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A weekly feature on the
communities in
Horowhenua & Kapiti

Caring for Our Community



This week's feature Group—RSA

What does a band proving popular in Athens have to do with an organisation in Paraparaumu? It seems the RSA is full of surprises. "Where else can you go for a four-course meal for \$15?" asks John Bull, secretary and manager of the Kapiti Returned Serviceman's Association.

"We've the best restaurant in the district," he proudly states. In fact the premises on Amohia Street in Paraparaumu has now become rather too small for its popularity and the vision the RSA has for itself.

Established in 1921, the membership has risen to 2400 in Kapiti alone. "We're here to celebrate the services given by many different services," says John. He describes the club as a vibrant place where people of all ages can go to, to enjoy the many facilities. The restaurant is popular, as is the lounge area, (both of which are non-smoking) and the bar is a place where blokes prop up the bar to have a yarn and a smoke. "You can't fight tradition."

As with the Otaki and Levin RSAs, which both enjoy restaurants and bars, they also have a women's section. This isn't an area cordoned off just for women, but rather a group which meets once a month to drink coffee and tea, or go on an outing, play indoor bowls or anything else they may have planned. The women in particular help attend to the welfare needs of other members of the RSA. One of the services available to members, is help with transport to and from hospital. John says the Kapiti Carers are a great help in this area.

Over recent years, the ANZAC parades are becoming evermore popular with younger members of the community, and the RSA has recognised this upsurge in interest.

The new building planned for the Kapiti RSA in Paraparaumu reflects the forward thinking that is



going on within the club. "The idea of the new building is to give far better service than we currently do" explains John. While the new building will serve as a memorial for those who served New Zealand proudly in the two World Wars, the club also includes young people. "We're very people oriented, young and old."

The new three-storey building will include a children's playground, where parents dropping in for a coffee can sit on the north-facing terrace above and relax while watching their children play. Music will be on offer at the new RSA, with a goal to provide as much variety as possible for members. For the 'younger' members who like to start their evenings out late, there will be music from 11 pm to 1 pm on certain nights.

The building will include an auditorium, where it is hoped talent such as Tom Jones and Abba will be on offer in the future. Wellington's Beat Girls, apparently proving popular in Athens, have already starred at the RSA in Paraparaumu.

The auditorium, to seat 250 people, has already

been booked for conferences.

"We hope to give Kapiti an essential tourist destination for all those 400,000 members nationwide."

John says the building will incorporate a four star hotel to be run by an outside organisation. As well as the 50 hotel units, the property will house a swimming pool; ladies lounge; restaurant; billiard room; bar and gaming room. Outside will be a memorial grotto with a flagpole.

Paraparaumu RSA contact John Bull, phone (04) 902 7927. Otaki RSA contact Pat Bloxham, phone (06) 364 6221. Levin RSA contact Mike Murray, phone (06) 368 3475.

Adventure of the week



OrangeHut

Weather permitting, on August 22, there will a moderate walk through Whareroa Farm, along the top ridge to Orange Hut, located in the Whakatiki Valley, a five hour walk.

The Kapiti Sunday Walkers are a group which meets every second Sunday at 9am in the KCDC carpark Rimu Road for a walk. Cost is \$2. Call Stephen Brazier on 905 8752 for more information.

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