



NZ GUNNER

Royal New Zealand Artillery Association Newsletter

PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

BY SHAY BASSETT

Unfortunately, due to being ill, I was unable to join fellow Wellington based Gunners for the St Barbara's Day celebrations recently. I haven't heard any reports on how the evening went, so I am assuming it either went well or there was trouble! Joking aside, I have always thought that getting together periodically and sharing a bit of comradery is a key aspect of life as a Gunner, and facilitating such activities is an important function of the RNZA Association.

It was therefore immensely satisfying to see such a successful annual Reunion and AGM in Hamilton over the weekend of 18 to 20 October 2024.

Any time we get 70 Gunners, and family, sitting down to dine together, has got to be good. Perhaps the icing on the cake was having the chance to visit the new Waikato Artillery Museum (WAM) on the Saturday afternoon, which is a simply outstanding example of what Gunners can achieve when they set their sights on something and have the drive to get there!

For those of you who have not yet visited the WAM, I would highly recommend including either a stopover on route through the Waikato, or a destination in its own right.

Another outcome of the weekend was the wholehearted support by members at the AGM, for holding our next annual Reunion 'down South'. I know Shelly, Lox, and others in the southern Gunner team are already working on putting together a plan for the weekend, although we can't confirm exact dates yet - as deconfliction with other events in the local area needs to occur before we lock everything in.

Rest assured, once we have the information it will be pushed out to everyone in order to give members the best chance of securing accommodation and arranging travel at the most optimum rates.

It is probably fair to say that for many 2024 has not been the easiest of years. Sadly, recently 16th Field Regiment lost a promising young soldier through circumstances that could have happened to many off us. So as we look to the coming year, let us hope that it will be a better one for everyone, not just Gunners.

Finally, on behalf of your RNZA Association Committee, that does such a great job behind the scenes making things tick over, I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone the very best for the festive season and we look forward to seeing as many of you as possible in Dunedin next October!

Shay Bassett - President

Q Store:

For a wide range of RNZA and gunnery items

<http://www.rnzaaQstore@gmail.com> - The Association Q Store.

Contact Us:

RNZAA Website: www.rnzaa.org.nz

President: Shay Bassett: SHAY.BASSETT@nzdf.mil.nz

RNZAA Secretary: John McNicol: rnza.association@gmail.com

Newsletter: Marty Coomber: martin.coomber.nz@gmail.com

Q Store: Craig Hewett: rnzaaQstore@gmail.com

Donations

Donations can be made to our account as follows:

Account name: RNZAA. Account number: 38-9007-0694501-00 Reference: Donation.

You can claim tax credits for donations of \$5 or more when the donation is made to an approved charity. The RNZAA meets the charity criteria. Receipts for donations are available.

GUNNER COMEDY CRUISE 16 - 19 MAY

BY SKIN FRANCIS

The Gunner Comedy Cruise departs Brisbane about 1600 Friday 16 May returning about 0630 Monday 19 May, 2025. Spend a few nights at sea as some of Australia's best comedians take the stage each night.

Enjoy the Comedy Cruise Gala (a must-see), an up close and personal chat to the comedians and cheeky adults-only shows in the Sit Down Comedy Club, there's something to make everyone smile. Includes meals, entertainment, fitness centre and Pools.

Attendee's: 13 confirmed and 8 more have expressed interest and finalising details.

POC is Cindy Villanueva. She will handle bookings for us. Her contact details are: Direct Line: +61242 048 629 (M-F 8am-5pm Syd) E: cindy.villanueva@pocruises.com.au - and quote the link code "TWID: AAH PID: AAH".

You can find more informaton here: www.pocruises.co.nz/cruises/comedy/i524

Dont forget the military Benefit of \$50 onboard spending money, these are the requirements for first time cruisers:

- Active personnel currently serving by providing their Regiment number or Service Number.
- Ex-serving personnel, including discharged and retired personnel, by providing relevant documentation which shows evidence of having served in the ADF or NZDF, such as military superannuation or pension statement from the Military Super scheme, the DFRDB scheme, the DFRB scheme, or the DFSS scheme (New Zealand) or Certificate of Service.

