



# The New Zealand Gunner

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Royal New Zealand Artillery Association (Inc)

Founded 1934

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## 1. PRESIDENTS REPORT

Dear Fellow Gunners

There is not a great deal to report at this stage of the year, although the Executive Committee has already met twice since the marvellous AGM/Reunion in Wellington last November, and we have decided on some targets which we as individuals intend to try to make progress on this year: Tony McLeod-1) further develop the 16 Fd Regt YO/RNZAA Mentor Program, 2) encourage closer communications between serving and ex-gunners in the Manawatu; Greg Thwaite 1) pursue the submissions to VANZ re Welfare support to veterans, 2) organise `special event` for RAA 300year commemoration (L5 portage by mule across the Auckland Isthmus); Bernie McCort 1) continue Secretary/Treasurer functions, 2) establish alternative (more profitable) supply of `Q` store items.

The major activity coming up in the near future is the reunion of those who served with 161 Battery in South Vietnam (July), commemorating 50 years since the first gun reported `Ready`. Organisation of the event (under the leadership of Woody Barrett) is well under way, and we would like to encourage maximum attendance by SVN vets, as with age catching up with everyone this could well be the last such reunion.

ANZAC Day is nearly upon us and once again we would welcome the opportunity to pay for a wreath to be laid at your location; just remember all you need to do to have us pay for your wreath is to get a photo of 5 gunners gathered together on ANZAC Day. Easy enough? So do it!. It is great to see planning underway for Gunner`s Day Commemorations around the country in May, and for the reunion to be held in Christchurch in November. Please get in behind the Association and support these gatherings; you can do your bit to help keep the Association alive simply by attending these functions.

I will be overseas on both ANZAC Day and Gunner`s Day this year, and I won`t be back

in action on the gun-line until September; I will be riding my motorbike with my son and a couple of German mates from Germany to Iran, (and back again I hope). We will be near Gallipoli on ANZAC Day, but security may be a bit too tight to allow access to ANZAC Cove for a couple of wandering bikies, so we may go there a day or two later. As the Vice President, Greg Thwaite will be taking the reins in my absence, GO GREG!.  
**Ubique. Tony McLeod, President RNZA Assn**

## 2. VIETNAM CROSS OF GALLANTRY CITATION

Please be aware that the Vietnam Cross of Gallantry Citation will soon be available through Victor Johnson. As far as I am able to find out Vic will be one of the very few in NZ who will stock it. His email is [v.johnson@slingshot.co.nz](mailto:v.johnson@slingshot.co.nz) and his website is <http://nzmilitarymedals.com/replicas.html>.



The Vietnam Cross of Gallantry Citation with Palm will be in stock mid-next week @ GST inclusive \$25.00.

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### 3. LAST POST

42145 **BONE** Brian Vincent (Bone Driver), RNZASC, toured SVN with 161 Bty 1968 (Steward). Passed away peacefully at Christchurch, on 21 December 2014, aged 66 years.

330295 **FLEURY**, Claude Chenevix

Eccles (Chen). Sgt RNZA KForce. Passed away on 23 December 2014 at Auckland.

**HASTIE**, Neil. Passed away Sunday 25 January 2015 at Sunnymead Nursing Home Caboolture. He had been a member of the CMDRSL before his illness & often travelled with us on our RSL Care bus trips. He was responsible for much of the woodwork inside & outside of the RAR National Memorial Walk & a good friend of Kiwi Gibbons & Neil Eiby. For many years he was the RACQ bloke in the Redcliffe area. He was also part owner of the race horses "Frontier Boy & Frontier Girl". He was a Kiwi & served with the NZ Army with 161 Battery in Korea.

P544354 **HONAN**, Kenneth Hugh Francis (Ken), RNZASC/NZRCT, toured SVN 1969 with 161 Bty (No 1 Gun). Passed away 25 December 2014 at Auckland aged 68 years.

204434 **JOSEPHON**, Peter Andrew. 16 Fd Regt. Passed away on 21<sup>st</sup> December 2014 in his 89<sup>th</sup> year at Auckland.

408520 **KAYE**, Lloyd. RNZA Unit 4 Svy Tp 17<sup>th</sup> Fd Regt, 3<sup>rd</sup> NZ Div. Passed away 13 January at Tauranga in his 94<sup>th</sup> year,

40636 **KIRIKAU**, HRT Raimona (Raymond, RNZA. Toured SVN with 161 Bty 1967 Gnr on No3 Gu2nd March 2015 in Taupo aged 75 years.n and 1969 as L/Bdr on No 3 Gun. Passed away

617802 **LOUISSON**, Derek Melville. Gnr, Wellington Regt (TF). Passed away 5<sup>th</sup> January 2015 in his 91<sup>st</sup> year at Hastings

39370 **MAUNSELL**, Michael William (Mike/Baldy), Sgt RNZA. Toured SVN with 161 Bty 1965 (Gnr No 2 Gun), 1968 (Lbdr No 1 Gun) and 1969 (Bdr No 4 Gun). Passed away 15 January 2015 at Waikato Hospital in his 72<sup>nd</sup> year.

