



The New Zealand Gunner

Official Journal of the

Royal New Zealand Artillery Association (Inc)

Founded 1934

Issue # 163

Dated September 2014

1. PRESIDENTS REPORT

Another financial year is coming to an end and the AGM/Reunion is nearly upon us. It is a busy time for the office bearers on your committee and for the organisers of the Reunion.

I would like to reiterate that the way our Association achieves its goals of fraternity and support is by keeping our social networks active.

The best way to keep them active is by encouraging maximum attendance at our organised functions, thereby facilitating contact with our mates, and helping to spread the word about our mates who can't be present. At this stage the registration for the Reunion in Wellington is rather disappointing, and I urge gunners from Wellington and around the country to get behind this event. Don't leave it to others or think 'maybe I'll go next time'. Get in behind your Association NOW. The old saying 'you get out what you put in' is very true, especially in our case, so please look at attendance at this function as something you can put in.

During the past 3 months we have celebrated the 80th Birthday of the RNZA Assn with a group photo outside the location of the inaugural meeting in 1934 (Masonic Hall, Devonport, Auckland), we have had representation at the Australian Artillery Assn inaugural 'National Dinner', we have had a great time with 16 Field Regt personnel on Ex Ben Cat in Waiouru, and we have celebrated 150 years of artillery in Auckland with a great function in Auckland organised by Greg Thwaite and his team of ex 11 (A) Battery personnel (a special vote of thanks must go to this team for their efforts).

I am looking forward to seeing a large turnout at the AGM/Reunion in Wellington 7-9 November. Don't have any regrets next year-REGISTER NOW.

Best wishes to you all. Ubique.

Tony McLeod, President RNZA Assn

2. AUSTRALIAN ARTILLERY ASSOCIATION GUNNER DINNER 2014

Tony McLeod, President of the NZ Artillery Association, made a presentation on our behalf to the Australian Artillery Association at the "Australian National Gunner Dinner" held in Caloundra 23 August. The presentation was received by Kim McGrath, President of the Australian Artillery Association. 500+ attended the dinner including NZ gunners; Pete Baker, Jerry Meyer, Mike Phillips, John Wasson, Tony McLeod and Skin Frances.

Friendships were renewed with those Australian Artillery Association members who had visited our NZ functions. Some plan to be in Wellington in November and others are already



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3. LAST POST

622619 **BROADFOOT**, Reginald John (Bill). Gnr 23rd A Tank Bty WW11, Passed away at Waihi on 6th August 2014 aged 90 years

42779 **DOUGLAS** William Brown (Bill). 161 Bty 1967 & 1969 SVN: 1967 Gnr No 4 Gun and 1969 LBdr No4 Gun and PX Manager. Bill passed away in Tauranga, on Wednesday 10 September 2014, aged 67

457800 **EDWARDS**, Kenneth G (Ken). Gnr 161 Bty SVN: 1967 No 6 Gun, 1968 Tpt Lbdr and 1970 on No 4 Gun. Ken passed away at Whakatane on 29th August 2014. At Kens request a service was not held.

U773600 **GLOVER**, David Malcolm. SSgt 11A Bty 16 Fd Regt. Passed away 13 August 2014 at Auckland.

33553 **HOGAN**, Ivor Louis. Sgt 16th Fd Regt K Force RNZA. Passed away 21st July 2014 at Thames in his 85th year.

Y484057 **O'BRIEN** Ted. Sgt 4 Mdm Bty, RNZA. Passed away 31st July 2014 at Hamilton aged 64 years.

207036 **PACKER**, Alan William (Alan), RNZA, ex 1NZ Regiment 1961-63 Malaya, passed away at Christchurch, 20 August 2014, aged 86 years

*They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old;
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.
"We Will Remember Them"*

4. IMPORTANT SET OF GUNNER MEDALS

The RNZA Association has the opportunity to purchase an important set of New Zealand Gunner medals for the RNZA Heritage Trust. Brig IT Standish won a DSO for gallantry as a Battery Commander with our guns on Gallipoli and a CMG for a series of actions he fought in France between September 1916 and February 1917. He was also mentioned in dispatches for his work prior to the withdrawal from Gallipoli and again towards the end of the Somme Battles in 1917.

Brig Standish served as a mounted Trooper during the Boer War and as a Gunner throughout the First World War and continued to serve as a Gunner until he retired in 1939. He was then recalled to service, promoted to Brigadier and served throughout the Second World War as the Adjutant General Army Head Quarters. He was by any measure a distinguished and gallant Gunner.

The RNZA has the opportunity to purchase the full set of medals at a good price before they are put on the open market. We want to do this through the

RNZA Association which will then gift the medals to the RNZA Heritage Trust for display in the Regimental Museum n Linton.

We want to raise \$7500 to assist us in the purchase of these medals through "crowd-funding". This is to collect as many large and small donations as we can from the widest possible Gunner and Gunner Friends Network.