Prices range from (AUD):

Net Total single or twinshare: \$958. (Interior)

Net Total single or twinshare: \$1,148. (Some view)

Net Total single or twinshare: \$1,418 (Premium Balcony)



COLONEL COMMANDANT'S CORNER

BRIGADIER (RTD) PAUL SOUTHWELL

Greeting fellow gunners, association members and partners. As another year draws to a close, let me wish you all a joyful gunner's day and a Xmas surrounded with family, excited grandchildren, and sumptuous food.

Having been AWOL from the association reunion in Hamilton (due to a more pressing engagement with our new grandson in the States) I trust that you all enjoyed a catch up with mates and the opportunity to visit the Waikato Artillery Museum (WAM). You would have seen first hand the tremendous work of the team that supported Major Hugh Vercoe in establishing this unique collection of our Artillery history.

It is our intention that with the continued support of the family of gunners, the Museum will go from strength to strength including establishing a working relationship the National Army Museum.

16th Field Regiment has seen a busy year of training including a large-scale multi national exercise in Hawaii in which our gunners performed with notable credit. Such exercises reinforce the return to a closer defence relationship with the United States, critical in maintaining our operational capability.

In September the Regiment conducted a most impressive parade in farewelling Lt Col Sandra Patterson and welcoming the new CO Lt Col Brent Morris. Sandra has been posted to an operational appointment in the Sudan as a deputy chief of planning. We wish her and all of our gunners serving overseas a safe and rewarding tour of duty.

The Band of the Royal Regiment of New Zealand Artillery

On Remembrance Day, 11 Nov our band gave another sterling performance at the Bruce Mason Theater in Takapuna. The theatre was sold out with an audience of approximately 900, the largest attendance in the theatre this year.

One of the highlights of the morning was a solo performance by Bdr Mike Chestnutt an outstanding musician who can play every instrument in the band. Mike played a composite arrangement produced by the band's director of music WO1 Steven Booth in which he played eight different instruments, being handed each one in turn by a fellow bandsman. The audience was ecstatic in their appreciation of such talent. Some of you would be well aware of Mike who served 17 years in the NZ Army Band.

If you get the chance to attend a performance of our band, grab a couple of your mates, gunners or otherwise, and reacquaint your self with the musical talents of this wonderful band, the longest continuous serving brass band in NZ, having being formed in 1860.

It was intended to be an artillery Band associated with an artillery Militia but there were no guns so it started life as the Auckland Volunteer Rifles Band. In late 1860 guns arrived to form A Battery but we have no record of when the band assumed the title of the Artillery Band.

Next year the band will perform another remembrance Morning Melodies at Takapuna on 3 Nov.



NEW HOME FOR PICTON RSA L5

BY MARTY COOMBER

The Picton RSA has found a new home for its historic L5. The gun had long taken pride of place outside the RSA's former home, on Wellington St, before the association had to find a new venue amid rising costs.

It was moved into storage in June as the RSA and was unveiled at its new resting place on Monday 11 November to coincide with Armistice Day.

The gun was manufactured in 1961 and saw service in South Vietnam and is understood to have been 161 Bty's 'C' gun at the time.

Its new home would be beside Waitohi Whare Matauranga, the Picton library and service centre. Picton RSA vice-president Greg Childs said the howitzer –had been given a fresh lick of paint so it was looking “spiffy” for the unveiling. “She will look beautiful on the day,” he said

The howitzer's instruction manual would be on display in the library next door.

Picton RSA welfare officer John Welch ended up having the howitzer added to his firearms licence during the move. Even though the weapon was not in working order, Childs joked that Welch was the “proud recipient of an L5 howitzer to shoot rabbits with”.



What a moving Armistice Day with the unveiling of the L5 Howitzer in its new home outside the Picton Library.

Thank you to all the dignitaries and speakers and all those who attended.

Its new home is perfectly situated so the Howitzer can look directly across to its old home at 66 Wellington Street.

We must also thank the efforts of those in the committee, most notably Greg Childs, John Welch and Dave Coard. – Picton RSA



Photo credit and some text – Christchurch Press

OP UBIQUE NORTH ISLAND UPDATE

BY ROB MCAULAY

The progress of re-establishing Op Ubiq has not progressed as well as I had intended. This has been due to a few factors one of which being the downturn in the economy and the subsequent budget restrictions limiting options in Waiouru and with the National Army Museum.

