



All welcome to our gatherings! Meat raffles every Wednesday from 5pm; weekly quiz nights have started again, Wednesdays from 7pm; \$5 per person, with the usual bar tab prizes and sweet-treat raffles!

JOIN US IN OUR BRIGHT & FRIENDLY VENUE THE THIRSTY PIG @ 27 HIGH STREET PICTON DISCOUNTS FOR RSA, CLUBSNZ & NZMCA MEMBERS!

Newsletter April 2026

Patron Peter Bugler, QSM, JP

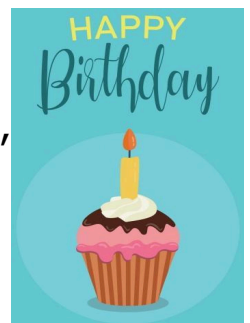
What is the most important thing in the world? It is people, people, it is people, it is people!



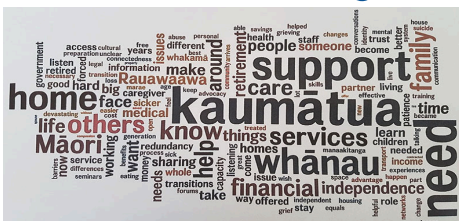
He aha te mea nui o te ao? He tangata, he tangata, he tangata!

April birthday people: all the best!

To Amai, Carolyn, Peter, Tania, Martin, Chris, Denise, Maurice, Michael x 2, Gyllian, John, Nigel, Warren, Ann. We hope you have had, & will continue to have, healthy, happy & relaxing times with family, whānau & friends



News (1) Delighted to announce!



Lawrence Macdonald has agreed to be our kaumatua for 2026. We are very grateful to have his expertise and knowledge on board to help guide us in all matters within te ao māori

News (2) The Thirsty Pig, 27 High Street bright, cheerful and



welcoming for our Wednesday club nights with discounts on drinks and meals on presentation of your RSA, NZMCA or Clubs NZ card. Meat raffles are every Wed from 5pm and our world-famous-in-Picton **weekly Wed quiz**

night has started again at 7pm so gather together your teams and your wits! There are bar tab prizes and sweet-treat raffles! Please do join us - all are welcome

News (3) Poppy Day Friday 17 April 2026

An annual event conducted by RSAs all over the country, to raise funds from the sale of poppies. Every cent raised is retained in each district, **to support our local vets and service people**. You will see poppy collection boxes all over town in local businesses and shops - we are very grateful for their support of this very worthy fund-raising effort



<https://www.stuff.co.nz/nz-news/360958675/why-your-rsa-poppy-might-look-different-year>

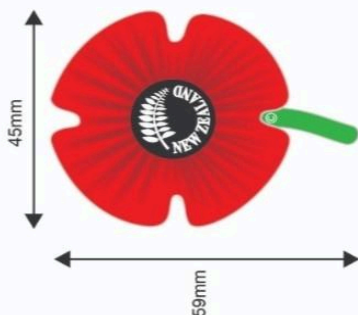
But wait, there's more - another new poppy design - mail order only!

The New Zealand Poppy

This four-petal Poppy represents those poppies, commonly known as the Flanders or Soldier's Poppy, which grew in the battlefields and cemeteries of Flanders and northern France during the First World War.

The silver fern motif in the centre adorns headstones of New Zealand servicemen and women buried in cemeteries worldwide, immediately identifying them as Kiwis and providing a symbolic link to their homeland.

This Poppy represents remembrance of our war dead and support for our living veterans.



ACTUAL SIZE

Designed by Veterans and Manufactured in New Zealand.

Dispensing Box contains 250 poppies.
No pin required.
Easy to apply.
No damage to garments.

Cost: \$12.60 + gst per dispensing box

You can also purchase a larger outer carton, which contains 30 dispensing boxes. (7500 poppies)

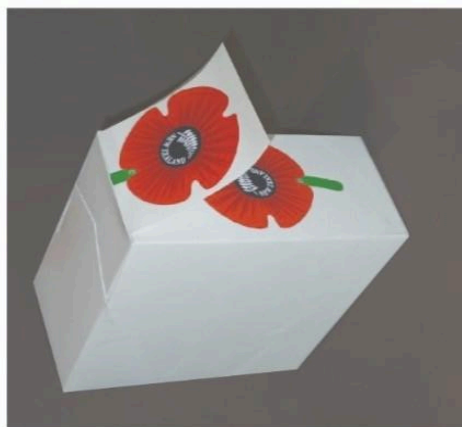
Cost: \$378.00 + gst per carton

*Delivery / Courier costs not included

HOW TO ORDER YOUR POPPIES:

Contact:
Carol
Email: secretary@aucklandveterans.org.nz
Mob: 027 224 3539

Glennis
Email: admin@aucklandveterans.org.nz
Mob: 027 242 3610





We need more volunteers to swell our ranks of street collectors - if you are able to offer even just an hour to help out, please contact Joy Fletcher as soon as you can! joyfletcher123@gmail.com



News (4) ANZAC DAY 25 April 2026 from 6am Picton RSA & Club hosts **Marlborough's only dawn parade and ceremony** down High Street to the **memorial arch and te pou** on the foreshore, with a gathering afterwards at our clubroom at The Thirsty Pig, 27 High Street, Picton. Please join us to commemorate all those who have served, and who continue to serve. Lest we forget



News (5) Picton RSA & Club 80th anniversary October 2026:



We've received a few ideas on how to celebrate this milestone: after all, we're still here, even if the horses have bolted and the building has vanished! There's plenty of memorabilia, photos and, above all, a treasure trove of rich and varied memories to share! Below is a proposal for you all to consider and provide feedback!

How about a Picton RSA 80th Anniversary Military Ball?



Summary As we approach a significant milestone in our history, the Picton RSA is exploring the opportunity to host a Military Ball in October 2026 to celebrate our 80th Anniversary.

Purpose This event is intended to honour 80 years of service, remembrance, and community connection within the Picton RSA. It will be a chance for members, veterans, community and supporters to come together in a formal and meaningful way to reflect on our past, celebrate our present, and look ahead to the future.

What to Expect The evening is envisioned as a formal and respectful celebration, including:

- A structured programme with welcome, acknowledgements, and short speeches
- Dinner and formal toasts
- Recognition of our history and long-serving members
- Entertainment and dancing
- A commemorative moment to mark 80 years of the Picton RSA
- Members will be encouraged to wear medals and formal attire.

Why It Matters Reaching 80 years is a remarkable achievement. This event will:

- Honour those who have served and those who have gone before us
- Strengthen connections within our RSA and wider community
- Provide an opportunity to celebrate who we are today
- Reinforce the relevance and future of the Picton RSA

Expressions of Interest At this stage, we are seeking expressions of interest from our members to help guide planning. We would like to know:

- Would you attend this event?
- Would you bring a guest or whānau?
- What would make this evening meaningful for you?
- Your feedback will help shape the scale, style, and planning of the event.

Final Note This is more than just an event — it is a celebration of our shared history, our people, and our future. We invite you to be part of it.

Please contact us! pictonrsa2@gmail.com

News (6)



CLUBS NEW ZEALAND

Clubs New Zealand 2026 National
Cribbage Tournament
hosted by the Porirua Club, 18 & 19
April 2026

Registrations are now open (can be done online. Contact Kate@clubsnz.com or call the National Office on 0800 425 827

News (7) 01 - 03 May

36th Seddon Shield

Darts Tournament

Brunner Workingmen's Club

Entry forms to swinter@xtra.co.nz 0273501475

Deposit entry fee into account 03-0846-0651923-00



BRUNNER CLUB

Community Club
Everybody Welcome

News (8) SNOOKER PLAYERS

The 2026 Clubs NZ South Island Snooker Pairs tournament is to be held at Club Waimea in Richmond (Nelson) on

06, 07 and 08 August. Whether you are a novice or an old hand, your entry is welcome! **All entry fee money (\$120 per pair) is returned by way of prizes;** email Kate@clubsnz.com or call National Office on 0800 425 827 or Colin Bowden 021 055 2664 for more details



News (9) Upcoming events

2026

April

- 01 Apr: RNZAF Day
- 17 Apr: Poppy Day
- 25 Apr: ANZAC Day
- 25 Apr: Sinai Multinational Force & Observers (MFO 1982)

