



The New Zealand Gunner

Official Journal of

The Royal New Zealand Artillery Association (Inc)

Founded 1934

1. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The past 3 months have been very busy for the Assn; seven wreaths were laid across the country by Assn members on ANZAC Day and we would hope to double that number next year. The reason for laying a wreath on behalf of the RNZA is not just to commemorate those who have fallen in previous wars, but also to act as a catalyst to gather gunners together within the local community. Lindsay Skinner's experience at Tapu Whenua (article later in this newsletter) is a great story of how a possible disaster was turned on its head and brought people together, gunners or not. Thanks Lindsay. We are very grateful to Peter Hanson for his generous support in funding this initiative. It was also encouraging to see Gunners Day celebrated throughout the country, with sit-down dinners and social gatherings organised by several Regional Reps. We will aim to build on both the ANZAC Day and Gunners Day celebrations next year. More photos from around the regions would also be appreciated.

I would urge everyone to read the article 'Membership Review' (later in the Newsletter) as it spells a significant change for the Assn going into the future. Essentially all gunners who have served in the RNZA will be Full Members, the right to be a member has been earned by their service to the Royal Regiment of NZ Artillery, and not by having paid a subscription. This move will give some meaning to two very important concepts; firstly 'the family of gunners' and secondly 'once a gunner always a gunner'. However it also means that we will be largely dependent on donations to finance our activities, and so we would hope that each member will make an annual donation (similar to the current sub). If we maintain relevance for both ex gunners and serving gunners, then I don't think the wider membership will begrudge offering this donation. The required changes to our rules will be actioned in the coming months and those changes will be presented for ratification at our AGM in November. If anyone has any comment to add on this issue, please let the committee know now, don't wait until November.

I know that all members would support me in expressing our sincerest condolences to Ron and Jo Turner, and their family, at the tragic loss of their three grandchildren in Doha. All of our thoughts are with them.

Best wishes to all, Tony McLeod

2. WARNING ORDER; 2012 Reunion & AGM, Browns Bay, Auckland

Programme Outline

Friday 9 November 2012

From 1600 hrs -

Registration

Mix and mingle

Buffet dining, choice of full menu (own responsibility)

Mix and mingle continues

Saturday 10 November 2012

AGM 1000-1200 hrs

Agenda:

- President's report
- Presentation of accounts
- Election of President, Secretary and Treasurer
- Election of Executive Committee
- Amendments to Rules
- General business
- Reunion 2013

Afternoon activity to be advised

Dining-in - Miniatures to be worn - 1800 hrs for 1900

Sunday 11 November 2012

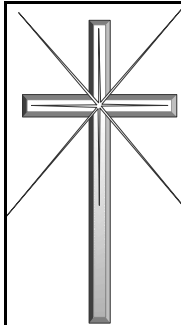
Armistice Day Service - Auckland War Memorial, 1030 hrs Refreshments, Farewells and disperse at 1200 hrs

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June 2012



3. LAST POST

Recorded in the press 10 April 2012, is the passing of Alister **YOUNG**, on Easter Sunday at his home in Invercargill. Alister served with 5 Light Regiment and was BC of 31(B) Bty.

DIAMOND, Lorraine Mary QSM. Life Member. At Whangarei on 18 June 2012, previously of

Waiwhatawhata.

KILLEEN, John Francis, on 17 June 2012 at Auckland .Bty Svy 161 Bty SVN 1967.



The photo above is of the RA memorial at the UK's Camp Bastion in Helmand Province, Afghanistan. It is sited outside the RHQ area of a locating Regiment based at the Camp, and unfortunately there were about 17 names on the cross. I was in Bastion as a result of escorting comedians Mike King and Andy Clay during an entertainment tour of the various locations in Afghan where our troops are based. We ended up overnighing at the Camp en route because of the weather. It was the tail end of Winter, and rather stormy when we there. My lasting impression of Camp Bastion is a sandy stony plain that stretches as far as the eye can see, with a climate similar to our very own Six Cross in Waiouru at the equivalent time of year i.e. not a nice place. Bamyan, and Kiwi Base in particular, were a relative paradise after Helmand.

Shay Bassett



4. NEWSLETTERS BY EMAIL

Please note that with effect from December 2012 Issue, this newsletter will be forwarded to members by email, unless they specifically ask to receive a printed copy, and have prepaid their \$20 fee.



5. NEW MEMBERS

We would like to welcome the following new members; Full Membership;

Bowen James **MEIKLE**, 161 Bty SVN (1967), Palmerston North
Bruce Ray **SMITH**, 161 Bty SVN (1967 Dvr Op), Palmerston North
Graham Edward **GORDON**, 161 Bty SVN (1968 No3), Antarctic,

Palmerston North

Garry Leslie **BRENNAN**, QSM JP, SVN (1966, 1968, 1970 No3 and Dvr Op), Palmerston North

Jonathon **DICK**, Lt serving, 163 Bty, 16 Fd Regt, Linton

Christian David **JACOBSEN**, 2Lt serving, 16 Fd Regt, Linton

Geoffrey Alexander **CHAMBERLAIN**, 2 Lt serving, 16 Fd Regt, Linton

Stuart Errol **TYLEE**, Capt serving, 163 Bty, 16 Fd Regt, Linton

Jeffrey William **KENT**, serving, 16 Fd Regt, Linton

David Joseph **HAWKES**, Lt serving, 163 Bty, Linton

6. REPORTS FROM COL COMDT

A. PHUOC TUY VISIT APRIL 2012

We'd put aside a day of our fifteen days in Vietnam to do the battlefield bits North of Vung Tau city. We had a car and permits organized for us to get where we wanted to get to. So, in the visit in sequence with a bit of explanation:

The provincial capital Baria (two of us got caught up in a serious mass gaol break by the VC one midnight in mid 1966 while we were manning a radio relay station for the Regt), Long Phuoc tunnels – recently opened and 1.8kms of them including a small hospital (my first operation was Hardihood with 173rd Airborne Bde and the main battle was over Long Phuoc – 173rd lost half a rifle company). It's a major VC/NVA memorial park, shrine, gardens and museum now. Long Tan Cross and a wander over the turf, and roses and poppies on the memorial. What a place to fight a battle – flat, open and nowhere to go. Not much changed from when I last saw the area – rubber plantation is younger, roads rather than tracks, and of course the Cross.

From there to the old Task Force base in the rubber at Nui Dat - I found the remains of one gun platform (probably Echo), the CP and the infamous well. Judy also located the Battery rock at the entrance, still faintly marked in red over blue, with some gold - we should have a project to get it back to NZ. Is there anyone that wants to take the lead – Regt already have a site for it in their lines in Linton?

From there to An Nhut where Peter Williams was killed on 14 Feb 67. Found the spot, or damn close to it, and we placed poppies for Peter, and the Australian OC and 2IC Don Bourne and Bob Milligan who were all killed at the same time.

A big spread of a lunch in Dat Do and then on to Xuyen Moc.

We (just 161 Bty) had deployed to this village for a week and a bit in, I think Dec 1966 – about 20kms East from Nui Dat base. No-one on our side had been there for years. It was a small village carved out of the jungle by a village of Northern Catholics who had fled South at partition in 1954 at the end of the French Indochina War. Their priest had been assassinated some years earlier, the school blown up and the headmaster shot - the teachers had fled. The village of woodcutters - the jungle had teak - were restricted to subsistence living in the village confines. We flew in a Task Force priest to say mass, fixed the village water pump, and got in several tens of tons of US Aid rice that had been recaptured at the bottom end of the Long Green.

Without a school the kids flocked to the Kiwis on the guns on a daily basis - we were in the fields beside the broken down school. The soldiers and kids loved it - the kids were soon taught to sing "God Save the Queen" and some te reo songs - the kids were happy which meant so were the gunners.

We did get a bit of VC attention after a few days, so the Task Force flew in an Australian infantry platoon to help with our local defence. As the platoon got off the choppers they were met with a stirring rendition - in Vietnamese - of "New Zealanders number one, Australians number ten", from the local kids choir, which perplexed the Ockers somewhat but was hilarious on our side of the gun position.

