



75th Anniversary of Jayforce commemorated

3 Forum for veterans held
in Mt Maunganui



8 Annual rates adjustment:
new rates announced



11 Veterans get a taste of farming
at Taratahi



In this issue

- 3 Forum for veterans held in Mt Maunganui
- 4 Jayforce remembered in National Commemoration
- 6 Reservist does his bit for Operation Protect
- 7 Women in Service – RSA National Women's Section
- 8 Annual rates adjustment
- 10 What's happening at Veterans' Affairs
- 11 Veterans get a taste of farming
- 12 30th anniversary of Operation Desert Storm commemorated

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.


Contact us

For more information about Veterans' Affairs or anything in this edition of VA News:

 www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz

 veterans@nzdf.mil.nz

 **0800 483 8372**
(Freephone New Zealand)
1800 483 837
(Freephone Australia)
+64 4 495 2070
(rest of world)

 **Veterans' Affairs**
PO Box 5146
Wellington 6140
New Zealand

Cover image: Jayforce veteran, Raymond Cooper.



New Zealand Government

From the Head of Veterans' Affairs

Tēnā koutou katoa

Welcome to the Autumn Edition of VA News. We ended 2020 with our Bay of Plenty Veterans' Forum at the Mount Maunganui RSA and we are continuing with our forum programme in 2021.

As this issue of VA News goes to print, we have held our first veterans' forum for the year in Whangārei. It was great to see so many veterans and their families attending. We will be heading to Gisborne towards the end of April and then to Hamilton towards the end of May. Keep an eye on our Facebook page and website for further details.

I had the privilege of attending the National Commemoration marking the 75th Anniversary of the Arrival of Jayforce in Japan on 19 March, at our national place of remembrance, Pukeahu National War Memorial Park. 25 Jayforce veterans were in attendance with their families and it was indeed a very special and memorable occasion.

We are currently running an independent client satisfaction survey through our partners, Public Voice. This means that a random selection of our clients will be contacted by phone throughout the year, to ensure that they have the opportunity to provide feedback on a variety of topics. It also gives us some real time reporting in terms of client satisfaction with our services. If you are a client of ours and do not wish to be contacted, please get in touch with us.



Bernadine Mackenzie,
Head of Veterans' Affairs

As we continue to navigate our way through Covid-19, I hope you and your whānau continue to remain safe. We remain committed to ensuring all our veterans are well supported through these changing times. Stay safe, stay kind, and please let us know if there is anything we can do to help.

In closing I would like to acknowledge the passing of nuclear test veteran, Roy Sefton. Roy died on 5 January at the age of 82 and he is remembered fondly by many for his tireless advocacy on behalf of his fellow nuclear test veterans. I know he will be greatly missed by his family and his many friends. Lest we forget.

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 both:

- 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

APR	MAY	JUN
28	26	30
Wednesday, 28 April 2021	Wednesday, 26 May 2021	Wednesday, 30 June 2021

 Ranfurly Veterans' Centre,
539 Mount Albert Road,
Three Kings, Auckland 1042

To book an appointment get in touch with us:

 **0800 483 8372**

 veterans@nzdf.mil.nz



Forum for veterans held in Mt Maunganui

More than 200 veterans and their family members attended a health and wellbeing forum organised by Veterans' Affairs at the Mt Maunganui RSA in November.

Veterans' Affairs, working in partnership with Ranfurly Veterans' Trust, brought together veteran agencies and organisations that support veterans to offer information about support and services in a 'one-stop shop' for veterans of all ages living in Bay of Plenty.

Those at the event met Veterans' Affairs case managers, veteran support agencies, and local service providers. They could also attend seminars and take home tools to support independent daily living.

Head of Veterans' Affairs Bernadine Mackenzie said bringing together Veterans' Affairs and other

organisations in one place was a great way for veterans to get information face to face.

"We hosted this event because we know that there's value in sitting down with our veterans and talking to them about what they need" she said.

"It helps us to make sure that they're getting the support they need for independent daily living. Mt Maunganui RSA were wonderful hosts and everyone at VA appreciates their support for the forum."

The event followed on from expos for Vietnam veterans held in 2019.

The focus was on supporting the veterans in ways that suited them best, Ms Mackenzie said.

"We're keen to encourage all those who served and who have Qualifying Routine Service or Qualifying Operational Service to register with us so they can access their entitlements."

