



The New Zealand Gunner

Official Journal of the

Royal New Zealand Artillery Association (Inc)

Founded 1934

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1. **PRESIDENTS REPORT**

Dear Fellow Gunners

What a great reunion at Linton/Palmerston North over weekend 18-20 October. My sincere thanks to Tom Roche and his committee for organising a wonderful event, and to 16 Field Regiment Officers, WOs and Sen NCOs for hosting us at their memorable Formal Dinner on the Saturday night. The whole weekend was warm, informative, significant and smoothly organised and will be remembered I'm sure for a long time by all those who attended. At the risk of some repetition I would like to republish the report I gave to the AGM in Palmerston North on Sunday 20 October 2013

This year has seen the **consolidation of the changes** that we made to our Constitution at last years AGM, when full membership was opened to all those who have served as a gunner for more than 3 months, and subscriptions for Full Members were scrubbed, the member being deemed to have paid his or her dues to the RNZA Association by virtue of their service to the RNZA. This important change in our 'raison d'être' has lead to the need to connect (and reconnect) with a wider grouping of gunners than ever before, and I think we have got off to a slow, but steady, start during this year. There have been **53 new members** register through our website during the year, which means that we now stand at about 400 Full Members, although only about 60 of those old members have 'registered' their membership via the new website. We may not get an accurate count on membership for some years yet.

Website. The most significant event in 2012 was the launch of our new website in October. The 'bedding-in' of the new website this year has not been without its problems, and we are very grateful to Mike Dakin for having come out of retirement (he turned 80 during the year) to shoulder the main workload as webmaster

and blogmaster. (I'd also like to thank Deb Giles and Deb Lees from Logix for their support). We desperately need a replacement for Mike, and the website will stop functioning if we can't identify a replacement soon. I appeal to all members to help solve this issue; do you know anyone who may be suitable and prepared to take on the role?.

Honorary/Life Membership. In the 2012 amendments to the Constitution we also addressed the wording of our membership categories, in particular the 'Honorary Member' and 'Life Member' Categories. This has led to the awarding of Honorary Membership status to Chris Turver (the NZPA correspondent with 161 Bty in Vietnam in 1965), and to Pam Miley -Terry for her nursing care to RNZA personnel before during and after Vietnam. It has also led to the awarding of 'Life Membership' status to seven of our senior members, in what is essentially a bit of a catch-up, for recognition of their contribution to the Association in the past. These new Life Members are Brig Geof Hitchings, Brig Ray Andrews, Col Don Kenning, Col Barry Dreyer, Maj Denis Dwane, Capt and QM Graeme Black and Mr Brian Jerry Meyer. (I would ask you to put your hands together to congratulate these members on their selection to 'Life Membership' status). I am sure there are many more who are also

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deserving of this honour and we will be looking to recognise their contribution in the coming year.

Mentor Program. The year has seen the continuation of the 16 Field Regt/RNZA Association Mentor Scheme, with ten Young Officers having been linked up with their Association Mentors. Whilst the job of Mentor is not arduous, it does require diligence on behalf of the Mentor to ensure that relationships are kept alive, not necessarily that easy when the age gap can create communication difficulties. The development of the NCO Mentor Program has not yet got underway, but this program is now more likely to take the form of 'mentorship as required', still under the umbrella of the Association but coordinated by 16 Field Regt.

Minor Support Initiatives.

The 'Wreaths on ANZAC Day' initiative was continued this year; the aim of this is to rejuvenate gunner networks at the 'local' level, with the Association paying for wreaths where 5 or more gunners are assembled (and photographed) in one location (I would once again like to thank Col Peter Hansen for his generous sponsorship of this initiative).

Cards (and a small gift) were again sent to our members serving overseas at Xmas time (the 2nd year) and this small gesture will continue this year.

Activities.

Exercise Ben Cat on 17 Aug was once again a brilliant occasion, and I am amazed that so few ex-gunners (only 12 this year) take up the opportunity to spend a day in the field with 16 Field Regt; this year it was 163 Battery Live Firing in the Paradise Valley. I wish to thank the CO, Lt Col Matt Weston and his staff sincerely for their hosting of this event; for me it's the most important (and most interesting) date in our Association Calendar, the opportunity for old to meet current in the 'work environment' which binds us together.

I would like to thank the organisers of the various celebrations held on Gunners Day throughout the country, as this event (other than funerals) really does unite us in our common bond of service to the Royal Regt of NZ Artillery. I'd like to make special mention of the team in Dunedin for their celebration of the 'acceptance' of 'B' Battery in 1863. Well done 31 B Battery Gunners.

Donations.

Inwards; I would like to thank all those members who made donations to the Association through the year (predominantly members making a donation in lieu of the previous annual subscription), and in particular to the Auckland Artillery Officers Mess, (a group of mainly CMT era gunners) who donated \$1000 towards development of our website.

Outwards; This year we made one 'support' donation of \$500.00 donation to the George Greening Funeral Fund.

The RNZA Historical Trust, which was formed in 2012, has got off to a slow start, with a data-base system for the recording of heritage items having been identified, but still undergoing some development, and

so there is little real progress. The trustees are conscious of this situation and we would hope for better progress next year.

District Coordinators. I would like to thank our District Coordinators for the part they have played in keeping the Association alive throughout the country; Graeme Black (Waikato, VN Vets and heaps of other groups), Danny and Bernie McCort (BoP and Vietnam vets), Tom Roche (Central), David Weston (Wellington and RNZRSA Rep), Skin Frances (Christchurch), and Bill Olsen/Chris Diedrichs/Al Martin/Warren Sapsford/etc (Dunedin). Special thanks to Tom Roche and his team from the Manawatu who have organised this great weekend. Many thanks to you all.

Support Advisers. I would also like to thank our support advisers Mike Dakin, Lindsay Skinner and Pat Duggan. Their ongoing willingness to help is very appreciated, as their expertise is available to all members to help with advise on pension and other support matters.

Newsletter. We made the decision to continue the quarterly 'NZ Gunner' in its current form, even though it is now sent out by email to all but about 20 recipients (by snail-mail). These members are mainly the WW2 group in Auckland. If you know of any older members who are not computer savvy and would like a newsletter, please let the secretary know; a \$20 sub to be paid by the recipient, or a kindly benefactor would also be appreciated. Our ongoing thanks go to Marie Roberts for editing this newsletter. I think the latest September edition reflects the direction the Association is heading, with articles and photos from WW2 Vets, through to articles and photos from three of our serving personnel. Thanks to the article contributors, please keep it up as Marie is not happy unless she's busy!. We would appreciate input from a wide range of members, on a wide range of subjects. The launching of the 'Professional Journal' on the website by the Col Comdt is a significant step forward for a small Army like ours; so for the 'military/strategic' thinkers out there, please contribute your thoughts if you think you have an opinion on where the NZ Forces, and the RNZA in particular, are headed, or should be.