So please let all your friends know and get the donations to: Kiwi Bank: RNZAA Special Projects Fund:

38-9007-0694501-04

Donations will be tax deductible as we are a registered charity. If you want a receipt for tax purposes please let the Association Secretary know.



It is an important set of medals which we want to keep in the RNZA in New Zealand. We hope we can make this happen.

UBIQUE

Barry Dreyer **Rob Munro**
Col Comdt RNZA **Chair, RNZA Heritage Trust**

5. COL COMDT REPORTS IN.

(A). Ubique 300

Planning is progressing for the May 2016 300 year anniversary of the Royal Regiment. At this stage there will be a Royal Regiment of Artillery rugby team touring New Zealand as well as elements of 94 (NZ) Battery, 4 Field Regiment RA. More details later. We are still planning on sending a troop of NZ Gunners to the United Kingdom for the Larkhill celebrations.

(B). Activities

Monday 4 August marked the 100th Anniversary since the start of World War I. The Regiment fired a 100 gun salute from the waterfront in Wellington alongside Te Papa. You will have seen the pictures. The guns received worldwide publicity.

The following day The Band of the RNZA performed for the commemoration ceremonies at the Auckland War Memorial Museum. The Band was in fine form and were televised nationally.

On Sunday 17 August there was a Memorial Service in Auckland marking Vietnam Veterans Day followed by a gathering at the Manurewa RSA. The service was attended by a small group of Ministers and MPs, veterans and families, as well as a representative from the United States Embassy.

On 11 September the new gunners graduated from the Basic Gunnery Course and were badged into the Regiment on a Regimental parade in Linton. This brings the strengths of the two Linton Batteries close to 90 gunners each.

The parade was followed almost immediately with Exercise Ben Cat which allowed the new gunners to complete a live firing exercise within a week of joining the Regiment. Ben Cat is also the exercise where Association members are invited to spend a day in the field with the Regiment. This was an outstanding day as it had 161 Battery completing its first air mobile deployment using the new NH90 medium lift helicopters. These aircraft carry 14 or so fully equipped troops or about 3500 kg of underslung load, depending somewhat on range. The battery took 10 sorties to deploy a 4 gun troop, command post and ammunition for the live shoot. This is a significant increase of capability for the Regiment.

The Ben Cat exercise included Australian and Canadian Gunners as well as a UK forward observer – and a bunch of elderly and very interested Gunners.

(C) The Standish Medals

There are some notes elsewhere in the Newsletter requesting support for the purchase of this important Gunner medal group. We are aiming to keep the medals in New Zealand and in the RNZA. At the time of writing we are at around half of what we need to raise. On behalf of our Heritage Trust I would strongly urge you to consider donating. A lot of quite small donations will get us to where we need to be.

(D) Join In

There are some important Gunner activities coming up and if you are in the area I encourage you to join the Regiment:

- The Cordite Cup between the Armoured Corps and the guns across a range of sports in the week ending 3 October in Linton, with the competition days on Monday, Wednesday, and most importantly Friday.
- 161 Battery will be exercising the 16 Field Regiment Charter of Raglan at 11:00 hours on Saturday 11 October, followed by a function at the Raglan Club. We are encouraging all Gunners, family and friends to attend to support the Battery, Regiment and Raglan. Beret and medals please.
- The 80th Annual Reunion of the RNZA Association will be held in Wellington 7 to 9 November – details elsewhere in this newsletter.
- Vietnam Veterans of 161 Battery and attached troops should start planning for the 50th

Anniversary commemorations of the first round fired in Vietnam, to be held in Palmerston North and Linton from 14-16 July next year.

(E) A snippet in from the RA in response to a question about NZ firing a 100 gun salute to mark the start of WW1

Gun salutes are customarily fired, both on shore and at sea, as a sign of respect or welcome. Just as a salute with the open hand was used historically to show that no weapon was concealed in the palm, so the firing of cannon as a salute indicated the friendly intent of an empty chamber.

Today gun salutes mark special occasions on certain days of the year, many of them with Royal associations. On these days, Royal salutes are fired from locations in London and authorised stations in the United Kingdom. The number of rounds fired in a Royal salute depends on the place and occasion. The basic Royal salute is 21 rounds.

In Hyde Park an extra 20 rounds are added because it is a Royal Park. At the Tower of London 62 rounds are fired on Royal anniversaries (the basic 21, plus a further 20 because the Tower is a Royal Palace and Fortress, plus another 21 'for the City of London') and 41 on other occasions.

The Tower of London probably holds the record for the most rounds fired in a single salute: 124 are fired on 10 June when The Queen's official birthday (62 rounds) coincides with The Duke of Edinburgh's birthday (also 62 rounds).

Source: www.royal.gov.uk.

