Rotary Club of Palmerston North & Awapuni Chapter
President: Stu Schwartz

Rotary Bulletin – 9 November 2026

Rotary News

Sell Christmas Pubs at Night Market

Shaun Kay and President Stu **need helpers to raise funds for Lifting the Lid** by selling Xmas puds at the Night Market in the Library on Thursday night 12 November, 5.00-9.00pm.
Signage donated by Dan Wheeler, Freedom Plus.

Starlight for Joy – Welcome Packs

Monday 16 November 9.30-11.30am St Matthew's Church 109 Church St. Help make welcome packs for those with mental health needs arriving with nothing at Ward 21 Mental Health Ward.

Croquet

Tuesdays 5.30pm-6.30 pm.

Brew Union

Friday 27 November 2026, 5.00 pm.

Next Meeting:
Monday 16 November 2026

Welcome President Stu Schwartz

Intro/Thanks for Speaker: Dave Gaynor.

Guest Speaker: Liam Hehir
"A Review of the recent NZ election."

Sergeant	Nigel Withell
Corporal	John Freebairn
Parting Thought	John Brunsden
Bulletin Editor	Dave Gaynor
Attendance	Martin Townend

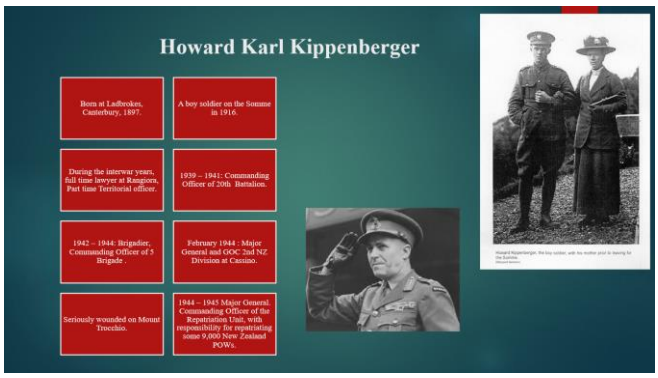
Glyn Harper's speech to Palmerston North Rotary Club 9 November 2026

"The war hero and the traitor: Kippenberger and Coulander at war."

Glyn Harper contrasted the wartime service of Major General Sir Howard Kippenberger with that of Roy Nicholas Courlander, the only New Zealand soldier to join the British Free Corps, a unit of the Waffen SS. His central theme was Kippenberger's careful handling of Courlander's court-martial and the prolonged campaign to overturn its verdict.

Two contrasting wartime paths

- Kippenberger served in both world wars, rose to command the 2nd New Zealand Division and lost both feet at Monte Cassino. He subsequently led the organisation responsible for repatriating New Zealand prisoners of war from Britain.

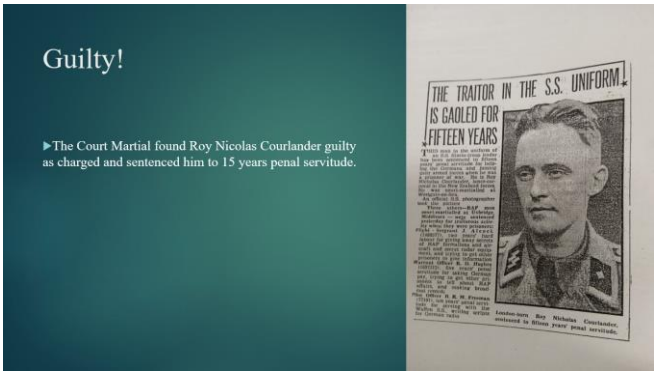


- Courlander, captured in Greece in 1941, voluntarily made propaganda broadcasts for Germany and became a founding member of the British Free Corps in 1944. Harper portrayed

him as an opportunist with a criminal background who repeatedly denied responsibility for his actions.

The British Free Corps
Glyn described the Corps as a small, ineffective and disorderly organisation. Despite German ambitions to recruit a substantial force, it attracted only 39 members in total. Courlander helped recruit for it but later surrendered to the Allies and provided intelligence about its membership.

Court-martial and appeals
In October 1945, Courlander was convicted of voluntarily aiding the enemy and sentenced to 15 years' penal servitude. His defence was that he had joined the Corps to undermine it from within. Kippenberger convened the court-martial and carefully reviewed its proceedings before confirming the sentence.



Glyn emphasised that the case underwent several further legal reviews. For six years, Courlander and his supporters challenged the conviction, alleging unfair treatment, unreliable evidence and an excessive sentence. Kippenberger answered their correspondence but remained convinced that Courlander had received a fair hearing. Glyn also outlined intelligence reports and statements from fellow prisoners that contradicted Courlander's account.

Glyn's conclusion
Glyn's assessment was that Kippenberger combined firmness with fairness: he would not accept unsupported claims of innocence but eventually supported Courlander's release without changing his view of the man's guilt. Courlander was released in 1951, later moved to Australia and died there in 1989.