Executive Committee. Lastly but by no means least I would like to thank your elected committee, who meet every two months and whose hard work goes largely unnoticed, but without whom the wheels of the Association would stop turning. So special thanks to Mike Dakin (our webmaster/blogmaster), Colin Jansen (our very enthusiastic Facebook Manager and Quartermaster), Bernie McCort (our new Secretary), Peter Fraser (Treasurer), Kemp Solomon (VP), Greg Thwaite, Ken Davie, John Botica., Peter Miles, and Bob Downs. A marketing sub-committee has also been working hard this year to help in the 'branding' of the Association, producing the Polo shirts, coffee mugs, and the generic business cards, that you have seen this weekend. They have also identified a new 'Logo' for the Association, and a Maori proverb which neatly encapsulates the 'ethos' of our group. Special thanks to Kemp Solomon, Peter Fraser, John Botica

and Colin Jansen for their great efforts.

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

In conclusion I would like to wish all members and their families a very Merry Xmas and a Happy New Year.

Ubique, Tony McLeod, President, RNZA Assn



2. LAST POST

206059 **ANSTIS**, Colin Francis. 162 Bty, 16 Fd Regt, Korea, RNZA. Passed away 29 November 2013 at Havelock North.

60436 Gnr **COOK**, Ronald Sydney (Ron). 4th Light Ack Ack Regt. Passed away at New Plymouth on 19 October 2013 aged 95 yrs.

42337 Maj (Rtd) **FLAVELL**, Graeme L. RNZA. Passed away 24 November at 5.50pm after a long struggle with emphysema. Graeme toured SVN in 1969 as a Sct Comd/GPO with Andrew's Bty.

61017 **HARRIS**, Dudley Frederick. F Troop 6th Fd Regt WWII. Passed away at Auckland on 17 October 2013 aged 94 years.

800122 (NZEf and J Force), B30200 Col (Rtd) **JONES**, Howard. 2 NZEF, J Force, 6 Fd Regt, CI Sch of Arty, RNZA passed away 12 November 2013 in Wellington aged 91 years.

658780 **McCOSKRIE**, Harold Houston. 25th Fd Bty J Force. Passed away at Auckland on 8 November 2013.

457436 Bdr **MURRAY**, John Graham (Graham). 9th Coast Regt. Passed away in Whangarei on 30 August 2013. Graham volunteered to join those going to Korea but because of the skills he processed he remained in NZ as part of the training team that trained the gunners who went. On leaving the Army graham joined the NZ Police and served the majority of his time in Central Auckland.

Best man at his wedding was "Gunner" Arthur Simeon.

621510 **ROLLS**, Roberts Frank (Bob). Sgt WW11 RNZA. Passed away 4 December 2013 at Auckland in his 90th year

Obituary - Col (Rtd) Howard JONES RNZA.

Born: 02-09-1922, Wanganui .

Service Number: Originally, 800122 (2NZEF & J Force), then 30200 from 1st April 1948 onwards, until check letter B added around 1970).

Service: New Zealand Army

Highest Rank: Colonel

Enlistment: 30-01-1942, entered Duntroon as a Staff Cadet on enlistment. Graduated as Lieutenant on 14-12-1943, Returned to NZ 19-04-1944

Mobilised: 02-05-1944

Discharged: 02-09-1977

Overseas Service: 26-06-1944 to 22-07-1946 (Egypt, Italy, Japan)

Overseas Units: 6 Field Regt in Italy, appt Military Secretary 2New Zealand Expeditionary Force in Japan

Appointments:

- Appt Chief Instructor, School of Artillery 08-06-1949 for 3 years.
- Attended Staff College Queenscliff, Melbourne 12-01-1953
- Appt NZ Army Liaison Officer Melbourne on completion on 12-01-1954.
- Return to NZ 22-06-1956
- Appt Deputy Assistant Adjutant General (DAAG), 1 Army HQ on 23-11-1956
- Appt DAAG, Plans & Mobilisation Army, HQ on 01-09-1959
- Posted NZ Cadre, Fiji for 2 years on 27-02-1961
- Appt Recruiting Director, Army HQ 13-06-1963
- Appt Chief of Staff, HQ Central Military District
- Appt Deputy Head New Zealand Defence Liaison Staff UK (london) 17-08-1968
- Returning to NZ 29-10-1972
- Appt Director of Manning 29-10-1972
- Last Posting was as Colonel General Staff, AGS on 24-01-1974

Total Service: 35 Years 216 Days

Medals: 1939-45 Star

- Italy Star
- Defence Medal
- War Medal 1939-45
- New Zealand War Service Medal
- New Zealand Defence Service Medal



3. REPORT FROM COL COMDT, RNZA

Col Comdt in the UK

On a private visit to the UK in November, I was fortunate to be invited to spend a day at Larkhill hosted by HQRA and the Royal School of Arty, and initiated by John Tulloch.

The notes below are for interest. They are from a briefing from HQRA, and they are in the public domain in the UK.



NZ Memorial Hyde Park, London

UK ARMY STRUCTURE

With the pending RA withdrawal from Afghanistan and Germany, all active RA units will be stationed in the UK by about 2016 for the first time in more than 150 years. The major concentration will be at Larkhill with five active Regiments.

Gunner operational groupings will be around armd, air assault and commando battlegroups.

The 2020 Royal Artillery structure will be:

- 1 Arty Bde with 7 regular and 2 reserve CS Regts, and 1 reserve GMRLS Regt
- 1 Int & Surv Bde with 2 regular and 1 reserve UAS (unmanned aerial systems) Regts, and 1 regular and 1 reserve STA (surveillance and target acquisition) Regts
- HQ Joint GBAD (ground based air defence) with CAD (close air defence) and Rapier Regts and 1 reserve Regt, and an LEAPP Bty

There will be a much heavier reliance on the reserves as assigned units in operational groupings.

Force structure will be:

The **very high readiness group** (Joint Helicopter Comd) has 16 Air Assault Bde with a regular regt of lt guns.

The **Reaction Force** of 5 brigades. 3 armoured infantry brigades will form 3 (UK) Division with one armd inf bde at full readiness at all times. The Div will have 3 regular CS gun regts with AS90 (SP 155mm) and GMRLS (guided 185mm rockets)

allocated from Force Troops. The other bdes are the Air Assault Bde and a logistic bde.

The **Adaptable Force** of 7 infantry brigades which will keep a cav regt, 2 mounted inf bns and 3 light inf bns ready for contingent tasks. The adaptable force will have 4 CS gun regts with lt gun (2 regular and 2 reserve) and a reserve GMRLS regt allocated from Force Troops.

Force Troops will command all combat support, command support, and most combat service support for the Reaction and Adaptable Forces. The grouping will be in 8 functional brigades plus the theatre entry bde. These bdes will be: an arty bde of 5 RF and 3 reserve regts; an engr bde; two sigs bdes; a log spt bde; a med bde; and int and surv bde, incl 4 RA regts; and, an MP bde.

The **Int & Surv Bde** – part of the Adaptable Force – will have 3 UAS regts (2 regular & 1 reserve), and 2 STA regts (1 regular and 1 reserve)

Air Comd will have a regular GBAD regt with Rapier, and 2 CAD regts with HVM (hyper velocity missile) (1 regular and 1 reserve)

Navy Comd will have 3 Cdo Bde with a regular CS regt with lt gun.

COMMEMORATIVE EVENTS

There are a number of commemorative events in the next few years. The RA (and RNZA) are early planning stages, but the RA would welcome any participation by visiting ex-RNZA personnel.

