

# ROYAL NEW ZEALAND ARTILLERY ASSOCIATION INC.

## 85th Annual General Meeting

Location: WO/SNCO Mess, Trentham Military Camp, Wellington

Date: 17 October 2020

Meeting opened: 0958hrs

Chairman: Tony McLeod

Minutes Secretary: Chris Pearce

### 1. Welcome

The President, Tony McLeod, welcomed the forty-seven (47) members attending the Annual General Meeting. Attendees detailed in **Schedule 1**.

### 2. Apologies

Apologies were received before and at the AGM, from the persons detailed in **Schedule 2**.

### 3. Minutes

**Resolution:** The Minutes of the 4<sup>th</sup> 8AGM as written and presented be approved.

*Tony McLeod/Chris Morris*

Passed **unanimously**.

### 4. President's Report

The President presented a written report. A copy of the report is attached to the Minutes at **Schedule 3**.

**Resolution:** The President's report be accepted.

*Tony McLeod/David Weston*

Passed **unanimously**.

### 5. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer presented the annual accounts, for the period 1 October 2019 to 30 September 2020. He commented:

1. Q Store and Donations remain the sole source of income.
2. Q Store trading had been affected by COVID 19 and was down on the previous year.
3. The 2019 AGM ran at a small profit.
4. Craig Hewitt and Lt. Col. (Rtd) Wayne Anker reviewed the accounts on 29 October 19.

**Resolution:** The Statements of Financial Performances and Financial Position up to 30 September 2020 be accepted.

*Chris Pearce /Chris Morris*

Passed **unanimously**.

### 6. Elections

#### 6.1 President

Brig Paul Southwell was welcomed to his first AGM as our Colonel Commandant. The Colonel Commandant is an ex-officio member of the committee and was asked to assume the Chair for the election of the President. Tony McLeod indicated willingness to continue in office. There was no other nomination.

**Resolution:** Tony McLeod be appointed President

*Paul Southwell/David Weston*

Passed **unanimously**.

Tony McLeod resumed the chair.

#### 6.2 Secretary/Treasurer

Chris Pearce indicated willingness to continue in office.

**Resolution:** Chris Pearce be appointed Secretary/Treasurer *Tony McLeod/Bernie McCort*  
Passed **unanimously**.

### 6.3 Committee Members

The following persons were stepping down from the Committee: Colin Jensen and Andrew Donnellan. Tony McLeod thanked them for their service and contribution.

The following persons indicated a willingness to continue to serve in office: Chris Morris and Greg Thwaite.

**Resolution:** Such persons be reappointed to the Committee *Tony McLeod/Colin Jensen*  
Passed **unanimously**.

An extended Committee was also nominated. New members were: Shay Bassett, Bryan Moles, Paul Weldram and Colin Davidson.

**Resolution:** Such persons be appointed to an extended Committee *Craig Hewitt/Bernie McCort*  
Passed **unanimously**.

The President noted:

- (a) Craig Hewitt would continue as an ‘advisor’ to the Committee, but not be on the Committee.

## 7. Life Membership

The President announced the conferral of a number of Life Memberships. Recipients are:

Mr	Woody	Barrett
Mr	John	Deazley
Mt	Terry	Farrell
Lt Col (rtd)	Con	Flinkenberg
Lt Col (rtd)	Fred	Goodall
Maj (rtd)	Kerry	Lee
Mr	Danny	McCort
Lt Col (rtd)	Rob	Munro
Maj (rtd)	Roger	Newth
Col (rtd)	Roger	Pearce
Brig	Paul	Southwell
Lt Col (rtd)	Ron	Turner
Lt Col (rtd)	Rick	Williams

At the Reunion Dinner, the presentations were greeted with applause and enthusiasm, as were the stories that accompanied each recipient’s reply.

## 8. Bank Signatories

Tony McLeod explained the bank signatory process and sought a resolution to reappoint the President and Treasurer as signatories.

**Resolution:** Moved that Tony McLeod and Chris Pearce be the signatories *Tony McLeod/Bernie McCort*  
Passed **unanimously**.

## 9. Honorarium

The honorarium of \$500 each to cover travel expenses for, and offered to, the Secretary/Treasurer and Webmaster was discussed. It was agreed to keep the honorarium in place even though the recipients have declined to accept it.

Resolution: the honorarium be retained at \$500. *McCort/Weston*

Passed **unanimously**.

