

NEW ZEALAND PERMANENT FORCE OLD COMRADES ASSN INC

PO BOX 33 710, TAKAPUNA, AUCKLAND 9

NEWSLETTER No 64

December 1989

A registered publication

SEASONS GREETINGS: The President and Executive extend to all members best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

LAST POST: 1781 Major W.F. (Bill) Cox MBE, 19 Sep 89, at Auckland.

L925438 W02 L.G. (Les) Jackson RNZA, 29 Sep 89, at Papakura.

30211 Major H.J. (Bert) Harvey, 16 Oct 89, at Auckland.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS:

P.R. Anderson to 30 Taonui St, Papakura.

W.A. Cooper to 21 Taihiki Rd, Clarkes Beach, RD4, Pukekohe.

Capt F.F. Eastgate to 44A Huia Rd, Point Chevalier, Auckland 2.

W02 P. Gregg to c/o 3 Sqn RNZAF, Hobsonville then to 16 Fd Regt RNZA, Papakura wef 11 December 89.

R. Huston to 57 Hakanoa St, Huntly.

S.E. Morrison to 28 Rata Rd, Otatara No 9 RD, Invercargill.

P.L. McInerny to 80 Lorn St, Invercargill.

Major R. Newth to 176 Waiwhetu Rd, Lower Hutt.

P.J. Page to c/o Post Office, Matata, Bay of Plenty.

Mrs Enid Standen to 5A Clifton Ave, Carterton.

R.T. Wirihana to 36 Kindergarten Drive, Takanini.

Brig L.W. Wright to 2/23 Heathcote Rd, Castor Bay, Auckland 9.

AMENDMENTS TO NEWSLETTER No 63: In 'Struck off strength...' para 3 delete 'the modern Gunner' substitute 'some modern Gunners.'

To the roll of members attending the Motutapu reunion add: Reg Walker.

AMENDMENT TO NEWSLETTER No 62: In the note re James and Dalton in NEWS FROM AROUND AND ABOUT para 3 delete 'invariably' substitute 'usually.' See also NEWS etc in this newsletter.

GONE NO ADDRESS:

S Sgt D. Rawiri

W02 J.W. Niwa

LAST KNOWN LOC

29 Presidents Ave, Papakura.

16 Fd Regt RNZA, "

REUNIONS ETC: 6 NZ Field Regiment NZA: The 50th anniversary of the formation of the Regiment will be celebrated at the next national reunion to be held in Auckland on 25-26-27 May 1990. Reunion HQ will be at Ellerslie Racecourse. For further details contact G.A. (Geoff) Maxwell, Secretary/Treasurer, Box 38 306, Howick, Phone 09/534 5353.

NZPFOCA - Auckland Christmas Social: This will be held in Birkenhead RSA premises, Recreation Drive, Birkenhead, on Wednesday 13 Dec 89, commencing at 1100 hrs. All are welcome; attendance is not confined to Auckland members. If you can make it please ring Alf Smith, our Auckland Rep, on 09/410 4564 or Secretary on 09/453 567, and to assist with catering indicate whether or not you will be staying for lunch.

NZPFOCA - National Reunion 1990: will be held again in Taupo over the week-end 9-10-11 November 1990. MARK THIS DATE ON YOUR CALENDAR NOW! Members who are unable to drive or who dislike driving long distances are reminded that they may bring a companion/driver who may take part in all reunion activities except the AGM.

7 NZ Anti-Tank Regt Assn: 3-4-5 April 1990 at Tauranga. Contact Sec'y R.G. Simister, 29 Ngatai Rd, Tauranga, Phone 69 301.



NZPFOCA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING: Will be held in the Birkenhead RSA at 1000 hrs 1 February 1990. All visiting members welcome.

ARMY MUSEUM LIBRARY COLLECTION: The Queen Elizabeth II Army Memorial Museum, Waiouru, is building up its library collection to include books, diaries, paybooks, letters, annotated photographs etc for posterity. The long-term aim, agreed by CGS, is that by 1995 there will be established a Military Research Centre as an adjunct of the Museum for the use of military and civilian scholars and students.