Long story, great little kids, and basically and unusually, a happy episode and good memories - lots of photos of the kids, which I had taken back with me.

One of my aims in coming back was to see if we could track down some of the kids in these photos. A very long shot - the kids were five to about ten 46 years ago and the village of less than a thousand was now in the tens of thousands.

To cut a long story short we found our old gun position beside a very large (1200 kids) and modern school, visited lots of houses and eventually we found some older people who remembered the Kiwis - she was a 21 year old midwife in the village in 1966. She recognized two of the kids in my photos and in fact had delivered one of them.

A few more torturous visits around the town and then I had my man, a successful local 52 year old businessman who remembered plenty and particularly the ditty his kids choir gave to the Ockers. A few beers together, some food, lots of excitement and laughs over my photos of the kids in 1966, some tears too - wonderful stuff.

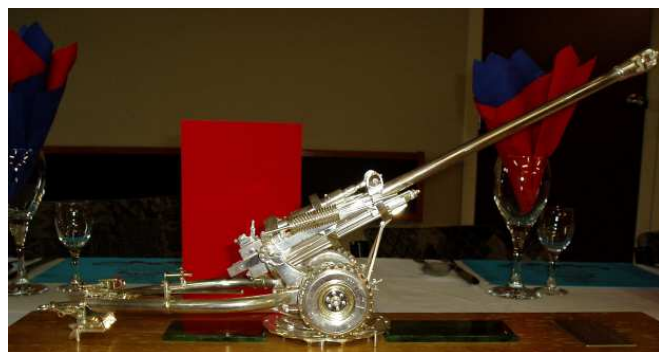
B. SOME QUICK IMPRESSIONS ON VIETNAM

We visited Vietnam for a couple of weeks this year in April. This note will be a few paragraphs on our impressions of the country. We started in Vung Tau in the South for a couple of days where the Australians had their logistic base, visited the Nui Dat area, then bussed to Saigon, flew to Da Nang, went by car to Hue, and then trained to Hanoi.

Firstly the country. It is a big, bustling energetic place on a major economic growth curve with an aim to

A SELECTION OF PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN AT THE GUNNERS DAY LADIES DINING NIGHT HELD AT THE PAKAKURA RSA ON 26 MAY 2012.

Various Artillery items that adorned the Tables: Part 1



More photos of the Dinner on pages: 8, 9, 13, 14

being a first world country by 2030. There are significant amounts of infrastructure development, particularly highways and ports. We stayed in middle of the road Vietnamese hotels (\$25-\$40 per night, good ensuite rooms and breakfast) and spent lots of time with locals. They are friendly, helpful and with no interest in discussing the past – their focus is on making money and the future.

The country is still a single party centrally run economy. All of the rural and agricultural land is owned by the state, and parcelled out to farmers, most of whom continue in a peasant style economy. An economic piece of productive agricultural land is 500 square meters, which includes the house. The land in the cities and



VC/NVA Shrine at Long Phuoc Village



Poppies for Peter Williams, Don Bourne, and Bob Milligan at Ap An Nhut

industrial areas are privately owned and can be bought and sold just as we do. There is a concentration of wealth and power in those that own large amounts of city residential and commercial land and buildings.

The food at all levels is outstanding. We had most of our eating squatting at roadside stalls or in little shops. Providing you avoid the dog and frog, most Kiwis would get by well. The chicken, duck, pork and seafood are excellent. A meal is about five dollars. At the upmarket places equating to NZ restaurants you would pay about \$15 for a main course. Beer is \$.80 a bottle; the local wine is crap.

Now the cities. We did not spend any time in Saigon, just passed through the airport. Vung Tau was interesting, a big brassy and busy seaside city with its economy based around offshore oil, oil field maintenance and fishing. It is still a tourist resort and in some parts a bit tacky. However the people are friendly and the food is good.

Da Nang was interesting. Plenty of history and a stunning museum of Cham sculpture built by the French in 1900 and covering the local Cham civilisation from about 1800 BC through until 1200 A.D. Da Nang is in easy reach of China Beach (plenty of casinos and upmarket resorts) and Hoi An, a World Heritage site.

The drive to Hue is through mountains and passes, then stunning coastal beaches. Hue is the old imperial capital, and a highlight for the history buff. Serene winter palaces and imperial estates out of town, the magnificent Citadel at the heart of the city on the Perfumed River, majestically peaceful pagodas spread around the place, and a bustling, thriving old quarter. The train trip to Hanoi was old world, an average speed of about 25 km an hour, bunks to sleep in,



With Nguyen Van Nhut at Xuyen Moc



◀ 161 Bty Rock at Nui Dat, some gunner colour still there

the occasional bedbug, and a tiring 12 hour trip.

However, Hanoi was a highlight. Once again we were in the old city close to the centre of town. Everything we ate, drank, saw and did was excellent. Good shopping, stunning French architecture, and more reserved but still very friendly people.

Overall for my first trip back, strongly recommended and anyone interested in going should do so quickly before the place develops too much, and if you are my vintage, while you are still fit and healthy enough to stand the pace of life in the place.

C. UPDATE ON THE BAND OF THE ROYAL REGIMENT

The Chief of Army issued his directive early in the quarter as a result of the NZ Defence decision to disestablish all Territorial Force bands. The CA directive establishes what we should call the "RNZA model". The disestablished TF bands are encouraged to remain intact as independent legal entities, such as incorporated societies, and then to maintain formal affiliations to Army units through an "article of affiliation". These affiliations will allow naming rights to be maintained, the various issued ceremonial uniforms to be retained, and to all intents and purposes, for business as usual for the Bands. The major change will be no Territorial Force pay for enlisted bandmen.

Army units will engage the RNZA Band as required and pay for any engagement through the normal planning and budgeting processes at unit level. Army will expect to pay realistic prices when they engage the Band.

Within the RNZA Band, there will need to be governance restructuring, a revised RNZA Band Association constitution and other structural changes. However, in most areas the band and its supporting structures have been organised for this event for some years.

There is still a lot of work to be done, but the trustees, association and Band leadership are very positive about the future and see the process as full of opportunities for the Band. This is very encouraging.

The Band management has already secured three engagements for the full Band with Auckland units, at commercially realistic pricing.

More than ever though, the Band will need commercial acumen and administrative skills to assist it to devolve into the new regime. So, when you are asked to provide some help or advice please give freely to ensure our Band continues into the second half of its second century, and we need more members of the RNZA Band Association to help through this transition.

D. 2nd Quarter Activities

ANZAC Day

The Regiment paraded on Anzac Day at Paraparaumu, Raglan and Hunterville, with the largest contingent at Paraparaumu. With leadership from the Association, gunners also gathered in a number of centres and laid wreaths on behalf of the Association, from Dunedin through to Auckland. The Association intends to build on this activity next year.

Gunners Day

26th May saw a very good turnout throughout the country. The Regiment celebrated in Linton on Friday 25th May, with most of the gunners having just come out of the field from a live firing exercise in Waiouru.

Like ANZAC Day, we had a good turnout around the country with sit-down dinners for Gunners Day in Auckland, Christchurch and Dunedin, a social gathering and an informal dinner in Palmerston North, and a memorial service and get together in Wellington. This is excellent. The intention is to continue to develop these dining nights in each of the main centres to celebrate Gunners Day, and to encourage as many gunners as possible to join their colleagues for these gatherings.

Other activities

I was lucky enough to spend a few days on the final live firing testing exercise for the forward observers course in Waiouru. The regiment deployed a gun troop and a mortar troop to support the School, with a good ration of ammunition for the ten-day exercise, culminating in danger close procedures, technical procedures such as shooting on a slope and adjusting unobserved rounds, and finally quick fire plan testing exercises. I did note that the school was engaging targets that Graham Birch and I had engaged more than 40 years ago, and the students were still missing them.