172963 **MAY**, Royston George (Roy), Gnr 5<sup>th</sup> Fd Regt 2NZEF. Passed away on 27<sup>th</sup> December 2014 at Auckland aged 93 years.

084566 **MULVEY**, Gregory John. Major, RNZA. Passed away 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2014 aged 97 years at Auckland.

343044 **RYAN**, Terence Francis (Terry). Gnr RNZA ex 161 Bty SVN 1965 (No4 Gun). Passed away 30 December 2014 at Waiuku.

41693 **ST BRUNO**, Don. RNZIR. Toured SVN 65/67 with V1 1 and 69/70 with 161 Bty (No 4 Gun and Tpt). Passed away 21 November 2014 in Australia.

41723 **PIRINI** John Toko (John). Gnr RNZA, ex 161 Bty SVN 1966, (No 1 Gun). Passed away in Whangarei Hospital, on Friday 19 December 2014.

### 4. COL COMDT REPORTS IN

Greetings and I hope the first quarter of 2015 has gone well for everyone. I know the Regiment has been busy with a range of activities as has the Band, as well as completing the planning for significant activities and exercises later in the year. I will be visiting Linton in the last week of March and will update any activities on the Association Facebook page.

The RNZA has gunners who will shortly be going on active service with New Zealand's contribution to Iraq. On behalf of all Gunners in New Zealand I wish them Godspeed and a safe return later in the year. The tour will be demanding and arduous, and will require the highest level of professional and personal skills, in a mentally and physically tough environment.

#### Historic matters

We are now working with four sets of medals for the Historic Trust. As you are aware from the last Newsletter we were unsuccessful in attempting to purchase the Standish medals. However, the more than \$5000 raised is now in a trust account to be used for the purchase of any further important medals that may become available to the Trust.

We are still awaiting medals confirmation from Defence for Sergeant Reg Reid, MM, 16 Fd Regt, Korea, to ensure that the collection held by the family is his full entitlement, before they are received into the RNZA.

Most of you will remember Warrant Officer Jack Keinzley. His family are also donating his medals to the Regiment and we are similarly awaiting confirmation from Defence that the medals he was entitled to have been issued.

A new complete set of medals have been provided by Defence for the late Captain Peter Williams, to go with the framed photograph that the RNZA will provide for 5RAR, the battalion Peter was a forward observer with when he was killed in action.

The Trust is proceeding cautiously with the project to develop a significant book based on the Brig Reg Miles' papers. This major collection of papers is secure in a vault in Wellington, the early portions have been digitised, and we have agreed to share our collection with that of the family in due course. The family's collection of papers dovetail well into the large collection of Brig Miles' papers that the RNZA holds. I was also able to source new Miles material from archival collections in the United Kingdom during a recent visit. We will be meeting with potential authors over the next few months to develop a plan for the writing of the book. We are still aiming to publish towards the end of 2017.

#### Reunions

Do not forget to plan for and book travel and accommodation for the 161 Battery Vietnam 50 year reunion in Palmerston North 14 to 16 July this year, and the Association reunion in Christchurch 13 to 15 November.

## ANZAC Day

This year is an important ANZAC Day. You are all encouraged to attend Dawn and Civic Services in your area, wearing your gunner badges and ties.

It was Brig Reg Miles, then a newly commissioned Lieutenant, who led the left section of 4 (Howitzer) Battery NZFA ashore at ANZAC Cove at dawn on 26 April, 1915, our first guns in action at Gallipoli. They were sent ashore much earlier than planned as the few Australian guns that had got ashore on the 25th could not elevate enough to engage the Turks. As he records in his diary:

*"...with the help of drag ropes hauled the two guns about 50 yards uphill. One gun was brought into action, our colonel gave us a rough line and range and "bang" went the first shot our battery had ever fired, just to let the infantry know our guns had landed. We were the first NZ battery in action and owing to the steep hills were the only guns of much use during the first week."*

**Ubique. Barry Dreyer. Col Comdt. March 2015**

## 5. IN KOREA WITH AD WATT

Maj AD Watt, RAA commanded 163 Bty RNZA from April 1952 to November 1952.

This 3rd and final part of this story continues on from Part 2 in Newsletter 164 (December 2014) and Part 1 in Newsletter Letter 163 (September 2014).