For WW1 centenary bespoke RA events will be centred on 1914 first rounds fired Le Cateau and Nery; 1916 Somme battles; and, 1918 Armistice.

For Waterloo 200th in 2015, RA will link to Army plan

Most important RA event is the 300th Anniversary of the RA in May 2016. – UBIQUE 300. The main RA events will be: Salisbury Cathedral service; Royal review at Larkhill; Royal dinner at Larkhill; and, a traditional Arty Day on Salisbury Plains.



Royal Artillery Memorial Hyde Park London

Additionally, there will be a Queen's Baton taken around the world by Commonwealth gunners calling into all RA linked countries. Baton will move primarily by RAYC yacht, but also flying, canoeing, running, parachuting or any other event gunners want to develop. There is a high expectation that RNZA will be well involved. The baton will of course come through NZ. It will complete its journey when it is handed to HM at the Larkhill Royal review 26 May 2016.

There was a clear sense that the withdrawal from operational deployments and concentration of the RA into the UK has re-focussed the view that the RA should re-develop the Commonwealth links quite strongly. Both the Regt Col and the Master Gunner St James Park, as well as the CI at the School explored a number of suggestions, particularly around UBIQUE 300, so take this as a WngO:

- For the RA Gunners UBIQUE 300 is the big event and where most of the commemorative focus is going to be. The Captain General's visit, drive past parade on Knighton Down, formal dinner, etc, followed by Artillery Day. It will be a very big splash. It was hoped that RNZA would again participate in Royal ceremonial with whatever we could muster.
- We are strongly encouraged to participate in the Queen's Baton event, both in the NZ region and worldwide.



RA HQ Officers Mess

4. COL 16 Fd Regt - HANDOVER OF COMMAND

On 6 December 16 Fd Regt paraded for the handover of command between Lt Col Matt Weston and Lt Col Andrew Shaw, with the Col Comdt as the reviewing officer.

On behalf of all ranks, serving and retired in the RNZA I wish Lt Col Shaw all the best in his new task. I am sure the Regiment will continue to prosper under his leadership and I look forward to working with him.



For Lt Col Matt Weston, I wish him all the best in his next posting, which will be overseas. Matt has done a great job with the Regt, continuing with the development and introduction of new equipment both on the gunline and in the CPs. He has consolidated an ambitious five year plan technical, equipment, and training and development plan which will see the Regt prosper within the Brigade. As always, the core is well trained, technically strong all round gunner officers and soldiers who can hold their end up in any company. It has been a job very well done by the CO.

Finally, I wish everyone a very restful and enjoyable Christmas and holiday break, and good times with family and friends.

We will see you in 2014

Ubique, Barry Dreyer, Col Comdt, RNZA

5. 79TH RNZA Assn REUNION

What a weekend, what did we do and how did we find time to do it all!!

Arrived **Friday**, went and registered our presence and participated in the meet and greet function. They came from the south (Invercargill, Christchurch, Wellington), the north (Kaiwaka, Auckland, Hamilton, Tauranga) and places in between.



Up early **Saturday** so much to do, attend the formal welcome from Rangitane (local Tangata Whenua), 16 Fd Regt and Naval Assn personnel. The Gunners go off to Linton to inspect the new toys the current gunners get to play with.



The partners go off to Ashurst to visit the Herb Garden for some R and R and of course a cup of coffee.



Rest up in the afternoon for the big night.

Board our staff car (the bus) and get taken to the WO's and Sgts Mess at Linton.



Meet by the Officers and Senior NCO's of the Regiment. Join them for a four course superb dinner (entree: venison salad, Soup: rosemary and cumin spiced pumpkin, Main: seared beef fillet and dessert: lemon sabayon tart accompanied with suitable wines).

During the course of the evening a number of presentations were made:

A. RNZA Assn Honorary Membership accorded to: Chris TURVER and Pam MILEY-TERRY.



Membership notes for Chris can be found in Newsletter 157 page 8 and for Pam in Newsletter 158 page 8.

B. RNZA Assn Life Memberships awarded to:

Brig (Rtd), Geoff **HITCHINGS**, (absent) BC 161 Bty SVN 1968/69

Brig (Rtd) Ray **ANDREWS**, BC 161 Bty SVN 69/70

Col (Rtd) Don **KENNING**, BC 161 Bty SVN 65/66

Lt Col (Rtd) Barry **DREYER** (Col Comdt), LO/GPO 161 Bty SVN 66

Maj and QM (Rtd) Denis **DWANE**, 161 Bty SVN 65 No4 and 6 Gun and 67 Sgt Echo Gun

Capt and QM (Rtd) Graeme **BLACK**, 161 Bty SVN BQMS 65 and Chief Clerk 67

and Mr Brian (Jerry) **MEYER**, 161 Bty SVN Svy Sgt 1966,



L to R: Brian, Denis, Don, Ray, Graeme and Barry

C. The "Peter Williams" Trophy for 1st on the GPO Cse awarded to Lt Craig Deal 11/4 Bty



Lt Deal with Colleen Brooker
(widow of Peter Williams)



Paul O'Connor (ex RSM of the Army) presented
to Colleen a selection of photos taken in
SVN of the late Peter Williams GPO KIA 1967

D. The RNZA Assn Trophy for Gunner of the Year (2013) awarded to Sgt Lance GREER.



Sgt Greer's performance in 2013 is deemed to most personify the ethos and values we expect of our Gunners. He was selected from a highly competitive group of soldiers identified as performing to an outstanding level.

Sgt Greer is employed as a Gun Sgt at 163 Bty. He has performed his duties in action to a very high standard and in a manner in which we as Gunners can all be proud. St Greer is an excellent role model and

his Gun Detachment performs to a high standard. Sgt Greer has also taken an active role in the development of mortar procedures and Civil Military Operations.

Sgt Greer's performance has been particularly noteworthy due to his efforts to organise and execute a wide range of Regimental and overseas activities that have greatly contributed to a successful year for 16 Fd Regt.

Highlights include:

- His role organising and commanding gunners involved in a reciprocal exchange with the Canadian Artillery that saw NZ Gunners deploy to Canada in late 2012 and then Canadian Gunners deploy to NZ April-May of this year.
- His conduct of Civil Military Operations on Ex Alan Halfa and then Ex Pacific Partnership, a multinational Humanitarian and Disaster Relief Ex in the Pacific.
- Sgt Greer then went on to enable other soldiers develop competence in Civil Military Operations by instructing on Courses and planning and organising Ex Phoenix Assist in Opunake.
- Sgt Greer also voluntarily assisted the organisation of a very successful Regimental Ball.

In the conduct of his duties Sgt Greer has demonstrated the highest standards of professionalism, agility and commitment. He is therefore a worthy recipient of **Gunner of the Year 2013**.

E. Certificates for 20 years Service awarded to:

Lt Col Kevan **SCOTT**,
WO2 Nick **SHIELDS**,
WO2 Richard **THEODORE**,
SSgt Heath **SOUTHCORBE**
and SSgt Kyle **MOFFAT**.