The danger close was interesting. With a solid concrete observation post and thick shrapnel proof glass viewing windows, rounds were brought down to 100 meters. If the forward observer was in the open in the prepared slit trenches, fire can be brought down to 200 meters. This provides pretty realistic peacetime training. Shooting on a slope was as difficult as it ever was, but the modern forward observer seems to have more acute hearing than that of the ex-Vietnam gunners, and they were able to quickly get on top of adjusting unobserved fire.

I also attended a field artillery trainer shoot with 11/4 Battery at Kaipara South Head. This was at the end of a weekend where the focus was on BDOs. The Battery had an enthusiastic turnout,

and had obviously had a busy weekend. We also had a brief ceremony to change over command between Anthony Mitchelson who is off to Staff College in Canada and then Tactical School, and Richard Buchan who is coming back to the Regiment from a short stint in the infantry.

By the time you have read this I will have been back to Waiouru for a couple of days to join the School again, for the final live firing exercise of the young officers course.

Some of you will be aware that there are 20 or so Gunners from the US Marine Corps in New Zealand as part of the United States contingent celebrating the 70th anniversary of the arrival of American forces in New Zealand during the Second World War. The Marines use the new 155 split trail gun and a new rifled 120mm mortar with, like us both mortars and guns in each battery. They will be joining the exercise spread through the shooting batteries. Having come from San Diego they will no doubt enjoy Waiouru and the central plateau in winter.

It has been a busy quarter for the Regiment with a sustained brigade level exercise including live firing, and a couple of other weeks of live firing exercises in Waiouru. This is on top of the normal training and maintenance cycles that go with such activities.

The School of Artillery is now completely located in Linton, and will be moving into purpose-built buildings towards the end of the year. This will probably be the first time our School has ever had purpose-built accommodation.

There will be an opportunity in September for Association members to have a day in Waiouru at a live shell practice, subject to final agreement from the CO. I look forward to seeing as many of you as I can at that exercise.

Finally, Tony McLeod and his team throughout the country have initiatives underway with membership, the Association itself, and the serving Regiment. Tony will have noted these elsewhere in this edition. I commend all of these activities to you – they will only succeed with support and help of all members. If you are asked to get involved or assist, please help; if not, volunteer.

**Ubique,
Barry Dreyer, Colonel Commandant RNZA**



NEWSLETTERS BY EMAIL

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7. REPORT FROM CO 16 Fd Regt Lt Col Matt WESTON, RNZA

FROM RA TO RNZA

As the current Adjutant of 16th Field Regiment the CO has asked me to write a piece about my career transition from the Royal Artillery to the Royal New Zealand Artillery and the similarities and differences that exist.

I am currently in my tenth year as a Gunner and have spent almost an equal amount of time serving with both the British Army and the NZDF. I deployed with 7th Parachute Regiment, Royal Horse Artillery as a GPO to Helmand Province, Afghanistan in 2006 and fired over 8,000 rds in a 6 month deployment as the Taliban attempted to throw out the 'British Invaders'. Less than a year later I found myself posted to 16th Field Regiment as the British Exchange Officer in what was then Kapyong Battery. Towards the end of my two year posting, after a brief discussion with Lt Col Gillard, I decided to continue my career with the RNZA in preference to a return to the RA. After 2 years at the School of Artillery as an IG I took over my current post at the beginning of 2012.

As far as similarities go there are too many to mention in full but there are some of particular note. Firstly the soldiers. Gunners who join either Army are very similar in nature and those that succeed would do so in both. The mental and physical toughness that is required to do this job is what sets Gunners apart from the humdrum of civilian life. Individuals are rightly proud of their history, service and their contribution to society as a whole. A fierce pride in their job and an unswerving loyalty to their Batteries and the Regiment as a whole instils that unique Gunner esprit de corps.

The similarities in conditions and locations that we train in also exist. Every Army training area I have ever visited throws environmental conditions and challenges that require meeting. Waiouru is a very special place with regards to these challenges as the majority of you will know! Sennybridge in South Wales also holds a very special place in my memory with regards to environmental challenges after an encounter with a flash flood.

Finally the diversity of tasks that a Gunner is able to undertake exists within both Armies. To be able to switch to an Infantry role overnight, to coordinate lethal and non lethal fires and to de-conflict Air, Guns, Mortars and Naval Gunfire Support. This skill set makes the Gunner an adaptable and capable individual whose versatility is a real asset to commanders on the battlefield.

As far as differences between the two the one that stands out for me is the focus of technical and tactical skills. The Kiwi Gunner is technically expected to be at a much higher level of knowledge than a British one. This is evident at all rank levels from Gunner to Officer. The technology employed within the RA has allowed for quicker training times and therefore faster career progression, the level of cross training and expertise of the Kiwi Gunner far exceeds their British counterparts. Where the British currently hold the advantage is with Operational Experience and the employment of joint assets in a counter insurgency environment. Last year I attended the BC's Course in the UK, which is very Afghanistan centred, and the difference in complexity and available assets from when I was in Helmand Province six years ago has increased tenfold. This has led to a culture of constant change which has greatly increased the flexibility of the average Gunner.

One of the key experiences that I enjoy as an RNZA Gunner is the challenge of keeping us up to date with our coalition partners and developing our own Tactics, Techniques and Procedures. With an increase in training alongside the United States Marine Corps now occurring our opportunities to maintain and develop our skills are increasing all the time. Overall I have thoroughly enjoyed my career so far and that is down to the people I have worked with. Gunners from any Army are a very special breed.

Capt Sam Bayley, RNZA

8. Lt Col Nick Gillard REPORTS IN FROM LONDON

I am currently in Turkey on holiday. Travelling to Gallipoli on Sunday. Not back until the 27th. The Blackberry isn't the best means to write an article so I will have to apologise this time. At least there will be lots to write about next time.

Lt Col Nick Gillard, RNZA, London

NEWSLETTERS BY EMAIL



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9. HISTORICAL ITEM—WAR IN THE PACIFIC - PART 1 PRELUDE TO WAR

The NZ Delegation posed three questions:

- How could imperial defence plans prevent an enemy island hopping to NZ?
- What liaison should be set up with Australia on matters of strategic interest and logistic supply?
- How would Britain equip NZ Forces if the sea lanes between the two were severed?

These questions were not taken seriously by the British and the NZ Delegation left with a deep sense of foreboding. Following this conference NZ invited the British Gen Makesy to stay on and report specifically on the state of the NZ Army. His report was highly critical and pulled no punches.

At 1145 on 3 September 1939 a telegram arrived from the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs to the Governor General:

TELEGRAM

Government House, New Zealand

RECEIVED 3rd September, 1939

(11-45 p.m.)

From The Secretary of State for
Dominion Affairs.
To The Governor-General of New
Zealand
Dated 3rd September, 1939.

Most Immediate (En clair)
Circular telegram C.49

Defence.

War has broken out with Germany.