A real highlight has been the work done by Pete Dawson in gathering (read gentle arm twisting) some of the South Island gunners and reviewing some of the guns in the Christchurch area, Pete's passing midyear sadly put the brakes on progress, but several South Island gunners are stepping up to help out.

There is a spreadsheet that records the location and condition of both L5 and M101A1 equipment around the country with information from a variety of sources which I am continuing to develop, my thanks to all those who have and continue to assist with information on these guns.

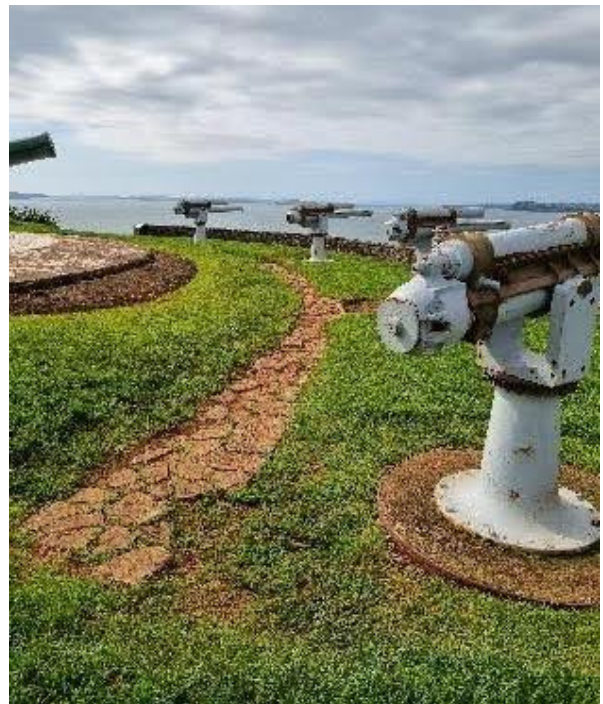
TODs

We were able to arrange one TOD to Waiouru in May with the objective of giving the 5.5 outside the WO/SNCO Mess a much needed spruce up. Many thanks to WO2 Dermody who hosted the team in Waiouru. Unfortunately, the TOD clashed with a contingent of gunners being in Rarotonga, this group contained a significant number of the experienced Op Ubiq team, but those who did make it to Waiouru did a great job.

My intention is to try for a couple of TOD's in the next year along with some smaller local working bee's for various RSA guns around the country.

Ex Kaikohe RSA L5 – The property owner where the gun is currently stored has been contacted and has a workshop that might be able to be used. The gun is in a very weather worn condition, We are currently attempting to organize a weekend to assess the gun and plan further work.

Napier RSA L5 – John Rhodes and I met with Alan Lawton, Napier RSA, to view the gun, it is in need of some serious TLC but not as bad as the Kaikohe Gun. The Napier RSA is currently having its roof replaced so we could not get to close due to scaffold being in the way.



North Head & Mt Victoria – I have met with the Auckland Council people looking after Northhead and Mt Victoria in Devonport. I was able to view the North Head guns, the main disappearing 64pdr appears in good condition and appears to have been painted recently. The Saluting Battery guns are not so flash and need some work done to repair the rust and provide a new coat of paint. Chris Moriss provided some info and suggested I contact Ross Goldworthy and Barry Dreyer as they have had previous involvement with these guns. I was unable to view the Mt Victoria guns.



New Lynn & Swanson RSA L5's – I was able to view these guns over Labour weekend and they appear to be in a reasonable condition. We will need to continue to monitor these.

Operation Ubique - Assistance needed

As the activities of the Op Ubique team are increasing I am looking for some assistance to keep an eye on the guns around the Motu. The purpose of the role is to co-ordinate local gunners to review and maintain the look of the Guns displayed in our communities.

If you have some spare time and would like to assist in coordinating the upkeep of our retired colours in your District please reach out through the RNZA Association website.

Rob McAulay Op Ubique Co-ordinator - North

OP UBIQUE SOUTH ISLAND UPDATE

BY SHELLY BOYES

In May 2024, Gunners' Day was a popular weekend celebration at St John Camp in Waddington, Canterbury. The weekend was split between maintaining the M101A1 on Saturday and firing it on Sunday in front of 200 community members, along with activities for children and spectators, followed by a gunners' toast with port.

