

Bio "Skin" (Brian Scott) FRANCES

Skin was born Masterton NZ, in Jul 1954. He completed all schooling in Masterton then joined the Army as a Regular Force Cadet in 1971. During the two years at RFCS, Skin continued his secondary education, rose to the rank of Cdt SSgt, but graduated as a Cadet, due to his fondness of beer. In Nov 72 Skin attended his first course at the Sch of Arty, the four month long Formation Survey Course.



In Mar 73, on completing the course Formation Survey Course, Skin was posted 161 Bty (Papakura) as a Battery Surveyor. During the next five years, Skin spent most of his time in the CP, with the odd stint in the OP. He completed many Sch of Arty courses and was able to attain his "4 Star" (Band 5) qualification in Jul 76 while still a Bdr. He also attended a Cymbeline Mortar Location Radar Course at Sch of Arty, Larkhill, Nov 76.

"The Allen Key Award". During a live shoot on the "4 Star" course, Skin was Number One of one of the two 105mm L5 Pack Hows deployed. Other course members (from memory were Brian Soper, Trevor Pilcher, Tiny Manurewa, George Mc Elroy, Marty Mioha and more, but the memory has failed). I think must were all lucky to survive the firing of my first round that day.

During pre-firing recoil testing on a lively wet Waiouru day, Skin had inadvertently he left a bag of Allen keys in the barrel and placed the muzzle cover on the gun. The following day, again wet and dreary, on coming into action Skin failed to check the bore was clear. The other L5 adjusted the mission and FFE was ordered. Skin ordered the HE rd to be loaded then ordered "Fire". The gun recoiled excessively and the HE rd landed about 400m short. On inspection it was found the rifling was stripped and was hanging loose in the bore. ALL were VERY lucky escape a bore premature.

Brian Soper's (Soap) memory of the event:

"I have strong memory of Marty, in my sight line with my head averted in his direction, shrieking and pointing and roaring like only Marty could, and then looking up the barrel at the festoons of hanging rifling lands. I never sat on a gun being fired ever again. But, I did teach Det Comds to do there bore check, with more with more interest.

Skin has openly shared this tale, to allow others learn from his very simple silly basic mistake. If it had gone the "other way", there would have been many rapid promotions within the RNZA in 1976."

May 78 saw Skin promoted to Sgt and posted 31 (B) Bty as a Cadre NCO, but based in Invercargill. This was the first time in many years there was a formal Arty presence in Invercargill, comprising a Section of 3 x M101A1's 105 mm Hows and a CP. By early 80, Skin had married Jill and was posted as Radar Sgt to 1 Locating

Troop, Waiouru. On Skin's departure, due to local Army 'politics', the Invercargill Section was directed to close, Gnrs given the option 'Corp Change or Discharge' and the Section was re-located to Dunedin.

After completing a number of years in 1 Locating Troop, Skin went to 32 Bty Training and Reinforcement Troop, Burnham, in the role as Training NCO, in early 82. During periods of combined RF and TF training Skin often held roles within HQ Bty. Later in 83, he spent four months at the Sch of Arty Manly (Aust) attending WO Met and Sound Ranging promotion courses.

Dec 83 saw Skin again moved to 1 Locating Troop, this time as TSM. A few years later to Skin was moved to SMIG Tech at the Sch of Arty. From Sep 86, with the family in 'tow', Skin attended the Canadian Master Gunners Course in CFB Gagetown, returning just under a year later to take up the SMIG Tech position again. Skin was very proud he was the top student on the course. Later in 87 Skin was promoted to WO1 (MG) and served as MG at the Sch of Arty, until he was commissioned in Mar 90. Skin was heavily involved in the development and introduction into service of the Vanguard Fire Control Computer system, designed and developed by the NZ based company Marine Air Systems (MAS).

Skins final RF posting was to Wellington as Project Officer Artillery, with the primary project being the development of the Gun Data Link to interface with the Vanguard system. Skin retired from the RF as a Capt in 7 Jun 91.

In Jun 91 Skin commenced a 23 year 'second career' as a civilian instructor for the NZ Police in Christchurch, until he took 'voluntary severance' in Jun 2014.

During this same period Skin worked for MAS, as the need arose, as an instructor and technical manual writer, 'unfortunately' having to work for MAS in Botswana (with MG Leroy Forrester), Kenya, UK & Ireland. In 2018 Skin spent a month as a civilian instructor delivering training on the 105mm Light Gun for a company who sold one gun to the Columbian Artillery. *(Some interesting drills/practices were observed. Comments on these are included in the RNZAA News Letter Jun 20)*



In 2000, Skin was enlisted into the TF as a RNZA Capt being posted to the 2nd Canterbury Bn Gp and stayed with the unit until 2014.



Skin served on operations the for 6 months as a 'Battle Captain' with the MFO (2001) in Sinai and 12 months with UNTSO in Israel, (2003-4) as an Observer on the Golan Heights then as the Mission Trg Officer, based in Jerusalem. In addition, in 2007, he served with the NZ Police as an Instructor at the Solomon Islands Police Academy in Honiara for 6 months.

As of August 2020, Skin is theoretically 'retired', but still

working as an Orderly at Burwood Hospital and for MAS upgrading an Artillery Fire Control System.