

# STAFF REPORT

**TO:** Community Services Committee  
**FROM:** Reserves Manager  
**REFERENCE:** P100  
**DATE:** 15 March 2006  
**SUBJECT:** 2006 – Year of the Veteran

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## PURPOSE

To provide the Committee with background information relating to the Year of the Veteran and the proposal put to Council for a Community project by Rick Williams from the RSA.

## BACKGROUND

Attached to this report are information sheets explaining the purpose of the Year of the Veteran and how the community can help celebrate this year.

Most of the information relating to community projects involve projects and events such as:

- The refurbishment and rededication of local War Memorials and honour rolls.
- The construction of a War Memorial.
- Exhibitions, concerts, local events to honour veterans in their communities.
- And to involve the young people in the community as much as possible.

The proposal Rick Williams has put to Council is for soldier poppy borders to be established in the RSA areas of Councils Cemeteries. Richmond and Motueka Cemeteries contain official RSA areas.

The borders would be approximately 50 metres long and planted exclusively with soldier poppies. This border would be planted with the aid of local school children then maintained each year by Council.

## COMMENT

Council would be eligible to apply for a grant for the installation costs of these gardens but would have to bear the ongoing costs of maintenance.

Solider poppies are in this situation an annual type plant however they are mostly sold as a wildflower plant and may not be the most appropriate plant for a formal situation with a high standard of maintenance such as a Cemetery.

Annual beds are expensive to maintain and a plant such as the soldier poppy would also require the removal of the seed pod to prevent it invading the rest of the Cemetery which would be an added expense and time consuming.

Richmond Cemetery RSA contains two rose garden areas with Lest We Forget and Trumpeter roses which were both developed to celebrate Returned Service Personnel.

Motueka Cemetery RSA area has no land in this vicinity available for a planting such as is proposed.

## **OPTIONS**

That the request be approved and that staff work with the RSA in establishing the poppy borders.

That approval be given for staff to plant a small area of poppies at the Motueka and Richmond Cemeteries for this particular year but decline the request for large borders being planted.

That the request be declined and that Council works with the RSA on other proposals to celebrate the Year of the Veteran. This could include Youth Council projects, veteran visits to schools etc.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Committee declines the proposal from the RSA for borders of soldier poppies in the RSA section of the Motueka and Richmond Cemeteries but investigates other proposals for Council and the RSA to celebrate this year within the community.

Beryl Wilkes  
Reserves Manager