F. Capt and QM (Rtd) Brian (Skin) FRANCIS was dined out of the RNZA having served in the NZ Army 1971 - 1991 (RF) and 2000 - 2013 (TF)..



H. The usual Gunner toasts were made and acknowledged. Each table comprised a mixture of current and past gunners thus there were some most interesting discussions held during the evening.



The Editor had the pleasure of sitting next to Sgt Hamish Railton (grandson of the late Major Ray Tinsley, OC HQ's Company ATG mid 70's).

I. The formal dinner concluded with the reading of the Regimental Poem by Lt Michael Doughty RNZA:

Memories of Kapyong



I am standing in my garden, in the early morning haze,
Looking up towards the hillside where the quiet cattle graze,
And the fog which night has gathered on the swamp which lies between,
Forms a blanket which enhances this, my early morning scene.

But now further up the valley, from the quarry neath the hills,
Comes the sound of early blasting which my peaceful scene dispels
For the sound I hear recalls to me

the echo of a gun,
In a valley in Korea in the spring of fifty-one.

And the fog which shrouds the swamp land, now assumes a deeper hue
Like the gunsmoke on the paddi, in that valley that I knew,
I smell the cordite once again, and as the daylight comes,
I see spread across the valley floor, that regiment of guns.

The Middlesex ahead of us, Australians to the right,
And to the left Canadians have held on through the night.
With target after target from our O.P. on the crest,
The gunners feed the guns, their bodies crying out for rest.

For the guns, now like an orchestra, the targets they engage,
With a symphony of anger, a cacophony of rage.
And from the hill above me, just beyond the nearest crest,
Comes the stutter of the bren guns from the infantry hard pressed

From the road which lies behind us come the Army Service Corps,
Dump their load of ammunition and then speed back off for more.
I see walking wounded moving through our lines, while overhead,
Fly the choppers which are lifting out the dying and the dead.

And now at last, the foe repelled, the storm and fury done,
Each weary gunner lays him down and sleeps beside his gun.

Now I hear a pheasant calling, and a stirring in the trees,
And I feel the cool caresses of an early morning breeze
I feel a hand upon my arm, a voice beside me say,
"What are you thinking of my love? You seem so far away"

My aging eyes refocus on the farmlet that we share,
The orchard with the apple trees, the peach, the plum, the pear,
The sun is up, the mist is gone, the cattle on the hill,
Are back to grazing peacefully, and all is calm and still.

You sometimes smile and tell me of the things that I forget,
People's names and missed appointments, little things

like that, and yet
Despite the years that lie between, my mind can still recall,
How we held the line that April, on the road that led to Seoul.

By Maurice. E Gasson, May 2003

Maurice Gasson took long term leave from his teaching position at the Te Kuiti District High School in 1950, to join the newly formed 16th Field Regiment. He sailed with the main body on the S.S. Ormonde in December of that year, for Korea, where he served with 161 Bty until his return to New Zealand near the end of 1952. Upon discharge Maurice returned to his teaching position, and remained teaching, through a number of North Island schools. He served his last 10 years of teaching as Principal of the Clevedon School, and retired in 1985. He now lives with his wife on a small holding, raising beef animals, travelling, and writing both poetry and prose. With seven children and sixteen grandchildren, (and currently 14 heifers) he is kept quite busy.

Sunday dawned a beautiful day, heaps of sunshine and little wind!!! A simple and short church service was held beneath the Naval Assn flag pole and was conducted by Chaplin Class 3 Hamish Kirk.



The National Anthem was sung, prayers said, the 23rd Psalm read by Brian (Jerry) Meyer, the last post played, the roll of honour for 2012/2013 read by Denis Dwane and the ode read by Graham Black and Kemp Solomon.



Move inside for morning tea then the **2013 AGM** was held.

MINUTES OF THE 79TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING Date: 20 October 2013

Location: Royal NZ Naval Association, 20 Domain St Palmerston North
Start time: 1030 hrs
Chair: President, Tony McLeod
Minutes Secretary: Gregory J. Thwaite

1. **Attendance;** (37) Barry Dreyer, Denis Dwane, Paul O'Connor, John (Woody) Barrett, David Lackey, Pamela Terry, David Weston, Graeme Black, Chris Turver, Robert Down, Kemp Solomon, Peter Fraser, Brian (SKIN) Frances, Colin Davison, Andrew Donnellan, Colin Jansen, Jim Gilchrist, Phil Johnson, Kevin Stone, Peter Miles, Neil Rhynd, Barry Cook, Ross Goldsworthy, Peter Baker, Garry Brennan, Catherine Dymock, Bowen Meikle, Brian Jerry Meyer, Wayne Searle, Graham Gordon, Danny McCort, Tom Roche, Rangi Fitzgerald, Bernie McCort, Greg Thwaite

2. **Apologies** In advance: Brig Les Wright, Lyndsay Skinner, Robert Barker, Mike Dakin, Alan Taylor, Bill Stewart, Brig Geof Hitchings, Bob Kerslake, Mike Subritsky, Peter Baker, Emma Giles, Brigadier Andrews, Colonel Kenning, Dinga Bell, Brian Mills, Peter Dawson, Mayne Manson, James Horn

3. **Minutes** of the 78th AGM These had been circulated in advance.

Moved: The Minutes be accepted as a true record: *Tony McLeod* Passed unanimously

4. **President's Report** The President read his report (See Item 1, Page 1)

Moved: The Report be accepted: *Tony McLeod/ Paul O'Connor* Passed unanimously

5. **Treasurer's Report** The Treasurer's report was circulated at the meeting. The Treasurer Peter Fraser summarized the key points. (A full copy of this report is on MuzzleFlashes).

Moved: The Report be accepted: *Brian Meyer/ Denis Dwane* Passed unanimously

6. Appointment of **Patron** The President advised that the selection of a new Patron is under consideration, in consultation with the present and past Colonels Commandant.

7. **Election** The Colonel Commandant Barry Dreyer assumed the chair for the election of officers.

Nominations were called for the office of President. Tony McLeod indicated his willingness to serve.

Moved: Nominations be closed: *David Weston/ Barry Dreyer* Passed unanimously
The Colonel Commandant announced the election of Tony McLeod as President, and vacated the chair.

The following persons were nominated for the Committee:

- (a) Bernie McCort (to be Secretary/Treasurer)
- (b) Michael Dakin
- (c) Ken Davie
- (d) Andrew Donnellan
- (e) Robert Downs
- (f) Peter Fraser
- (g) Colin Jansen
- (h) Peter Miles
- (i) Kemp Solomon
- (j) Gregory J. Thwaite

Those persons were elected unanimously

8. Signatories The President advised that the signatories to the bank account would continue to be the persons holding office as the President and the Treasurer.

9. Honorarium Moved: The Honorarium remain at \$500 *John Barrett/ Paul O'Connor* Passed unanimously

10. General Business

10.1 Support for Gunners in Distress The President raised for general discussion the criteria to be applied to requests for financial assistance from Old Gunners. He referred to a brief Memorandum that he had drawn up on the topic, which sets out four suggested principles.