Organisations in attendance:

- Age Concern
- Bay Audiology
- Independent Living
- Ministry of Social Development
- New Zealand Defence Force Financial Hub
- Perpetual Guardian
- Ranfurly Veterans' Trust
- Royal New Zealand Artillery Association Inc.
- Royal New Zealand Returned and Services' Association
- Soldiers, Sailors, and Airmen's Association of New Zealand
- Veterans' Affairs
- Viet Nam Veterans and their Families Trust
- Vietnam Veterans' Association
- Vietnam Veterans' Children's and Grandchildren's Trust



The 75th commemoration of Jayforce

The National Commemoration of Jayforce on the 75th anniversary of its arrival in Japan was held on 19 March at Pukeahu National War Memorial Park, Wellington.

Twenty six Jayforce veterans, most in their 90s, travelled with their families to Wellington from all parts of New Zealand. They were joined by Her Excellency the Governor-General of New Zealand, Dame Patsy Reddy, His Excellency the Ambassador of Japan, Mr Ito Koichi, diplomatic representatives from other countries, youth representatives and senior New Zealand Defence Force leaders. They were all there to remember New Zealand's service in Japan between 1946 and 1949.

After Japanese surrender ended the Second World War, an allied occupying force was established to demilitarise and demobilise Japan. Jayforce was New Zealand's contribution to the British Commonwealth Occupation Force.

Fifteen New Zealanders died in Japan due to accidents or disease between 1946 and 1949. In total around 12,000 New Zealanders, including several hundred women, served as part of Jayforce.



Jayforce veteran, June Yearbury



Jayforce veteran, James Robertson



The New Zealand Defence Force Catafalque Guard



Peter Jackson, Taranaki Whānui



Air Marshal Kevin Short, Chief of Defence Force



Jayforce veteran, Margaret McNaughton



Her Excellency the Governor-General of New Zealand

Reservist does his bit for Operation Protect

Brett Te Wheoro, a former Regular Force Warrant Officer Class 1, left the Army in October 2019 after 31 years in uniform. He joined VA as a Projects Advisor and has worked on projects and events which includes international commemorative activities, expos and forums, and pilot programmes for veterans.

He answered the call to serve once again – this time to protect New Zealand against Covid-19.

In February 2021 he stepped back into uniform as a reservist and joined over 800 NZDF personnel deployed on Operation Protect, NZDF's support to the All of Government Response to Covid-19.

"We can't get complacent about Covid-19 and we all have a part to play" he said.

Brett underwent training and deployed in February to a Managed Isolation Facility in Wellington. While some NZDF personnel are involved in security, Brett's position was managing the facility. His role was all about people – those staying in the facility as well as the hotel staff, nurses, Police, security guards, and NZDF personnel.

"My job was about keeping New Zealand safe, you're on guard the whole time as anything could change" he said.

"I saw the rest of the country getting on like normal, while the staff inside the Managed Isolation and Quarantine Facilities are following strict safety precautions to protect New Zealand.



Everybody in there does such a brilliant job."

Brett's main goal was to keep both the returnees and staff safe in the Managed Isolation Facility. This occurred with daily agency meetings and allowing returnees the option to exercise outside where possible.

"You really feel for returnees because they're shut inside for two weeks, so being able to go outside becomes really important for keeping spirits up."

After finishing his deployment, he completed mandatory isolation before jumping back into work at VA. In his first week back on the job he was at Taratahi Agricultural Centre supporting veterans taking part in a taster farm-skills course.

"After deploying on Operation Protect, I have a new perspective on the work that NZDF and other agencies are doing to stop the spread of Covid-19. I'm so thankful for what everybody in the Managed Isolation and Quarantine system does for New Zealand."

Above:
Brett Te Wheoro

Reservists at VA

We have a reservist employment programme at Veterans' Affairs. We really value reservists' contributions and they are key members of some of our teams. You may find yourself interacting with one of our reservists from time to time.

The aims of the programme are for reservists to gain valuable skills and to enhance awareness of entitlements within the veteran community. If you know a reservist who would benefit from working with us, get in touch with us at veterans.projects@nzdf.mil.nz.

Women in Service – RSA National Women’s Section

To celebrate Poppy Day 2021 and its theme of Women in Service, we learned more about RNZRSA’s Women’s Section.