The Regiment has had a busy time, as have the wider group of Gunners. There is a lot more ahead. The RNZA is in good heart; well lead by the officers and NCOs, well trained and enthusiastic gunners, and with state of the art gunner gear. They have operational deployments available, offshore coursing, and plenty of interaction and exercises with allies in NZ and overseas. It is a good time to be a Gunner.

Hopefully we will see most of you in Wellington in November.

Ubique. Barry Dreyer, Col Comdt RNZA



**80th RNZA Assn Reunion and AGM
to be held in Wellington 7/9 November 2014.
See pages and 10 for full details.**

6. REPORT FROM 16 Fd Regt

Exercise Hamel 2014

At the start of July this year 28 members of 161 Battery (with a few ring-ins from 163) embarked on an RNZAF C-130 for a long and bumpy flight from RNZAF Ohakea to RAAF Townsville. Their task: to participate in Exercise HAMEL 14, the annual exercise for Australia's 3 Brigade, based in Lavarack Barracks, Townsville.

The Kiwi contingent consisted of A Company from 1RNZIR, a troop of engineers, plus attached MPs, medical, signals and intelligence pers. The Gunners put forward a force of a Mortar Troop, a Joint Fires Team (JFT - attached to A Coy) and a JFECC component which integrated into the HQ of 1 Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (1RAR).

The first week started with integration and training with our Aussie counterparts from 1RAR, and a variety of safety briefs about the local flora and fauna. What I took away from that was that 9 out of the 10 most deadly snakes were found in Northern Queensland, which was right where we were going. That, plus deadly spiders, snakes, ants, ticks, cassowaries was enough to worry about, let alone the 450 US Marines that had come down from Darwin to act as the opposing force (OPFOR).

During the integration phase the Mortar Troop conducted build-up training with the Mortar Platoon from Support Company, 1RAR. Once the Aussie grunts got used to the fact that Kiwi mortar teams were actually Gunners rather than Infantry their relationship improved from their initial inter-corps rivalry. A lot more Kiwi/Aussie and Gunners/Grunts banter was soon to follow over the coming weeks.

The field exercise was held in the Townsville Field Training Area (TFTA) which is about 45mins drive from Townsville. It was a non-live firing defensive exercise conducted over three weeks, so at times there was little activity to do apart from drink brews and wait for the enemy to attack. Despite the slow tempo of the exercise everyone who participated gained new skills and knowledge, and new friends in the wider Gunner fraternity.

Once the exercise was completed and all the MPI-standard cleaning of kit was conducted it was time for some R&R. 4 Regiment Royal Australian Artillery (RAA) hosted the Gunners for a BBQ and beers, and invited the Kiwis to enter a team into their annual touch competition. Naturally, after a close final, down to extra time, the Kiwis were proud winners of the 2014 4 Regiment Touch Competition, with a shiny plaque to take home for our efforts.

Everyone got a few days of leave at the end and most people took the opportunity to make the most of what Townsville had to offer, by the way of bars, clubs, beaches, tropical islands and friendly locals. Sadly our time in tropical North Queensland had come to an end, and by the time the RNZAF had come to collect us some people were looking forward to going home more than others.

The Regiment looks forward to being invited back to 3 Brigade next year for a live-firing activity and more of that tropical sunshine.

Article supplied by Catherine Dymock 16 Fd Regt

7. MARRIAGE IN THE SKY AFTER 49 YEARS - Ex Ben Cat 2014

Military history has been made in New Zealand by matching the right helicopter and the right gun to significantly improve the mobility of artillery support here or overseas.

It came close to the 49th anniversary of the first abortive attempts in Vietnam to sling a complete L5 howitzer under a Huey.

Two of the RNZAF's new NH90 medium utility helicopters easily carried four 105mm howitzers, together with guns crews, ammunition, and support equipment, in eight lifts from Waiouru military base high up into the backhills for a live shoot.

The demonstration came during the annual Ben Cat live firing exercise by 161 Battery of 16 Field Regiment, New Zealand Artillery – the same battery which served in Vietnam from 1965 to 1971.

The battery now has the sophisticated L119 105mm howitzer complete with built in computerised navigation, target aiming, acquisition, and fire control systems.

Veterans of the original Operation Ben Cat in Vietnam in 1965, who had been invited to watch the exercise, remembered years of frustration in trying to airlift the original L5 howitzers under American Iroquois helicopters to provide greater mobility in supporting allied forces.

In the end it could only be handled by either breaking down the L5s and flying separate parts into action by Iroquois for ground reassembly, or using the big American Chinook helicopters.

Since then 16 Field Regiment, regarded through international exercises with allies as one of the best light artillery units in the world, has been waiting for a perfect mobility marriage with the right helicopter partner.

Between 17-18 September the RNZAF honed its skills in lifting the L119s, underslung in strops, manoeuvring in flight, and finally carrying the guns high into the hills for the Ben Cat live firing exercise.