Brigadier J. (Blackie) Burns, who as a member of the Army Museum Board has a special interest in the establishment of the Research Centre, appeals to all old soldiers - and members of this Association in particular - to contribute any such books etc they may have.

The project is a very worthy one, and the time to contribute is NOW before all your treasures are lost, gone astray, or are otherwise disposed of.

NEWS FROM AROUND AND ABOUT: Tony McLeod has recently purchased the New World Supermarket in Porirua and is so busy making money he cannot leave it even for a day.

For future reunions or other trips to Taupo Charlie Wotherspoon recommends the Wairakei Geothermal Guest House (not to be confused with the Wairakei Hotel or Motel), which he and Dorothy find quite adequate and reasonable Tariff: Adults \$13.75 per night, children 2-16 years \$7. Meals: breakfast \$6; dinner at restaurant. Half meals available; children under two no charge. Add GST to prices. Phone: 074/48358; after hours 074/48301.

From the illustrations in the brochure Charlie supplied it looks pretty good. Keep it in mind for 1990.

Paul Gregg who returned from the Sinai during September is to assume the appointment of RSM 16 Field Regt RNZA on 11 December 89. He reports that his father Norman, also a member of this Association suffered a stroke some months ago but is fighting to regain his normal health. We wish you every success, Norman.

Peter Anderson, until recently Chief Clerk, Papakura Camp, has retired from the Army and is now an owner-driver with Freightways in Auckland. He says the old saying 'a change is as good as a rest' is of rather doubtful application in his case!

Eric Hall recently underwent an operation on his right eye which was successful, but at time of writing (5 Oct) he had still to obtain the spectacles necessary to enable him to drive. See you in Taupo in 1990, Eric.

George Norris from Whangarei sent us a number of photographs which will make a useful addition to our collection. Thank you, George.

The photos were mostly taken at Palmerston North during the early days of World War 2, and show among other things the BL 6-in howitzer before and after conversion to mechanical draught, i.e. local pattern pneumatic. I distinctly recall the conversion was not exactly a howling success; I put it in the same category as Bob Semple's tank!



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STOP PRESS! Page 2 Para 1: Delete 1 Feb substitute 17 February.

NEWS FROM AROUND AND ABOUT (Cont.): If you're wondering why Dave Jones, our Wanganui Rep, was not at the reunion, Averill, his good lady cannot do a lot owing to 'ticker' trouble. Dave writes that he is therefore chief cook, bottle-washer, farm manager, orchardist, and head bee-keeper, so has little time for 'pursuits of the flesh' as he puts it. Averill, we all hope you soon get well.

Similarly Bill Stephenson, our Northland Rep, and Elaine had every intention of coming to Taupo but at the last minute Elaine suffered an attack of asthma which meant that their trip had to be cancelled. Elaine, we trust you will beat the asthma, and that we'll see you next year, or better still on 13 December at the RSA, Birkenhead.

You will recall the note in Newsletter No 62 which stated the barrack blocks named after Fred James and Bill Dalton had been demolished, the replacement buildings left unnamed, and that Jack Cook (died 17 Jul 89) intended to do something about the omission.

Lt Col R.J. (Ron) Turner, OC Base Area Wellington, reports in a letter that unfortunately Jack died before he could carry out his intention. Ron confirms that when named Army buildings are demolished tradition allows the names to die with them.

Ron also took me to task for saying the New Zealand Army invariably names buildings etc after Officers, hence the change to 'usually' in the amendment above. Of course he is quite right and I stand corrected. He points out that in Papakura barrack blocks are named after theatres of operations and battles, in Linton after VC winners, in Trentham after World War 1 battles, while Burnham uses more recent campaign names.

When I wrote Newsletter 62 I was thinking of my days in Waiouru with its Campbell Crescent, Caughley Crescent, Andrews Drive, Weir Terrace, Maxwell Grove, Stewart Street, Hamilton Field, etc etc. Perhaps I spent too long in the place!

