



34 memorial plaques unveiled at Mount View Cemetery

Barry Rankin, a Marton resident and life member of the RSA, made it his mission to discover the final resting places of New Zealand servicemen who died while at Lake Alice psychiatric hospital.



Barry Rankin at Mt. View Cemetery

Those World War I and II veterans who died while in the care of the hospital were often buried in Mt. View Cemetery, but their graves were unmarked.

In 2016, a member of the public approached Rankin to help find the grave of her uncle, a returned serviceman who she believed had died at Lake Alice.

He found a record of the burial and, with the help of the Rangitikei District Council and Archives New Zealand, discovered the names and locations of other servicemen who died at Lake Alice.

He has now identified the final resting places of over 30 servicemen and has helped to connect the deceased with living relatives.

Rankin believes that it is important for families to know where their loved ones are buried. Veterans' Affairs has helped by determining the service records of the deceased veterans and funding gravestones and plaques.

Marti Eller, deputy head of Veterans' Affairs, praised Rankin for his hard work and care in locating the lost

Rankin for his hard work and care in locating the last resting places of these veterans.

Many of these soldiers had suffered from shell shock, a psychological trauma caused by the stresses of war. They were admitted for treatment to the psychiatric hospital, sometimes without their families knowing.

Rededication ceremony

On February 4, 2023, these servicemen were honoured at an unveiling and rededication ceremony at Mt View Cemetery.

Organised by the Marton RSA and the Rangitikei District Council, guests were welcomed by Marton RSA President Alan Buckendahl and members of the 5th/7th Battalion. The speakers were Barry Rankin and Marti Eller, and prayer was led by the Padre from 5th/7th Battalion.



Barry Rankin speaking at the ceremony





Marti Eller speaking at the ceremony

A flyover of Beechcraft T-6 Texan II aircraft by officers of 14 Squadron RNZAF Base Ohakea added another tribute to the event.



Flyover of the Beechcraft T-6 Texan II aircraft

WO1 Matt Bedford led the 5th/7th Battalion to fire off volleys, followed by the Bugler sounding the Last Post and Reveille.





5th/7th Battalion performing a volley fire

The ceremony concluded with the unveiling of the 34 plaques by members of 5th/7th Battalion.



A newly unveiled memorial plaque

One of the servicemen honoured at the event was Edward Knipe, a gunlayer who had served in North Africa. His nephew, Barry Knipe, remembers him as someone who had lived with his family in Lower Hutt after he returned from the war.



Colleen Treadwell and Barry Knipe pay respects to their uncle Edward Knipe now honoured with a new plaque on the previously unmarked grave

Knipe recalls that his uncle was a lovely man, though a bit of a loner, and had received war medals, but the family had no idea what had happened to them.

Edward Knipe had been living in an unmarked grave since

Edward Knipe had been lying in an unmarked grave since 1976, and his war service was only now being properly recognised.

The Marton RSA would like to hear from anyone who may have had a relative or knows of a serviceman who was at Lake Alice and maybe buried at Mt View Cemetery.



One of the many wreaths that were lain during the ceremony

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Tags

Commemorations (<https://www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz/news-events/articles/?tag=52>)

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