‘People Helping People’ is the motto of the RNZRSA National Women’s Section and it’s what they’ve done since local RSA ladies committees and Auxiliaries were formed in 1916.

“Women weren’t the ones who came into the clubs when they started taking members, that was for men first. We were still there though – we were doing the dishes” said Diane Wilson, President of the National Women’s Section.

The National Women’s Section board has nine members, some of whom are veterans themselves, and most of whom are married to veterans.

Diane’s father was a Second World War veteran who was held as a prisoner of war and her husband served with the Corps of Royal New Zealand Engineers. She’s been involved in initiatives for military families for over 40 years.

The first Women’s Section was formed in Kaiapoi on Waitangi Day 1941 and other Women’s Sections were soon established across New Zealand.

The National Women’s Section was formed in 2004 and incorporated in 2006, which gave women a voice on RNZRSA National Council. Before that, all Women’s Sections were affiliated to their local RSA.

“We needed a voice on National Council, the biggest thing was getting that voice” said Diane.

Fundraising for local clubs and Poppy Day started with women within the RSA movement and is still a big part of their work today. In Diane’s district, the Women’s Section donated over \$50,000 to the community in 2019. This included donations to hospitals, rescue helicopters, and their local RSA clubs. Women’s Sections also support community initiatives such as knitting clothes for premature babies and school holiday programmes.

During the Second World War, members of Women’s Sections visited the families of service personnel who had died, which continues today. “You just sit there sometimes, they don’t need any welfare assistance, they just need someone to talk to.”

Women’s Sections continue to lead programmes for families in their communities and strive to bring the recognition of women’s service in the military to the forefront.

“Our core focus will always be our veterans and their families, because that’s who we are.”



“Women weren’t the ones who came into the clubs when they started taking members, that was for men first. We were still there though – we were doing the dishes”

– Diane Wilson,
President of the National Women’s Section

Above: President of the RNZRSA National Women’s Section Diane Wilson and Vice President Lynda Gage.

Grandparented rates from 1 April 2021

War Disablement Pension

Ordinary rates		Rates for those with severe disablement		Rates for those with severe disablement: Aged 60 years and over	
Disablement (%)	Weekly rate (\$)	Disablement (%)	Weekly rate (\$)	Disablement (%)	Weekly rate (\$)
5	11.68	105	245.34	105	269.87
10	23.37	110	257.03	110	282.73
15	35.05	115	268.71	115	295.58
20	46.73	120	280.39	120	308.43
25	58.42	125	292.08	125	321.29
30	70.10	130	303.76	130	334.14
35	81.78	135	315.44	135	346.98
40	93.47	140	327.13	140	359.84
45	105.15	145	338.81	145	372.69
50	116.84	150	350.49	150	385.54
55	128.52	155	362.18	155	398.40
60	140.20	160	373.86	160	411.25
65	151.89				
70	163.57				
75	175.25				
80	186.94				
85	198.62				
90	210.30				
95	221.99				
100	233.67				

Veteran's Pension and Lump Sums



MINISTRY OF SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT
TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

Veteran's Pension

	Gross weekly rate (\$)
Single living alone rate	506.64
Single sharing accommodation rate	466.03
Relationship rate	384.46
Relationship (partner not receiving superannuation or pension)	728.64
Relationship (partner not receiving superannuation or pension) legacy rate	768.92

Lump Sums

	Lump sum (\$)
Lump Sum Payment on death of veteran	6237.50
If veteran was, before 1 April 1990, receiving a war veteran's allowance under the War Pension's Act 1954	15727.34
Lump Sum Payment on death of spouse or partner of veteran	4756.27

The weekly rates for the Veteran's Pension are shown as gross amounts.
The exact payment you receive will depend on your own tax circumstances.

Questions about Veteran's Pension and Lump Sums

For information about the Veteran's Pension and Lump Sum Payments contact the Veterans' Pension Centre.

