



**NEW ZEALAND PERMANENT FORCE  
OLD COMRADES' ASSOCIATION (INC)**

P.O. BOX 79-371, ROYAL HEIGHTS, AUCKLAND 1230

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## **NEWSLETTER No. 102**

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**JUNE 1999**

**ROUTINE ORDERS**

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**LAST POST:**

Mrs Joan Keinzley	4 March 99 in Melbourne
889761 N.J. (Neil) Ward	7 February 99 at Kaikoura
1616 Lt L.E. (Eric) Autridge	22 April 99 at Auckland
30221 Col R.H. (Bob) Smith, OBE	12 May 99 at Auckland

**CHANGE OF ADDRESS:**

D.S. Ashley	to	6A Konini St., Taupo
Capt. R.W.G. Bennett	to	C/- NZMCA, PO Box 147, Papakura, Auckland 1730
Lt Col. H.S. Cocks	to	5A Northridge Apartments, 28 Stanwell St., Parnell, Auckland
J. Fallon	to	C/- Lawson, 46 Leichhardt St., Logan Central, Woodridge, QLD 4114, Australia
Maj. P.H. Kitney	to	PO Box 115, Jamison Centre, ACT 2614, Australia
Mrs J. Lundon	to	Maureen Ploughman Home, PO Box 35282, Browns Bay, Auckland 10.
Col. T. O'Reilly	to	16 Weir Tce, Waiouru.
Capt. B. Rigden	to	GS03 Weapons, Logistic Executive, DFAM, Trentham.
R.H.G. Simpson	to	19 Highbury Bypass, Birkenhead, Auckland.
Mr I.J. Walker	to	C/- 26 Cleek Rd., Mangere East, Auckland
Mr D. Weston	to	16 Copeland St., Lower Hutt.
WO2 P.L. McInerney	to	NZCMFO, El Gorah, SINAI. C/- Auckland International Mail Centre, Auckland.
Lt. J.R. Basham	to	225A Rangatira Rd, Beachhaven, Auckland.
Mr A. Boyd	to	39B Titirangi Rd., New Lynn, Auckland.

**ADDRESS, EMAIL**

A new section to cater for members equipped for modern communications. Send your call-sign if you wish to join.

Lt. Col A.J. Rivers	:	arivers@clear.net.nz
Col J. O/B Horsford	:	drofob@xra.co.nz
James Horn	:	jameshorn@xtra.co.nz
Kevin Burnell	:	KCB@ltsa.govt.nz

**LIFE MEMBERS:**

The following are elected life members on reaching the age of 80

D.C. Allison	wef	4 May 98
G.A. Weaver	wef	26 July 98
Lt. Col. J.F. Spring MBE	wef	3 November 98
C.M. Cochran	wef	20 February 99

**NEW MEMBERS:**

Mrs Averill Jones	59A Nixon St., Wanganui East, Wanganui (Lady Associate).
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**RESIGNATIONS:**

Mrs Edith Sewell	wef	28 May 99
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**NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING:**

This will be held at 1000 on Saturday 14 August 99 at Birkenhead RSA. All members are welcome to attend.

**ABSENCE OF PRESIDENT:**

Des O'Connor will be in Italy and Europe until late July, conducting another "*Antiquity Art and Opera Tour*".

**EDITORIAL**

Since our last transmission, in which we remarked unkindly on the "*Interim Report into Defence Beyond 2000*", the "*consensus among defence analysts*" has broken up with a bang. Some support the basic assumptions of the Select Committee, more debunk them, and new stars appear in the firmament. We have space for only a few highlights.

In the NZ Defence Quarterly, the Minister when interviewed deals sternly with the wetter parts of the report, but opposes the recommendation we favoured, the re-amalgamation of the Defence Force and the Ministry. "*There is a healthy tension between the Ministry and the Defence Force. They provide two separate streams of advice*", he says happily, preferring tension to teamwork, as this allows the politician to keep control, perpetuating such an absurdity as an army without a coast defence capability, devoid of heavy anti-aircraft or anti-tank artillery, and without any medium guns. He did not have to arrange this, as it was engineered by a cynically immoral previous administration.