## 10. Website & Membership Database

Chris Morris reported orally on the website performance and activity.

## 11. Welfare/VSA14.

Tony McLeod addressed the Association's response to VSA14 and thanked those that contributed to the both the written and oral presentation of the RNZAA's submission. Tony outlined the process the Association followed and outcome from the oral presentation. Greg Thwaite was invited to discuss the submission process and outcome. Greg made the following points from the submission process, which was made on behalf of 7000 veterans:

- (1) The RNZAA had established itself as a premier veteran's affairs organisation.
- (2) The process enabled the Association to form strong links with other organisations.
- (3) The Association will continue to monitor the implementation of the adopted Paterson report recommendations.
- (4) The Association has a need to integrate future generations/operations.
- (5) We need to continue to lobby MP's. Barry Dryer added that Gregg's paper on 'How to lobby an MP' was particularly useful.

Tony requested that we maintain a register of complaints on VA interaction. Bernie McCort agreed to maintain the register to include problems and complaints in dealings with VA.

Tony continued the discussion by outlining that the Association's recommendations were not adopted by the Select Committee, but that he was confident in the outcome. Subsequent to the process Tony had sought clarification from VA on one particular matter: the 30-Day response time frame. The specific question to and response from VA is detailed below:

**Q:** Many of the submitters to the Select Committee for the VSA14 Amdt Bill #2 asked that the 30-day time frame for VANZ to accept or decline a claim be retained. It wasn't. What notification procedure will VANZ follow to ensure vets are kept informed of the progress of any claim?

**A:** VA must now acknowledge receipt of an application within seven (7) days and keep the claimant informed and updated on the progress of the claim. This means VA will phone the claimant when the application is received and request any additional info at that time. There may also be a follow up email from us if needed. VA will also let the claimant know if there are any delays to reports or decisions.

Elaine Myers-Davies

Manager / Projects and Communication

Bernie McCort was also invited to contribute to the discussion on veteran welfare and provided her perspective on the challenges facing veteran support response. Bernie covered mental welfare,

the benefits that the Op Ubique programme brings to participants, and the benefits of gatherings such as the reunion weekend.

## 12. RSA

David Weston reported orally on the activities of the RSA, in his capacity as our Delegate. This covered an update on the Association, including the RSA's response to and the impact of COVID 19, especially as it related to income from Poppy Day collections, and ANZAC Day activities. The Government's assistance of \$2.5M was discussed, as was the Association/Government relationship, the strengths of the RSA looking forward and the threats posed by dropping membership numbers.

## 13. Historic Trust

Barry Dreyer reported on the activities of the Trust, specifically on the production of the Reg Miles book and funding challenges. In addition, Barry outlined the work which was undertaken to create a register of Artillery trophies, including their location and ownership.

## 14. Operation Ubique

Paul Weldram provided an update on the current and upcoming Op Ubique assignments:

- (1) The Trentham assignment was now complete.
- (2) The Pt Jerningham assignment had completed work on two guns but still had work to do on a further two guns
- (3) Skin Francis was looking into the Burnham assignment which entails a 5.5in, an M1 and a 25pdr.

Maj John Garton outlined the need to be vigilant with RSA closures and the disposal of artillery pieces as these, in the main, are held by RSA's under loan agreements.

## 15. Next Reunion

The next Reunion/AGM location for 2021 was proposed as Trentham Camp. *Tony McLeod/Terry Farrell*

Passed **unanimously**

## 16. Other Matters

1. **Last Post.** Brian Meyer was thanked for his efforts in monitoring and advising the Association of Last Posts.
2. **Horowhenua Artillery Association.** Roger Newth provided an update on the activities of the Horowhenua Artillery Association.
3. **RNZAA Trophy.** Colin Jansen enquired as to the ongoing use of the trophy he donated for 16 Fd Regt GOTY. Options for its use were briefly discussed and then referred to the Committee for discussion/action. In the interim it was decided that the trophy will remain in the 16 Fd Regt trophy cabinet until an alternative use is confirmed.