In Peter Dawson's absence, the Operation Ubique North Island Co-ordinator, Rob McAulay, has been working with a Southern Gunner and an RSA president to maintain the Christchurch, Papanui, and Godley Head M101A1 guns.

Peter Dawson

Peter Dawson made a significant and comprehensive contribution to the RNZAA and the Southern Gunners. Not only will we miss his leadership and institutional expertise greatly, but it will take some time before we realise how much.

- Outstanding projects and tasks for completion include:
- Clean the ex-Christchurch RSA gun and place it on permanent display at Godley Head in a container with a viewing wall.
- Follow-up participation in a working group with the Firearms Authority considering single shot artillery pieces for live firing.
- Refurbishing the Godley Head display gun after the Department of Conservation removes the asbestos.
- Follow up on prospective sponsorship with a South Island paint company to supply undercoat and topcoat paint for the guns.

ARMISTICE DAY - HAGLEY PARK

BY SHELLY BOYES

Southern Gunners and Godley Head Heritage Trust supported the Armistice Day parade and celebration of the the 100th anniversary of the Bridge of Remembrance.

Sonny Manuel was the parade commander for the commemoration. The Parade started at the Field of Remembrance and marched to the Bridge of Remembrance where a joint commemoration for Armistice Day and for the 100th Anniversary of the Bridge of Remembrance was held.

Brian Frances (Skin) was the RSM at the firing location at Hagley Park, up to 800m from the Field of Remembrance. He ensured that everyone knew their roles and were confident in carrying these out with plenty of practice and support. Skin and Alex Smith, a trustee with the Godley Head Heritage Trust, were integral to obtaining the permissions required from Christchurch City Council to get 'the guns back in Hagley Park' after a more than a decade hiatus.



The plan was to sound the start of the parade with three rounds 90 seconds apart at 10:30AM and then three rounds 60 seconds apart at 10:58AM concluding at 11:00AM when the gun fell silent. This meant precise communication between Sonny and Skin to make this very public effect happen.



This event held further special significance to the Southern Gunners with recognition and acknowledgement of Chris and Katie Bull, of James Bull Locksmiths Limited, for their generous donation to the Christchurch-based Southern Gunners which they intend to be used to maintain the gun.

They had the opportunity to play an active role feeding and firing the M101A1 gun, and Chris who coincidentally brought his cornet with him, played The Last Post and Reveille in our own ceremony at the gun after two minutes silence at 11:00AM



Katie and Chris Bull.



Katie Bull fires the M101A1



UBIQUE! David Bolam-Smith (32(E) Bty), Alex Smith (Godley Head Heritage Trust), Shane Fuller (32(E) Bty).



32(E) Bty Gun Crew, pictured (left) Dave Westgarth, Grant Hunter, Allan McClure, Willie Wilson.



32(E) Bty Gun Crew: Grant Hunter, Allan McClure, Willie Wilson.



David Bolam-Smith (32(E) Bty), Shelly Boyes (1 Loc Tp; South Island Co-ord)

BRIDGE OF REMEMBRANCE

BY CHRISTCHURCH CITY LIBRARY

The Bridge of Remembrance which links Oxford and Cambridge Terraces over the Avon River at Cashel Street was opened on Armistice 11 November 1924. It was opened by the Governor-General, Admiral of the Fleet, Lord Jellicoe, who had previously laid the foundation stone on ANZAC Day, 25 April 1923.

Initially open to vehicular traffic, the Bridge was reopened as a pedestrian precinct on Anzac Day 1977 by Capt. Charles H. Upham, VC and bar.



What will a man not do for his country



The Territorials cross the Bridge of Remembrance on the way to King Edward Barracks - ANZAC DAY 1926

The Bridge of Remembrance was structurally damaged in the 22 February 2011 earthquake. The repair included replacing the original 4 metre piles with 27 metre ones, and reinforcing the historic arch with an 8.2 tonne beam. The work means that the arch, built from rock quarried in Tasmania, will rock rather than twist in any future earthquakes. The Bridge of Remembrance re-opened to the public and rededicated on Anzac Day, Monday 25 April 2016.



In Remembrance Park (the Avon River Precinct near the bridge), a field of crosses has been laid out by Fire and Emergency New Zealand volunteers to recognise the 4,500 Christchurch service people who died in World War One.