The NZ International Review carries an excellent dissection of the report by a retired Naval Officer, who advises the Army "*The "Corps" mentality belongs to the past. Soldiers will need to think of themselves not as infantry, gunners, engineers, etc.,...Something could be learnt from the British Royal Marines*". Never mind that for centuries every army in the world has found the separation of these arms to be necessary. On the other hand, the Navy might find it sensible to install the designed primary armament on its "floating target" frigates.

The chairman of the perpetrators of the "Beyond 2000" report stated in the press that the army was poorly equipped for even peace-keeping roles, to be promptly contradicted by the acting director of the Centre for Strategic Studies. Mr Quigley bounced back, to be supported by a retired Chief of the General staff, who was in turn met by a counter-blast from the Present CGS. How splendid that some professionally qualified officers are entering the arena, even if they are on opposite sides!

All forget that the function of a Defence Force should be to defend: they concentrate on peace-keeping, placidly accepting financial cuts, and placing "affordability" as the prime factor in equipment acquisition. Meantime the Army has become an under-gunned political toy, and may deteriorate, as we are told that the select committee chairman "*might be given a special advisory defence role*" in a different administration. "*The Flowers of the Forest are a'wede away*".

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## THE WEBSITE: OUR BIG PROJECT

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There will be no more "gems", gentle reader: you will have to look in on the Internet yourselves. As you know, we are on a one-year free trial, sponsored by Angus Rivers, to be reviewed at the AGM in November. A summary of his sitrep follows:

- (a) The site is well-developed, having reached over 3 million bytes, of the possible 5 million to which it is limited in its present location, and beyond which it cannot be expanded without going commercial. The Homepage is visited approximately 50 times per week by a growing number of callers including many regulars.
- (b) Webmaster Catherine aims to expand in such fields as members' own pages, newsletter extracts and history, a valuable research source.
- (c) Angus is going to simplify the complicated address: a shorter form, e.g., **arty.org.nz** would increase traffic and allow expansion.
- (d) At present, costs for our own website would be approximately \$75 for set up, plus annual maintenance of at least \$650.
- (e) Angus will bring a CD to the AGM, carrying all the website material, and suggests ways of raising revenue by such means as sale of CD's and memorabilia.

He concludes - *"Catherine and I would enjoy running the website for as long as members want it, ideally on its own ISP (Internet Service Provider?) with its own name. From a practical viewpoint, until we can find a cheap way to do it, we will probably suggest to the AGM that we continue on the present basis for another year and see what develops"*.

This is a précis : get Angus' full paper from the Secretary by snail mail or phone (09) 416 8662. Get onto the Internet, note particularly the "What's New" section which is constantly growing and see if you can provide any notes, diaries, photos or reminiscences of days gone by. The address is: - <http://OurWorld.compuserve.com/Home Pages/Rivers Partners/Old Comrades/index.htm>

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## MOTUTAPU GUN POSITION RESTORATION

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DF Mainland and Co are managing a project for the Motutapu Restoration Trust which involves setting up a "corporate hospitality facility" (to watch the America's Cup racing) at the 6in gun site on Motutapu Island. At least one gun pit is to be "themed" in its military role. The Trust has been given support by the Army and Navy, and requests our help in obtaining memorabilia (photos, films, uniforms, equipment etc.) to this end. Jeremy Speight, the administrator can be found at Private Bag 99912, Newmarket, Auckland or phone (09) 307 9066.

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## FROM AND ABOUT MEMBERS

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**David Jones** (Last Post, Newsletter 101), born in 1914, joined the RNZA in 1938, and went off to Egypt in '41. After 14 LAA in the Desert, he ended the war as WO2, MID, in 5 Fd Regt to return to the grateful Pig Islands and become a Bdr again! No wonder he opted for civil life in '45. There's a detailed obituary of David on the Website. Averill is clearing the decks, and still has for sale some copies of David's book on earth building, on which he was an expert, breaking new ground (cough). She aims to RV at Taupo in November this year.

