



Incorporated

NEW ZEALAND PERMANENT FORCE OLD COMRADES ASSOCIATION INC

PO BOX 33 710, TAKAPUNA, AUCKLAND 9

NEWSLETTER No 79

September 1993

A Registered Publication

LAST POST:

1721 AT (Alan) Hobson, 3 May 93, at Te Aroha.
1857 PNH (Pat) Shepherd, 3 Jul 93, at Brisbane.
1642 CR (Charlie) Wotherspoon, 16 Jul 93, at Pukekohe.
1661 EJ (Ted) Quinn, 13 Aug 93, at Lower Hutt.
1668 Captain CC (Charlie) Pipson, 20 Aug 93, at Auckland.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS:

Capt JP Bellamy to 44B Bould St, Johnsonville, Wellington.
Capt MR Dakin to 70 Fitzwilliam Drive, Torbay 1310, North Shore City.
Capt MR Nowill to 1 NZSAS Squadron, Private Bag, Hobsonville.
PB O'Connor MBE: address in NL 78 should read 69 Sabys Rd, NOT 62.
J Taylor to 16 Bertram Rd, Kawakawa Bay, Private Bag, Papakura.
Major J Wasson to 1/22 Centorian Drive, Mairangi Bay, Auckland 10.
JD Waters to 14A Dittmer Place, Papakura.

GONE NO ADDRESS:

LAST KNOWN LOCATION

Capt JE Fitzgerald	32 Chapman St, Invercargill.
Col WG Dixon	73 The Esplanade, Raumati South.

Any member knowing the whereabouts of above please inform Secretary.

NEW MEMBERS:

Mrs E (Elizabeth) Joplin, Otarawairere, Box 434, Whakatane (Associate).
Mrs GE (Gwen) Hobson, 6 Pooles Rd, Te Aroha (Associate).
35232 Major MB (Melva) Walker MBE, 14 Sydney St, Takapuna (Associate).

COMMITTEE MEETING:

Our next Committee Meeting will be held in the main lounge, Birkenhead RSA, on Saturday 9 Oct 93, commencing 0900 hrs. Non-committee members are welcome to attend.

AUCKLAND St BARBARAS DAY SOCIAL:

Will be held in the main lounge, Birkenhead RSA, on Wednesday 15 Dec 93, commencing 1100 hrs. All members and partners are welcome to attend; the social is not restricted to Aucklanders. An excellent lunch is available at \$7 main course.

DISTRICT REP:

PB (Paul) O'Connor MBE, 69 Sabys Rd, Halswell, Christchurch 3, is our new District Rep for Canterbury/Westland. Paul is active in the Real Estate business with Harcourts, Hornby Real Estate Ltd, 395 Main South Road, Hornby, Christchurch, Phone 03/349 9919.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF REGIMENTAL COLONEL:

The following is a letter from our member Colonel Tom O'Reilly:

The President, Old Comrades Association,

I thought members might be interested in one of the more recent developments/initiatives in the Army.

You will be aware that Corps Directorates were disestablished some time ago. This created a void in terms of the provision of Corps specialist advice, the overview of Corps personnel and Corps Regimental matters. To redress these deficiencies, the Chief of General Staff has appointed a Regimental Colonel for each Corps. The Regimental Colonel is a regular force Colonel or Lieutenant Colonel. I have been appointed the Regimental Colonel for the Royal Regiment.

The appointment of Regimental Colonel is not a separate appointment but is one which is additional to the primary appointments already held by the officers. For instance my primary appointment is Assistant Chief of General Staff (Personnel) ACGS (Pers)) but in addition I am the Regimental Colonel for the guns

My general responsibilities are:

- to provide Corps specialist advice when required;
- to maintain an overview of Corps personnel matters;
- to function as a link between the Regiment and the Colonel Commandant and provide support to the Colonel Commandant;
- to provide advice on Regimental matters and Corps traditions.

I hope this is of interest to you and members.

Yours aye,

Tom O'Reilly.

REUNIONS:

Ex-Vietnam Services Association. Labour Weekend, 22-25 Oct 93, at Christchurch. Contact Pat Duggan or KJ Murray, Box 19692, Christchurch 2

50 Bty 38 Fd Regt propose to hold reunion on 16-17 Oct 93, Blenheim. Enquiries to WJ Hathornem, Anakiwa, RD 1, Picton.

3 NZ Div Assn, 23-24 Oct 93. National Reunion Enquiries to Box 560, Nelson.

7 NZ Anti-tank Regt, 8-10 Mar 94, Alexandra Park Raceway, Greenlane, Epsom, Auckland. Contact R Curry, Reunion Secretary, 565 Hillsborough Rd Mt Roskill, Auckland 4, Phone 09/626 4435.