Freephone 0800 650 656

www.workandincome.govt.nz/about-work-and-income/contact-us/veterans-contacts.html

Scheme One entitlement rates from 1 April 2021

Disablement Pension

Impairment rating (%)	Weekly rate (\$)
5-7	11.69
8-12	23.38
13-17	35.06
18-22	46.73
23-25	58.41
26-30	70.10
31-32	81.78
33-37	93.46
38-41	105.16
42-47	116.84
48-49	128.51
50	140.19
51	151.88
52-54	163.56
55-57	175.24
58-61	186.94
62-66	198.62
67	210.31
68-74	221.97
75	233.67
76	245.35
77	257.03
78	268.70
79	280.40
80	292.08
81	315.44
82	338.81
83	362.17
84	385.54
85-100	411.25

Other weekly rates

	Weekly rate (\$)
Surviving Spouse or Partner Pension	172.37
Dependant's Pension	172.37
Children's Pension	184.57
Weekly Income Compensation	1,030.88

Annual payments

	Annual rate (\$)
Children's Bursary (Orphans and Children of Veteran's Pension)	
Full-time Year 9-13	975.51
Full-time Tertiary	1,157.55
Part-time Tertiary	487.69
Children's Bursary (Other Children)	
Full-time Year 9-13	487.71
Full-time Tertiary	578.74
Part-time Tertiary	243.84

Allowance

	Weekly rate (\$)
Decorations Allowance	33.53

Note: The Allowance for Decorations is available for recipients of United Kingdom Gallantry Awards only.

Rates and entitlements Common to Scheme One and Scheme Two from 1 April 2021

Weekly rates

	Weekly rate (\$)
Travelling Allowance	26.94
Battery Allowance	
Monaural	1.13
Binaural	2.30
Clothing Allowance	
Loss of two limbs or parts	24.81
Loss of leg or part	23.95
Loss of arm or part	17.35
Use of mechanical appliance (maximum)	17.35
Soiling of clothing	17.35

Lump sum payments

	Lump sum (\$)
Retirement Lump Sum	36,064.76
Asset Threshold for Couple (excl. house or vehicle)	327,861.49
Asset Threshold for Single or Couple (incl. house or vehicle)	546,435.81
Motor Vehicle Grant	
Total Lower Body Impairment	20,011.70
Severe Lower Body Impairment	9,005.85
Motor Vehicle Fitting Controls Grant	3,231.04
Funeral Expenses	
Transportation of body within same locality	700.06
Transportation of body to a different locality	1,400.12

What's happening at Veterans' Affairs

VA News sat down with Marti Eller, Deputy Head of Veterans' Affairs, to talk about the Make it Easy to Claim programme happening here at VA.

VA News: *So Marti, tell us about Make it Easy to Claim.*

Marti: We want veterans and whānau to know that we are here for them and how they can access support. So this year we will keep making improvements and looking for ways that we can make it easy for veterans' and whānau. A Veterans' Reference Group has been working with us so that Make it Easy to Claim benefits veterans and whānau. Their feedback and insight has been invaluable.

We've simplified the application process by doing things like making phone calls instead of sending letters. We've brought all the teams responsible for keeping applications moving into one group, which has made a big difference to how applications move through our system. It means that we can process applications more easily with less impact on veterans and whānau. If applications are going to take longer than usual to process, we keep veterans and whānau informed.

We also have a new sign up process for veterans who want to register with us but who don't need support right now. This means that if these veterans need help in the future, it will be faster and easier for them to receive help to keep living independently and to make applications for support. We can also keep them up to date with any changes in entitlements.



VA News: *Are forms part of Make it Easy to Claim?*

Marti: Yes, simplifying our forms is a big part of Make it Easy to Claim. We've had a lot of feedback from veterans and whānau about our forms, the Veterans' Reference Group has provided feedback too. We're looking forward to introducing some simplified forms this year.

VA News: *We hear that claiming for Funeral Expenses and the Surviving Spouse or Partner Pension is now easier too?*

Marti: Previously, when claiming for Funeral Expenses or a Surviving Spouse and Partner Pension, the veteran's death had to be caused by a condition linked to their Qualifying Operational Service. Thanks to changes to our legislation, we now only require proof that the veteran had Qualifying Operational Service. This means that in many cases, if the veteran was a client, we don't require extra information from whānau.

We're changing our processes to match those changes and we're going to get input and feedback from some spouses and partners. We'll trial the simpler approach, tidy up any loose ends, and introduce it later this year.

VA News: *It sounds like there's some good stuff happening with applications!*

Marti: We're really happy with the changes that are being made and we'll be able to give more updates in VA News later this year.