May

08 May: VE Day

August

15 Aug: VP Day

September

03 Sep: Merchant Navy Day NZ

2027

July

10-17 Jul: Invictus Games, Birmingham, UK

News (10) ANZAC reading

WARTIME SECRETS FROM THE FAMILY HOME

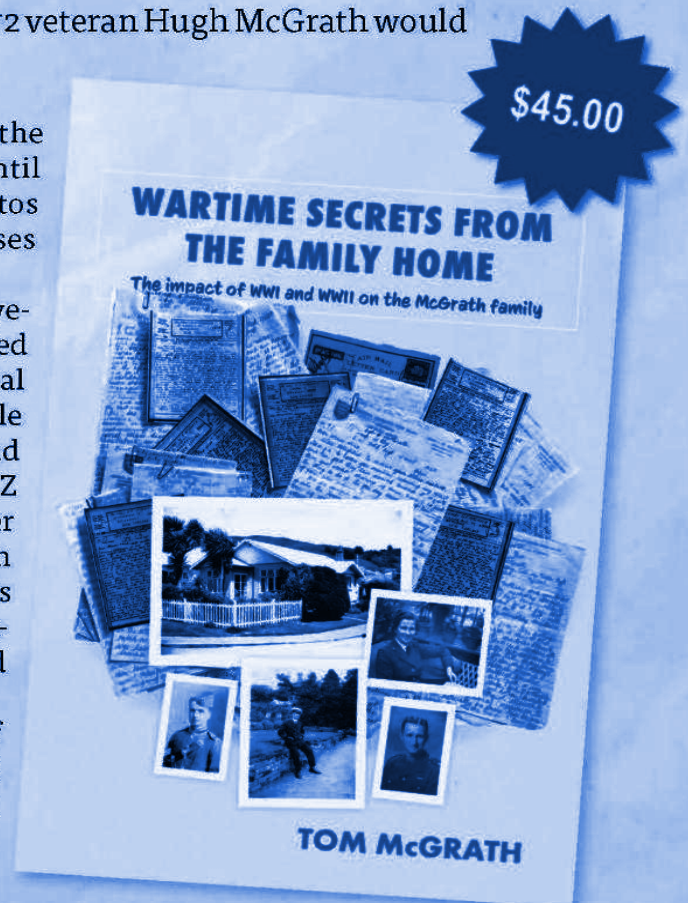
The impact of WW1 and WW2 on the McGrath family

“I blame that bastard Hitler for my teeth,” ww2 veteran Hugh McGrath would often say as his dental bills mounted up.

He could have said so much more, but didn't. So the full extent of his wartime story didn't unravel until the chance discovery of hundreds of letters, photos and postcards stuffed into boxes and attaché cases and scattered throughout a suburban house.

Hugh's son Tom McGrath uses their unique, eye-witness commentary to recount his family's varied experiences in both world wars — in ww1 his paternal grandfather Frank was an army captain, great-uncle Harry McGrath OBE served in the Royal Navy, and maternal grandfather Tom Rainbow was in the NZ Tunnelling Company in France. Hugh and his sister Joan served in the second world war, he in North Africa and Italy and she as a nurse in RAF hospitals in England. The book also sheds light on their post-war lives, which were peaceful, yet deeply affected by their wartime experiences.

Other family papers revealed generations of McGrath ancestral connections with the armed forces, including the Irish Brigade of the French Army. One ancestor became a viscountess — married to Lord Nelson of Trafalgar.



I can't say where we are except "in the desert". We are a mobile battery and if taken into action again I shall greatly prefer this type of role. It's no good staying in one position in the desert. It's quite obvious that if you hit up a Gerry MT [military transport] column say, and stay where you are, he will snoop up next night if he can and give you a hurry up. I have a pretty good gun sub-section and a good "quad" driver. "Quad" is an enclosed lorry tractor pulling the gun and ammunition limber. Three of the crew are new to guns but are picking up rapidly. (Hugh McGrath, letter to his parents, 23 February, 1942)

Tom McGrath was educated at Karori Normal School, Wellington College, and Victoria and Massey universities. He has been a teacher, factory inspector, union organiser, parliamentary research officer and polytechnic lecturer, and a contributing author to books on employment relations and human resource management. From 1994 to 2006 he was a member of the Council of the Open Polytechnic of New Zealand. Tom's first book, *Blasted by seeds* (published 2015), recounts his experience of surviving diagnosis and treatment for prostate cancer. His interests include historical research, mountain biking and swimming. He lives in Karori, Wellington, and is married to author Julia Millen.

Wartime secrets from the family home: The impact of ww1 and ww2 on the McGrath family

First published 2023. \$45.00, ISBN 978-1-99-117102-3

Soft cover, 153 x 234mm, 308 pages, 90+ photos.

Send orders to mcgrathtomo@gmail.com
or lynn@writeshillpress.co.nz





President's shout-out This month I had the opportunity to attend the Veterans' Support Forum in Nelson, which was incredibly worthwhile. I came away with swathes of valuable information which I will gather together into a compendium - this will help us better showcase the support our members can access. It was a pleasure to spend time with representatives from the RNZ Naval Association, to catch up with Deb from Nelson RSA, and meet and chat with Mario, serving in the Army and based out of Wellington. These connections remind me that while each RSA stands on its own, we are part of a much wider network of support, experience and shared purpose.

In early April my husband and I will also be attending the TS Talisman Navy Cadets here at their presentation of the Naval Association Cup.

As we move further into the coming month, we approach some of the most significant times in our RSA calendar: Poppy Day, the Empty Chair Ceremony at the Masonic Lodge and ANZAC Day. All provide us with moments to pause, reflect and remember - deeply important occasions, not only to honour those who served and sacrificed, but also to remind us of the ongoing impact of conflict. As we watch events unfold around the world, including the now month-long troubles in the Middle East and beyond affecting people across the world, we are reminded that the cost of war is never confined to history. It is ongoing, it is real and it reinforces the importance of remembrance, understanding and, more critically now, support for those who serve.