Detail from the Bridge

GUNNERS' CHRISTMAS PAST AND PRESENT



Gunners of New Zealand Artillery formation line up for Christmas dinner on the Italian Front line, World War II - Photograph taken by George Kaye



Christmas card Korea 1953



Christmas card from the New Zealand Artillery of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force, Middle East.



*2024 Christmas Card from RCA to RNZA - via Colonel Ben Bagley
Regimental Colonel RNZA*



Men of New Zealand Artillery boil a billy in wet and muddy surroundings on Christmas Eve afternoon, Italian Front, World War II - Photograph taken by George Kaye

22(D) BTY ANTI- TANK SHOOT

BY CHRIS MORRISS



I think the tracer is there in photo 1, but not the bright streak at upper right. I think it's probably the fainter slightly-pink round blob straight out in front of the gun that I've arrowed below. And Blair Dickie must have been part way through camo painting the guns as one is camo and one still dark green in image 2.



Could that be Jerry LeClair maybe looking through Binos beside the gun? Wearing of ear muffs wasn't being enforced much that day!

RNZAA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

BY JOHN MCNICOL

The AGM for the Association was held in Hamilton on 19 October 2024, and was attended by 33 members. The following article is a brief summary of the reports. Please click the folloiwng link for the full minutes.

CLICK HERE FOR THE FULL MINUTES

President’s report - Shay Bassett

Shay described the year as “steady,” with significant contributions such as the acquisition and presentation of Colonel Horsford’s medals to 161 and 163 Batteries.

He expressed deep sorrow over the passing of committee member Pete Dawson, acknowledging his importance to the Association. The welfare link with the RSA through John Hannon continued to grow, benefiting gunners in need.

Website Refresh: Shay emphasized the pressing need for a website overhaul due to security vulnerabilities and outdated design, projecting a cost range between \$5,000 and \$10,000.

Treasurer’s Report - Richard Gordon

The Association has strong financial position, reporting a balance of \$65,131—up by \$4,117 from last year, mainly due to Q Store sales and interest from term deposits.

Veterans' Affairs and Welfare - Greg Thwaite

Greg provided a detailed report on welfare activities throughout the year, particularly the growing relationship with John Hannon, who has been instrumental in ensuring that artillery veterans can access welfare services through the RSA network.

A significant advocacy effort this year involved a formal letter sent to the Minister for Veterans as well as the Minister of Statistics. The letter outlined the Association’s proposal to include a dedicated question in the National Census that would allow veterans to disclose their status. This initiative aims to create a pathway for veterans to voluntarily identify themselves, which would then enable Veterans' Affairs New Zealand (VANZ) to engage with them and provide support.

Your new Committee

Shay Bassett:	President
Greg Thwaite:	Vice President and VA and Welfare
Craig Hewett:	Quartermaster
Chris Morriss:	Membership Officer and Webmaster
Richard Gordon:	Treasurer
Maj John Garton:	Serving Officer
Rob McAulay:	Operation Ubique
Shelly Boyes:	South Island Affairs and Op Ubique
John McNicol:	Secretary and RNZRSA Liaison
WO 1 Heath Southcombe	Regimental Warrant Officer RNZA
WO 2 Iain Sutton:	16th Field Regiment CO's Rep

Constitution: Richard Gordon

Richard detailed amendments to the constitution to comply with the new Incorporated Societies Act. The key change involved setting up a Disputes Resolution Process. Other changes involved shifting the financial year-end from September 30 to July 31 to align with the reunion’s financial impact and ensure revenue and expenditure related to the event are captured in the same financial year.

Facebook and Website - Chris Morriss

The Association’s private Facebook Group continues to tick along, with a membership of over 1200 and fifteen new members added in the last two months. New posts are added almost every day.

The website has an average visit length to a single page on the site of about one and a half minutes long and the website gets 30 to 180 visitors each day.

Membership - Chris Morriss

The association currently has over 1200 members. We continue to reach out to Gunners through Veterans Affairs/RSA veteran support events and via the Q store.

Southern Gunners - Shelly Boyes

The Southern Gunners Membership List now contains 170 members, with potential for 60 more. Contacting members without recorded emails will finish the initial task. Maintaining the List is expected to be an ongoing endeavour.