The French-built NH90s can carry an



underslung load of 4,000kg – more than twice that of an L119 - or 18 troops in light order. Their top speed is 300 kph and they have a range of 780km

The NH90s were escorted by a sleek A109 light utility helicopter, one of five replacements for the Sioux.

What the “marriage” means for the future, when all the testing processes have been completed, will be an outstanding level of mobility from land, or from the sea if a naval vessel like the support ship HMNZS Canterbury were to be used.

New Zealand will become an increasingly attractive operational partner for our allies.

**Chris Turver Correspondent 1965
with 161 Bty in SVN**

8. TOWARDS A BIOGRAPHY OF 41874 CHARLES BEVAN HENDREY 1914 - 2013.

I came upon this article in your journal, The New Zealand Gunner, September 2008, of issue #139 page 12. Titled: 9. END OF AN ERA: THE LAST OF THE RNZA LAUNCHES, when doing a Google search.

It was of interest to me as my Uncle served on the 9th Battery Motutapu for a limited period in 1940-41. He mentioned in his memoirs (Oral Digital recording) a couple of times the Gunner. This took him to and from Motutapu under interesting circumstances. It was a while before the penny dropped and I realised it was a launch of the the RNZA and not the Navy and was not a person. The article in your journal clarified a great deal. It is interesting that your journal is also titled as The New Zealand Gunner.

Bev Hendrey was a guard on Motutapu island and had challenged a shepherd under trying summer heat approaching the area of the 6” MK21 guns that defended the island. The alleged (Alien) German shepherd with the accent was transferred to Somes Island in leg and arm manacles to be interned, presumably, there for the duration of the war. (7th January 1941)

Bevan was transferred to Trentham Military camp and promoted to Lance Bombardier. (7th January 1941).



Then he went to Egypt on the Troop ship [H.M. T 25], the Mauritania. In Egypt he became a member of The Army Service Corp and continued to serve in both North Africa and the Italian campaigns. The incident on the Island worked out a bonus for this married soldier as he was able to see his brother Leo Hendrey. 1919-1999 {Army number 61026}.

His brother Leo was in the calamitous rout of

the 6th Field Regiment I think it was the 30th Battery that he survived with very few about December 1941.

Would any of your members or readers be able to help towards the biography of Bevan and his brother Leo Hendrey? Have any any of your readers or members a photo of the RNZA launch named the Gunner?

Or was it a clone of one of the other launches mentioned in the article of your journal?

**Regards. Michael Oakley-Browne.
phone 09 3786851 or 02102381470
or email: patrickob@ihug.co.nz**

Note The Editor has referred Patrick to Ross Goldsworthy and yes Patrick is the brother of Hugh Oakley-Browne RNZIR

9. SENIORITY AND ALL THAT

The Editor, The New Zealand Gunner, Dear Madam.

B Battery may have faded away as old soldiers are want to do but I feel honour bound to point out that the services of the Dunedin Volunteer Artillery Regiment were accepted by the Colonial Secretary in a letter dated 9th September 1863. I can vouch for B Battery celebrating its centenary and 125th anniversaries on the appropriate dates. It seems that the matter of true seniority must have arisen before as I have a note “A Battery was originally the Royal Company of Auckland Volunteers, formed in 1858, and converted to a field artillery unit in 1874 that the Auckland Artillery Volunteers became A Battery.” QED.

Arnold Hayman, erstwhile BC 31(B) Bty RNZA.

10. 161 Bty SVN REUNION 2015

Attention all 161 Battery Vietnam Veterans. Planning has begun on a reunion next year to commemorate the 50th anniversary of 161 Battery, reporting 'One gun ready' on 15th July 1965 at Bien Hoa, South Vietnam. The celebration is planned for Tuesday 14th to Thursday 16th July 2015, and will be held in Palmerston North. At this time we are only seeking indications of interest and assistance in updating our contact list. An early indication of interest in the reunion will not be taken as a firm commitment of attendance but will help us in our planning for the event. Full information with regard to the event will be promulgated in due course. If you want to update your information (especially email address), or express an interest in attending, please contact the reunion secretary John (Woody) Barrett (07) 549 4829, email jonlynbar@yahoo.com you can also try mobile 027 583 1338 (no guarantee this will be on or even whether it can be found at any given time.

Reunion Secretary John (Woody) Barrett

11. WITH 16 FD REGT IN KOREA BY A.D. WATT

On arrival in Seoul I was taken by helicopter to HQ 1 Comwel Div Arty. On alighting I was met by the Brigade Major Royal Artillery (BMRA), a British Officer Maj Tony Gregg, with whom I had spent nearly a year at staff college, Queenscliff. Tony showed me around, introduced me to the CRA Brig Pike and other Officers and gave me an excellent briefing on the elements, layout, functions etc of the divisional artillery and the general tactical situation. I came away with a reasonable overview of the present state of play.