Amidst general jollity, the Meeting closed at 1132hrs

## Schedule 1: Attenders

Tony McLeod (President)

Peter Baker

John Barrett

Shay Bassett

Barry Cook

Martin Coomber

Owen Dance

Colin Davidson

John Deazley

Peter Domanski

Andrew Donnellan

Barry Dreyer

Jeffrey farmer

Terry Farrell

Skin Frances

John Garton

Frederick Robert Goodall

Leon Grandy

Craig Hewett

Kent Arthur Horsfield

Alastair Malcolm Irving

Colin Jansen

Kerry Lee

Jon Martin

Robert McAulay

Bernadine McCort

Danny McCort

Stephen Willson

John Austin McNicol

Brian Meyer

Bryan Moles

Chris Morriss

Rob Munro

Roger Newth

Paul O'Connor

Chris Pearce

Roger Pearce

Wayne Searle

David Seymour

Paul Southwell

William Taylor

Gregory Thwaite

Ron Turner

Barry Vryenhoek

Paul Weldrand

David Weston

Richard Williams

## Schedule 2: Apologies

Mike Wicksteed

Les Wright

James Horn

Mike Bradfield

Kim McGrath

Mike Subritzky

Bryce Harrison

Con Flinkenberg

Tom Roche

Pete Dawson

Kevin Stone

Brian Edwards

Murray McKendry

Fred Russell

Walter Steward

Phillip Moore

Robert Baker

Willy Jensen

John O'Reilly

Peter Miles

## Schedule 3: President's Report

### RNZA Association; Presidents Report 2020

Presented by Tony McLeod, President RNZAA, 17 October 2020.

#### Intro

Well COVID 19 has certainly had a dramatic effect upon our normal commemorative activities with the cancellation of ANZAC Day and Gunners Day activities as well as our visit to the 16<sup>th</sup> Field Regt Gun Line in Waiouru. However, it has not been an idle period with significant work going on behind the scenes on veterans` advisory matters

#### Veteran Support Act 2014.

I would like to take a minute to explain the work which went on behind the scenes regarding the Veteran Support Act 2014.

In March 2020 the Minister for Veterans Affairs Mr Ron Mark tabled the Veterans Support Amdt Bill (No 2) in Parliament. The Bill was a follow-on to the Paterson Review to which the RNZAA gave both formal and informal submissions, and it purported to address 48 of the 64 recommendations of the Paterson Review. The Bill certainly addressed the provision of support to veteran`s families and the provision of urgent treatment of mental injury or illness. We wholeheartedly supported these moves.

However, there were some aspects of the Bill we felt should be improved upon, and these included:

1. The retention of the 30-day time frame for VANZ to accept or decline a claim,
2. The continuation of payment/supply of benefits to a veteran until any disputes over the provision of these benefits had been resolved,
3. The establishment of a 5 yearly review cycle of the legislation because of the unknown nature of theatres of possible future deployments, and
4. The establishment of a formalised Veteran Advocacy Support Office to assist veterans when disputes did arise.

In a very short space of time (3 weeks) an informal RNZAA Veteran`s Advisory Support Group of Greg Thwaite, Rob Munro, Barry Dreyer, Mike Dakin, myself fired ideas around ,mainly by email, under the direction of Greg Thwaite who then compiled the points into a very comprehensive document which was submitted to the Select Committee before the deadline of 15 June 2020. At this stage we all thought we could relax for a little while but within 48 hours we were advised that our Oral Submission hearing time, would be in one weeks` time, 15 minutes at 4.00pm on 23 June 2020. The urgency was due to the government`s attempt to get the Bill passed before Parliament rose for the final time before the elections (2 weeks` time).

So, the team of Greg Thwaite, Barry Dreyer and myself set to preparing an oral submission, and at this stage we drafted the services of Bernie McCort as a fellow presenter because of her hands-on experience with Veterans Affairs. It was when we were waiting at Auckland airport to catch the 9.00am flight to Wellington on 23 June that Murphy`s law decided to intervene, Wellington airport was closed due to fog. My flight was cancelled, and Greg just managed to sneak in on a flight which had been delayed some 3 hours. Gone was the preparation time we had relied on to coordinate our presentation. The revised team of Greg, Barry and Bernie then delivered our oral submission to the Select Committee based on our four major points. After that

the fate of our submissions was in the hands of the parliamentary process, but word was that there was no way the Bill would get through its third reading in time to be passed. This would mean everyone would be starting from scratch with amendments to the VSA 14 in the next governments term.

The next thing we receive is the Report by the Select Committee on the Amdt Bill (No2) and it appears that they have not accepted any of the points we raised in our submissions (written and oral). However, it was always our view that it was better for the Bill to go through rather than be held up by any amendments, including our own.

