colonel Bagley said COVID-19 prevention protocols had greatly restricted movements and day-to-day activities in Afghanistan, and it was good to be back in New Zealand.

"Gyms and messes were closed, everyone wears face masks, meetings are held virtually and there is no socialising."

While he had enjoyed the work in Afghanistan, he said all personnel were looking forward to getting back to family.

“When we lowered the New Zealand flag, we were all proud to be the last Kiwis to represent our country in Afghanistan.”

– Colonel Ben Bagley

The 75th commemoration of Jayforce

It's been almost three months since twenty-six Jayforce veterans together with family members and carers, attended the National Commemoration of Jayforce on the 75th anniversary of their arrival in Japan, held at Pukeahu National War Memorial Park on 19 March 2021. Given the significance of the occasion, VA took the opportunity to find out from those who attended, just what it meant to them to attend the commemoration, and their lasting impressions.

Jennifer Thomas, whose father David served as a Private in the 2nd Battalion, said the feelings of camaraderie amongst the veterans was something she would never forget, as well as the event itself. "It was indeed a great privilege to be able to escort our dad on such a momentous occasion", she said.

James Robertson, also served in 2nd Battalion, and his whānau tuned in to the live stream of the commemoration from across Australia, the United Kingdom and New Zealand. "Dad really enjoyed himself. I don't think he has been so busy for years and like the others on the day, he doggedly stood when it was his duty to stand" said his son, Stewart. "The feedback from the family was unanimous – lumps in throats, tears in eyes. Jim was their hero."

For many who attended, it was a time to remember and reflect on service given more than 75 years ago. For Graham Boswell, who served as a Captain with 3rd Battalion, he would look back on the commemoration with

fond memories, and noted that it was in "stark contrast to the sombre reception in 1948".

Members of Jayforce brought back to New Zealand, a new appreciation for and understanding of Japan. Some men had fallen in love not only with the country, but with Japanese women they met, who returned with them as war brides. Others would return to Japan during the Korean War of 1950–53, where the country they had once occupied acted as a base for operations. Looking back, the post-war occupation can be understood as marking the tentative beginnings of what has become, seven decades later, an enduring relationship between New Zealand and Japan.

The insert included in *VA News* features all of the Jayforce veterans who attended the Jayforce 75th Commemoration.



Message from the Minister

Tēnā koe

It gives me great pleasure to be able to write a short message for this edition of *VA News*. I am honoured to be in the role as Minister for Veterans and in the last few months I've had a chance to catch up with veterans and their whānau at events and commemorations across New Zealand. I've seen some old faces and I've met some new ones and I am particularly keen to meet with our contemporary veterans as well.

Having dropped in to the Northland veterans' forum, I was pleased to see the support services on offer to our veterans and their families. To hear first-hand how these services help maintain independence, especially in the home, certainly strengthened my view that we need to provide solid support systems that work well for those in the veteran community.

Recently I travelled back to Tairāwhiti where I, together with Hon. Willie Jackson, Minister of Māori Development and senior Defence Force personnel, jointly presented 67 medals to whānau of our soldiers who served in C Company 28th (Maori) Battalion, and to Korean War veterans who never received their medals. It was indeed a privilege to be part of this special occasion.

This was possible in no small part of the unwavering efforts of David Stone,



Hon Meka Whaitiri, Minister for Veterans (left) and Robert (Bom) Gillies (right). Bom is the last surviving member of 28th (Maori) Battalion.

an Auckland lawyer and great nephew of Dooley (Turi) Swann (Gisborne), who was killed during the Italian campaign in 1944, while serving with the battalion. David said as far as the family knew, they never saw Dooley's medals and as a result, David has dedicated himself to ensuring that the families of the East Coast veterans of the 28th (Maori) Battalion receive their medals.

I certainly look forward to meeting many more of our veterans in coming months. Until then stay safe as the winter season approaches.

Ngā mihi

**Hon Meka Whaitiri
Minister for Veterans**

Veterans' Pension and Superannuation Portability

If you are considering moving to another country or taking an extended overseas trip (when the borders open further), before you do it would be worth your time to learn about how that move or trip might affect your Veteran's Pension or Superannuation.

The support available and eligibility criteria in the country that you are thinking of moving to might be different to New Zealand. It's important you understand what support is available and what the criteria are if you plan to live in another country after retirement.

Eligibility criteria for entitlements can change over time and it's important you check to see if changes have occurred that might affect your eligibility, for example in recent years Australia has changed the eligibility age for the Age Pension, so you no longer qualify when you are 65 years of age.