FRONTLINE BRITAIN 94;

A Frontline Britain Medal is available to those who served in the East Kent District, south East Command area between 1939-45, including New Zealanders, e.g. members of 2 Ech, NZ Div. There is an admin charge of 15 pounds sterling. For further information write to Frontline Britain 94, 107 Mongeham Road, Great Mongeham, Deal, Kent CT14 9LJ, OR write to Secretary.

QF 3.7-in HOWITZER:

16 Field Regiment RNZA has one of these on display at their HQ in Waiouru and would very much like to borrow a handbook on the equipment. If any member has one and is prepared to lend it please send to our Waiouru Rep W01 IS (Ian) Foster who will photo-copy it and return it to lender. Address is: Private Bag 1702, Waiouru.

THE MOTUTAPU FLAGPOLE:

16 Field Regiment have recently acquired the flagpole which is believed to be over 100 years old. They would very much like to find out more about its history. Any member with information please send to Ian Foster address as above.

ARTILLERY JERSEYS:

These are available from 16 Field Regiment at \$55 each sizes M, L, and XL. Contact Ian Foster.

ARTILLERY TIES:

Are available from 16 Field or Secretary. AIG ties are available from the Shool or through Secretary Price \$15. They are \$20 in Auckland - Sec.

ARTILLERY
ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION (NSW) INC Box 576 GPO Sydney, NSW 2001, offers membership to any New Zealand Gunner. It is affiliated to the RA Association. The President is Major LP Hindmarsh ED, 5 McRae Place, Turramurra, NSW 2074, Australia.

CONDOLENCES: Are due to Bill Stephenson and Vic Loader who recently lost their good ladies.

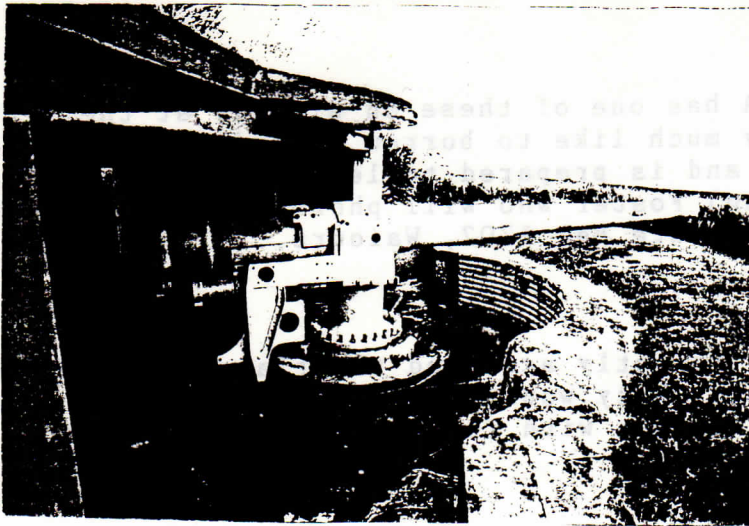
NEWS FROM AROUND AND ABOUT:

Jock Gunn reports he enjoys reading our articles on guns and records the following interesting story: Dicky Barrett, after whom Barrett's Hotel and Barrett's reef in Wellington are named, together with a partner Jack Love, came to grief in New Plymouth when a case of pork fell from a sling and holed their schooner. Dicky married a local chief's daughter there, and in 1831 when Te Wherowhero's Waikato Maori invaded their pa and were "having the pick of the feast" Dicky and his shipmates ran out four old guns from the wrecked schooner, loaded them with bottles (presumably empty), and stemmed the tide of onrushing Waikato, among whom the bottles are said to have created considerable havoc!

Michael Dakin has retired but says he hasn't worked so hard for a long time - at breaking in a new section. He reckons digging gun pits was much easier than the clay he has had to attack. He "was volunteered" to be Pensions Officer for the East Coast Bays RSA, a post he finds very interesting.

Jim Gilberd, our Hawkes Bay/Taupo Rep., reports Alex McDonald is having a hard time with his 'ticker' but is bearing up. Ian McLean, Ivan Wilson, and Jack Kearney are still going strong. Jim himself has had a spot of trouble with cancer in his right ear, involving surgery, skin graft etc.

Albin (Karl) Karlsson from Palmerston North reports he recently called at the Levin Veterans' Home where he saw Gordon Thomas. Gordon is very mobile considering the trouble he has had, has a philosophical outlook on life, and still enjoys a drop of 'medicine.' Karl is very interested in stamp collecting, a hobby he finds very absorbing.



Arthur Kilmore, who spends his winters in Fiji, sends this interesting photo of one of the Bilo Battery guns at Milo Bay, just south of Nadi. Both the site and the equipment have been refurbished and are kept in excellent order by the National Trust of Fiji. The site is a very popular attraction for tourists and picknickers.