**(SIGNED) SECRETARY OF STATE FOR
FOREIGN AFFAIRS.**

Immediate measures were taken to man coastal defence and anti-aircraft defences at the three defended ports of Auckland, Wellington and Lyttelton, including the embodiment of TF into those units. Guards were also placed on vital points such as military bases, bulk oil installations and cable and wireless stations. The ORBAT as at May 1940 was:

ARTILLERY COASTAL DEFENCES: MAY 1940

Auckland 9 Hy Regt
Motutapu 2 x 6in Mk 21
North Head 2 x 6in Mk7 2 x 12Pr 2 x 16 Pr
Narrow Neck 4 x 4in Mk7

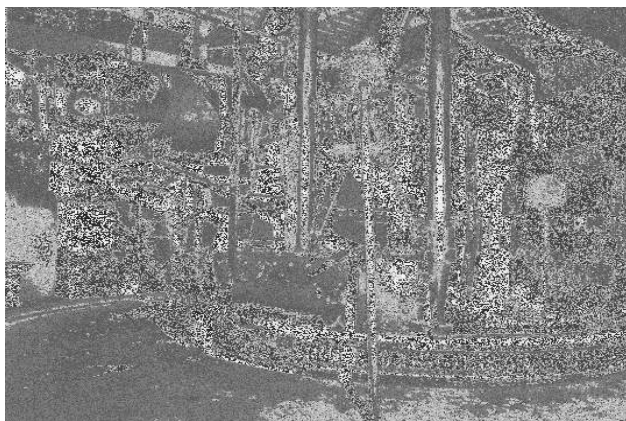
Wellington 10Hy Regt
Palmer Head 2 x 6in Mk 21
Fort Dorset 2 x 6in Mk7 2 x 4in Mk7 2 x 12 Pr
Point Gordon 2 x 4in Mk7
Mt Victoria 2 x 3in AA

Christchurch 11 Hy Regt
Godley Head 2 x 6in Mk 24 (2 x 60Pr BL interim)
Battery Point 2 x 4in Mk7

Dunedin/ Port Chalmers provided a dilemma for the planners as to the degree of defence warranted. Auckland was our largest city, a significant export port, and the site of our key naval base; Wellington was the capital, again a key export port, and had a large relatively secure harbour; Lyttelton was the main port in the South Island. Dunedin was considered less vital to the life of NZ as a whole, was the greatest distance from the perceived threat, and was a small export port with a narrow torturous deep water entrance channel difficult to navigate and not suitable for anchoring.

However it was our fourth largest city and of considerable business, financial and educational import, so after much deliberation Dunedin was also designated a defended port of vital national importance. 11 Hy Regt raised 18 Hy Bty as a detached section to take over Taiaroa Head effective Feb 41.

The immediate task was to reactivate the Russian scare 1880s vintage EOC Disappearing gun on the Head, and a close defence bty at Harrington, equipped initially with two Boer War (vintage 15Pr field guns. 1880's era EOC in BL Disappearing Gun



(Photo of a Ripapa Island Gun during WWII)

By mid 1941 the Japanese threat was becoming very real, and the NZ Government invited yet another British General, General Sir Guy Williams, to assess the required defences of the country. Williams's

A SELECTION OF PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN AT THE GUNNERS DAY LADIES DINING NIGHT HELD AT THE PAKAKURA RSA ON 26 MAY 2012.

Various Artillery items that adorned the Tables: Part 2



appreciation was to provide the model for the expansion to come, and along with the classified Manual of Coast Defence 1939, became the blueprint for the WWII NZ defences. Williams categorised New Zealand's ports as follows:

- **Defended Ports** of Vital National Importance. Auckland, Wellington, Lyttelton, Dunedin.

These ports were to be provided with the full range of defence systems – designated as fortress areas; combined HQ; a port war signal station; coastal artillery including counter bombardment, close defence, examination and anti-AMTB Btys; searchlights; controlled minefields; indicator loops; asdic; booms & gates; anti-aircraft defence; radar; air reconnaissance and offensive air support. Only Auckland and Wellington reached this capability level during WWII.

- **Ports of First Class Military Importance:** Bay of Islands, Whangaroa, Marlborough Sounds, Akaroa.

These ports were to be defended to a lesser level. Controlled minefields were planned for each but were only laid at Akaroa, Whangaroa, and the Bay of Islands. A minefield was planned for the Marlborough Sounds but not installed. It is worthy of note that plans were well advanced for the Sounds to be an American Fleet Base had Pearl Harbour fallen.

- **Ports of Major Military Importance.** Port Fitzroy, Napier, New Plymouth, Nelson, Timaru, Bluff, Paterson Inlet, Port Underwood.

These ports were to only have guns to defend them, manned by a mixture of TF and Home Guard

- **Ports of Minor Importance:** Whangarei, Tauranga, Firth of Thames, Gisborne, Wairoa, Wanganui, Oamaru, Greymouth, Westport.

The lowest priority for gun defences.

Following William's report and the entry of Japan into the war the defence of New Zealand was taken very seriously. Our bids for equipment, primarily from the UK, were given much higher priority, the entire TF was mobilised for full time service and rapid manpower expansion occurred.

Part 2 will follow on from this point.
Article supplied by Brig (Rtd) Graham Birch

A SELECTION OF PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN AT THE GUNNERS DAY LADIES DINING NIGHT HELD AT THE PAKAPURA RSA ON 26 MAY 2012.

Various Artillery items that were on display: Part 3



Top Photo: A place setting
Middle Photo A lemon Squeezer (was
Bottom Photo: This artillery piece is opposite the front doors of the Pakapura RSA.

10. THE LIFE AND DEATH OF AN ARTILLERYMAN Lt Ralph D DOUGHTY MC – Part 2

Diary One which is a notepad that has leather covers cut from a horse saddle and held together by a copper wire that is stitched through the spine, contain entries from Egypt and Gallipoli.

Diaries Two and Three are small black pocket note books continue from where Diary One had finished, and contain entries from in and around the various locations on the Gallipoli Peninsular like “Shrapnel Gully” and “Lone Pine” and also contains entries of Ralph’s days spent on Lemnos and Embros Islands up until the General Evacuation Order was given, with the, last entry in Diary Three being on the 3rd January 1946 back in Te-al-Kebir Egypt.

Diary Four, which is a hard covered field service correspondence book was started on the 22nd March, 1916 in Tel-el-Kebir Camp. It contains entries of Ralph’s voyage from Egypt to Marseilles, France then travelling via train up and through the Champagne Districts (procuring drinkables and a cooked pheasant on the way) up and around the outskirts of Paris to arrive in the town of Le Havre. After a short rest at Sanvic rest camp, Ralph and battery crew travelled via train into the war zone of the Western Front, where he was to then experience his first “hate” against the “Hun” on the, **24th April 1916 (Easter Monday)**.

This afternoon we had pour first “hate”. Stuck in about a dozens rounds for luck. Our anti-aircraft guns brought down a Taube today. Sunday, artillery duels the order of the day otherwise quiet. It’s just 12 months back when we were all anxiously waiting for our first scrap, and now after one year of scrapping we are considered quite veteran soldiers.

Ralph was to make his last entry in Diary Four on the 11 August 1916 when he was in action around the areas of “Le Val de Maison” and “Poizieres”

Diary Five was started on the 12th August 1916 and is also a field service correspondence book (but with soft covers). His first entries are from in and around the areas if the “Western Front”, namely “Vandencourt Wood” and “Ypres”. From here Ralph travelled through into “Belgium” and onto the muddy bloody battlefields of “Passchendaele” with his last area of reference being on the 11th March 1917 from the town of “Albert” (which is 4 km south of Brussels), when he had visited the officers club to have his afternoon tea. Ralph went on to make his last entry in his set of five diaries a few days later with what has to be a very appropriate and poignant ending for an artilleryman who had given his all since enlisting in Sydney back on the 28th August 1914.

16 March 1917. *Better to day. Very heavy bombardment on both left, right and centre.*

Throughout Ralph’s diaries he also made sure to mention his “pals” as they had all had a significant part to play in his military life. Be it beside him helping

with the loading and firing of the 18pdr battery guns, or spending time in a dugout playing cards around the billy while eating the daily rations (if there were any), to travelling by horseback down to the local village to gather supplies. But unfortunately Ralph also wrote entries in his diaries of their demise, wither through illness or when they had sustained wounds while in action.

Regret to have to record the death of one of our most liked boys. H.H. King (Kiny) was shot through the heart while bringing up ammunition. Buried “Kiny” under a hill in the rear of our position. Anyhow he met his death in the way we all hope to meet it if it is come out here, “In Action”.

Once again only gain the utmost respect for every service personnel who is prepared to put themselves in harm’s way so that others may live without fear or tyranny, as Ralph did on many occasions. And can only imagine what it was like to have gone through “The Great War” but it through the reading of Ralph’s diaries that you will gain a very good understanding of what it was like for him.

