

Let's Chat : 18 April 2009

Hello everyone

I hope that you had a good Easter break, and had the chance to enjoy the fine weather relaxing with family and friends, or doing whatever you chose to do. It is amazing just how quickly this year is moving along. I promise I won't start talking about winter!

But talking about dates, it is appropriate to recognise that Anzac Day is just a week away. This year, I am privileged to be asked to make the address at the Amberley RSA service. It is a presentation that I have not yet written. I have deliberately held back, just letting my thoughts and ideas circle around in my mind until I can feel comfortable that all the emotions and points that I think I might like to make, come together into a single, coherent, and relevant set of notes.

I am finding this a most interesting process to go through. It is forcing me, gladly, to spend quality time thinking about our district in days gone by and the values and the character building experiences that shaped us. As we all know, these memories can be very personal.....my mind drifts to what it must have been like for my grandfather, mustering on Woodbank Station, signing up and departing for the European front in 1915...returning, marrying, and settling soon after into the Dalgety's house in Culverden, the beginning of a career as a fat lamb buyer, moving to Amberley with a young family of six, surviving the depression only to see his only son head off to a second world war, never to return. All in less than thirty years (the same time that has now passed since the infamous Springbok tour in 1981 that most of us can recall so clearly). How tough those years must have been on families, on relationships, on individuals.

Yet through all that, across New Zealand, there must have been an overwhelming sense of hope, of promise for the future, matched with an ethic for hard, honest work, trust in each other, and pride in our freedom that meant it was worth defending, irrespective of risk.

Somehow, I still see those same values in our communities in Hurunui today. That's why I wouldn't trade our lifestyles, our district, our landscapes and our future.

Where ever you are on Saturday April 25, please give some time to remembering and appreciating our forebears and our families. I am sorry that I cannot be at the RSA services beyond Amberley. But I will be thinking of you all.

Sincerely

Garry

garry.jackson@hurunui.govt.nz