

RNZAC ASSOCIATION CANTERBURY BRANCH NEWSLETTER #175 March 2019

Meetings Happy Hour: Thursday 4 April 2019 at 1700 hrs at the Papanui RSA.
With a Committee meeting at 1815 hrs.

Next Happy Hour: Thursday 2 May 2019 at 1700 hrs, Papanui RSA.

Whose is it?



Social Events

BBQ Sunday 10 March 2019. Our annual barbecue was held on rather dull overcast Christchurch day which saw 30 members of the Canterbury Branch and partners gather at the home of Neville and Pauline



Reilly for the annual BBQ on Sunday 10 March. Their spacious home made it easy for us all to stay indoors if we wished. Some hardy souls did however spend some time in the seating areas



outside.

As to be expected there was plenty of talk some of it to do with past experiences in the Corps. We were pleased to welcome Steve Thompson now living in Versailles. He had been the first Secretary when the Branch was founded. It was also good to have Andy Blaikie with us for a couple of hours, on leave from Christchurch Hospital, where he had been for several days.



Outside Allan West, Mike Shepherd and Bruce Tweedy toiled away in the BBQ area while inside



Pauline, Liz and others arranged all the food that had been brought so that when the BBQ was ready we were treated to a delicious and plentiful array of food including some lavish desserts.

An unexpected event was the arrival of a birthday cake, complete with candles, ready for the birthday-boy, Bruce Keddie, to do the blowing out. His piping skills meant that he had no problem with that. No one dared, or was too polite, to ask which birthday it was.

We are all grateful to hosts Neville and Pauline for allowing us to gather at their place, to Pauline for coordinating the food and of course to the chefs.

[Thank you Harold for this. *Editor*]



Events Past and Future



**SITREP from SGT Johnny Duncan, NZGD
QAMR, QUEEN ALEXANDRA'S MOUNTED RIFLES, RNZAC
DAVID.DUNCAN@NZDF.mil.nz**



QAMR's main effort continues to be the build-up to Ex Hamel in the Shoal Water Bay Military Training Area in Queensland. The unit has just finished Ex Sangro in Waiouru, this saw the squadrons conducting tasks with and without Infantry and both blank and live. The RHQ also deployed to practice command post operations in the field. A highlight for the unit members and their families was the Family Day held on the 16th in Waiouru. This allowed the families to see their loved ones doing their jobs both in the field and on the range.

After careful consideration in light of the events in Christchurch the day before it was decided this activity would go ahead as it was too late to cancel and it could not be run again before the onset of winter. The next month will see more build-up training with HQ personnel deploying to Australia to take part in a major command post exercise.



Ake Ake Kia Kaha
Johnny

Last Post. Members of the Association will be sad to learn of the death of K846731 Captain Andy Blaikie, RNZAC on 13 March 2019.



Andy's childhood was spent in Southland, Nelson and later in Christchurch. At Christchurch he attended university where he obtained a degree in Chemistry and Geology.



Andy as a National Serviceman joined the RNZAC in 1967 and was posted to 1 Recce Squadron in Burnham. In 1971, 1 Recce Sqn was re-roled to become an APC Sqn and renamed 1 Sqn NZ Scots where in 1973 he was promoted to Sgt. Later in November 1977 he was commissioned. Such were his abilities that two years later he was promoted to Captain. Appointments during his 23 years included QM NZ Scots, Staff Officer HQ 3TFR, APC Troop Commander 1 NZ Scots, SO3 Log HQ 3TFR. Many people who served with Andy will remember him as person who was very very good at retaining information, and made a point of getting to know all about the men he was responsible for.

Andy was very hard worker and he became very involved with the RNZAC Association, becoming President of the Canterbury Branch and in 2019 the president of the RNZAC Association. Andy was admitted to hospital prior to our BBQ on Sunday 10 March but was adamant about attending. As a footnote, after the funeral service and refreshments, friends, members of the association, Andy's two brothers, their family members and his two sons met at the Papanui RSA. This was a great occasion to find out more about Andy and get to know his family and friends. We all learnt so much more about Andy that we had not known.

Andy, you were a pleasure to be with, and will be sorely missed.
Rest in Peace.
Our condolences go to Andy's family, friends and comrades.

ANZAC Day – Thursday 25 April 2019, to be held at the 19th Battalion & Armoured Regt War Memorial in Victoria Park. This commemorative service has a distinctly armoured feel about it and is held in a peaceful and picturesque location that is special.



Timings and details of the ANZAC parade ceremony are as follows:

0745 - Assemble at the car park below Victoria Park Information Centre.

0800 – At memorial site, after move by foot from assembly area. At the completion of the service tea, coffee, rum and sausages will be served.

Please note that parking is not permitted immediately below the memorial. Please park in the areas adjacent to the play area in front of the Information Kiosk. If however, you have a mobility problem and require help, place your beret on the dash of your car and ask to be directed to the warden's hut where transport will take you to the cenotaph.

Humour

Church Bulletin Misprints

At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be "What Is Hell?"
Come early and listen to our choir practice.

Weight Watchers will meet at 7 PM at the First Presbyterian Church.
Please use large double door at the side entrance.

Don't let worry kill you. Let the church help.

Great Britain. The **Ajax** is a family of armoured fighting vehicles being developed for British Army to replace the CVRT Scorpion, Scimitar range of AFV's. The first squadron will be equipped by mid-2019. Ajax is the reconnaissance variant developed by General Dynamics UK. This variant carries a crew of three. Other variants, using a common base platform are; recovery and repair, infantry carrier (eight soldiers and crew of two), bridge layer, and ambulance.

Designed to provide the most advanced and reliable systems with good protection, firepower and mobility for 24x7 reconnaissance missions. The AFV can identify and detect helicopters, UAVs and decoy systems out to ranges twice that of the currently battle group.

Ajax has a 1.7m diameter turret ring providing the crew with a favourable working environment. Normal combat weight is 34t but it has been designed for increases to 42t to accommodate new technology and component upgrades. The vehicle is expected to have a life of 30 years. The MoD placed an order for 589 Ajax variant vehicles in 2014.

The Ajax is armed with a cased telescoped 40mm cannon system capable of firing APFSDS, Point Detonating, General Purpose - Airburst and Anti-Aerial Airburst rounds. The weapon system can fire single shot, bursts and automatic fire up to 180 rpm. The turret azimuth and elevation is electronically controlled and has ballistic computer software to control the use of ammunition.

Its wide track and high power-to-weight ratio, dual rate suspension, seven wheel running gear give the vehicle a top road speed of 70km/h and range of 500km and provides improved all-terrain manoeuvrability over the CVRT. The 600kW engine coupled to an automatic transmission,

Link to further information about the AJAX.

https://www.janes.com/images/assets/503/65503/Ajax_uncovered_Detailing_the_British_Armys_latest_combat_vehicle_family.pdf

Reminders; RNZAC Association Web site: www.rnzac.co.nz Contributions to this newsletter are Gratefully accepted. Email: jandavid@snap.net.nz Phone 03 359 6861. **David Harrison, Editor**