*..I won't repeat them here....*

Suffice it to say that I had a kind of room at one end of the battalion command post with its own (Sheldrake) entrance and a hessian screen separating it from the battalion CP. Here I had my stretcher and along one wall a wide shelf, where I could fire plan, study maps and aerial photographs with stereo binoculars, write reports, etc. I also had my exchange with communications to OPs, battery and RHQ. My party with the radios were in a dug out close by and we were in direct communication. Whenever there was a raid, attack or a patrol in trouble the battalion commander and I worked side by side in the CP - sharing all the information we both received, ensuring the absolute minimum time between requests for fire or a decision by me to call for extra fire, type of fuse, e.g. V.T. etc. These arrangements worked very well to the satisfaction of the battalion commander as well as RHQ.

Certainly the static nature of the war permitted such arrangements, which would not have been possible in other circumstances. Nevertheless I think there will always be a requirement for the closest possible liaison, the best possible communications and the quickest response to calls for fire. By completely integrating himself into the battalion HQ, a battery commander can best serve both the battalion commander and his own CO. (Any arrangement, of course, must be approved by the battalion commander).

In view of the static nature of the war I was able to develop a daily routine in conjunction with

3RAR officers at battalion HQ. The routine I outline below is based on what I wrote on my return to Australia.

Each morning I was given a copy of the patrol details for that night. Having looked at the patrols on the map I advised on and arranged any special tasks required; encoded patrol information and passed it on to the RHQ; attended briefings if required and selected harassing fire tasks, phoning them to the 10 at RHQ (with brigade HQ).

I worked very closely with the battalion 10, had access to his air photographs and stereo binoculars and was on the distribution list for all intelligence reports and summaries. I compared reports from OPs with those received from patrols, listening posts, snipers, etc. By visits to my OPOs I made myself familiar with the front and also arranged reliefs for the OPOs and trained my junior officers for that work.

(As an aside, my cosy arrangement with the battalion IO did at one time puzzle some visitors. On 21 August, Capt Brian Poananga RNZIC, who'd been attached to 3RAR as a platoon commander assumed the appointment of IO 3RAR.

If Brian and I, while in discussion, were introduced to a visiting officer one soon noticed the visitor's look of confusion as he heard that the Kiwi officer was the IO of the Aussie battalion and the Aussie officer was the BC of the Kiwi battery.)

Most of our activity was at night when the battalion had a variety of patrols out, carried out probes and raids or defended against those of the enemy. During the day the OPOs kept a close watch on enemy positions, engaged opportunity targets and played a part in other tasks required by RHQ.

There were many operations by 3RAR during my time with it; however I do not intend to describe or elaborate on them as this has already been done by infantrymen including some who took part in the operations and also outlined in 3RAR war diary; however, I will mention briefly my involvement in the planning.

While for routine patrol activity I usually discussed artillery requirements with the IO or Adjutant, when a raid or other significant operation was being planned the battalion commander discussed it with me early and then, when firm, discussed it again explaining what he would like by way of artillery support. I then obtained from my CO the artillery resources I could plan on being available and any specific instructions. When my plan was suitable to the battalion commander I discussed it with my CO and left it with him for coordination and production. As already mentioned, during the actual operation I took my remote (on the regimental net) and followed developments with the battalion commander or his battle 2IC.

We were only in the line a few days when the battalion carried out operations "Capture 111" followed rapidly by a raid on point 115 by fighting patrol "OBOE". The latter, after initial success came against a position of estimated company strength and heavy mortar fire, suffering many casualties. The

operation continued for some hours and I was busy providing support, at one stage applying the fire of three regiments. This type of support was to be repeated many times for a succession of 3RAR operations.

Periodically, in accordance with Corps policy, 3RAR was required to mount an operation to try to capture a prisoner with a view to extracting information from him. It seemed to be fairly common knowledge that most attempts throughout the Corps had resulted in considerable casualties and few, if any, prisoners.

The battalion commander always planned these operations with great care and gave his main attacking element the maximum support; yet there were often casualties. Sometimes the enemy strength was much greater than expected and the operation extended over several hours with inevitable casualties. Troops displayed great courage in these actions.

Sometimes there were no casualties at all. I recall one such attempt. Maj Ralph Sutton, OC C Coy led a patrol of three, on the night of 11 August, to capture a prisoner on an enemy supply route. The patrol crossed no man's land without incident, reached a village and came on a farm house occupied by a family. A youth about 19 was selected but when attempts were made to tie him to prevent escape on the way back the whole family screamed, alerting nearby enemy troops and the patrol had to get away. No prisoner but no casualties and the patrol was able to provide some useful information about a small section of the enemy front.

It wasn't until I read, many years later, in Jeffery Grey's "The Commonwealth Armies in the Korean War" (1988), that I learned Gen Cassels, the Comwel Div commander, strongly disagreed with the policy, which he took up personally with the Corps Commander, Lt Gen J.W. (Iron Mike) O'Daniel. Despite the confrontation the policy was to continue.