From dawn till dusk and through many sleepless nights, from the heat and sands of Egypt, to the rain and snow of Gallipoli, and then onto the bloody battlefields of the Western Front and Passchendaele, Ralph’s set of diaries give a factual account of how he saw the war through his eyes, with every aspect of artillery life placed onto the pages of his dairies so that by the time you read his final entry on the 16th March 1917 you will have gained an awareness of what life was like during his nearly three years of active service. The above article appeared in the May 2012 issue of the RAA Association (NSW) Inc magazine “Gunfire”.



To be continued in the next issue of The NZ Gunner

11. A FIRST HAND ACCOUNT OF THE DEALING WITH THE CHRISTCHURCH EARTHQUAKE

I thought it was high time I sent a reply to your request for a few words about the effect the earthquake had on me as a resident of Christchurch during the whole of the period of tremors.

It's been a strange year. My wife Adrienne, and I were heavily affected by the earthquakes in Canterbury. For anyone not present at the time it may already be difficult to recall the sequence of events so here goes...The first (and strongest one) in September 2010 was a Magnitude 7.1, but it did very little damage to us or Christchurch as it was centred in a quiet part of the countryside about 40km from the city. No one died and although lots of buildings were jiggled, only a few fell down. We lived in a townhouse on the eastern side of the city – Waygreen Avenue in Avondale, near the river and the beach to be precise. That street featured in the majority of TV coverage of all the damaging quakes. It was a reliable source of footage of flooded roads, liquefaction and general destruction. In Sep 2010 our next door neighbour's house, like quite a lot of others had liquefaction (sandy water) squeezed up from the ground. Once the water drained away, tons of sand were left to be shovelled away to the curb and the city council then collected and dumped it. It was followed by a range of aftershocks and a notable one on Boxing Day 2010 that still did no real damage to anyone. Our house was undamaged at this point.

Then things were quieter with an average of two dozen smallish shakes a day until Feb 22 2011 when we had the bad one. It was only a 6.1 followed by a few fives, but they were centred under the city and there was an unusually severe vertical acceleration. The result was that anything that was unreinforced concrete or brick or stone was badly damaged. Basically, the land jumped up a metre and fell back down and you can imagine the effects if you took a stone cathedral and lifted it up a yard and dropped it. The city was destroyed. Even modern reinforced buildings that remained standing and looked intact were so badly damaged that repairs were uneconomic. Underground infrastructure was badly damaged. Roads look like a rumpled blanket. Power and water was mostly out on the east side of the city. Phones were down but the mobile system coped with text messages but couldn't handle voice calls.

That quake killed 189 people – mostly in the city centre and over half died in a single fairly modern multi-story building that collapsed and burned. The suburbs were badly rattled and about 10% of all the houses in the eastern side of the city were wrecked. I was at work in the city at the time and the building I worked in was destroyed but I got everyone out OK. Dust, sand, water, bricks, rubble, smoke from a fire and abandoned cars were everywhere. My car was in a car park next door and it was trapped by another car that was stuck in liquefaction which rose underneath it as it was being driven out. The car thus blocked the driveway and 20 more cars including mine were stuck

behind it. It was inside the cordon for a month or so before I could reclaim it. At the time I took a company car to get most of the way home and then walked through knee deep water for a mile or so. Adrienne is a nurse and she had been at home at the time and she trotted off to help evacuate a rest-home around the corner at which Ady had nursed. She fell into a submerged hole that appeared in the pavement and drowned her cell phone. I finally found Ady back at our house watching all the floodwater pour out of it.

The central city was immediately cordoned off by army and police and remained a no-go zone for months. Curfews were enforced and inner city residents had to time their arrivals and departures from home with that in mind. Even now, 15 months later, near the edge of the city cordon, you can walk past fenced-off bars and see drinks on the table where they were abandoned in Feb 2011. It's a ghost town in parts. The western side of the city was fairly unscathed. The eastern side was flooded with liquefaction (about 1 million tons of it oozed up in 20 seconds of shaking) and our house was flooded with it too. We lost the downstairs carpet (only a year old) and lots of other stuff like appliances and wooden furniture and drapes etc and had many tons of sand to shovel away from our tiny section and the driveway. Then shovelling was a regular chore for weeks afterwards. Like mowing the lawns but not as fun. Our sewerage, water and power were off for weeks after the Feb quake and things were rather primitive. We showered at a neighbourhood mobile shower station and used a chemical toilet and carried water home to use for kitchen things. My work shut down for a month or more while they found alternate premises. All that was followed by many 4-5 magnitude quakes in March, April, May 2011 and then another pair of sixes in June which delivered more liquefaction (and re-flooded our house) but caused no deaths. By then, the demolition of the city was just starting and now, nine months later it is still going on. All the tall buildings are being taken down because they are damaged and too hard to repair. All the old buildings fell down. What remains are lower, newer buildings. They've been trucking out rubble for 12 months now and have amassed two million tons in a nearby forest. Gradually the cordon retracted until now only about 200 acres of the heart of the city is still closed off. Skyscrapers are being demolished a floor at a time and there are hundreds of acres of vacant lots where buildings once stood. Businesses have relocated to the city fringe and 10,000 people packed up and left to live in Oz or other parts of NZ.

We carried on living in a house that was structurally fairly sound but with bare concrete floors downstairs, difficult plumbing and sand storms and sand dunes outside. Upstairs was a cosy refuge that winter but the view outside and looking forward was grim.

But then in late June the government (which operates an earthquake insurance scheme in NZ) announced that certain parts of the city had so much underground land damage that they could not be rebuilt

upon. About 10% of the city is destined to become parkland again and we were right in the middle of it.

In June last year I also quit my old job in frustration. Luckily just as I left that position, the insurance industry started hiring flat out following the quakes and later that month I got a terrific job with twice the pay working for a big Australian / NZ insurance company. It was a short term contract but they keep renewing it and so now I'll be here at least until June 2012 and probably longer.

We also had record snows this winter which made life tough for people who were still using portable toilets. We had four days when the city shut down due to snow which is highly unusual. Supermarkets ran out of staples and it brought home how fragile the urban supply chain is now that companies practice just-in-time replenishment.

In June the government announced the 'red zone' areas (almost all are adjacent to watercourses) and they agreed to buy all the land and houses at a set valuation. Our rateable valuation was rather more than market value. That was a lucky stroke because it was set in 2007, well before the earthquakes at a time when house prices happened to be at roughly their highest for a generation. We sold our house immediately to the government and moved to a beautiful 10 acre lifestyle block about 50 km out of town in a picturesque village called Cust, about 20 minutes inland from Rangiora and 10 mins short of Oxford. Rolling foothills, olives, cattle, sheep, llamas – that sort of thing. It's a dream house for both of us (four years old with rapidly maturing trees and an established garden) and we were extraordinarily lucky to find it at the exact moment that we had a guaranteed sale of our old property at a very good price. We had been looking all over the South Island for two years prior for a suitable country house and finally found the perfect place on our doorstep. I bought a ride on mower to celebrate and now I drive around like Forrest Gump on weekends, mowing diligently and drinking a beer as I manoeuvre round trees in the baking late summer heat. All very good.

We've been here in the new house since September 2011 and have added four chickens, four sheep and two beef cattle. Next year some pigs too. Our three dogs are fine and I rescued all our goldfish from the pond at the old house and they are re-housed in a barrel waiting for me to finish their new far bigger pond. The house has a workshop garage that fits two cars plus a workbench and storage. Adrienne even has room for a workbench in it where she can sew and make soap etc.

Article Supplied by Lee Hughes and will be continued in the next issue of The NZ Gunner

12. GUNNERS DAY and ANZAC Day AROUND THE COUNTRY

A. Wellington prior to ANZAC Day



Matt Beattie, resplendent in his gunner tie, doing the honours of reciting the Ode to the Fallen before the Crusaders v Hurricanes rugby game on 21 April 2012.

B. RAGLAN



The Youngest and Oldest Gunner's in uniform on Parade.