Veterans get a taste of farming at Taratahi



In December, Veterans' Affairs partnered with the Ministry for Primary Industries and UCOL for a pilot programme for veterans at Taratahi Agricultural Training Centre.

"The group included veterans from the Navy, Army, and Air Force, so as you can imagine, it led to a huge amount of light-hearted banter between them all" said Simon Bailey, UCOL Team Leader – Primary Industries.

The veteran group started off at the training centre, where their first few days were filled with a range of farming activities from milking cows to fixing fences.

The course covered farming vehicles such as tractors, frontend loaders, quad bikes, and light utility vehicles. The group was taken through safety, maintenance, and pre-start checks as well as advice on how to drive them on various terrain. The final day was spent introducing the group to the basics of beekeeping.

"This has been a hugely successful opportunity for both veterans and our team at Taratahi. They got to share experiences from both a farming and military perspective, which led to a newfound respect for each other. It is always great when everyone learns something new. It has also shown how our training farm can help veterans, in exactly the spirit it was originally intended for," said Simon.

"We had a mix of veterans of all ages, representing service from Malaya to recent deployments to Afghanistan" said Elaine Myers-Davies, Veterans' Affairs Manager of Projects and Communications.

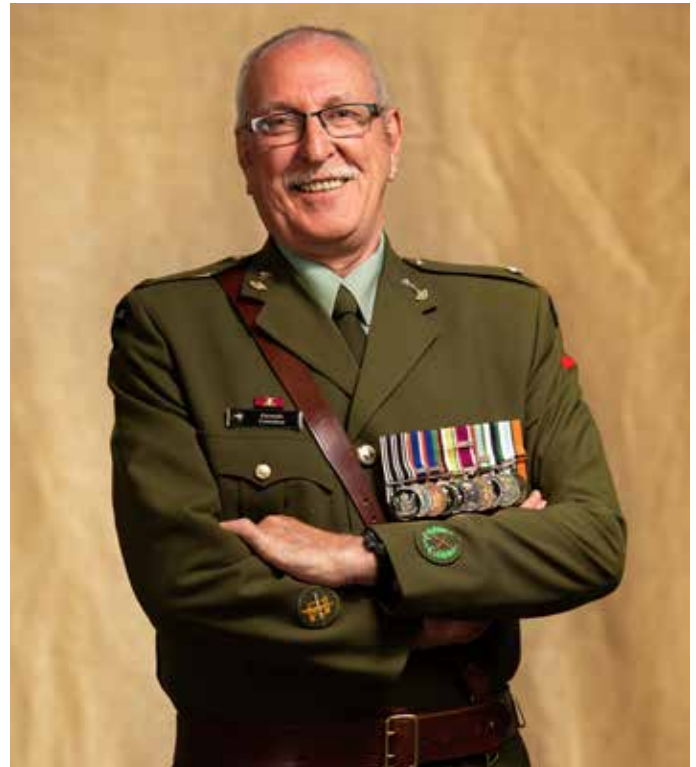
"Some veterans are enthusiastic about returning to Taratahi to undertake the beekeeping course. The veterans really appreciated that this course was put on for them – the staff at Taratahi went out of their way during the veterans' time there. We extend our thanks to the Ministry for Primary Industries and UCOL for making this pilot course possible."



Above, from top:
Afghanistan veteran Andy Mackenzie and Timor-Leste veteran Nancy Cox.
Veterans at Taratahi Agricultural Training Centre.

30th Anniversary of Operation Desert Storm commemorated

January 17 marked 30 years since Coalition forces launched Operation Desert Storm, the combat phase of the Gulf Conflict, in 1991. To commemorate this anniversary, New Zealand Army and Royal New Zealand Air Force Operation Desert Storm veterans still serving in the NZDF were photographed for commemorative portraits.



Top row, L–R:
Squadron Leader Tom Tuke was 23 when he deployed as a Flying Officer with No. 40 Squadron.

Major Ken Coombes was 32 when he deployed as Admin NCO, the first of three deployments to the Middle East during his service.

Bottom row, L–R:
Major David Foote was 21 when he deployed as a medic with the Field Surgical Team, 1st New Zealand Army Medical Team.

Warrant Officer Mark Harwood was a Flight Sergeant in charge of the maintenance team for the RNZAF C-130s during the deployment, which flew every day for four months.