The RNZA Historic Trust - Barry Dreyer

Our most recent task, which we have been focussed on for the last eight years, is the biography of Brig Reg Miles, CBE, DSO & bar, MC, probably our most distinguished gunner. By the time of our 2024 AGM, the book will be at the publisher, and we anticipate publication towards the end of next year.

AGM PHOTOS



Frazer Taiapa, Shelly Boyes, Matt Te Pou Snr, Eddie Naden.



Shelly Boyes, John Rhodes, WO2 Iain Sutton.



AGM PHOTOS



Absent Comrades



Maj Shay Bassett, Rob McAulay, Mark Aldridge, Craig Hewett



Bryce and Joan Harrison

HAPPY NEW YEAR – MESSAGE TO FRITZ 1944

Letter to the Editor – NZ Herald – Jan 2000

In the context of a television new item on the conflict in Chechnya, it was reported that the Russian soldiers shouted “Happy New Year!” as they sent another shell hurtling to Grozny.

That report reminded me of a related, but somewhat less impromptu episode involving the field artillery of the NZ Division at New year in Italy in 1944.

A gunnery expert of the Royal NZ Artillery, Brigadier Steve Weir, was in command of the Divisional Artillery. He had perfected techniques that enabled the firepower of a huge number of guns spread over a wide front, very rapidly, on to a small target area,

On that night 56 years ago, the guns (25-pounders) of the three field artillery regiments fired a plan devised and coordinated by Steve Weir and his staff so as to spell out in the snow on the enemy’s forward positions the message “Happy New Year Fritz.” Each of the 18 troops of four guns (72 guns in total) was allocated a separate range and bearing so that their exploding shells would (theoretically at least) mar out a specific letter or part of that letter of the message.

The writer had a role to play on that occasion, as the No 1 (gun sergeant), of No 3 gun of B Troop 46 Battery, 4th NZ Field Regiment. *Des O’Connor, Mairangi Bay*

DIV. HEADQUARTERS, Jan. 4

Happy New’ Year, Fritz,” was spelled out by nearly a hundred guns in the clear frosty air, as in 17 minutes of firing over 5000 high explosive shells crashed down on the snowclad ridges around Orsogna yesterday.

The New Zealand Artillery sent the heartiest of New Year greetings to enemy troops, but it is doubtful whether the Germans appreciated the spirit behind the sentiment expressed in shot. The barrage was the result of careful planning over some days, and it is a tribute to good staff work and careful gunnery that not a shell was wasted on an unprofitable area.

As the New Year approached it was decided a suitable message should be sent over by the 25pounders. Subsequent planning fitted the message to areas normally covered by our artillery concentrations. As a result four ridges on which the enemy was known to be in maximum strength were selected as a signboard, and the required tasks were plotted.

Then came the blizzard of January 1. The shoot had been arranged to take place at 8.30 o’clock that morning, and at that time, despite snow, rain and chill wind, our guns were ready to fire. It was realised that the enemy would certainly be under cover, so timeliness was sacrificed for efficiency. Saying it With Guns

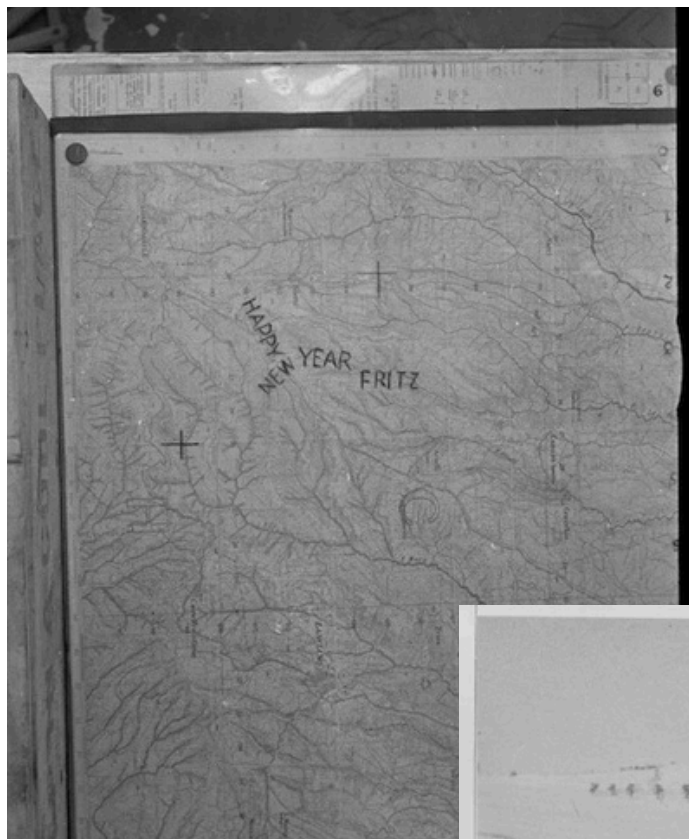
The following day was bright and clear, with the selected ridges gleaming under a fresh mantle of snow. Punctually at 9.15 a.m. the batteries opened up on the first letter. On traces supplied to each regiment, a cheery, four-word greeting was marked out in a number of different colours. The colours indicated which part of each letter each regiment was to fire. For example, letter H for “happy” might have its left upright outlined in blue ink, its cross-pieces in red, and its right-hand upright in green and black. A minute’s gunfire was devoted to each letter—and each letter was 500 yards high.