The various views on the topic were as follows:

1. The Association could be in a position to top up grants to Vietnam veterans and their families.
2. A separate general fund for welfare purposes could be established, by donations.
3. The raising of funds for welfare would be easier if there was a specific focus.
4. The principles as set out look suitable.
5. The RSA has for a period not been using welfare funds properly, and the RSA should be an early port of call for welfare assistance.
6. Where the RSA does not assist, the Association might first give non-financial assistance.

These views were approved informally by a show of hands.

The meeting supported the use of discretion by the Committee, with no set financial limit, and with decisions being made on a case-by-case basis.

The President emphasizes that the primary resources are the social networks created by the District Coordinators and the support advisers available to each District Coordinator.. At the end of the

discussion, the President indicated that the Committee would take account of the views of the meeting, and with the benefit of 24 months of experience of the new Membership criteria, would raise the issue again in 12 months' time.

10.2 Colonel Commandant's Briefing

(a) RNZAA Historical Trust The Colonel Commandant explained that various items of RNZA property have ended up in the hands of RSA clubs, City Halls etc.. The role of the Trust is to track them down and catalogue them, while leaving them in place in the meantime. The securing of funding has taken time, and a database is not yet configured. The Regional teams will be the key people in the process.

(b) Funding The Colonel Commandant sketched the advantage of a centralized funding pool for the various RNZA entities, e.g. 16th Field Regt., the Association, and the Band. The fundraising for the funeral for G Greening showed the importance and effectiveness of Facebook communication.

(c) Professional Journal An important aspect of the Facebook and website was providing a forum for articles on the future role of Artillery in Defence thinking. Feedback is an important part of this process.

(d) Regimental Memorial A Memorial has been erected outside RHQ of 16th Field Regiment. Work is underway to compile a list of KIA's from the RNZA.

(e) Band The Band was reported to be in good shape. Financially it has \$40,000 in the bank, freehold land and its own instruments, and the replacement of instruments is funded by community trusts. At 33, it is now stronger in numbers than before its separation from the Army.

(f) 2014 Gunners' Day The Colonel Commandant attended the 2013 Day in Dunedin, and proposes to attend the 2014 Day in Wellington.

(g) Parade On 6 December there will be a parade at Linton to mark the Change of Command. At the same time Colonel Gillard will take over command of 1 Brigade.



10.3 District Reports.

(a) Christchurch. Skin Francis reported satisfaction in Christchurch, with St Barbara's Day in hand, and the expectation of hosting the Association reunion in 2015. He observed that it was hard to locate and attract Old Gunners from the 1980's and 1990's.

(b) Wellington. David Weston reported good turnouts for Gunners' Day, Anzac Say, and 4 December. He echoed the comments about the Old Gunners from the 1980's and 1990's, but alluded to the benefits of Facebook. He was prepared for the 2014 reunion to be in Wellington.

(c) Bay Of Plenty. Bernie McCort reported that focus is on organizing the EVSA reunion in 2014.

(d) Manawatu. Tom Roche observed that the closing of the RSA removed a central meeting point for Old Gunners. There is little contact with Korean veterans at one end, and serving soldiers at the other. He commented that a website is a point of contact.

(e) Colonel Commandant. The Colonel Commandant took the opportunity to praise the Exercise Ben Cat experience, and to recommend it to Old Gunners.

(f) Lt. Catherine Dymock Lt. Dymock, of 161 Battery outlined the recent achievements in terms of training and the Gunners' Ball, and spoke briefly on upcoming exercises e.g. Southern Katipo.

10.4 Conclusion

Tony McLeod posed the question how to make the Association relevant to serving Gunners. Skin Francis suggested the importance of RSA connections, and was supported by Paul O'Connor.

11. The Future

(a) The President observed that the success of the Dinner for 31 'B' Battery in Dunedin shows the significance of events revolving around a Battery. He mentioned the upcoming sesquicentennial of 11(A) Battery in Auckland, and the 50th anniversary of the deployment to South Vietnam of 161 Battery, as suitable dates for Battery reunions.

(b) The Colonel Commandant voiced a caution about splintering the Gunner community into Battery groups. Further, a general Facebook page for all Old Gunners was preferable.

(c) Colin Jansen spoke of the importance of face-to-face contact with Old Gunners as a means of encouraging participation, and referred to the contacts made at events e.g. Exercise Ben Cat.

12. Orderly Room Briefing Secretary/Treasurer Bernie McCort covered the following points:

- (a) the importance of the electronic database, especially for District Coordinators;
- (b) the different roles of Facebook and the website;
- (c) the importance that information be passed to the Association e.g. for the newsletter;
- (d) the need for photos, but with persons identified;
- (e) the policy that product ordered from Q will be shipped only if paid for in 14 days.

13. 2014 Reunion It was agreed that the next Reunion would be held in Wellington. David Weston has started the planning process. A church service at the National War Memorial is a prospect.

Brian Meyer raised the prospect of a return to Taupo, which has historical significance. The President's view was that a Reunion should be moved around the country, as it stimulates interest among the local Gunners.

14. Australian Visitors The visiting Australian Artillery Association President (Kim McGrath) spoke briefly of the Reunion proposed in Caloundra in 2014. The President presented Kim and Jim Bushell with a RNZAA polo shirt.

15. Vote of Thanks Tom Roche and his team were thanked for their efforts in organizing and running a fantastic reunion weekend.

16. Korowai Members were invited to inspect the Vietnam *korowai* being prepared by Rangi Fitzgerald.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 1155 hrs.

A PICTORIAL VIEW OF THE REUNION

A. FRIDAY NIGHT MEET AND GREET



Above Graeme Black and John Deazley



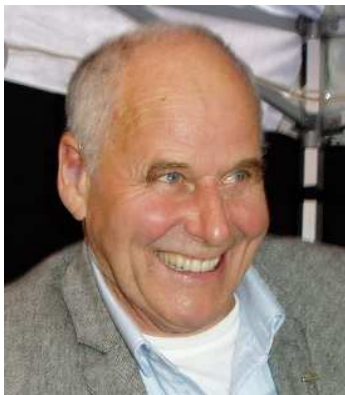
Above Denis Dwane and Paul O'Connor



Above Graeme Henderson



Above Mike Subritzey and David Bahler



Above Bowen Meikle



Above Colin Jensen wearing
a RNZA Assn "T Shirt"

**B. SATURDAY—VISIT BY THE
PARTNERS TO THE HERB GARDEN**



**B. SATURDAY—VISIT BY THE
GUNNERS TO 16 Fd Regt**



C. FORMAL DINNER



D. SUNDAY CHURCH PARADE



6. LIFE MEMBERSHIP BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

A. 483067 Brig (Rtd) Raymond John ANDREWS CBE. RNZA

Upon graduating from RMC, he became an Instructor RNZA at Papakura, CMT Battery, followed by a posting to RNZAF Flying School, Wigram to complete AOP training.

He then returned to 16 Field Regt at Papakura, which was reforming after its disbandment in South Korea.

1961 was a posting to the British Army Flying Corps, flying operationally in Malaya, Brunei and Borneo. With Lt Brown RNZA, they were the first of a number of RNZA pilots to be posted there.

1967 was spent at Staff College, Queenscliff, Australia.

The year Sept '69-Sept '70, BC 161 Battery in Vietnam was a highlight.