What a pity the guns on some of our historic sites have not been preserved in the

same way. Their value as tourist attractions would far exceed the few miserable pounds received for them as scrap.

Tom Chapman, our Wellington/Hutt Valley Rep. sends the photo on the right of Wally Fraser and Bill Thornton taken at Fort Ballance, Wellington. Wally has for the last ten years been researching the history of New Zealand's coastal forts, in particular that of Ballance. He has been instrumental in uncovering the work previously covered by mounds of earth and generally tidying it up, a very commendable effort. He hopes that in the foreseeable future the fort may be completely restored and opened to the public. It should provide a useful tourist attraction even without its guns. Where are the guns?

Were they sold for scrap or were they ignominiously buried in some rubbish dump?

The original armament, two RML 7-inch guns which were dismantled about the turn of the century were probably given to some local body which was the policy in those days. What happened to them?



Major Wally Fraser, left, and patron of the Fort Ballance project, Sir Leonard Thornton, both from Karori, check the gun emplacements which were uncovered thanks to the research and motivation of Major Fraser.

Reidar Pedersen, having retired from the Manukau City Council a year ago, has just completed a 12-month holiday at his beach unit at Big Bay Awhitu Peninsular. He particularly regrets the closing of Papakura Camp with the consequent ending of opportunities for serving and retired soldiers to enjoy together mess facilities etc. Still, he looks back on his days in the Army with nostalgia.

Napier RSA have been recently given a 105-mm howitzer by Army as a memorial. It was unveiled by our Hawkes Bay/Taupo Rep., Jim Gilberd.

Tom Chapman reports he has been visiting all Old Comrades in his area who for some reason or another were unable to attend our last reunion. He especially mentions Jim Gibb and his good lady, both sufferers from arthritis, George Mansfield whose speech is still affected by a stroke, and last but not least, Ted Quinn, who has since passed 'beyond the veil.' We greatly appreciate his efforts, and especially those of

his good lady, Margaret, who does most of the driving.

Roger Pearce reports he is kept busy with his property management business in Wellington, in addition to which he has been active in Rotary for some 11 years as well as debating. Canoeing and tramping keep him fit.

Vic Loader, 32B Havelock St, Mornington, Dunedin, has had a bad spin this year. Some three months ago he had a stroke, lost the use of his right hand, and partially lost the power of speech. However, he is on the mend, and would appreciate a visit from any Old Comrade, especially any of 14 Wing RNZA.

THE GUN

Continued from Newsletter No 78.

By Wally Ruffell

MECHANISATION (Continued).

In 1898 the Scotte Tracteur (France) underwent extensive trials and proved completely superior to animal transport. The French Army requested six for artillery purposes but their government turned them down.

The South African War (1899-1902) saw the first real attempt by the British to mechanise medium and heavy artillery, at least 15 traction engines being employed in that conflict.

Vehicles already mentioned were all steam-driven but by the turn of the century the internal combustion (IC) engine had become a practicable proposition. However, far-sighted Officers of the Regiment who in 1901-02 suggested its development for use in gun towers were not taken seriously.

Here it is pertinent to remark that medium and heavy guns were manned in the field by members of the Royal Garrison Artillery (RGA), who had for some time been known in the Regiment as "The Scientific Corps," i.e. were not averse to adopting new ideas for the betterment of the art. They were not prejudiced against 'mechanical contrivances' as were many of their colleagues in horse and field.

Many were the arguments proffered by the last-named gentlemen against the adoption of IC-engined tractors:

Petrol supply would never be adequate.

Breakdowns would be frequent.

Dumb Gunners could never be taught to drive tractors - let alone maintain them.

Cross-country performance of a tractor could never equal that of a team of horses etc etc.

They conveniently ignored the arguments against the horse:

A horse badly wounded had to be put down - but an engine damaged in action could be repaired or replaced.

The horse still had to be fed even though he was idle, but the engine required 'feed' only while it was working.

The horse could work effectively only for a limited time without rest; the engine did not need rest.