The Veteran's Pension is administered by the Ministry of Social Development's Veterans' Pension Centre. If you are thinking about a move overseas, give them a call on Freephone 0800 650 656 if you have any queries.

New Disablement Pension Form

Veterans' Affairs has updated the Disablement Pension form to make it easier for those with qualifying service to claim. The new, simplified form can be used to apply for a Disablement Pension, or a reassessment of your Disablement Pension. The new form is available on our website or you can contact us on Freephone 0800 483 8372 if you would like copies of the new form mailed to you.

We will continue to accept applications on the old Disablement Pension form, but if you have copies of the old form, we would prefer that those are discarded.

From time to time we will get in touch with some of those who use this form to check whether it needs further improvement.

Commemorative Fund Update

If you have Qualifying Operational Service (QOS), you will now be able to apply for a commemorative travel contribution to attend a domestically based event that commemorates your service (some conditions will apply). Organisers of reunions that commemorate qualifying operational service will now be able to apply for \$50 per head for each person attending who has QOS. Our website will be updated with further details in due course.

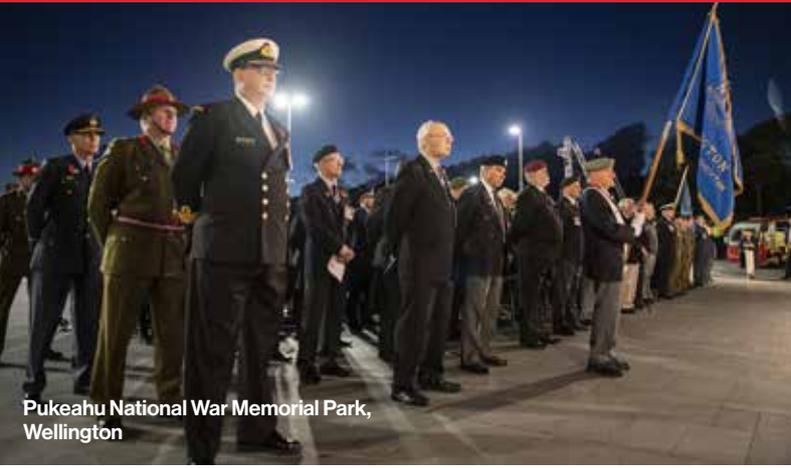
Hawera



Hawera



Anzac Day 2021



Pukeahu National War Memorial Park, Wellington



Pukeahu National War Memorial Park, Wellington



Pukeahu National War Memorial Park, Wellington



Burnham



Napier



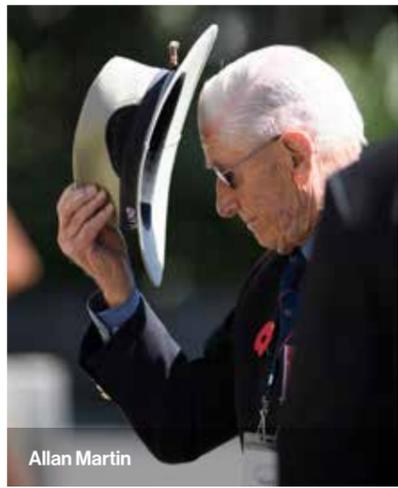
Napier



75th Commemoration of Jayforce

Pukeahu National War Memorial Park
19 March 2021





Allan Martin



Allen Alworthy Martin



Bryan Cox



David Daniel



David Thomas



George Ferguson



Graham Boswell



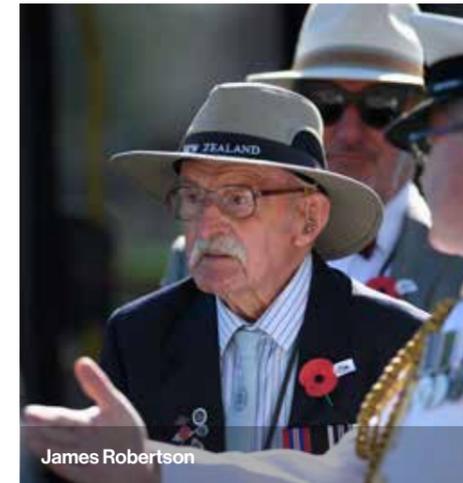
Ian Hausman



Jack Warrender



James Quested



James Robertson



James Sewell



John Walker



June Yearbury



Laurie Colombus



Lawrence (Bill) Mischefski



Margaret McNaughton



Ormand Edwards



Peter Grayburn



Peter Wiren



Rauna Paenga (aka Muhu Ihaea)



Raymond Cooper



Raymond Laurance



Robert Boyne



Stanley Burden



Trevor Burrell