C. EAST COAST BAYS



Above Tony Irving, Spike Jones, Mike Dakin, Bill Stewart, Ray Pita, Alistair Irving

D. AUCKLAND



"Gunnery": Lt Col (Rtd) Tony McLeod and Brig (Rtd) Ray Andrews



RNZA Assn President Tony McLeod and Robert Barker inspect the historical (and tattered) Old Comrades Assn Wreath, made by Terry Transom.



Bob Davis and Tony McLeod with members of the Artillery Band

E. CHRISTCHURCH



Christchurch Dawn ANZAC Service – Crammer Square.

Sonny Manuel carried the 3rd Field Regiment Artillery Standard and Skin Frances laid the Artillery wreath.

The service was attended by about 5000 people. The dawn service was an Artillery run event, with Paul O'Connor being the MC and Pat Duggan the Parade Marshal. Russ Barron and Pete Dawson both played roles as President and Vice President of the Christchurch RSA.

ABIQUE Skin FRANCES



F. GUNNERS DAY WELLINGTON

A group of about 25 gathered at the National War Memorial today to observe Gunners day. We held a short service, led by Ian McKie, a former TF Padre with 2 Fd Regt and 22(D) Bty,

A SELECTION OF PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN AT THE GUNNERS DAY LADIES DINING NIGHT HELD AT THE PAKAKURA RSA ON 26 MAY 2012

Who was at the Dinner - Part 1



Lt Col (Rtd) Tony McLeod, President RNZA Assn, WO1 Evan Kareko, RSM 16 Fd Regt and Mrs Polly Kareko



Cadre Staff 11/4 Bty



Members of the RNZA Band entertaining the diners



Mrs Maureen Cook and Mrs Jan Rout

NEWSLETTERS BY EMAIL



Please note that with effect from December 2012 Issue, this newsletter will be forwarded to members by email, unless they specifically ask to receive a printed copy, and have prepaid their \$20 fee.

with a wreath being laid by Col Bob Burns. The opportunity was taken to read the message from the Colonel Commandant to the assembly This was followed by a gathering at Molly Malone's in downtown Wellington for the usual socialising.



Wreath that was laid



From the Left: "Gunners": Con Flinkenberg, Robbie Munro, Fred Goodall, Bob Burns, Terry Barrett, Mark Ogilvy, David Weston

G. LEST I FORGET – ANZAC DAY 2012

Headed off for the dawn service at Porirua RSA and got blown away, 600+ on parade and equally as many spectators, the biggest parade they have had since I arrived in 1982. The numbers were boosted by attendance from a group from the 28th Maori Battalion who were meeting at Takapuwahia Marae and the NZ Police Course currently being run.

Attended the Civic Service with Lyn at 0900hrs with similar numbers to the dawn service and laid a wreath for Vietnam Veterans, a great parade with Sir Wira Gardiner as the guest speaker. Then on to Whenua Tapu for the midday wreath-laying ceremony.

This turned out to be a total fiasco, we had to leave the car at the entrance by State Highway 1 and walk up to the Service Monument which is quite a hike when carrying a wreath. Even though we arrived early the access ways were jammed, unbeknown to us there was a graveside service being conducted for Leon Smith who had been killed in Afghanistan and a considerable number attended from the Johnsonville RSA. Having never attended this service previously I attempted to locate the organiser from Pukerua Bay RSA. He was AWOL and did not appear.

With midday fast approaching I took over and had the 41 Sqn guard form up on the road beside the memorial, and brief the cadet who was the person designated to handle the flag (the halyards for this flagpole are inside the flagpole and if not used

SELECTION OF PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN AT THE GUNNERS DAY LADIES DINING NIGHT HELD AT THE PAKAPURA RSA ON 26 MAY 2012

Who was at the Dinner - Part 2



Trevor (Blue) Higginson, Gary (Pic) Pickering and Bob (Pud) Kerslake



"Senior Gunner" Bill Giles and "Junior Gunner" LBdr Michael Bromley



Danny McCort (Left) and Mr Vice LBdr Michael (Broms) Bromley



"Gunners" who were presented with their NZ Defence Medals

GUNNERS DAY DINNER PAPA KURA

About 106 attended the dinner.

Seated at the Head Table were:

Dining President Jeff Watters and Monique (Nicki),
Lt Col Chris Powell CO 3 Auckland/Northland
Battalion Group,
WO1 Evan Kareko RSM 16 Fd Regt and Mrs Polly
Ksreko,
Lt Guy MacDiamrid Cadre Officer 11/4 Bty,
Lt Col (Rtd) Tony McLeod,
Maj (Rtd) Pam Miley-Terry RNZNC,
Capt and QM (Rtd) John (Woody) Barrett and Mrs
Lyn Barrett.

Lt Col Powell made the toast to the Regiment.

Lt MacDiamrid replied on behalf of the Col Comdt

Trevor Higginson proposed the toast to the Ladies

and Barry Cook made the toast to Absent Friends.

L/Bdr Michael (Broms) Bromley 11/4 Bty was

Mr Vice

SELECTION OF PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN AT THE GUNNERS DAY LADIES DINING NIGHT HELD AT THE PAPA KURA RSA ON 26 MAY 2012

Who was at the Dinner - Part 3



Major (Rtd) Pam
Miley-Terry,
RNZNC



CO and Cadre Staff 11/4 Bty and RSM 16 Fd Regt



161 Bty Gunners SVN (1965/66) when the Bty was attached to 173D US Army Airborne Brigade

correctly could cause a fairly serious cut to the hand). The chaplain arrived and started with a prayer before the "Last Post" was provided by the bugler. Several wreaths were laid including the RNZA Assn one and the chaplain started to pray again when he realised that there were still over half of the wreaths to be laid, so he stopped and continued with the wreath-laying. On conclusion the Ode was recited before the Bugler sounded "Reveille",

The cadet working the flag was stressed and when looking up the flagpole, the workings were jammed and the flag was still at half mast were it had to remain. People started to leave the assembly when the chaplain called out "Come back I haven't yet given Benediction" They returned, the chaplain gave his Benediction and all departed. There was quit a few spouses who had been tidying graves who joined with us for the wreath laying and resumed their tasks on completion. A service I will never forget.

Article Supplied by Lindsay Skinner

13. RNZA Assn HISTORIAL PRESERVATION GROUP

At the moment there are a considerable number of valuable historical items and records at Linton Camp which have yet to be properly identified and preserved. The CO 16 Field Regt has asked the Assn if we can help. For this reason the 'RNZA Historical Preservation Group' has been established, with the following tasks in mind; to determine how the Artillery items should be housed/displayed/recorded/preserved in the longer term, to identify as many faces as possible in the photographs and to identify background history to trophies and silverware. Big ((Rtd)) Graham Birch has agreed to head the HPG and Kerry Lee has agreed to become the curator for the displays/museum? going into the future. We now need to get a team together which can in the first instance identify what we have and put names to faces etc The first meeting of the Group will take place in Linton in July 2012 (possibly 27-29 July period) So if you are interested in historical matters and would like to become a member of this Group could you please let me know in the next week so that we can start to get thing organised. Just email Tony McLeod at rnza.association@gmail.com. Your help will not only be appreciated, it will be essential to the successful achievement of this task. In the future, we may well use the process we develop for handling this task as a blueprint for also addressing the historic items held in the South Island, and in Auckland. Members of the Group should plan on day trips to Linton, but

barrack accommodation could be provided for anyone living further a field. Looking forward to a 'flood' of responses.

Tony McLeod, President RNZA Assn

14. MEMBERSHIP REVIEW

Dear Fellow Gunners

On 31 May 2012 I sent the following letter to 50 of the senior members of the RNZA Assn seeking their opinions on Automatic/Free membership of the Assn.

'Over the past two years we have been looking seriously at the best pathway going forward for the Association. This has led to several new initiatives aimed at establishing more contact with, and more relevance for, the serving gunners. Without wanting to go into any depth here, these initiatives have included; cards/parcels to Gunners serving overseas at Xmas time (commenced Xmas 2011), a Mentor Program for NCOs and Officers of 16 Field Regt (under planning with CO 16 Field Regt at the moment), an Employment Assistance Program for gunners coming to the end of their service (underway in 2011 and to be formalised in 2012), establishment of the RNZA Historical Preservation Group, and the RNZA Assn Trophy (an annual trophy, with the inaugural presentation made at the RNZA Assn reunion in Christchurch November 2011).