So with Fred and Bill written off it seems we are back to normal, i.e. to have something named after him a WO or NCO must first win a VC.

Colin Young, our Canterbury/Nelson/West Coast Rep has just returned from Australia where he has been advising the authorities on the restoration of Fort Lytton near Brisbane.

Gordon Williams, our Southland Rep writes of the difficulties involved in attending a reunion in the North Island. The Executive is well aware that Invercargill, Dunedin etc are a long, long way from Taupo, and is prepared to give every assistance to South Island Reps who may wish to organise a reunion on the Mainland. Let us have your ideas.

REUNION 1989: Those who attended spent a very enjoyable week-end. Our numbers (50 at the AGM, 88 at the dinner), were slightly down on last year's owing to the number of older members who went west during the previous twelve months, while others did not attend owing to sickness, hospitalisation, or being unable or unwilling to undertake the long drive to Taupo.

To the latter let me repeat that members may bring a relative/companion/driver who is welcome to take part in all reunion activities except the AGM.



If there are enough 'takers' among Auckland members your Secretary is prepared to organise a mini-bus to and from the reunion - and include a trip to the Army Museum, Waiouru, if desired. However, to make a mini-bus an economical proposition it must be filled or almost filled, i.e. there should be a minimum of, say, ten passengers. Think about it for 1990.

Reunions have been notable in recent years for the small numbers of younger members who turn up, a situation which greatly concerns your Executive. We may be '... a lot of silly old buggers..' as I once overheard a certain Officer remark, but we are young at heart. When I myself was young, and with many of my contemporaries, attended my first reunion in 1947, we likewise found the 'ancients' young at heart - and some were ex-Armed Constabulary! Suffice it to say that those same contemporaries who are still living regularly attend reunions to this day.

So to the many younger members who have not yet attended one of our reunions, what about coming to Taupo in 1990? If an organisation is worth joining is it not worth supporting? At present the Association is in good heart; it is over to you to keep it so.

And don't forget, you too will grow old - if you are lucky.

PRESIDENTS REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1988-89 as presented to the AGM.

Once again may I say what a pleasure it is to be present here in Taupo at our Annual Get-Together for the AGM and to welcome all present. For myself it is something to look forward to each year, and I know I speak for many others when I say it is most enjoyable to meet up once again with comrades whom one has served with during both war and peace.

Last December after several years in the doldrums Alf Smith was able to organise a luncheon for the Old Comrades held at the Birkenhead RSA. This was most enjoyable and those members and wives who attended found the Birkenhead RSA did us proud, even if the power did go off!

One person who was a little unhappy about the power failure, was Joe Cook's wife, Zita, because when the power went off she had her purse, pockets and everything else that held money, full of 20-cent coins from the machines. A big smile was on Joe's face as he helped count the money, saying "That's my girl."

At the last meeting, General McKinnon intimated that he would like to stand down as Patron. This was agreed to reluctantly, as since being the Patron he has served the Association well. We were indeed fortunate to have had such a dedicated member as Patron. I'm sure all members will join with me in wishing the General all the best for whatever he intends to do to fill in his time and "Thanks" for all he has done to help the Old Comrades run as smoothly as it has.

We have also been fortunate in having Wally Ruffell as Secretary. I know I am speaking on behalf of us all when I say his Newsletters are really something to look forward to. What research Wally must do to produce such interesting information. A very big "Thank you" must be given to Wally for his time-consuming work.

Last, but not least a "Thank you" to your Committee. Some of them travel quite long distances to attend the Meetings. But whatever the weather, there is always a very good attendance. Also a big "Thank You" for our Reps from out of Auckland. It is always



good to hear from them and to get the information of members. So altogether, we can say all is well within the Association.