I can say with certainty that Lt Col Hughes and Brig Daley never took these tasks lightly, treating each attempt as warranting meticulous planning and maximum support. But they couldn't have been very pleased and Maj Gen Cassels must have been extremely unhappy about the policy being continued.

The British had learned hard lessons in the Great War from the battles of the Somme and those lessons were incorporated in the teachings of military colleges in the UK and the major dominions. An important lesson was that you don't reinforce failure or otherwise needlessly risk the lives of your men. Commanders like Montgomery and Alexander, who had commanded in the Great War practised these principles as did other UK commanders as well as those from countries such as Australia and New Zealand.

I should add that, in late October, when the Chinese formation facing the Corps was relieved by one about which little was known, there was a reasonable case for trying to capture prisoners to gain information - but not with disregard for the number of possible casualties.

The whole of my time with 16 Fd Regt was characterised by marked aggression by both sides in their patrolling, probing, raiding and occasionally, attacking in greater numbers; and also in the almost continuous shelling and mortaring. One response was continual digging and strengthening of trenches, dug outs for various purposes, especially troop accommodation and administration; camouflage and concealment and, on our side, wiring and laying mines. The whole nature of the war led some to liken it to trench warfare during WWI in France.

The Chinese were committed diggers, constructing deep refuges and connecting tunnels, which gave them a defensive advantage but I think our infantry still had an advantage in skill and execution and the artillery in the accuracy and speed of response.

As time went on the Chinese obtained many more guns and kept improving their accuracy and ability to bring down concentrations of fire more quickly. In general they outranged the division's guns; however our Corps artillery's guns were competitive, as were the division's 4.1-inch mortars. (Commenting on this Maj Stanbridge said: "On one occasion whilst on OP duty on 355 I actually saw Chinese guns firing ... well outside our range. I got an immediate shelling away but they were never engaged, at least not that I saw ...").

Most of the enemy's shelling and mortaring was directed at battalion positions, especially the forward companies and sometimes Battalion HQ. Gun and mortar positions were frequently subject to harassing fire and, on occasions, to counter bombardment fire. (Capt Stanbridge recalled that "Most of the artillery fire directed at the gun lines was during operation COMMANDO. It was frequently heavy and very accurate.")

Of course enemy mortaring and shelling could be very damaging in support, of its own probes, raids, etc and in defence against ours. Such activities at night were the main focus of 163 battery and 16 Fd Regt generally and in major part, I think, of the divisional artillery.

We thought we could give better than we received. Our plentiful supply of ammunition including a variety of fuses helped and we knew that we were superior with our predicted fire, as well as observed fire, not least in the speed with which we could deliver regimental and divisional concentrations.

We also thought we were superior with our counter bombardment (CB) fire. From my initial briefing at HQRA when I was given an outline of the organisation and procedures of CB in the division and learned first hand of the CRA's enthusiasm for CB and his determination to develop it further in the division and noticed the continuous progress actually made, I had been most impressed. CB had been integrated into the course at Larkhill and its importance stressed; however we were warned that not all commanders gave it all the attention it warranted. I won't elaborate on the subject here as it has been very well covered,

including in

"The Evolution of Counter Bombardment Procedures and Techniques Part 7 - Counter Bombardment in the Korean War 1951-1953" by Major Alan Smith E.D. (Retd), m CANNONBALL, Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Company, No. 49 November 2002.

While the division had the means and ability to locate the enemy guns it lacked the range and power to deal effectively with all of them. A medium regiment or even battery would have been a great help. Fortunately Corps artillery's 8-in howitzers and 155-mm gun/howitzers were usually made available during major operations or special CB programmes.

In addition each regiment usually had the use of one of these guns each day. The allocation to batteries depended on RHQ's assessment of priorities: it was great when we had a tum. Their fire was often directed at bunkers and other selected targets in the enemy's forward defences including annoying mortar and gun positions and we hoped their fire would at the same time harass the enemy. (Months after I left Korea, 74 Med Regt with eight 5.5-in guns joined 1 Comwel Div.)

My fire plan for each night always included some harassing fire tasks even if no particular operation was planned. I'd heard it said that all you needed to select such tasks was a pin; however I always thought, as I'm sure most BCs did, that a haphazard selection was a waste of ammunition. Using every bit of up-to-date information available and avoiding any set pattern offered the possibility of some success. Even if the probability is not high I think that, providing ammunition is available, the effort is warranted.

A vivid memory that has remained with me from Korea was walking along a path in C Coy in the direction of the OP when I came upon Capt 'Prang' Oliver lying on the ground with C Coy Commander Maj Ralph Sutton kneeling beside him with his thumb pressed on Prang's femoral artery stemming the flow of blood from a machine gun wound. An NCO medical orderly was struggling to tighten a huge tourniquet while other orderlies did their best to keep Prang still as he writhed in agony. I have no doubt that Ralph Sutton saved Prang's life. I visited Prang some time later in hospital in Seoul. He developed a stiff leg and was eventually returned to New Zealand.