Time is running out to formalise the Bill into legislation. Then quite unexpectedly on 2 August 2020, just days before parliament is due to rise, Mr Ron Mark stands up in Parliament and presents his VSA14 Amdt Bill (No 2). It is supported by all parties except for National who would like the 30-day time frame for VANZ to accept or decline a case, to be retained (our point #1). Mr Chris Penk the National spokesman for Defence speaks to support his proposed amendment, i.e. retaining the 30-day clause. Mr Mark then responded with the rationale for removing the timeframe being the inability of VANZ to be able to collect all the relevant information to make an informed decision. He indicated that one of the main issues was getting other Departments to share information but he was confident that this issue has been addressed in the last budget, He was adamant that this did not preclude VANZ from delivering veterans` services in a timely and effective manner. He stated that he would be `watching eagerly for feedback if this is not the case`. So, the Bill was passed into legislation and should have come into effect from 1 October 2020. I feel we should congratulate and thank Minister Mark for his efforts in seeing this Amendment Bill (No2) through.

But where does that leave us now?

Well I believe we have an excellent basis for identifying what other measures need to be taken to improve the lot of the veteran, and at what level they should be addressed, for example are they legislative issues such as our four main points or are they procedural issues with VANZ/NZ Defence/RNZRSA such as the many items we identified in the Schedules to our Written Submission. We can now determine where to target these matters.

We should also maintain a register of complaints from our members about any lack of satisfaction with VANZ, which we can then feed back to the Minister whoever that may be, who should be `watching eagerly` for such cases.

I cannot stress enough our gratitude and appreciation to Greg Thwaite for the amount of time and professional expertise he has put into this submission process. I would urge all members who are interested to read our Written Submission, to get an understanding of the complexity of the issues and the intellectual gymnastics it has taken to compile this into one succinct yet comprehensive document. I would also like to re-thank Rob Munro, Mike Dakin, Barry Dreyer and Bernie McCort for their invaluable input.

Membership: We now have 1621 names in the membership database (compared to 1605 last year and 1400 the year before), 878 of whom we have email addresses for (up from the 856 we had last year, down from the 880 we had the year before but up from the 640 t the year before that).

Operation Ubique: This initiative, which started four years ago as a monthly assistance program for the maintenance of equipment held at the National Army Museum in Waiouru has been affected by Covid this year. I would like to reiterate my thanks to Colin Jansen for his work over the preceding 3 years and thank Paul Weldran (an Infantryman) for stepping up to take the role

as national coordinator this year. Pete Dawson in Christchurch also has an active job on his books with the maintenance of several guns at Burnham Camp.

RNZRSA: Our thanks to David Weston for his ongoing support as our delegate to RNZRSA. David has also stepped up to be the Associate delegate to the Chairman`s Board. The RSA is undergoing change (as was much needed) with its new constitution, and its emphasis on welfare rather than running social clubs. I believe it is an institution which is well worth supporting as it tries to find its place in the modern world. I am very happy that we remain an affiliated associate of the RSA.

Xmas appreciation: In December 2019 a card and a small gift (calendar) were sent to gunners serving overseas at Xmas time. This is the 9<sup>th</sup> year we have made this small gesture to thank our serving gunners for their commitment, and we will continue it again this year.

### **Media**

Website: I would like to thank Chris Morris for his work not only as our webmaster but also as our Membership Secretary. Chris puts in a lot of `invisible` but critical effort. Chris is also a critical member of the Op Ubique team

Facebook: Our facebook page ticks along even if it never gets anywhere near `viral`. This is a critical `tool` for the Association, and well worth keeping.

Newsletter: The relevance of a quarterly newsletter as means of conveying news is an anachronism in this modern technological age; our news is conveyed much quicker via Facebook and the website. However, it still has relevance as a journal of Association activities, and as a means of retaining contact with members. Our thanks to Chris Pearce for another year as editor.

### **Committee.**

May I thank your elected committee for keeping the wheels turning over the past year; Vice President Greg Thwaite, Secretary /Treasurer Chris Pearce, Webmaster Chris Morris, Quarter Master Andrew Donnellan, C`ttee member Colin Jansen, unofficial C`ttee member Craig Hewett.

``He kitenga kanohi, he hokinga whakairo``-      ``To see a face is to stir the memory``.