The first word, “Happy,” sprawled itself in regular hammering “lifts” across the white face of that first ridge, covering an area 2000 yards long, and everybody was pleased except the gentlemen on the receiving end. Never has it been so aptly demonstrated that it is more blessed to give than to receive.

Then the guns shifted to the next slope, and the second word, “New,” was blasted across the ridge as by Hercules wielding a giant punch—the black pattern shellburst against the snow extending for 1500 yards right through the objective.

Christmas Postcard Setting “Year” covered an area of 1600 yards, while “quote,” which fell on a ridge behind Orsogna, was calculated to flatten anything along 1800 yards length. During the shelling the pretty showground town presided over the ceremony like the traditional Christmas postcard village.

The efficiency of this artillery contribution to the festive season had to be seen to be believed. During the delivery of the message any man unwise enough to stand in an area nearly half a mile wide by over four miles in length would be lucky to escape unscathed. The destructive power of such a concentration is not limited to the immediate vicinity of each individual shell burst. Flying fragments cover a wide area, and the perfect fragmentation of a 25-pounder high explosive shell is one of the main reasons for the success of the guns.



The map board

Unfortunately the “greeting” was marred as a spectacle by the presence on the “billboards” of black treestumps, previous shellholes and earthworks. which rather spoilt the appearance of the finished legend.

There is a strong probability that no member of the enemy forces can really afford to get into such a position as would permit him to admire the work.

The Luftwaffe also appears to have found more pressing engagements elsewhere. “We really wanted something like that to relieve our feelings after all that snow,” commented one gunner, “but I hope that if Fritz returns the compliment he will make it short.” So far, however, Fritz has not produced a single “hell”—only odd punctuation marks.



Gun crew firing 'Happy New Year Fritz' message from their Castel Frentano position in Italy

16TH FIELD REGIMENT IN THE NEWS

PHOTO AND TEXT - NZDF



Exercise Cartwheel involved soldiers from 16th Field Regiment, Royal Regiment of New Zealand Artillery and 1st Battalion, Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment delivering training courses to Republic of Fiji Military Forces (RFMF) personnel, to further build their 81mm mortar and sustained-fire machine gun capabilities.

The exercise culminated with a live fire exercise in the Nausori Highlands, which was a prime opportunity for RFMF and NZ Army soldiers to not only put theory into practice, but also enhance the relationship between the two forces and their ability to work together in a jungle warfare environment.

“1 (NZ) Brigade Commander, Colonel Ben Bagley, was in Fiji for part of the exercise and says these opportunities are invaluable.

Purely on a tactical and technical level, any opportunity to get our soldiers into the field and put their skills into practice is fantastic, but Exercise Cartwheel is much more than just that. It allows us to spend some valuable time with one of our key Pacific partners in the RFMF and enhance our interoperability,” Colonel Bagley said.

“The feedback we receive from the RFMF has always been positive around this exercise, and we equally value the opportunity to come and learn from our partners – it goes both ways.”

UPDATE FROM 16TH FIELD REGIMENT

WO2 I.J. SUTTON, TRAINING WARRANT OFFICER

In 2024, the 16th Field Regiment continued its commitment to operational readiness, with an emphasis on improving combat effectiveness, mobility, and integration within multi-domain operations. Over the past year, the Regiment has focused on:

- **Digital Fire Control Systems:** There has been significant investment in training operators in new digital fire control systems, which enhance the speed and precision of artillery strikes. Testing of digital communications is ongoing, working alongside of the SoA.