**Eric Autridge** (Last Post) was another Life Member lost to the Assn. He joined the RNZA in 1934, and was a Bdr when WW2 began, with his first excursion overseas being to Fanning Island to protect the cable station, with the aid of some infantry. Later, Eric went overseas to join a fd arty regt in Italy. All who knew Eric remember his admirable cheerful spirit and his ability to withstand the many hard knocks which came his way. In civil life, he gave long service and attained high office in the Takapuna RSA and the North Shore KEV, which was reflected in the great turnout at his formal military funeral at the Birkehead RSA on 27 April.

**Colonel Bob Smith, OBE** (Last Post) entered RMC Duntroon in February '43, to graduate in December '44, serve in J Force, and complete a Long Gunnery Staff Course (AA) in UK. He was well-known in the Regt through his time at the School, and as BMRA at Div HQ, Linton. At a memorial service at

Takapuna RSA. a large number of us heard from Max Tebbutt - class-mate, Maj. Gen. Les Pearce - Bob's CO when he served in Malaya in an infantry bn, and Maj. Gen. Ron Hassett with reference to his artillery appointments.

**James Horn**, with Aileen, still managing motels, says "*It's nice to keep up with the techo stuff. Fancy getting positioning down to .2 mils (we used seconds). Will have to find my conversion tables and 7 fig logs*". Keep your head down, James, or you'll be dragged to the School in the next fray. (Ed).

**Paul Kitney** (see Change of Address) seeks the whereabouts of Dick Meagher, former Duntroon class of '50 and later in 16 Fd Regt, Korea. That class are being herded for their 50 years' anniversary in February 2000. Paul's been to Larkhill for the 40th anniversary of the disbandment of 48 Fd Regt RA with which he served in Malaya, and would welcome a call from any member of the OCA visiting Canberra : his number (unlisted) is (OZ) 62 54 3022).

**"Routine Orders" Robinson** points out that he has missed only 3 Taupo reunions since the first one in 1972 "*when we presented a plaque to the AC Baths*", with Des O'Connor and Mat Crawley among others. A great record. Robbie: can we have blood transfusions for some of our "torpids"? (Ed.)

**Henry Salt** flies yet another kite from Queensland, with an extract from the RSL News: "*All good Gunners wear the tie on Friday*". A barrage of support for this was included, dating back to 1945, quoting authorities as high as FM Lord Alanbrooke. As well as showing our allegiance to the Regt, it also enables (members of certain other Corps) to know what day of the week it is. So remember **FRIDAY IS TIE DAY**. Not much use in West Auckland, where ties are used only to support trousers or tomato plants, but recommended for more cultured milieux e.g. Wellington or Palmerston North (tell Linton) - Ed.

**Brian Meyer**, from NSW this time, works hard at shepherding ex-RF Cadets, and seeks former officers Harkness, Mars and Gadsby.

**3 Fd Regt** (post-war) is having its history written by Russell Gregory, who is keen to assemble all relevant data. Contact him at Mt. Lyford Alpine Village, Waiau 8275, North Canterbury. Phone (03) 315 6264, Fax (03) 315 6294.

**G.C. (Darkie) Forrester**, thriving, after 7 bypasses in 8 years, was one of 3 gunners to attend Tom Stephen's funeral recently. We remember him helping us defend the Southern outpost of the Empire (Invercargill) - Ed.

**Les Pye** urges all Old Comrades who are not members of the Govt. Superannuitants Assn. of which he is Vice President at Large, to "get in behind". He's off to UK this month, leading the NZ contingent to the July International Reunion of Korean Veterans, and promises more gen on K Force commemorations coming up.

**Kevin Burnell** is keen on the Warbirds, saying "*if anyone would like a guided tour of our hangars at Ardmore and a flight in one of the aircraft, they are most welcome to contact me*". Cf- Secretary, or - phone (09) 267 0297, Fax (09) 268 2037.