The next stop was Headquarters 16 Field Regiment RNZA, where I was greeted by the CO Lt Col (Pat) Paterson, met his senior officers and received a good briefing. The CO was a Duntroon graduate, regular and WW2 veteran who had joined the regiment in Korea in 1951. The 2IC Maj Harry Nathan was the original BC 161 Bty and a WW2 veteran. The BC 161 Bty, Maj Peter Joplin, who had been Adjutant and assumed command of 161 Battery about the time I arrived, was a Duntroon graduate and regular with WW2 service. BC 162 Bty, Maj George Solomon, a veteran who had earlier periods as BC 161 Bty and 162 Bty, had, I was told, been an All Black. Maj Arthur Roxborough, whom I was to relieve, was a WW2 veteran and prisoner of war and had been with the regiment from the outset. He had distinguished himself in various actions, winning an MC as a Forward Observation Officer (FOO) in February 1951, Kayforce's first decoration and receiving high praise for his work at Maryang San. The Adjutant, Capt Tan Vine, who'd been with Kayforce from the start, first as RSM, was a regular and WW2 veteran. (He was relieved by Capt Channings who was Adjutant during most of my time in Korea.)

I regret not recalling other officers present but I do remember the friendliness of all of them both then and later. In June Maj Ron Hasset, a Duntroon graduate, regular, WW2 veteran and later CGS New Zealand Army, replaced Maj Nathan as 2IC. The regiment was fortunate to have had such fine officers to continue the standards set by other early leaders who had returned to New Zealand. Arthur then drove me to 163 battery position, gave me a good look around and told me he'd be out of the line very soon adding that, in the meantime I was to feel free to look anywhere and talk to anyone.

The battery was in a narrow valley through which ran a small creek. The floor of the valley was fairly flat with a gentle slope up from the creek but was very narrow. The guns faced generally west to north west, the pits being constructed of earth filled ammunition boxes and sandbags, with overhead camouflage. Behind the guns on higher ground, were the battery command post, several stores and the troops dug in and protected living quarters. To their rear the valley side rose steeply. What seemed odd was that on the other side the officers' tented living quarters and Mess and the general battery office were in front of the guns. I knew that gun positions were often selected and

allocated in a hurry but, after doing some recces on foot I couldn't find anything better. Big hills and narrow valleys didn't provide many good positions for our 25-pounder field guns. Nevertheless, I did eventually find a very good position but soon after we were in the line and it was difficult to complete the preparation work and make the non-tactical move until later in the year.

Following the battle of Maryang San fighting had continued but clashes were comparatively minor as participating governments were not prepared to provide the additional men and other resources necessary for large scale operations. General Ridgeway decided to remain pretty much where the force now was, along the Jamestown line, which varied greatly in distance from 38th Parallel. At the eastern end it was over 30 miles north and at the western end slightly south of the parallel. Much of its central area was about six miles north. Towards the west the line sloped fairly sharply to the south, 1 Comwel Div being deployed in roughly the centre of this slope, facing the enemy from east to west (see map). The war of movement had given way to a static phase and that was the position when I arrived in April 1952.

On 17 April, 3RAR moved into reserve in the KajongGol area and 163's BC and OP parties were back in the battery position in the 16 Fd Regt gun area at Sokchang-Ni. Arthur said he wouldn't be able to spend a great deal of time with me as he had many calls to make as well as all the administrative chores involved in marching out of a unit for good. I told him I'd prefer to use what time he could spare on reconnaissance's. He was, in fact, very generous with the time he gave me.

During my briefings at div arty HQ and RHQ I'd scored some good topographical and sketch maps, which I studied, sometimes with the help of my officers and was ready to get around and look at the terrain closer to the front. We did many recces during which Arthur pointed out features on our side and also, from various vantage points, some on the Chinese front. Already knew that the divisional front extended, on the right from Kowang San to on the left, the Samichon River.

Kowang San was a hill of 355 metres, known in the division as '355' and to the US troops as 'Little Gibraltar'. It was a dominating feature with extensive slopes having many lesser hills some of those to the west being held by the Chinese. Four of those hills were called 'Matthew', 'Mark', 'Luke' and 'John' and, collectively 'The Apostles'. 355 was of great tactical importance to both sides.

Just outside the left divisional boundary was another feature of great significance to both sides known as the 'Hook', part of a group of hills some of which were occupied by the enemy. It was held by the US 1st Marine Div. Later in the year the Comwel Div left boundary was extended south of the Samichon, incorporating the Hook, which for some months was the responsibility of 3RAR, continuing to be the scene of much bloody fighting.

Just to the left of 355 and immediately south of the Apostles was a very narrow, flat, open valley

known as the 'Bowling Alley'. The position just vacated by 3RAR was on the southern side of it, with one company on the northern side. The battalion position on the southern side was often referred to as the 159 position after its dominant feature. The next position to the left, which included Hamuthon and the Songgok was sometimes called the Naechon position. It was where I spent most of my time when 3RAR went back into the line, _ more later.