Next significant posting was as Brigade Major 28 Commonwealth Brigade in Singapore for the period 1971-1973.

During 1974-1976 he served as Chief of Staff 3 Inf Bde Gp Christchurch.

1977 to Fiji as Chief of Staff Royal Military Forces for 2 years, including the insertion of the first Battalion into Lebanon, where he stayed with the Battalion for 3 months to ensure they were operationally sound.

On return, 1979-1980, as Director of Royal New Zealand Artillery at Army General Staff. Then in 1981 as Commander 2 Task Force at Palmerston North.

1983/84 was an interesting one year course, seconded to the Canadian Defense



College. After another year, as Assistant Chief of Defence Staff (Personell), he was posted to Auckland as Commander Land Force Command.

From there, 1987-1990 his final posting was as Defence Head, Liaison Staff, London.

Retirement has included being Colonel Commandant RNZA for the period 1997-2003. (From 1990 includes honorary appointments in Old Comrades, Artillery Officers Messes and the RNZA Band).

In 1960 Ray married Laurie and have three sons; Craig, Anthony and Hamish-all of whom have been gunners.

B. 37981 Maj and QM (Rtd) Denis Sidney John DWANE MBE, JP

Major Dwane was born in Carterton in February 1942 and educated at Carterton District High School.

He enlisted into the New Zealand Army in January 1958 as a Regular Force Cadet and graduated into the Royal New Zealand Artillery. Major Dwane's career as a Non Commissioned Officer was varied, and included two operational tours to Vietnam. His final post as a NCO was that of Regimental Sergeant Major of 3 Field Regiment.

On completion of 21 years service, Major Dwane was commissioned into the rank of Lieutenant and Quartermaster in February 1980. His first commissioned post was at Burnham Training Depot as Company Commander. He completed his posting in Burnham at Headquarters 3 Task Force Region at Headquarters Company as the Second in Command.

In August 1982, Major Dwane was promoted to the rank of Captain and in May 1983 posted to New Zealand Force South East Asia Singapore. While in Singapore he served with New Zealand Base Support Unit as Second in Command, and as a Company Second In Command with 1st the Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment.

On his return to New Zealand in August 1985 Major Dwane was posted to Papakura Camp as the Adjutant. In March 1987 he was promoted to Major and appointed as the Camp Commandant of Papakura Camp. He retired from the New Zealand Army in March 1990.

In March 1991 Major Dwane re enlisted into the New Zealand Army on the Special Service List as a Captain and was posted to 16 Field Regiment as a Battery Captain. In July 1993 he was promoted to the rank of Major and assumed the role of Second in Command 16 Field Regiment, at Mt Wellington Barracks. During this appointment the Regiment moved to Waiouru.

He was Acting CO of the Regiment from June 94 to December 94.



In December 1995 Major Dwane was posted to Headquarters Land Force Command, Takapuna as the Assistant G4 Equipment Management. In February 1998 with the rationalisation of the two commands Major Dwane was posted to Land Command Upper Hutt and continued in the same appointment he held at Takapuna. In May 1998 he assumed the appointment of the Second In Command, Headquarters 5th Base Logistic Group, Trentham Camp and for extended periods held the appointment of Acting Commanding Officer. In July 2001 his unit was re-titled Trentham Regional Support Unit and Maj Dwane was appointed its Commander with the title of Commandant Trentham Camp.

In June 2002 appointed Contract Manager for Papakura Camp with the return of 1NZSAS Gp to the Camp. He retired on 15 December 2007.

Throughout his military career Major Dwane has maintained a strong involvement with the wider community and was appointed as a Justice of the Peace in 1990.

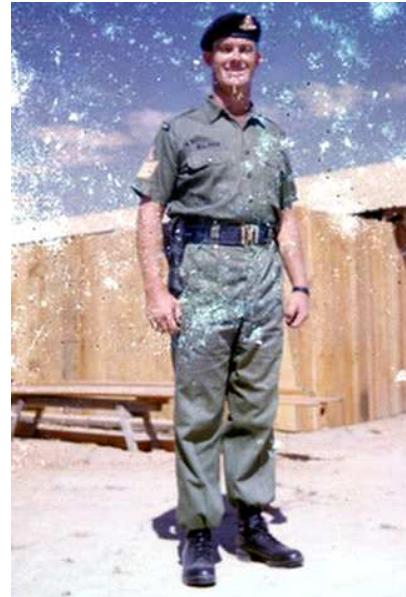
Major Dwane was awarded the MBE in the 1995 New Year's Honours.

Major Dwane is married to Margaret and they have five children.

C. 35314 Capt and QM (Rtd) Graeme B BLACK

- 14 Jan 1952 Joined RF Cadets and went to Trentam
- Jul 1952 moved to Waiouru as advance party for our future in Waiouru
- Sep 1952 attend AA Basic Instructors Course and was run over by a Bofors gun. Qual Q3

- Jan 1953 attend Basic All Arms Instructors Course. Qual Q3
- Apr ? 1953 attended RNSigs and RNZA Sigs course. Qual
- Sep 1953 Attended RNZA No 3 Mk 7 Radar Course. Qual Q2
- Dec 1953 graduated from RF Cadets as a Gunner 3*
- Jan 1954 reported to Artillery Wing as Radar Instructor
- Sep 1957 attended Tech Ack AA course. Qual Q1, so here was a posting to S of A
- Jan 1958 reported to S of A as an Anti Aircraft Instructor.
- 1959 Attended conversion Course AA and Coast to Field Artillery
- Jul 1962 posted to 16 Fd Regt as Gun Sgt
- Jan 1964 posted to 4 Mdm Bty as BQMS
- May 1965 posted to 161 Battery Viet Nam as BQMS



- Mar 1966 returned to 4 Mdm Bty and awarded BEM for service in Viet Nam
- Sep 1967 returned to Viet Nam
- Mar 1968 posted to BSM A Bty NSTU
- Jan 1969 posted to Recruit Trg Cadre No 2 RF Depot
- Jul 1971 posted to S of A as SMIG Tech
- Jan 1972 attended RAA WO Gunnery Course Manly. Topped Course
- Mar 1972 returned to S of A as SMIG Tech and then SMIG Loc
- Jan 1976 Commissioned as Met Officer 1 Loc Tp
- Mar 1976 Attended Junior Staff Officer's Course and gained second place.
- Sep 1977 Posted to 2/1 RNZIR prior to posting to 1 RNZIR as AQM

- May 1978 Posted to 1 RNZIR as AQM
- May 1980 Posted to 4 Mdm Bty as BK
- Mar 1983 retired from the Regular Force after being told that my next posting was to Waiouru where I had already spent 17 years

Other points of interest.

- Represented Army and Combined Services in Shooting, Swimming and Water Polo
- Qualified Private Pilot and Club Captain Ruapehu Aero Club
- Golf, President Ruapehu Golf Club. Treasurer Te Kowhai Golf Club.

7. HOROWHENUA ARTILLERY ASSN EL ALAMEIN LUNCH

The **Horowhenua Artillery Association** was formed 26th May 1960. Two annual functions have been held each year for the last 53 years, Gunners Day Luncheon and El Alamein luncheon.