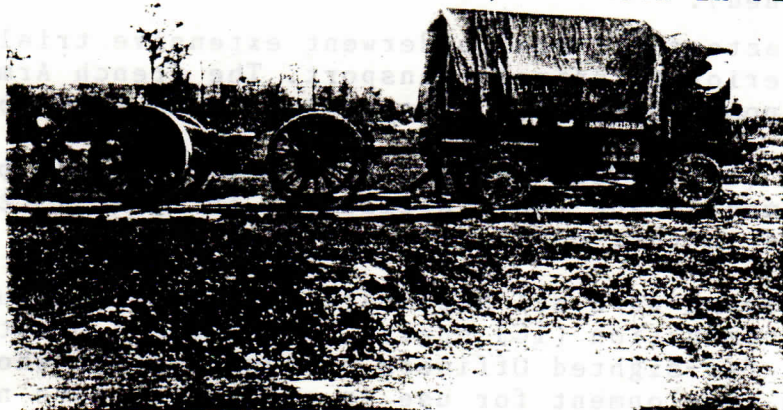
It took much longer to teach a soldier (even a dumb Gunner) equitation and horsemastership than to drive and maintain a tractor. Three drivers were necessary for a team (horse and field artillery)

but only one for a tractor. Six horses - and six sets of harness - were needed to pull one gun and limber, but only one tractor. The tractor needed no harness - simply a steel engine draught connector - but the horses needed six sets - and harness was a very expensive item during the horse-drawn era.

Notwithstanding the arguments in favour of adoption of mechanical draught for field and horse artillery the horsey fraternity resisted change until the late 1920s.

At the start of World War 1 steam-driven traction engines continued to be used by the RGA for towing medium and heavy guns with the exception of a few batteries of mediums which were drawn by teams of Clydesdale draught horses. However, as the war progressed IC-engined mechanical transport gradually superseded both horse and steam.

By 1916 some medium guns, e.g. BL 6-in howitzers, were being towed by heavy four-wheel-drive (FWD) IC-engined trucks or Holt Caterpillar tractors, all petrol-driven, as shown in Figs 21 and 22:

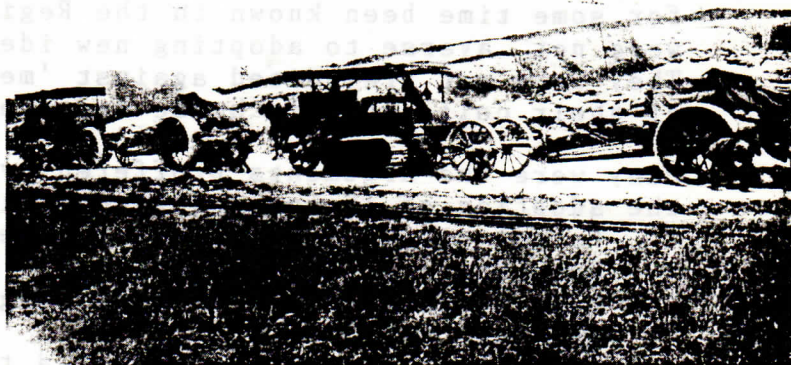


SOMME, July 1916. 6 inch 30 cwt. Howitzer being moved into position by a F.W.D. lorry near MAMETZ. Note construction of wooden sleeper temporary track necessitated by solid tyres.

(Photographs by kind permission of The Imperial War Museum.)

Fig. 21: Note that the BL 6-in 30 cwt howitzer was replaced later in the war by the BL 6-in 26-cwt, the latter being employed in New Zealand until a premature during CMT training in the early 1950s.

Fig. 22: This shows an early model of the Holt Caterpillar tractor which used two wheels in front for steering purposes. In New Zealand two later (Model 1925) fully-tracked Hols were obtained during the late 1920s Mention will be made of these later.



SOMME 1916. ASC Holt Tractors bringing up 8 inch Howitzers with men taking cover from shell bursts on far side of road. Note Decauville line in foreground. DEATH VALLEY, MAMETZ, July, 1916.

To be continued.

THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARTILLERY ASSOCIATION (NSW) annual St Barbara's Day church service will be held in the Holy Trinity Garrison Church, Millers Point, Sydney, at 1030 hrs Sunday 5 Dec 93. The Association extends an invitation to any of our members who may wish to attend, especially those living in Australia.



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PROGRAMME ANNUAL REUNION 19-21 NOV 93 AT TAUPO

FRIDAY 19 Nov 93; March in; 1600 hrs drinks at Taupo RSA, Horomatangi St

SATURDAY 20 Nov 93; 1000 hrs Annual General Meeting, Taupo Yacht Club.

Afternoon - free.

1800 hrs: Pre-dinner drinks at TAUPO YACHT CLUB.

1900 hrs: Reunion dinner in Yacht Club dining room.

Dress; Gentlemen informal - jacket and tie. Lounge suit or appropriate uniform may be worn. Medals and decorations to be worn.

Ladies: semi-formal.

Wine; The Yacht Club does not permit guests (including their own members) to bring own wine, but will have a comprehensive stock at club rates. Port is excepted and will be supplied by NZPFOCA.

SUNDAY 21 Nov 93; 1000 hrs Church Parade in Spa Hotel lounge, i.e. the meeting house 'Tiki o te Tamamutu.' Medals etc to be worn.

After Church Parade 'one for the road' in Suite 'A.'

Sunday after - free.