In early October 3RAR was relieved but 163 Battery remained in direct support of the relieving battalion; hence there was no long relief for my OPOs and their parties.

I was sorry to be separated from 3RAR. 163 battery had been in direct support for long periods and through much action in Korea and had a great relations with the battalion. I deemed myself fortunate to have played some small part in the operations of this very professional and capable unit and to have come to know fairly well most of its officers. 3RAR went on to be involved in very difficult and dangerous operations at the HOOK in the southern sector of 1 Comwel Div' s area of

responsibility.

battalion Durham Light Infantry (IDLI) had landed in Korea a month earlier. It had about 50% National Serviceman as well as quite a few experienced officers, NCOs and men. In command was Lt Col Peter Jeffreys DSO, OBE who had dropped a rank to get command of the unit in Korea.

During my first talk with him I asked how he would like me to function at battalion HQ. He said he'd talked with Lt Col Hughes and would like me to continue as I did with him. He added that he would arrange for me to talk about these arrangements to his adjutant, 10, 2IC and company commanders as soon as possible. I suggested that as my OPOs were very experienced as I understood his company commanders were also, they should get on famously. He agreed and I had good reason to believe they did.

The CO was a friendly person and very much in command in a non- autocratic way. He was forever out and about his companies giving directions and advice and getting to know all ranks. It was soon evident that he had the respect of all, which stemmed from, it seemed to me, their complete faith in him as their leader. I was impressed how quickly he developed the cohesion and capability of the unit. I think of my time with IDLI as one that was productive militarily and enjoyable personally.

The aggressive nature of the war continued as did the enemy bombardments. Night time activities also continued much as before with some actions lasting for many hours, with casualties and 163 Battery providing similar sorts of direct artillery support, my often calling for the fire of three regiments.

Capt Stanbridge who'd been scheduled to return to New Zealand in December, was required to leave Korea in late September to attend a course at their Army Schools. His relief was Capt Cess Lobb, who arrived some time later.

On 5 October I left for five days leave in Tokyo. Ron Hughes had leave at the same time and we spent time there together, including a visit to war graves in Yokohama. When passing through Seoul, I visited 'Prang' Oliver in hospital.

In November 1952 I was told that I would shortly be returning to Australia. My attachment was to have been for six months but lengthened to eight because a New Zealand replacement could not be spared. Now a major was made available to take over 163 Battery.

Although I was glad to be going home, it was a wrench to leave the battery that had performed so well, and the officers who had given me unstinting support I and the NCOs and men dedicated to supporting their infantry comrades. The battery captain arranged a parade near the guns, which gave me an opportunity to express my thanks, the CO arranged a farewell at RHQ and 3RAR invited me to dine with them on 15 November. I had been privileged to be part, albeit for a short time of 16Fd Regt, a Regiment with great esprit de corps which

had fought in Korea in the best traditions of the troops of the Great War and WW2.

And so I returned to Australia to see my family, continue my army career and remember fondly my service as a temporary Kiwi in Korea.

### **PREFACE**

This small memoir is a simple account of my time with 16 Field Regiment royal New Zealand Artillery during 1952. It is written in a very personal vein with copious use of the vertical pronoun - few inhibitions at ninety. I have written for the record to try to give a sort of snapshot of the employment of 163 Field Battery during a particular phase of the Korean War in 1952. Retired Major Colin Stanbridge, who had been my Battery Captain, kindly read my first draft, discussed it with some of our mutual comrades, corrected errors of fact, clarified some matters and also read the final draft, for all of which I am most grateful. Any errors that might remain are mine alone.

**AD WATT 2007**

## **6. ARMY LEGEND CLOCKS UP SIXTY YEARS**

**Eru Hamuera Brown's** name is synonymous with **Waiouru**. He has been there for 60 years, every day has been spent with the New Zealand Army. Sure, it's a great place, but for 60 years. "Ma'am, why not?" Mr Brown, 77, asks with consternation. "I love Waiouru! It's got everything here. It's the best place to be." Mr Brown was a physical training instructor (PTI) at the Waiouru Army Camp for 36 years. The gymnasium is named after him; he is renowned for his energy and enthusiasm, especially when it comes to encouraging soldiers and instilling the Army ethos into his charges. "C'mon team!" is the refrain those who have come into contact with him remember most;

Retirement and taking life easy isn't for him. He used to run, but pounding hundreds of kilometres a week came to an end with a knee operation. "The doc said I'd end up a cripple if I kept that up so I decided to cycle. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays I do 40 km each day before 9am, and on Tuesdays and Thursdays I cycle to Ohakune and back. If I can do it, I do it. I've been lucky so far. No brain, no pain, Ma'am", he says with a wry smile. And he points to the nearby hill, Waitangi. "I like to go up there regularly. I run a bit, then walk to the top."