Arthur pointed out these features and discussed them in some detail; also what could be seen of the ground between both sides, which was fairly flat with a small tributary of the Samichon flowing through it and much of it covered with paddy fields. The distance between the two sides varied from a couple of hundred yards at 355 and between a quarter and a little more than one and a quarter miles elsewhere.

Added to my earlier briefings, these reces gave me a good grasp of the present position and I was grateful to Arthur Roxborough. For months he'd been waiting almost desperately to get back to his family but New Zealand would not release a replacement because they were very short of experienced officers to train the expanding citizen force and keep the regular force viable. Eventually he was told that he'd be replaced by me but only after I'd finished my training in Germany and the UK. (Incidentally the RAA was having similar problems to the RNZA). When I arrived Arthur asked me, somewhat jocularly, to take care of myself, at least until he'd left Korea. I was pleased when he had departed knowing that he would soon be with his family and back to his civilian job as a traffic inspector. (Capt Stanbridge informed me that Arthur was chief traffic Inspector for NZ when he was killed in a traffic accident some years later).

Now the battery was mine and, after some well earned rest and relaxation for the others, I looked forward to a period of solid training.

I had always tried to put into practice my belief that, at all levels, a commander's main responsibilities are to care for his men and to train them to the highest possible standard. Their morale and security depend on such, as does the quality of support given to the supported arm. As to the latter the aim of the battery should, in my opinion, always be to deliver accurate fire in the shortest possible time and provide close and high quality liaison at battalion HQ and the observation posts.

How fortunate I was that the battery was in reserve, which meant that all my officers and men were at the battery position, giving me the opportunity to get to know them and to better appraise the working of the battery. I was helped in the latter by the guns still being operational, on call for regimental (Mike), divisional (Uncle) targets and any other special tasks required by RHQ.

I hastened slowly, observing closely work in the command post and on the guns, talking to the officers, having them introduce me to their NCOs and chatting to them all, gradually meeting all the men, meeting and talking to signallers, drivers and administrative and supply personnel. Even though the battery had proved

itself in battle, time and again, I soon saw where improvements could be made in all areas. I discussed any proposed changes with the officers concerned and where a change in one place could affect another, spoke to all involved. This took several days but we were in reserve and it was better to get things right early on. In more urgent circumstances of course one wouldn't hesitate to make a variation that offered a perceived advantage. As all the officers had been with 16 Fd Regt since it arrived in Korea and fought in some important actions, they might well have resented what I was doing but to my delight they seemed to welcome it. In fact they were a very modest group and hardly ever spoke about past actions. While most had had no army service before joining K Force, they had been fortunate in that 16 Fd Regt had a number of WW2 veterans in the senior positions who provided good leadership from the start but several of them had now left Korea. My officers often stressed how little training they had before leaving New Zealand and how much they still had to learn. One officer said they were 'a bunch of amateurs'. In fact some of them knew more than they seemed to think they did but, of course, there is always more to learn. A few had thoughts of joining the regular army on their return and were keen to learn all they could; thus training proceeded in a spirit of cooperation and zeal throughout the battery.

The men seemed to share similar attitudes. They were very much like Australian troops, independently minded with plenty of common sense, initiative, a keen sense of humour and loyalty to their mates and unit. A significant number were Maori and all seemed to get along well - Kiwi mates together on operational service.

The officers were a happy lot, exhibiting that close comradeship which reflects shared experiences and trust. They enjoyed humorous conversations about their lighter moments and joked about occasions that at the time were probably anything but funny. They had developed a few skits which they performed impromptu in the Mess tent from time to time, which I found hilarious. No doubt, like all anecdotes and skits based on a real experience, they were embellished with each telling or performance. Vern Duley, who was the CPO when I took over, would bite off a piece of his glass and nonchalantly chew away without a sign of blood. I never knew how he did it but it was quite mesmerising. A year later he was BC 161 Battery.

The battery captain when I arrived was Capt Colin Stanbridge, who'd had experience in the UK Army (in infantry) before moving to New Zealand and joining Kayforce at the start. Among his duties in Korea he had been a GPO at Kapyong, a CPO at Maryang San and an observation post officer (OPO) including four months on 355. As a result he had a sound understanding of the functioning of the battery and an excellent rapport with all ranks. As he was also calm and most reliable he was a first class battery captain.

To be continued in the next issue of The New Zealand Gunner

12. VICTORIA CROSS METAL

Victoria Cross medals are manufactured by the British company Hancock's the Jewellers and legend has it that the crosses are produced from metal taken from Russian guns captured by the British, at Sebastopol, during the Crimean War. However, whilst it is probable that the original crosses were made from gun metal, there are no records to substantiate where the metal came from.