There has also been considerable thought given to how we make sure we stay connected with the older gunners, to make sure that 'lest we forget' is applied at the 'personal' level as well as at the 'commemorative' level. This has led to the establishment of the 'Veterans Liaison Network' a network of veterans from the various wars/theatres who are in contact with their contemporaries and who provide our Regional Reps with info on their mates' welfare needs or funeral details etc for subsequent wider circulation throughout our membership, essentially becoming the 'eyes and ears' of the RNZA Association. It has also lead to the 'Wreaths on ANZAC Day' initiative, whereby the Association paid for wreaths to be laid on behalf of the Regiment on ANZAC day, providing a focus for the gathering of groups of gunners at the 'local' level (this initiative was very generously sponsored by Peter Hanson and we would hope to double the number of wreaths laid across the country next year). We have also formalised our welfare network by nominating official 'welfare officers' for the northern, central and southern areas (these three welfare officers are very experienced in the veterans welfare system and their role is to ensure anyone who may not be

receiving allowances to which they are due, are helped to access their appropriate welfare support through VANZ. We have also increased the number of Regional Reps/ Committee-at-Large in an effort to connect with more people around the country, and it remains a very high priority to further increase these numbers.

As we have made more progress with these initiatives it has become apparent that our current membership process/structure is not the best for the future. It can actually work against the achievement of our major aims, the main ones being; a. the provision of welfare to `the family of gunners` by sponsoring activities and activating networks which provide contact between gunners, and the resultant comradeship benefits, (and the opportunity to identify and assist those in need of welfare support which the main agencies may not be providing adequately) and; b. the `guardians of remembrance` for things Artillery within New Zealand`. In pursuing our goals we continually come up against what I consider to be the main stumbling block to progressing our aims with both serving and past gunners, and that is the process for applying for membership and the payment (or more particularly the non payment) of subscriptions

Membership. With 280 Full Members we represent only about 20% of the people eligible to be full members of the Association (since AGM Nov 2010 any person who has served as a gunner for at least 3 months is eligible to be a Full Member). I don't believe it is because people don't want to become members, I believe it is because they haven't stumbled across a membership application form either during or after their service as a gunner, and let's face it a large number of our now eligible members weren't allowed to be members in the past! (our Territorial Force gunners being a case in point). If membership were AUTOMATIC after 3 months service, we could begin to establish a meaningful database of all gunners and could then become truly representative of the full `family of gunners` within New Zealand . It would be a challenge to `capture` the information of ex gunners who are not currently members (a similar form to what we currently use as an application form would still be required for this purpose), and it would become a real challenge to keep membership contact records up to date, (and they probably never would be), but at least there would then be some record and form of contact for everyone who had served in the RNZA. It has been suggested that people won't value membership of an organisation which they don't have to apply for, and while there may be some truth in that, where the application process prevents us from being truly representative of the `family of gunners` I think it is then an

obstacle to the achievement of our aims. Anyone who did not wish to be a member could of course opt out at any time. This approach to membership does lead on to the related issue of payment for membership.

Payment. Traditionally the Association has charged an annual subscription fee (now \$20) and this has funded the printed newsletter and provided a small working capital. However the requirement for a payment of a subscription has led to some rather negative and unpleasant issues: people have been `struck off` the membership for non-payment (this anachronism is still in our rules); should people be allowed to receive the benefits of a member if they haven't paid and so would we turn our back on a fellow gunner who needs help but is not a member, or stop them from attending Association functions such as Reunions or Dinners etc?; the whole issue of following up non-payment becomes very negative and not at all in the spirit of the `Charity` which we now are. I do not think members deliberately fail to pay their subscription, it is such a small amount that I think they probably overlook it and then forget about it. I therefore think that membership should be free and the committee should be charged with looking for alternative ways of providing the funding for the printed newsletter and providing the working capital. These methods could include such things as sponsorship, advertising or Lotteries Commission grants etc. I think we should continue to seek a `donation` from the members, and coincidentally I think \$20 per annum is a reasonable amount, and I think we might get as much income from the donations as we do from our subscription fee. Now it has also been suggested to me that people don't value what they get for free, and once again while there may be some truth in this, where the imposition of a compulsory subscription has so many negative effects, I think it is better to do away with it and look to our other methods of raising funds`.

We had a very high percentage of replies to this letter, and they were overwhelmingly in favour of proceeding with automatic/free membership. I sent a follow up letter on 10 June 2012 to address the main criticisms of the proposal;

`Thank you all sincerely for your responses to my letter. The support which they expressed across the board was very heartening to me personally, and encouraging for the future of the RNZA Association. Whilst there was not 100% agreement on all issues, there were two replies in support which I would like to quote:

`I applaud this initiative. When I was on the committee several years ago we

grappled with the same issue and later while on the Wellington RSA Committee was faced with the same problem which we never cracked. It is an uphill battle trying to get the current generation of younger gunners/serving personnel to join anything really. It is just not the way they operate these days, so setting things up so that they are basically in unless they actively 'want out' is a great idea in my opinion. I wish we had thought of it!."

"I support the idea. You may find yourself pioneering the future of the RNZRSA as well."

A summary of the views is as follows:

Automatic Membership; 80% in favour, 20% against.

The 'not in favour' argument included; "From my perspective I see many organisations who state they have lots and lots of members. In reality they have names, many of whom take no interest in the group anyway. The numbers simply look good when the committee are trying to make someone think they are large, strong and supportive group of committed people"

It's hard to argue against this, although our rationale for auto membership is not to make the numbers look better, but to provide a database of those who have served in the RNZA which can be used to extend fellowship and camaraderie throughout 'the family of gunners'. I believe we will know how strong we really are with committed people when we count attendance figures at our activities such as Gunners Day functions and the Annual Reunion. If we maintain relevance to gunners, (both serving and ex), we will get stronger, if we don't we will get weaker. Fortuitously the CO 16 Field Regt agrees with the Automatic approach, and we will disseminate the current application form to all serving personnel to bring our records of serving members up to date, and ongoing, there will be a process put in place whereby individual gunners will complete a form at the end of their corps training, i.e. once they become eligible to become full members. Everyone has the right to opt out of 'membership' at any time, and no one will be compelled to complete the Association Form.

Free Membership; 70% in favour, 30% against.

The 'not in favour' argument may be summarised by one member's argument; "By proposing a nil subscription we risk the same fate of recording lots of names

many of whom we will mistake for members. If someone is prepared to pay even a minimal subscription of say \$5 they are showing a desire to belong to the association and take some interest in the goings on of what we do"

This is a fair point, but I feel it is outweighed by the 'negative' problems associated with the non-payment of even a token sub (which I believe the current \$20 is anyway). It is not the amount of the sub, it is the administrative burden of following up non-payment of subs, and the consequential question of providing benefits to 'gunners' who are not 'members'. I do not look on the RNZA Assn as a club, where membership is dictated by whether you are financial or not. I think that someone 'earns' the right to membership of the RNZA Assn by their service to the Royal Regiment of NZ Artillery.

Donations/Funding; Full Support. All recipients of the letter were in favour of seeking donations from members for ongoing operational expenses and welfare ventures. Seeking other sources of funding for specific programs was also supported. All recipients were in favour of a 'User Pays' approach to the printed Newsletter. Members should be encouraged to receive the newsletter by email, but where this is not feasible, a \$20 'Newsletter Fee' should continue to be charged.

Conclusion. Based on the replies, I think we are on safe ground proceeding with an Automatic/Free approach to our membership going into the future. The challenge for all existing members will be to contact people they may know who are not members so that we can begin to 'flesh out' the records of those who are eligible for membership. The challenge for the committee will be to ensure an appropriate level of working capital is maintained by alternative means (non subscription). If anyone wishes to discuss this matter further please don't hesitate to contact me by emailing me at rnza.association@gmail.com.