**WO2 Patrick McInerney** (See Changes of Address) is off overseas from 2 May to 12 November as Administration WO for the NZ Contingent, the Multi-national Force and Observers in Sinai. "*At the end of the tour I intend to travel around Europe, provided there is any left after NATO, the Serbs and the Kurdish rebels have finished blowing up everything in sight*" writes Patrick.

**Rick Williams** is "*well on the way up*" after a couple of strokes in '98, and adds "*the newsletters are very entertaining and welcome. Our bond is a wonderful comfort - witness the messages of support I received from friends everywhere, who still keep an eye on me too. Best wishes to all.*" Thanks, Rick: I will stick to my post a bit longer (Ed).

**Ian Cunningham** reports "*a noticeable lack of Old Comrades*" at Dunedin's ANZAC Dawn Parade, therefore no news, but wishes us all a very enjoyable Gunner's Day.

**Hellos:** We gratefully acknowledge greetings and encouraging signals from (excl ranks) John Horsford, Howard Jones, Solly Solomon, Enid Standen, Les Wright, Jim Gilbert, GJ Cassidy, Rene McLean, Colin Stanbridge, Ralph Porter, Tom Roche, CM Cochran, Kathleen Kitney, Paul O'Connor and Les Pearce.

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## EVENTS AND REUNIONS

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### ANZAC Day, 1999

A Wreath was laid on behalf of the PFOCA at he Birkenhead Memorial Park ceremony by Des O'Connor and Wally Ruffell. Bert Dyson, Vic Meyle and Dick Mitchell were among those present.

At the Dawn Parade at Brown's Bay, we noted attenders Maj. Gen. Les Pearce who laid a wreath, and Vic Meyle.

At Mosgiel, the Army News shows a howitzer being fired by 3 hatless members of the Otago and Southland Regiment on Anzac Day. What the HELL is going on?

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### GUNNERS' DAY DINNER, PAPAKURA RSA, 26 MAY

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John Rout presided at a gathering of 106. The Toast to the Regiment proposed by Geoff Morris, was replied to by Rod Baldwin. Jack Bunt, President of the RSA, was presented with a 105mm howitzer dial sight and carrier by the assembled gunners. The Band of the RNZA played. It was another splendid occasion, a credit to the organisation of Jeff Waters and his helpers.

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### GUNNERS' DAY BIRKENHEAD RSA, 27 MAY

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The lunch-time meeting was attended a loyal hard core of 14, sadly depleted by death and illness. Life Member, George Joseph, was a welcome addition. Justice, that blind-folded goddess, struck a mighty blow when Jim Ross won the bottle of whiskey raffled.

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### ANNUAL REUNION AT TAUPO, 12-14 NOVEMBER

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By the number of promises received, this promises to be a humdinger. Members wishing to reserve accommodation at the Spa Hotel may do so from now on by notifying the Secretary.

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### THE GUN.

Continued from Newsletter 101.

By Wally Ruffell.

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Another heavy gun worthy of mention is the RML 7-inch 7-ton. Except for size the equipment, i.e. gun, carriage and platform, closely resembled the 64-pr 64-cwt in outward appearance, but it was more powerful. With full charge of 30 lbs powder MV was 1561 fs, range 5500 yards with a QE of 11°, and with a reduced charge of 17 lbs 4000 with a QE of 9°52'. With full charge a shot could penetrate 6.72 inches of wrought iron at 500 yards. It employed the same system of rifling as the 64-pr but with a uniform twist of one turn in 35 calibres.

As already mentioned, with the 64-prs received in 1879 there arrived eleven 7-inch 7-ton guns on 7-ton carriages - all brand new according to Government records.

The guns were in fact new, having been made in 1878. However, in the Fort Cautley Fort Record Book we find: "... instead of new 7-ton carriages being made and coming with the guns, old sea-service 6½-ton carriages were converted for the purpose and sent out. Like all naval carriages of the same nature they were originally fitted with the EOC compressor, and although well filled up and painted over, the positions of the holes for the compressor shaft and lever bracket are still visible. The naval service metal bushes for the breeching rope are also still fitted in the holes in the brackets of the carriages."