Lines have worked their way into Mr Brown's face. But the stare is still as that in the photograph taken when he was made a Member of the British Empire in 1984, He reckons he can't recall what the honour was for. "I was just doing my job." Of Mahia-based Ngati Rongomaiwahine iwi, Mr Brown joined the Regular Force Cadets in the mid 1950's and became set on becoming a soldier and learning skills such as marching and shooting, and playing rugby and tennis in his spare time. He became

a truck driver when he graduated, "After six months I was sick of driving so I did the six week course to become an assistant PTI. I topped the course, went back to Waiouru but it was another three years before I became a PTI. They trained you in phases then and that's how long it took".

He served in Malaya, Vietnam and Singapore, and, when he wasn't undertaking his PTI duties, spent much of his time in the 1980's organising sporting events involving both the Army and civilians. He organised, coached and participated in many sports, including rugby, tennis and harriers. Twenty four years ago his engagement as a PTI finished. He didn't want to leave Waiouru so he obtained a job looking after the Army's vast training area. He attention to detail - some would call his fussiness - stood him in good stead, and the training area was tidied up and soldiers drilled with the instruction that any mess they made they had to put right or clean up.

Mr Brown is proud of his reputation for being fussy about anything he touches; right down to blankets being folded just so on the marae where he works nowadays. "I'm the third eldest of 10 children and our Mum and Dad instilled in us that you must always leave a place as you find it, or even better. All soldiers should do that." He loves working at the Army Marae, a facility that was developed under the instruction of former Chief of Defence, the late Lt Gen Tony Birks.

"The marae is a central point of the camp. Every soldier passes through it. Some many times, and they learn about our carvings and tukutuku panels, and our history. They learn about those who have come before us in the Army." He believes the soldiers of today are "every bit as good" as they were in his day. "They are developed differently now, but they're just as good.

Mr Brown may have a positive outlook on life, but his years at time have been tinged with tragedy. He and his late wife Toots had two daughters, and lost the youngest, TJ to breast cancer. On 4 November 2008 he lost his beloved Toots, also to breast cancer. A former soldier, she too was an avid sports player and administrator, "She had cancer for a while," recalls Mr Brown. "She wasn't an emotional person - none of this lovey-dovey stuff with her. One day we were sitting there and she grabbed my hand. She squeezed it hard and said "EH (that's what she called me) I want to go". I said "Darling if you want to go, you go". Then she started to cry and asked who would look after me. I told her her wairua, or spirit would look after me. She squeezed my hand harder, and within 30 seconds she was gone. Her spirit does look after me too. I feel she is everywhere".

He is keen to maintain his fitness, continue to help run the Army Marae, and to talk to each and every soldier who passes through. "As long as I have my health I'd like to be there".

**Article written by Judith Martin for the February 2015 issue of The Army News.**



## 7. APPOINTMENT OF CHAPLAIN TO LOCAL RSA

Paraparaumu RSA & Community Club has appointed its first Chaplain and his opening role will be to lead the re-dedication of the Memorial Gates on Saturday 14 February. David Bahler is a former military serviceman, an ordained Anglican minister, and owner of the Robert Harris coffee shop in Coastlands.

RSA president Chris Turver says it became clear as planning for the four years of commemoration of World War One began to unfold that the RSA needed its own Chaplain. Bahler was in the Royal New Zealand Artillery Regiment for seven years, at one point rising to become the youngest Sergeant in the entire Army, followed by 11 years as a Police Constable.



From there he went into various management positions including General Manager of Titahi Bay RSA and General Manager of Petone Working Mens Club. He was ordained seven years ago, regularly takes services at Te Horo Church, and is also the official Padre to the Wellington branch of the Royal New Zealand Artillery Association

**Both the article above and the one below were supplied by Chris Turver**

## 8. THE LAST HURRAH!

New Zealand's Iroquois helicopters, famous for the familiar whop-whop-whop sound of their rotors, will be withdrawn from service in May after a final fly-through many parts of the country. Thirty veterans of the Vietnam war – where the robust helicopters became famous – were given a special trip down memory lane during a series of flights from Ohakea air base on Friday (30 Jan).

The veterans included former RNZAF Air Vice Marshal Robin Klitscher who flew a helicopter gunship in Vietnam on secondment with the Australian Air Force and former RNZRSA national president Don McIvor who served in the NZ infantry. Paraparaumu RSA president Chris Turver, the first New Zealand war correspondent with 161 artillery battery in Vietnam, says it was an emotional experience for veterans to remember the reliance they placed on the Iroquois for support.

"It was like having a lifeline that could be called up almost anytime."