Alf Smith arranged another most enjoyable Luncheon at Birkenhead RSA on the 24th May 89. This was very well attended and it was good to see Don Kenning and Spencer Cocks arrive. Also members of 16th Field Regt whom Les Jackson brought along and kept his eye on. Bill Stephenson was in attendance as was Ian Rowntree. Both of these our Reps from out of town. Now that the Birkenhead RSA has become the Old Comrades Headquarters, it is to be hoped we can entice more along to these Get Togethers.

As Wally has mentioned in his Newsletters, the Birkenhead RSA is now where anyone in town can find the Old Comrades gathered on a Friday. And of course when we hold our bi-monthly meetings. The atmosphere is good and the company better so if you are in Auckland why not make it a part of your itinerary.

Our numbers are not quite as good as they could be, but still not too bad taking all things into consideration. We have :

Ordinary Members	339
Associate Members	13
Honorary Members	3
Life Members	23

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Total	378
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Without more ado let us get on with the Meeting. My remarks still stand that if you have something to say, get on and say it without babbling on with something that has nothing to do with what we are here for.

Thank you, one and all for your support over the past year, and may we remain as strong for the coming twelve months.

A. Boyd, President,  
Old Comrades Association

Taupo,  
11 November 1989.

APOLOGIES FOR NON-ATTENDANCE AT THE AGM were received from the following. Ranks have been omitted to conserve space: JJ ADAMS, CJ ANDREWS, LE AUTRIDGE, TJ ARNOTT, BP BANKS, HG BIGG-WITHER, RG BLANKLEY, TAWHIWHI BROWN, J BURNS, JD BENNETT, AW BIRCHALL, MJ CHARTERIS, CM COCHRAN, CJC CROOKES, R.CROSS, DN DELANEY, IJ DOAK, DP DUMBLETON, NM FISHER, EA FORBES, BK GILMER, J GRAHAM, RJ GUNN, EH HALL, LV HANKEY, RA HARRIS, BJL HEWITT, RG HICKSON, GA HITCHINGS, EG HIGHT, WG HOPKINS, PWF JOPLIN, JF KEARNEY, ELA KITNEY, AN KING, KF LEE, VO LOADER, BJ MEYER, RO MEYER, EC MORGAN, TSG MORGAN, JGR MORLEY, AE MILN, BD MILLYN, JG MOORE, RJS MUNRO, EN McEWEN, RB McIVER, AR McLEOD, PL McINERNY, AS McWHINNIE, R NEWTH, G NORRIS, RM NUTSFORD, PB O'CONNOR, J. O'MEARA, ET O'NEILL, LF PARTNER, A PILCHER, AM PETRIE, LA PEARCE, MJR PEARCE, E W PECK, EG ROLLE, JMcL ROSS, JB ROUT, HGC SALT, JR SPENCE, WN STEPHENSON, Sir LW THORNTON, RC WALKER, Sir RJH WEBB, GL WILLIAMS, LW WRIGHT, SDMG WRIGHT, W WINTER, TAN VINE, JF FRAME. Additional apologies recorded at the AGM: GJ CASSIDY, BK GILMER, EC LILE, PB O'CONNOR, HJ OSMERS.

The following sat down to dinner on Saturday night 11 November 89: Harry ANDERSON, Charlie and June ANNISS, Tommy ATKINS, Jack BAIGENT and Theo WILSON, Bill and Valda BAKER, Allan and Elsie BOYD, Cliff and Babs BRAGG, Spencer and Joan COCKS, Matt and Rosalie CRAWLEY, Tom and Margaret CHAPMAN, Dave and Mollie CRICHTON, Bert DYSON,