The format for these being:

Parade	10.55
Fellowship	11.00 - 1200hrs
Luncheon	12.00 - 1340hrs
Fellowship	13.40 - 1500hrs



Above L-R :	Patron	Jack Cursons
	Pres of Levin RSA	Les MacDonald
	Pres HAA	Roger Newth
	Guest of Honor	Col Barry Dreyer (Rtd)
	Sec/Treasurer	Adam Gibson

40 Gunners, Partners and guests were seated at our annual luncheon. Col Dreyer's address was warmly received, enjoyable and very interesting. The following is the part that relates El Alamein, other parts of his speech will appear in future issues of The NZ Gunner.

"The Battle of El Alamein on 23 October, 1942.

This was the great decisive battle of the Western Desert campaign. Freyberg and his staff urged at Corps and Army level, with some success, that the attack by the eighth Army begin with a creeping barrage.

On September 27 the New Zealand Division carried out a full-scale exercise to test the creeping barrage concept. The barrage trace and timetable worked well.

In mid-October the New Zealand gunners moved to the Alamein line, dug in and camouflaged. Gun crews rehearsed the fire plan repeatedly. 660 rounds per gun were brought onto the gun position, and 720 rounds per gun were held at the wagon lines.

Each attacking brigade had a Regiment allocated with the third Regiment superimposed across both brigades. The first targets were at Corps level with 480 field and medium guns firing a preliminary 15 min counter battery fire plan and then the first line of the barrage up to the first lift. After that regiments reverted to divisional control to support the local infantry assaults.

On the New Zealand front Steve Weir had 104 field and medium guns under his command. The divisional front was too wide for a full-scale creeping barrage so a series of timed concentrations covered the advance.

The planned artillery attack commenced at 9:20 p.m. on October 23 and ceased at about 2:30 a.m. the following morning. Our guns fired an average of 630 rounds each during that period. The detachments were exhausted.

The New Zealand attack took almost all its objectives and the gun regiments started moving forward for the next phase of the operation.

The following days saw a number of highly effective divisional creeping barrages fired by all three of our field regiments in support of a number of single battalion and two battalion attacks.

There were casualties amongst the gunner's with 28 killed and 68 wounded, mostly from Rommel's counter-attack on Miteiriya Ridge.

The initial battle of Al Alamein, Operation Lightfoot, was followed by Supercharge on November 2. Steve Weir was given a particularly heavy concentration of field guns plus 3 medium regiments to support a British two brigade attack to start Supercharge. The New Zealand infantry were in reserve.

Weir had one 25 pounder for every 20 yards of front and was able to provide a full-scale creeping barrage over a 4000 yard front and with an initial advance of 4000 yards.

After a series of pitched battles with tanks, infantry and artillery, by the morning of

November 4 the enemy's front had been breached, and Rommel's retreat commenced.

Barry Dreyer, Col Comdt, RNZA

8. LETTER TO THE EDITOR

I am taking this opportunity to comment on a statement in Bill Giles obituary in the last NZ Gunner issue that he served in the only major battle the Regiment was involved in Korea, namely Kapyong.

Whilst Kapyong was of course our first major battle and very important it was not the only one. The advance north of the River Imjin, autumn 1951 in Operation Commando, where we first experienced our first, but not last very accurate and intense CB fire, and the Battle on the "Hook" in May and July 1952 were both major battles and even more intense and prolonged than Kapyong.

I write this to ensure the history of the Regiment in Korea can be accurately recorded.

A Korean Gunner.

Barry Dryer Col Comdt, RNZA replies:

The Obituary for Bill Giles covered the actions he was involved in with 16 Field Regiment. The Col Comdt notes there were other battles in Korea that were longer or under CB fire, similarly in Vietnam, but Kapyong and Long Tan have become the iconic battles for a variety of reasons, both in Australia and New Zealand. The Col Comdt's address to the Horowhenua Artillery Association on El Alamein Day, 23 October 2013 discusses the actions around the Hook in Korea in mid 1953 and will feature in a future issue of The NZ Gunner.

9. WANGANUI'S TROPHY KRUPP FIELD GUNN

I have noticed On your site about guns around NZ that you state that this Krupp in Wanganui is a nine pounder and was buried by the Boers before being presented to the 4th Contingent NZMR by Kitchener.



This is not entirely correct. I have spent seven years restoring and researching this gun, which is a 75mm Krupp BL, built in 1892 for the Republic of Orange Free State and captured by British Forces under Brig Gen Roberts after the 10-day siege of Paardeberg Drift on the 27th Feb 1900.

It was then transported to Cape Town via Kimberley with the other captured guns and gifted to the 4th Contingent on the eve of their return to NZ on the 12th June 1901.

It is proven to be NZ's very first trophy artillery gun brought home by returning NZ troops, and is therefore a national military treasure that greater NZ is blissfully unaware of.

It was never buried by Boers although it was buried by the Wanganui District Council in 1942 and resurrected by the Wanganui Museum approx 1954/5. The myth that it was buried by Boers was mistakenly perpetuated by Colonel Robins in a report written in 1901 by the Under-Secretary for Defence for the House of Representatives, explaining the 'How, Why and Where' this gun came from. The report is still in Government archives. You can read all about it in my book **Our Gun** and you can learn more from my website, www.ourgun.co.nz

Regards, Geoff Lawson

Thanks for correcting the story Geoff.

10. MEMBERSHIP MEMO FROM AN OLD GUNNER - CYRIL HADDEN

Dear Terry

Enclosed cheque for \$6.00. I'm sorry I did not realise that I was in arrears this much, but if your records show it, then I must be remiss.

You have asked for personal particulars before now and again I am one who has not furnished any.

I originally served during compulsory territorial days in the 1920's and I was a gunner-sig with 13th Coast Bty Narrow Neck when they had two 6in guns emplaced. From memory I think I was there during 1926-28 and achieved the exalted rank of Bombardier, a rank which plays a part in a later story on being commissioned in WWII.

In those days (1920s) we used to form in at the Devonport Wharf and march to our weekly stint at Narrow Neck. Somewhere or other I still have a photograph of myself in bandolier and putties outside a bell tent on North Head.

I remember being one of a few of us who had to warn local residents to leave their windows open because we were going to conduct a live shoot. As the strength of the exploding charge

could still cause problems we used to fire on half charges. On one occasion both guns fired simultaneously and a great number of windows were broken on house in the Cheltenham area.

On one shoot I acted as an observer of the fall of shot. Before the commencement of the shoot there was a retired civilian fishing a matter of about five hundred yards from the shore. The first order gave a range of 5000 yards but the layer set 500. The gun fired and shell lobbed over the head of the fisherman and entered the water beyond him. He threw his line overboard, cut the anchor warp and rowed vigorously towards the shore and safety.

After WWII broke out I was living in Dunedin and joined the National Reserve, an infantry unit, which was mobilised the day the Japs attacked Pearl Harbour. I was called up on the phone at work at 4pm that day and at 7o'clock that night I was defending a beach on the Otago Peninsula with another chap with five rounds of ammunition for our 303s.

Later a number of us were selected to attend an OCTU in Dunedin and three days prior to being commissioned the authorities found they had too few artillery officers and we were sent as a body to Trentham to start again on one-stop-two.