Iroquois's entered service with the RNZAF in 1966 but were never sent to Vietnam but instead became famous in New Zealand for many support roles, notably search-and-rescue. Today there are eight left at Ohakea, with at least two destined for display in air museums in New Zealand and others to be sold. They have been replaced by nine state-of-the-art French-built NH90s, also based at Ohakea.

## 9. The RNZA Assn would like to extend its warmest congratulations to Neville Jordan on being Knighted in the New Years Honours list 1 Jan 2015.

Amongst all his other accomplishments and fine works, Neville was the founder of MAS Technology, the Wellington company which developed the Vanguard Fire Prediction System. The tender for Vanguard was accepted by the NZ Army in 1987 (Tony McLeod Director of Artillery, Tom O'Reilly Director of equipment Procurement, Alan Mitchell Projects Officer, Skin Frances Master Gunner). The system remained in operational use for over 20 years and cost a fraction of what some of the other bigger name companies offered. We are indebted to Neville and his team at MAS (including Dr Russell Gibbard) for their contribution to the RNZA.

*A press release on 08/01/2015:*

"Innovator and technology entrepreneur Sir Neville Jordan has been winning top business awards for years, most recently as Wellingtonian of the Year in 2012. He was president of the Royal Society from 2006-09, a rare position for a businessman, and has been a member of many government scientific organisations. He became a member of the NBR RICH LIST after listing his company MAS Technology on the US Nasdaq exchange in 1975 and continues to be an active venture capitalist through Endeavour Capital."



**161 Battery**

**RNZA**

**(VIETNAM 1965 - 1971)**

161 Battery RNZA Vietnam Veterans will be gathering in Palmerston North on 14 -16 July 2015, to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the battery reporting 'one gun ready', at Bien Hoa in the Republic of Vietnam. The reunion events will be centred on the Palmerston North Cosmopolitan Club at 22 Linton St Palmerston North. The programme for the event is still a work in progress, however it will include;

Tuesday 14th July – Registration and mix and mingle at the Cossie club  
Wednesday 15th July – Final Registrations and a Powhiri at the Cossie Club  
Visit and parade with 161 Bty/16Fd Regt at Linton Camp  
Reunion Dinner at the Awapuni Events Centre  
Thursday 16th July – Commemorative Service in Palmerston North  
Light lunch at the Cossie club before return to home  
Buses will be provided for the visit to Linton and the dinner.

The reunion is open to all personnel who served with or were attached to 161 Battery RNZA, in the Republic of South Vietnam, between June 1965 and July 1971, including the wives, partners and descendants of 161 (Vietnam) Battery veterans. An invitation is also extended to veterans of allied units that had close ties with 161 Battery in Vietnam.

**Sponsors:** Some of our fellow veterans are suffering from financial hardship and although eager to attend the reunion, are not able to afford it. If you wish to make a donation towards sponsoring a fellow veteran, we would be more than willing to facilitate this. Any donations received will only be used to defray the registration of veterans in need and will be accounted separately from the reunion operating fund. If there are any surplus donations at the end of the reunion, they will be donated to an RNZA or Vietnam Veteran charity.

**Car-pooling :** I am willing to coordinate a car pooling arrangement if there is a need. If you are able to provide a ride or are looking for a ride, please indicate on the registration form. If there is a match I will advise both parties and they can complete arrangements between themselves. No guaranties but I will try.

I look forward to catching up with you all in Palmerston North.

*John (Woody) Barrett Reunion Secretary*



## Accommodation Suggestions

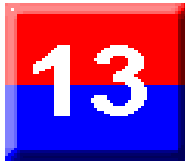
Hotels and Motels are offering a range of discounts for those attending. The facilities listed below were given 'thumbs up' for the RNZAA reunion here in 2013.

The Masonic and Café De Paris Inn, are older smaller style facilities, but most rooms have ensuites and comfortable surrounds..

When making bookings attendees should make it known that they are attending the "Reunion" to secure the appropriate discount.

The Cosmopolitan(Cossie) Club in Linton Street, one block away from the Square is readily accessible to the accommodation listed.