- **Live Fire Exercises:** Sub Units from the Regiment have conducted numerous live field firing exercises utilising both 81mm Mortar and 105mm Light Gun. Exercises were conducted in support to the School of Artillery trade coursing, as well as working alongside our international partners. Thus, enhancing our artillery skills and fostering international relationships.

16th Field Regiment has had a successful year, with significant progress in operational readiness, modernisation, and personnel development. We remain committed to our mission and look forward to continuing our service to the nation with pride and professionalism

FROM THE Q STORE

BY Q - CRAIG HEWETT RNZAAQSTORE@GMAIL.COM

The Q Store has seen a new range of products coming onto store this year. They include new Beanies with the Kings Crown, Assn Lapel pins with the Kings Crown and after much refinement and emails to overseas producers, replica OR beret badges with the Queens crown as was worn up until the change of beret to the Khaki.

At the moment, arranging the production of Officer Bullion woven beret badges with the new Kings Crown for our current serving Officers. New Association Polo shirts have been designed and manufactured to pre-orders with a very small stock holding. Pre-ordered Polos shirts for 3Fld and 11A Bty are being produced and a small re-order for 161 Bty SVN veterans has been made.



3 Field New Style Polo shirt with the Queen's Crown and Gunner patch



Royal NZ Artillery Assn.
New Style Polo shirt with the King Charles III Crown and Gunner patch



Sub-unit wall plaques coming soon

Acknowledgement: On behalf of the Association, I would like to thank Eliza Trapp the talented graphic designer who designed the new logo with the King's Crown. Eliza is married to Mark Pedersen who would be well known to many of us. Both are based in New Your - Craig



161 Bty New Style Polo shirt with the Queen's Crown and Gunner patch

Sizes: S/14, M/16, L, XL,2XL, 3XL 5XL

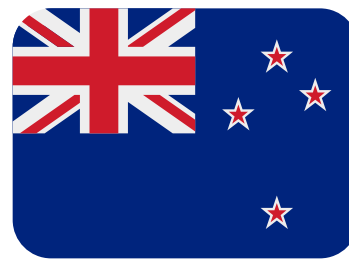
Order now - Prices \$TBC + Postage

Please email orders to: rnzaaqstore@gmail.com



4 Medium New Style Polo shirt with the Queen's Crown and Gunner patch

LAST POST



- HIGGINS, Darryl F A. 42718, 161 Bty RNZA, Vietnam Passed away in November 2024.
- BROWN, Ray. 3 Fd Regt, RNZA. Passed away in November 2024.
- CHRISTIE, David Anthony (Tony). SSgt, RNZA. Passed away peacefully in South Canterbury on 6 Nov 2024 aged 87 years.
- KIRKLAND, John Ferguson (Jack). 206247, Sgt, 16 Fd Regt RNZA, Korea, Capt, 1WWCT Regt. Passed away in October 2024
- FOWLER, G B R (Bruce). 161 Bty, RNZA, Vietnam. Passed away on 26 Oct 2024.
- SMITH, Richard (Borneo). K541245 WO1, RNZA, NZSAS Malaysia, RNZIR Vietnam. Passed away on 5 Oct 2024 in MASTERTON aged 83.
- MORGAN, William. H33357 Maj, RNZA. Passed away on 11 Sep 2024 at Nelson Hospital, aged 97.
- PAKI, Kingi Tūheitia Pōtatau Te Wherowhero VII, Knight of the Order of St John. 161 Bty RNZA. Passed away on 30 August 2024 in Hamilton.
- MILEY-TERRY, Pamela J (Pam) QSM, U30769, Matron/ Maj (Rtd), RNZNC. Passed away in ROTORUA on 12 Aug 2024 aged 86. Elected honorary member of the RNZA Association.
- RAKEI, Te Whitu John. L/Bdr, 161 Bty RNZA. Passed away on 10 Aug 2024 in Sydney.
- WRIGHT, Leslie W MBE. 800132/30175, Brig, RNZA, WW2, JForce, Malaya, Vietnam. Passed away on 30 Jul 2024 in Auckland aged 102.