The only mention of the crosses being made from Russian guns appeared in an article published in London's *The Times* newspaper, of the 18th June 1857, stating that "... next week, on the 26th June, Her Majesty, Queen Victoria, will present the first 62 recipients with the new medal the Victoria Cross, the medal is made from bronze taken from captured guns of the Russian Army of Sebastopol".

The original block of metal, from wherever it came, was used-up by 1914 and Hancock's then asked the War Office for a replacement source. The Office, to keep the myth of the medals being made from captured Russian guns alive (one that had grown in stature over the preceding 57 years), decided to obtain the needed metal from some British held enemy-captured guns and, as a result, the War Office chose two Chinese guns that had been captured in 1860 at the Taku Forts in China; the guns' cascabels were then removed and sent to Hancock's.

Since 1914 some 840 crosses have been made from the two cascabels and the remaining 16 kilograms of metal (which is estimated to produce a further 50 to 60 crosses) is kept at the Ministry of Defence's Defence Logistics Organisation (DLO), in Donnington.

Both the (new) Australian and New Zealand Victoria Crosses are manufactured in Britain by Hancock's, from the same Chinese gun cascabel metal, and the design of these Crosses is exactly the same as the 'British' VC; and the relevant recipient's details are engraved onto the reverse of the medal by Hancock's too. The Canadian VC, however, is manufactured in Canada, but the only change in its design is that the Cross' scroll has the wording *For Valour* written in Latin (the alternative to it being in either English or French).

The two Chinese "VC guns" were, for a good number of years, positioned at the edge of the Woolwich Barracks parade ground, however, when the Royal Regiment of Artillery moved away from Woolwich the two guns were relocated to the Royal Artillery Museum and are now standing on display in the Museum's foyer.

13. KASHMIR

Background: My tour with United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) was August 1970 to September 1971. I arrived in the Aitmn and worked in field sections for the full year. My stations were Baramulla, Bimber, Poonch and

Gilgit/Astore. I was in Katmandu on the way home when the war broke out in East Pakistan in 1971 so I was in the field during the pre war deployments of the Indian and Pakistani forces in the Punjab and Kashmir. The operational problem for the United Nations peacekeepers was that the cease fire lines [CFL] were drawn in 1948 and the deployments from the restricted zones were written for the equipment of the period. In those days neither side had any artillery forward, and they had very few mortars. By 1970 there had been three wars in the area and both sides were poised to deploy new equipment all along the line. In 1971 air support was restricted to medium lift helicopters and seasonal airfields for transport aircraft. When I revisited the area in 1993 the standard of airfields was the only visible improvement.

Mountain Batteries: Equipment in use by Pakistani and Indian Artillery units included 3.7 mountain guns and 105mm Italian Light guns. Both equipments were deployed in mule packs while 25 Pounds, in a variety of marks, were deployed along the road accesses. The only medium guns I saw were a full regiment of 5.5s doing an exercise along the main Srinagar/Leh road in the Autumn of 1970. They were in the valley on a visit from the Jammu area on the plains.

Deployment Positions: There were very few artillery units in the forward areas as they were severely limited by the cease fire rules of 1948. The need to use high angle in all of their potential fire plans/targets had also placed limitations on the deployment of artillery. Both sides had extra gun pits in support sites and artillery OP sites in critical infantry locations.

There were anti tank guns and many alternative gun pits in the lowland areas or along the river valleys which provided access to the CFL and the International borders. Many of the infantry positions in the forward areas had medium mortar pits for support weapon tubes. On one occasion I found a 3.7 mountain gun deployed into a infantry mortar pit in the reserve slope of the ridge line. The pic appeared to have been packed in as it was high on a steep slope and we found no guns within supporting range.

The Kashmiri farmers practice transhumance and the upper valleys all had clusters of huts sited in sheltered spots clear of likely avalanche tracks. The huts are flat roofed, with low ceilings and no windows. Tactically they usually had good observation, blended with the terrain and were close to the crests of ridge-lines. During winter they were abandoned as the villagers retreated from the snow. Sometimes the soldiers took over the huts in spring, so that often the first difference between a village summer site and a platoon HQ location was the siting of Mortar pits or a volleyball court. The latter was usually about the size of a helipad.

Article supplied by
U344489 Major (Rtd) Kerry Lee, ED BA, RNZA
and to be continued in the
next issue of The NZ Gunner

14.



**Royal New Zealand Artillery Association
80th Annual General Meeting and Reunion
West Plaza Hotel, Wellington,
7 – 9 November 2014**

The 80th Annual General Meeting and Reunion of the Royal New Zealand Artillery Association will be held on 7 – 9 November 2014 in Wellington. The weekend's events will be centred on the West Plaza Hotel, 110-116 Wakefield Street, opposite the Town Hall, and Michael Fowler Centre, and within 5 minutes walk from Willis and Manners Streets.

Registrations Forms are also available on the RNZA Assn Website (rnzaa.org.nz) and may be returned by downloading the Registration Form and returning by email or post. Full details are on the Website.

