

# Dunedin RSA Welfare Trust

## New Welfare Officer Niall Shepherd

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July and August have been busy and exciting months for me with lots to learn, lots to do, and some major changes happening in my working life.

I started work as Welfare Officer for the Dunedin RSA Welfare Trust in mid July having come from Age Concern Otago where I had a position managing funding, communication and community projects for the previous 2 ½ years. Before that I was a policeman, retiring in 2011 after nearly 32 years service. My recent background there was community policing, a mainly pro-active role. Most of what I did could be classified as helping to prevent people becoming victims, or finding solutions to small issues before they grew into bigger problems.

My policing career started on the West Coast after 6 years as an Engineer with the NZ Army culminating in a deployment to Moscow in 1979. Before coming to Dunedin in 2003 I served as the sole charge officer at Arthur's Pass for 16 years. My time in Arthur's Pass was fascinating though busy with a wide variety of work. Through necessity I became something of a local expert in Search and Rescue as well as being a Paramedic volunteer with St John, and a Rural Fire Officer. In 1997 I was awarded the Queens Service medal for public service in recognition of some of the work I had done at Arthur's Pass.

In 2002 I went to the Solomon Islands with 9 other Kiwis to coach and mentor local police and have since completed a number of other deployments to various parts of the world with Police and United Nations, (Solomon Islands & Timor Leste), Malcolm Trust (Nepal) and Red Cross (Haiti & Sri Lanka). I am currently the chair of the Otago Area Council for Red Cross, a voluntary governance role, and in 2013 I became a Justice of the Peace.

With the varied challenges of my working life I have come to the realisation that communication in all its forms, from simply talking and listening to people right through to being able to clearly convey important and complex information to people or institutions is one of the most important factors to the success of any endeavour. I believe this is especially true for my role as Welfare Officer.

With the Veterans Support Act 2014 coming into force in December, and various events commemorating 100 years since WW1, there is a renewed focus on veterans and I am looking forward to playing my part in promoting the wellbeing of ex-service people and their families. In the process of 'learning my trade' I expect to be asking the people around me a few [more] dumb questions, but I am already getting a good feel for how the path ahead is paved, and I am lucky to have access to a huge pool of institutional knowledge.

I can be contacted by phone: 03 466 4888,  
Freephone 0800 664 888, or by email: [welfare@dn-rsa.org.nz](mailto:welfare@dn-rsa.org.nz)

[My Office Hours are Tuesday to Friday 8 am – 4 pm](#)

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## DUNEDIN RSA UPDATE AUGUST 2014



Please find enclosed with this update information on the Centenary of WW1 1914- 2014 Embarkation. The Dunedin RSA will be there on the Day. If you would like to march with the Dunedin RSA please phone Sally or Niall to register.

A newsletter will be distributed in December if you have something that you would like to contribute or have ideas on what you would like to have in a newsletter please give us a call or email.

**Volunteering** is a big part of the Dunedin RSA, we are always looking for people to visit Rest Homes & Hospitals, currently we have vacancies at several rest homes in the Dunedin area if you can spare a few hours a month please give us a call.

*Photos below from the opening of the Dunedin's Great War 1914-1918 exhibition at Toitu Otago Settler Museum in August*



## Badges available from the Dunedin RSA

Prices between \$5 - \$10



Poppy