15. VIETNAM VETERANS ANNUAL MEDICAL ASSESSMENT - A message from the General Manager of Veterans Affairs New Zealand

In recognition of the fact that Vietnam veterans were exposed to a toxic environment during their service in Vietnam, the Government made the decision to introduce a free yearly medical assessment for all Vietnam veterans recorded on the Vietnam veteran's register. The Annual Medical Assessment form has undergone some minor modification to simplify completion. If you have one of the old AMA forms, please discard and use the 2012 version. Please note a new AMA form will be distributed to registered

veterans in 2013.

Just under half of the Vietnam veterans registered or 470/o completed the 2nd Annual Medical Assessment with 22% of those undertaking the medical assessment for the first time. There were also 39 new registrations. To continue to ensure that the health and well being of individual veterans is being monitored and to enable the Government to fully comprehend the issues relating to the veterans' service-related health, it is vital that as many veterans as possible undertake the assessment. I urge all registered Vietnam veterans to accept the Government's offer of a free annual medical assessment and to encourage those veterans not already registered to do so by downloading a registration form from our website www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz or by contacting Veterans' Affairs New Zealand. For further information veterans should contact Veteran's Affairs New Zealand on 0800 483 8372 or email veterans@xtra.co.nz. For those living outside NZ, the number to call is +64 4 4952 070.

16. THIS AND THAT

A. RON CROSS, Bdr RNZA, Sgt RNZIR & Lt Col RNZAOC Retired to Tamahere, Hamilton writes:

In my childhood the photo below was on the wall of my parents home in Christchurch. We used to refer to it as proof our dad, Gunner R.I. Cross, was in the airborne part of the RNZA. He was a gun tractor driver in a 25 Pdr Field Artillery Battery for much of WWII and we were told this photo was of him driving a quad in an Artillery camp near Nelson. As a LBdr in 163 Bty in the 1950s, I also drove these wonderful vehicles from Burnham Camp to field training areas such as Lake Ellesmere, Little Malaya/Oxford, Tekapo, etc where we did our best to get them bogged so we could practice recovery drills.



B. "A TOUCH OF HUMOUR"

Stories from Colin Stanbridge Continue:

As our Captain General celebrates 60 years as

Sovereign this year, the following may be of interest. In early 1952 as Tp Comd, '7' Tp, 163 Bty in DS of 3 RAR I found myself on OP duty with that Bn. Darkness having fallen we had retired into our bunker where we were joined for a "cuppa" by Lt Robin Hohne in whose platoon area we were located. The phone from the gun lines rang and on answering the Adjutant Peter Joblin simply said "The King is dead". Putting the phone down I repeated this message and Robin immediately said "Long live the Queen", so we raised our mugs to our new Queen.

It may not have been the first and no doubt there have been many more or more illustrious occasions but I think it might have been the first in Locoa and quite possibly what might be called the first ANZAC one to Her Majesty.

C. 3 Fd Regt PINS

3 Fd Regt pins for sale cost \$20 ea they can be obtained by sending a cheque to A J Riddle 45 Argyle St Mornington Dunedin 9011 include return address details.

2nd WARNING ORDER; 2012 Reunion & AGM, Browns Bay, Auckland - Programme Outline

Friday 9 November 2012

From 1600 hrs -
Registration
Mix and mingle
Buffet dining, choice of full menu (own responsibility)
Mix and mingle continues

Saturday 10 November 2012

AGM 1000-1200 hrs

Agenda:

- President's report
- Presentation of accounts
- Election of President, Secretary and Treasurer
- Election of Executive Committee
- Amendments to Rules
- General business
- Reunion 2013

Afternoon activity to be advised

Dining-in - Miniatures to be worn - 1800 hrs for 1900

Sunday 11 November 2012

Armistice Day Service - Auckland War Memorial, 1030 hrs Refreshments, Farewells and disperse at 1200 hrs



NEWSLETTERS BY EMAIL

Please note that with effect from December 2012 Issue, this newsletter will be forwarded to members by email, unless they specifically ask to receive a printed copy, and have prepaid their \$20 fee.

Behind the Lines: The Editors Page

Patron	Colonel (Rtd) Donal R Kenning MBE	06 358 2840
Colonel Commandant	Colonel Barry Dreyer	09 307 5692

The Patron and Colonel Commandant are ex officio members of the Committee

President	Lt Col (Rtd) Tony McLeod	09 4860910, 027 2698472
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Secretary/Treasurer	Trevor Higginson PB 110107 Auckland Hospital AUCKLAND 1148	029 4782476 rnza.association@gmail.com
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Committee;	Mike Dakin (Vice President) Colin Jansen (Asst Sec Facebook Mgr) Dennis Schofield (Coopted, RNZA Band) Kemp Solomon (Coopted)	John Botica (Asst Treasurer) Greg Thwaite Jas Singh (Coopted, 11/4 Bty) Bill Stewart
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Committee Members at Large;

Graeme Black (Waikato)	Brian Jerry Meyer (Australia)
Bob Kerslake (Auckland)	Jeff Waters (Auckland)
Danny and Bernie McCort (BOP)	Tom Roche (Manawatu)
Roger Newth (Horowhenua)	Dave Weston (Wellington, RNZRSA Del)
Lindsay Skinner (Wellington)	Rob Hitchings (Wellington)

Brian (Skin) Frances (Upper Sth Island) Bill Olsen (Lower Sth Island) Catherine Dymock (16 Fd Regt)

Welfare Officers;	Northern; Mike Dakin	021 0785850
	Central; Lindsay Skinner	027 5303319
	Southern; Pat Duggan	021 02615773

The NZ Gunner Editor;	Marie Roberts PO Box 5118 ROTORUA WEST 3044	07 3484659 dgroberts@xtra.co.nz
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Blogmaster;	Kerry Lee	muzzleflashes.blogspot.com
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Website;	Angus and Catherine Rivers	riv.co.nz/rnza/
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RNZA Historian;	Brig (Rtd) Graham Birch MBE
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Facebook Site;	http://www.facebook.com/#!/group.php?gid=209704013801
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Subscriptions: *Accounting policy* - The 2008 AGM endorsed the Committee's policy of accepting only 'full year' payment of subscriptions, that is, \$20 or multiples thereof. This action is necessary because the accounting process does not cater for fractional years. Odd sums will be credited to the Welfare Fund in the donor's name.

Donations: All charitable and welfare donations over \$5 are now tax deductible as the Association is a Registered Charity.

Receipts: Receipts are issued for all incoming monies and sent out quarterly with the next issue of *The New Zealand Gunner*.

Email Addresses: Are you on the Internet? The Secretary may not be aware of your address. If you are not getting messages from the RNZA Association and wish to do so, let him have your address. Have you changed ISPs? Have you updated your Internet address? Some mail is being returned.

Newsletter by Email: In order to save the Association money, please consider receiving your newsletter by email. Please notify the secretary at **rnza.association@gmail.com**

Input into *The New Zealand Gunner*: Short stories, especially with accompanying photographs are always welcome for inclusion. The Editor's email address is **dgroberts@xtra.co.nz**

New Members: New members are most welcome. **ALL** Gunners with a minimum of **3 months "Gunner" service** are eligible for Full Membership. Associate Membership is available to anyone who has been attached to an RNZA Unit or has had a close affiliation therewith, and to close family of RNZA Gunners and to Gunners of any nation around the world. Membership application forms are on-line at MuzzleFlashes.blogspot.com.

Death of a Member: If you know of the passing of someone who was a Gunner or a member please tell the Secretary. Where possible a representative of the Association will attend the funeral.

Muzzle Flashes items to Kerry at: MuzzleFlashes.blogspot.com

Secretarial/Treasurer Matters to: rnza.association@gmail.com

Items for The NZ Gunner to Marie at: dgroberts@xtra.co.nz

RNZA Assn Bank Ac # 38 9007 0694501 00