Costs: Full registration \$100-00 per person; Dinner Only \$75-00:

Friday 7 November	1500 – 1900	Registration open Ground Floor, West Plaza Hotel Mix and Mingle, Bar open
	Dinner	Own arrangements – dinner will be available at West Plaza (2 or 3 course set menu, complimentary roll and glass of tap beer or house wine, reservation essential at Reception)
Saturday 8 November	1000 – 1200	AGM, Cornish Room, 1st Floor, West Plaza Hotel
	Lunch	Own arrangements, lunch will be available at West Plaza
	1330	Buses depart from West Plaza for tour of Wrights Hill Fortress (return approx 1600) (see www.whfrs.org.nz)
		Partner's activities – Zealandia Sanctuary, Karori (see zealandia.com) There is an extra charge of \$12.00 for this option.
	1800 – 1900	Pre-dinner drinks – cash bar, Cornish Room, 1st Floor West Plaza
	1900 –	Semi-formal Dinner – Dorset Suite, 1st Floor, West Plaza
Sunday 9 November	1130	RNZA Association Commemorative Service, Wellington Cathedral

Accommodation: The West Plaza Hotel has provided the following deal on accommodation for the weekend: Arrival Friday 7 November Departure: Sunday 9 November

Standard double or twin room Rate: ***\$135 incl GST and breakfast, per room, per night***

Quote “Royal NZ Artillery Association” when booking, Book direct with hotel (reservations@westplaza.co.nz) Note: offer is **NOT** available through travel agents or third party website

A wide range of other accommodation options is available in central Wellington – suggestions will be published on the RNZA Assn Website.

Partner's Tour: This will be a visit to Zealandia Sanctuary – a predator free wildlife sanctuary in Karori where visitors have the opportunity of seeing and hearing, in their natural environment, many species of native birds (tui, bellbird, saddlebacks, stitchbirds, tomtits, NZ robins, fantails, kaka etc) as well as tuatara. Transport will be on the buses going to and from the Wrights Hill Fortress. In the time available, a short walk will take visitors to areas where the birds and tuatara may be seen. A major audio-visual exhibition is available for a small charge in the entrance building alongside a cafe.



80th Annual Reunion and AGM
7 – 9 November 2014
Registration Form

Number Attending: _____

I
initials and Surname: _____

Contact Address: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____ (Mobile preferred)

Service No: _____ Active Service theatre and years: _____

Names for labels: _____

Registration fee: \$100.00 per person – includes all following activities except entry fee at Zealandia.
Dinner only \$75-00.

Please indicate numbers attending.

<i>Day</i>		<i>Event</i>	<i>Numbers attending</i>
Fri 7 Nov	PM	Registration/ Meet & Greet	_____
Sat 8 Nov	AM	AGM	_____
	PM	Tour Wrights Hill Fortress	_____
		Partner's Tour – Zealandia Sanctuary (cost \$12-00)	_____
		Evening Reunion Dinner	_____
Sun 9 Nov	AM	Commemorative Service	_____

Payment: *There is a non refundable administration fee of \$20.00, which covers the basic cost of the registration documentation including Name Tags, Venue Hire and incidentals.*

TICK THE METHOD OF PAYMENT

_____ I have paid by Direct credit to the Association's Kiwibank Account (38 9007 0694501 00).
Ensure your name is recorded with Reunion in reference box.

Fill out OnLine Registration form on www.rnzaa.org.nz

_____ My cheque is enclosed
(Mail cheque with this form completed to: RNZA Assn, 18 Walford Drive, Rotorua 3010)

Email Contact Details: rnza.association@gmail.com

Registrations will close on 30 September 2014

15. AVAILABLE FROM THE RNZAA Q STORE



RNZA Baseball Cap
New Style (In stock)
\$35.00 each



Polo Shirts Dual logo
(Gunners and RNZA crest)
(Limited stock)
Email Colin for available sizes
and before making payment.
\$65.00 each



RNZAA Baseball Cap
Old Style (made to order)
\$39.00 each



RNZA Pocket Patch
(Made to order) **\$20.00 each**



RNZAA Name Tag (Made to order) **\$27.50 each**



RNZAA Bumper Sticker
(In stock) **\$5.00 each**



RNZAA Coffee Mugs
(In stock) **\$25.00 each**



RNZAA Lapel Pin
(In stock) **\$10.00 each**

To place your order or make enquiry contact Colin Jansen at email
rnzaaqstore@gmail.com

When making your payment, deposit or computer transfer to: RNZAA Account
38-9007-0694501-00

remember to state your name and "Q-store payment" in the reference fields so we know who and what the payment is for. Goods will only be dispatched or ordered placed with our source of supply once your payment has been made, identified as received by the treasurer, and a postal address provided.

Behind the Lines: The Editors Page

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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, **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, please forward 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.

Muzzle Flashes items to Skin at: muzzleflashesnz@gmail.com

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

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

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