Dan and Dorothy FOLEY, Frank GIBBISON, Jim and Dot GILBERD, Jack GILLOOLY, Bill and Emma GILES, Derek and Mrs GUNN, Ron and Mike HASSETT, Terry and Beryl HYNES, Joe HANVEY and Iris, Dutch HOLLAND, Don and Noeline KENNING, Bob and Betty KERSLAKE, Frank and Denise LUPO, John and Lucie LOW\*, Vic and Audrey MEYLE, George MILN, John and Amy MONK, Johnny and Lee MEIKLE, Bill and Estelle MORLAND, Ian McLEAN, Walter and Anna McKINNON, Bill and Tui McLEAY, Des and Buntie O'CONNOR, Brian and Joan O'CONNOR, Bill and Joy POWRIE, Ian and Iris ROWNTREE, Wally RUFFELL and Lorraine PRATT, Alf SMITH and Carroll WATSON, George and Ella SUTHERLAND, Vic (Swede) SVENSEN, Hoki STUART, Terry and Joan TRANSOM, Rusty VAIL, Gordon and Nora WEAVER, Ted WILLBOND, Cora and Doug WOODS, Charlie and Dorothy WOTHERSPOON, Yogi YOUNG, Leo BRADY, Pat HALL, Harold NICHOLSON.

SUMMARY OF AGM: Subscriptions: to remain at \$5 per annum.

Secretary's Honorarium: To remain at \$250 per annum.

Outstanding Subscriptions: Including those owed by members recently struck off amount to \$700. Members are urged to keep up-to-date with their dues.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS: All members holding office prior to the AGM were re-elected with the exception of the following:

Patron: Major General R.D.P. (Ron) Hassett CB CBE was elected Patron vice Major General W.S. McKinnon CB CBE BSc.

Papakura/16 Fd Rep: } These offices are now vacant.

Burnham/3 Fd Rep: } Executive to arrange replacements.

REUNION 1990: Taupo Senior Citizens Assn 9-11 Nov 90. Further details in later newsletters.

### SOLDIERS NAVY

(Continued from NL 63)

Defence vessels towed targets for coast artillery shoots, serviced fortress areas and lighthouses, and carried out a variety of other tasks for port authorities, e.g. conveying medical and customs officers to ships in harbour. From time to time they also did jobs for other Government Departments.

The Janie Seddon was sold in 1947 to the Motueka Trawling Co who employed her for two years fishing. In 1953 she sank at the wharf, nobody wanted her, so she was left to rot. Her remains may still be seen on the mudflat at Motueka.

In Auckland the original Lady Roberts appears to have been disposed of prior to World War 2. A second Lady Roberts, a tug-type vessel first built for UNNRA, came into use in 1948. During and after the war the launches Nissan, Gunner, Lance-Bombardier, and lastly the harbour defence motor launch (HDML) Bombardier were also in use in Auckland. The last-named having been borrowed from the Navy in 1946 was returned to that Service in 1960, by which time all coast artillery installations had been closed down and most of their equipment sold for scrap.

The Janie Seddon was the last of Wellington's defence vessels. During the closing years of coast artillery's existence there was little need for a defence vessel in the windy city except for towing targets. For shoots during Territorial Force camps the Bombardier was brought down from Auckland for that purpose.



Slim Cumming, a member of our Association, remembers well the Janie Seddon, for he spent some years firing her during the 1930s. Then a member of the Permanent Force General Duties Section (having transferred from the RNZA), Slim lived on board, and maintains he was the only soldier in the New Zealand Army ever to have been paid overtime! He recalls the Master being a WO1 (Sergeant-Major Coxswain), the Engineer a WO2. Strange to relate the deckhand was also a WO2, while Slim, who possessed the necessary steam 'ticket' demanded by the authorities, held the modest rank of Lance Corporal. On the outbreak of war Slim transferred back to the RNZA in order to serve overseas with the 2NZEF.

Several other members of our Association saw service as Coxswains of Defence Vessels, among them being: Bill Stephenson: Bombardier 1946-49; Dan Foley: Nissan 1947, Lady Roberts 1948, Bombardier 1949-59; Harry McKinnon: Lady Roberts 1949-59.

Harry Anderson, Hec Jamieson (died 1963), and Bill Powrie between them spent many years manning the engine-rooms of the vessels named above.

The writer lacks information about Defence Vessels in the South Island during the latter years of coast defence, and would appreciate anything members may have on the subject.