As always, please remember that if you need support - financial, physical, transport, emotional - we are here for you. Both our

Welfare Officers, and I, are available at any time. Responding to “reaching out” is never a burden — it is exactly what we are here for.

As we move towards ANZAC day, let us stand together: united in remembrance, respect, and our commitment to those who have served and those who continue to serve. In that unity, we honour the past and strengthen the future of the Picton RSA.



Blenheim	Picton
<p>The Veteran's Support Hub A support worker is available at Sowmans Funeral Lounge, Hutcheson & Parker Street, Blenheim on the 3rd Thu each month from 10am Contact Janice Marshall 021 071 6242 janicemarshall34@gmail.com</p>	<p>We offer home & hospital visits, & transport around town; information & advice. Picton is a small town; we often hear things through the grapevine, but direct referrals are always welcome. We take care to preserve people's privacy & confidentiality, & are always grateful to hear from & about people who might welcome contact with our welfare officers</p>



Research volunteer opportunity—Memory, health & wellbeing

Call for research volunteers aged 65 and over

Researchers from the Emotion, Lifespan, and Memory (ELM) Group in Victoria University of Wellington's School of Psychological Sciences, would like to share with you the opportunity to take part in an online study.

The study looks at the connection between memory, aging, and wellbeing. To do this, the study takes place over time, rather than collecting data from just one time point, as this is the best way to understand the nature and direction of how these things are connected.

What does participation involve?

If you sign up to take part, you will receive more detailed information, but overall, participation in this study involves:

- Completing some surveys asking about your health and general wellbeing
- Once a fortnight, write a couple of sentences about two events that occurred in the previous week
- Rate your current mood as prompted
- This is a longitudinal study which means it takes place over time. The study consists of three 6-month blocks.

People can take part using an app on their phones, or by receiving reminder emails that link to a website. **The time commitment per month is about one hour**, made up of brief, weekly tasks.

How do I sign up?

If you would like to find out more and join the Memory Study, visit the link below:

<https://elm-group.org/>

HUGE THANKS TO OUR LOCAL & LOYAL RAFFLE PRIZE DONORS!

every little thing.



AND REGULAR BUSINESS SUPPORTERS: PLEASE SUPPORT THEM LIKE THEY SUPPORT US!



PROUD EMPLOYER OF FIRE AND EMERGENCY VOLUNTEERS
HE RŌPŪ KOTAHĪ TĀTOU



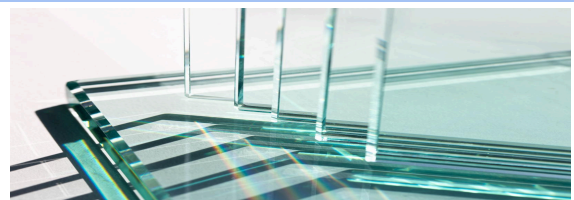
Contact: Bruce Gordon

Mobile: 027 446 0282

Email: topofthesouth@chemwash.co.nz



PICTON GLASS SUPPLIES (2003)





PICTON RSA – MERCHANDISE

Every bit of income we generate helps us to fulfil our mission to meet the needs of our members. Our “merch” appeals not only to locals, but also to visitors who pass through.

\$10.00



\$15.00

\$25.00



PICTON RSA – MERCHANDISE



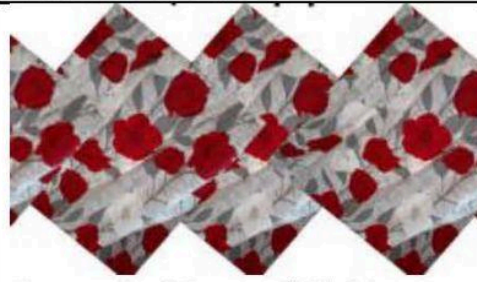
Picton RSA T-Shirts – Now \$30.00 each
Men’s & Women’s styles – sizes S-XXL



The Ode Placements - \$5.00
Created with The Ode in English and Te Reo. Plus the Merchant Navy and 28th Māori Battalion Odes.



Playing Card Holders – Just \$5.00
If you play cards, you will love these card holders!



Poppy Cushions – \$20.00
Be a part of history. We have a small amount of fabric left from our home at 66 Wellington Street that we are making into cushion covers – order today



Car or Truck Merchandise
Your car or truck can now show your support for your local RSA – enquire today about the poppies and stickers we have



Jewellery – Koha Donation
Made with love by The Sparkle Project and gifted to the Picton RSA – created from donated beads - all proceeds to the Picton RSA



Baseball Caps - \$20.00
An assortment of caps are available



Remembrance Coins - \$15.00
An assortment of coins are available