We are left to wonder: Did the New Zealand taxpayer pay for new carriages as ordered - or for the second-hand ones received?

NB: The 'compressor' was a crude recoil-limiting device made of two sets of metal plates, one attached to the carriage, the other to the platform. When squeezed together by the lever mentioned they acted as a brake on the carriage.

In 1904 all 64-pr and 7-inch guns in New Zealand were taken out of service and the complete equipments presented by the Government to local bodies in the four main centres. There they were displayed in local parks etc as memorials - reminders of events in the country's history.

Then during the 1930s there arose a group of peculiar people who thought that if all guns were hidden there would be no more war! They petitioned local councils to bury the old relics or sell them for scrap, and were successful in a number of cases. The guns in Albert Park, Auckland, survived until the Japanese entered World War 2 in 1941, when the same people petitioned the Auckland City Council to bury them. They claimed that Japanese aircraft seeing the ancient pieces might mistake them for modern armament and bomb the city!

To the amazement of normal people the Auckland City Council capitulated! Council workmen buried the guns but not before vandalising them by removing non-ferrous parts and cutting the platforms in half - easier than digging a bigger hole. When in 1977 the guns were 'resurrected' the City Council made an extremely poor attempt at restoring them.

Figs 95 and 96 show two of the 'resurrected' guns, a 64-pr and a 7-in respectively, both ex-Fort Cautley, North Head. Non-ferrous parts have been removed, e.g. carriage trucks and breeching rope hole bushes (7-inch, below the trunnions). Both central pivots are missing; these were dug up but the Council in its 'restoration' made no attempt to replace them on the guns. Neither did they replace the footboards formerly fitted to the platforms for use by detachments. Note also the botched attempt to join the two halves of the 7-in platform.

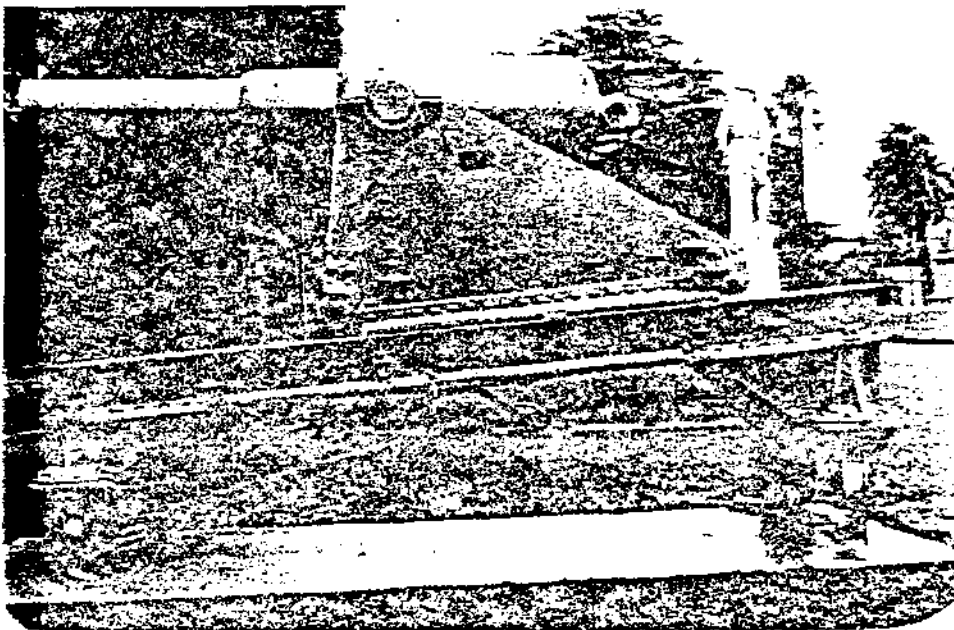


Fig. 95: 64-pr  
ex-Fort Cautley,  
North Head.

(To be continued)

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### A PARTING SHOT

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" Have fun - and at least one giggle per day. "

- Gnr Ivor Baxter, RA (Ret'd).