There were about 250 in this gunner OCTU and we were sent to Melrose (Sir Trudy King home) for training in anti aircraft gunnery. We were addressed initially by Winkler (?) who gave us the famous "silver-spoon" speech: "There are those among you who through birth and station owe it as a duty to the nation to become officers; there are those among you whom through educational qualifications may become officers; and there are the remainder of you who aspire to become officers."

It was while I was there that we had to attend a drumming out of an officer who was relieved of his rank for his association with a member of the Women's Auxiliary Corps. I thought it a humiliating spectacle: formed up in a hollow square with the poor individual in the middle; the reading out of the decision of the Court Martial, the roll of the drum and the ripping off of the badges of rank and buttons. I, with others thought this to be an archaic method of demoting an officer for an offence which was human enough: being found asleep in bed with a WAAC!

It is Bill Langevad (a well known Artillery Officer and long time supporter of the Old Comrades Assn) that I owed my being commissioned, and to a lie I told. We had completed our course and we were all lined up for an interview with the Brigadier. I was about the seventh cadet in the first rank. The Brig walked

along and spoke to each cadet with the same questions:

"Artillery I suppose?"

"Yes, sir."

"What rank."

"Sergeant, sir." And he walked on.

When he came to me my answer were different"

"Artillery, I suppose."

"No, sir, infantry."

"Ah!"

"What rank? Sergeant?"

"No sir. Private."

Then in front of me, he turned to Bill and said: "I think this man should be returned to his unit and get some experience of command as an NCO."

Langevad suggested they examine my instructors' reports and my examination results. I could overhear all that was said. Bill supported my being commissioned but I guess the Brig hated the thought of commissioning a private from Infantry and making him an artillery subaltern. He adamantly maintained I should return to my unit when Bill said: "Perhaps he's had previous military experience, sir."

So they hot-footed back to where I was still rigidly standing at attention.

"Have you had any previous military experience, Hayden?"

"Yes, sir."

"Who with?"

"Thirteenth Coast Artillery, sir."

"Oh, artillery?"

"Yes, sir."

"What rank?"

"Sergeant, sir," said the ex-two-striper.

And so I was commissioned in Ack-ack.

**To be continued in the next issue of
The NZ Gunner**



11. RECOGNITION OF INJURIES BY VANZ

Several years ago I applied to VANZ for consideration of an injury I suffered while serving in South Vietnam with 161 Battery as a Forward Observer working with Australian rifle companies.

The injury occurred when I jumped from a Huey of 9 Sqn RAAF during an air assault into an LZ that was covered by elephant grass (or lalang) about 3-4 metres high (not the metre or so that we expected!). I jarred my back at the time and was treated by the RAAMC Cpl Medic with the coy who gave me a handful of painkiller tablets and said something along the lines of "if these don't work, we'll speak with the Bn MO". They did relieve the pain somewhat and I continued on with the Coy. No formal record of the incident or my treatment was made on my medical records that were held by the Battery in Nui Dat.

My initial application to VANZ was declined as there was "no information available for the presumption of attributability to or aggravation to service under Section 17 of the War Pensions Act 1954 to apply." Some years later I obtained a copy of my Personal File from the Defence Archives which included my medical records – I then checked through the medical records covering my Vietnam service carefully and there was no record of any of the treatment for minor ailments or injuries that I had been treated for by the rifle coy medics. In conversation with a number of ex-161 Bty people I realised that there were quite considerable gaps in my, and probably other people's, medical records.

I obtained statements from 2 people who had been in 161 Bty with me; 1 who was a Signaller with me at the time of the incident, and the other who had been Admin Officer of the Bty for a period during 1968/69. They supported my description of the incident and the lack of information being sent back to the Bty admin and medical staff by the battalions. I included these statements along with medical evidence of problems arising in later life both while I was still serving and since, when I applied for reconsideration of my case earlier this year. On 16 November I was advised formally that "the Claims Panel's decision...is to Accept Degenerative Changes Lumbosacral Spine (redefined from Low Back Pain) as attributable to service and award a 10% permanent War Disablement Pension".

I was also helped in my claim by Rob Munro, the EVSA Support contact in Wellington, and either of us is happy to talk through the process with others who may have a similar case

for consideration.

The VANZ claim process provides for a range of evidence to be considered and weighed. The onus of proof is not on the person claiming. Review (as I was able to exercise here) and/or Appeal of any earlier decision is also provided for. The earlier a successful claim is made, the earlier medical help and compensation can be provided.

I would urge anyone else who served in similar circumstances (ie with but not formally attached for administration to Australian units) and who may have suffered injuries or illnesses with long term effects that were treated by RAAMC personnel without formal recording or evacuation, to think about making a claim along these lines.

Article Supplied By David Weston

12. VELLA LAVELLA MEMORIAL

The Association collected for the reconstruction of this memorial at the Christchurch Reunion. The memorial is for the complete detachment from an RNZA ack-ack gun on a landing craft going into Vella Lavella Beach with 3 NZ Div. The craft was hit by a bomb from a lone zero which is understood to have been shot down. It is good of the Engineers to go back to pay their respects.

The Memorial was visited in August 2013 during Ex Pacific Partnership. The photos have been supplied by Maj Alister Mitchell.



Behind the Lines: The Editors Page

Patron

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

Secretary/Treasurer Bernie McCort **rnza.association@gmail.com**
18 Walford Drive
ROTORUA 3010

Committee: Kemp Solomon Mike Dakin
Colin Jansen (Facebook Mgr) Greg Thwaite
Peter Miles Robert Downs
Peter Fraser Ken Davie
Andrew Donnellan

Committee Members at Large:

Graeme Black (Waikato)	Brian Jerry Meyer (Australia)	Bob Kerslake (Auckland)
Danny and Bernie McCort (BOP)	Tom Roche (Manawatu)	Roger Newth (Horowhenua)
Lindsay Skinner (Wellington)	Rob Hitchings (Wellington)	Rob Munro (Wgtn)
Brian (Skin) Frances (Upper Sth Island)	Bill Olsen (Lower Sth Island)	John Osborne (Northland)
Catherine Dymock (16 Fd Regt)	Dave Weston (Wellington, RNZRSA Del)	

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

The NZ Gunner Editor; Marie Roberts 07 3484659
PO Box 5118
ROTORUA WEST 3044 **dgroberts@xtra.co.nz**

Webmaster Skin Frances **webmaster.rnzaa@gmail.com**

RNZA Historian;

Facebook Site; <http://www.facebook.com/#!/group.php?gid=209704013801>

Subscriptions: For those members wishing to receive a printed copy of the Newsletter a \$20 fee is payable. Please forward by cheque to **The Treasurer, 18 Walford Drive, Lynmore, ROTORUA 3010.**

Subscription **Associate Members:** \$20 per annum. Please send cheque to above address.

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

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.

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**

Member Registration: New members are most welcome. **ALL** Gunners are eligible for Full Membership, it is **FREE**, and automatic once a gunner has served in the Regiment for more than 3 months. 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 the new website: rnzaa.org.nz.

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.

Web Items to Web Master at: **webmaster.rnzaa@gmail.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