Concluded.

### BOOT AND SADDLE

By Jim Gilberd.

This is a rather belated attempt to put on record the part played by horses in the New Zealand Forces from the 1840s until 1945.

This research should have been carried out at least 30 years ago when many military horsemen were still around; I refer to the veterans of the Armed Constabulary, Volunteer Cavalrymen, Mounted Riflemen, Artillery Drivers and others who formed horsed units during the period when animals provided the means of mobility and transport for the Army at that time.

In this paper I have tried to record the story of the horse both in peace and in war. What really is missing are the stories (first hand) from the military horsemen of that era. However, by researching Army reports, war histories and documents from Army libraries, National Archives and many other sources we will have salvaged something that will show the contribution made by those 'long-faced' friends and their handlers to the military history of New Zealand.

The military horse first appears on record with the arrival in New Zealand of British regiments from India, United Kingdom and Australia. The bulk of these troops were Foot Regiments of the line together with Royal Artillery batteries plus the Supply Train with their horses.

So we commence our story with the New Zealand Wars which brought British soldiers to this country. There were at that time small bands of volunteers formed into cavalry units to support the British in their operations against the hostile Maoris.



From the settlers such families as the Atkinsons, Smiths, Bayleys, Houlstorms and others made ideal 'frontiersmen.' Schooled in hard living, trained to work on their own, plus being excellent horsemen, this was the material that formed the volunteers.

In 1862 was formed the Colonial Defence Force Cavalry, a regular force organised on constabulary lines. Not a few of the mounted branch of the original Armed Constabulary formed by Governor Grey in 1846 transferred to the new force.

The first recorded use of horses for military operations was in 1860 during the First Taranaki War. Lieutenant Colonel Murray called out the militia and the Taranaki Volunteers for active service, and included in this force was a small detachment of mounted men armed with carbines, swords and revolvers.

Colonel Gold of the British Army moved on WAITARA on the 5th March 1860 with a force of 400 Officers, NCOs and Men from the 65th Regiment of Foot, some artillery plus the supply train. The first casualty in the Taranaki War was Trooper J. Garter of the Volunteer Cavalry.

Then on 9th October 1860 a composite column numbering over 1000 men marched out from NEW PLYMOUTH along the South Road with the object of reducing the Maori fortifications at KAIHIHI. Included in the force were 105 Taranaki Cavalrymen. These men were used on scouting and message-carrying duties, a very arduous job in the bush-covered terrain.

On 4th March 1861 Captain Mercer's battery of six 12-pr RBL Armstrong guns arrived in Auckland from Woolwich in the troopship NORWOOD.

The battery horses were purchased from outback stations in NEW SOUTH WALES, and were wild and unbroken. They gave some trouble to their drivers until broken to the draught work of hauling the guns. These 180 horses arrived in May 1861. Stables were built, harness unpacked, and training then commenced in earnest.

Much of this 'training' time was spent in making the original Great South Road from AUCKLAND to the WAIKATO. For this purpose the limber bodies, which in those days comprised two large chests, were removed and replaced by locally-made bodies suitable for carting and spreading gravel. The heavy work involved in handling this material greatly assisted in 'breaking' the horses.

In March 1863 Captain Mercer received instructions to mount 100 Gunners and Drivers from his battery to drill and train as cavalry. Each man was armed with a regulation cavalry sword, plus a carbine or a Dean and Adams revolver supplied by the Colonial Government. As hostilities were expected to break out again in TARANAKI, Mercer's battery and the mounted squadron moved by sea from AUCKLAND to NEW PLYMOUTH. Lieutenant Rait was in command of the mounted squadron.

The loading of equipment, men, and horses from the Manukau Harbour caused problems owing to the lack of proper wharf facilities. On arrival at the beach it was found necessary to drive the horses into the water while boats then towed them to the troopship where they were slung aboard.

Again at NEW PLYMOUTH the horses and equipment were slung overboard. The horses then swam ashore where their handlers took them over.

To be continued.