- 1. Ambassador Motel:** Fergusson. Street Upmarket facilities. Good rates. Phone 06 356 7074. Tariff \$95 couple or \$110 family. [ambassmotel@ihug.co.nz](mailto:ambassmotel@ihug.co.nz)
- 2. Aubuyn Court Motor Lodge:** Fergusson. Street Upmarket facilities. Rates from \$150. Phone 06 354 5758. [www.aubyncourt.co](http://www.aubyncourt.co).
- 3. Awatea Park Motel:** Fitzherbert Avenue. Mix of studio & family units. Rates from \$120. Phone 06 356 5366. [www.awateapark.co.nz](http://www.awateapark.co.nz)
- 4. BK'S Motor Lodge:** Cuba Street. Offering Studio Units @ \$135 (1-2 persons) , which is discounted by \$15. Ph 06 353 5995 <mailto:info@bkspalmerstonnorth.co.nz>
- 5. Café de Paris Inn :** Main Street. 20 plus rooms, most with ensuite. Range \$65 1 person; 2 people \$80; Small number of rooms accommodate 3 persons @ \$95. Phone 06 355 2130 [info@cafedeparisinn.co.nz](mailto:info@cafedeparisinn.co.nz)
- 6. Camelot Motor Lodge:** 295 Fergusson St. Mix of executive and studio suites. Tariff \$120. Phone 06 355 4141. [www.camelotmotorlodge.co.nz](http://www.camelotmotorlodge.co.nz)
- 7. Chancellor Motor Lodge & Conference Centre** 131 Fitzherbert Avenue, Palmerston North, New Zealand  
Phone: +64-6-354 5903 | Fax: +64-6-354 5083 | Reservations Freephone: 0800 370 781  
Email: [info@chancellormotel.co.nz](mailto:info@chancellormotel.co.nz) | Internet: [www.chancellormotel.co.nz](http://www.chancellormotel.co.nz)
- 8. Copthorne** previously the Kingsgate: Offering more affordable accommodation in the older motel facilities. awaiting refurbishment. Hotel rooms range from \$130 plus. Phone 06 356 8059. [caitlyn.veerbeck@milleniumhotels.com](mailto:caitlyn.veerbeck@milleniumhotels.com)
- 9. Coachman:** Fitzherbert Avenue. Range of Motel - studio & family units and Hotel - standard & delux rooms. B& B rates \$138, \$158 , \$196. Phone 06 356 5065 <mailto:functions@coachman.co.nz>
- 10. Distinction Palmerston North** previously the Travelodge: Cuba Street. Range of accommodation options. Room rate \$130. Phone 06 355 5895. [conference@distinctionpalmerstonnorth.co.nz](mailto:conference@distinctionpalmerstonnorth.co.nz)
- 11. Masonic Hotel:** Main Street . All rooms with ensuite. Single \$70 or twin share \$90 per night. Phone 06 353 480 [info@masonichotel.co.nz](mailto:info@masonichotel.co.nz);
- 12. Palmerston North Motel:** 66 Linton St ( A block away from the Cossie Club). Affordable accommodation. Ph 06 358 0681. [www.pnm.co.nz](http://www.pnm.co.nz)
- 13. Palmerston North Holiday Park.** Dittmer Drive. Approximately 4kms from the Cossie Club. Range of tourist flats and cabins; plus 60 powered sites. Phone 06 358 039 Check the website: [holiday park](#), [holiday parks](#), [holiday parks nz](#), [family holiday parks](#), [camping grounds](#), [palmerston north accommodation](#) > [home](#).



**161 Battery RNZA (VIETNAM 1965 - 1971)**  
50th Anniversary Reunion – Palmerston North July 2015

**Registration Form**

Regimental Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Dates of Service with 161 Bty in Vietnam: \_\_\_\_\_

Partners Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Details: Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Registration Fee: - \$140 per person: No: \_\_\_\_\_ Total : \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

**Sponsor Donation: - \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

**Total Remittance: \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

**Payment:**

**Cheques enclosed for full amount: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Or**

**Deposit into the Reunion Bank Account: Kiwibank 38-9016-0359350-00. By**

**Internet Banking Amount paid: \_\_\_\_\_ Date paid \_\_\_\_\_**

**PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU PUT YOUR NAME AS A REFERENCE WHEN MAKING  
AN INTERNET PAYMENT**

**All registration fees must be paid by 30th JUNE 2015**

**Post to: 161 Battery RNZA Vietnam Reunion**

**c/o P O Box 311, Katikati 3166, New Zealand or email: jonlynbar@yahoo.com**

**Contact: John (Woody) Barrett Reunion Secretary: ph (07) 549**

**4829 Mobile 027 583 1338 or email: jonlynbar@yahoo.com**

Car-pooling: I am able to offer \_\_\_\_\_ people a ride from \_\_\_\_\_

to Palmerston North and return.

I would like a ride for \_\_\_\_\_ person/people, from \_\_\_\_\_

to Palmerston North and return, if possible.

**AVAILABLE FROM THE RNZAA Q STORE**



**RNZA Baseball Cap**  
New Style Sold Out  
New Supplier sought



**Polo Shirts Dual logo**  
(Gunnery 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) **\$35.00 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 on 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*

**Patron**

**Colonel Commandant** Colonel Barry Dreyer 09 307 5692  
The Patron and Colonel Commandant are ex officio members of the

**President** Lt Col (Rtd) Tony McLeod 09 4860910, 027 2698472

**Secretary** Bernie McCort 07 345 3643  
18 Walford Drive  
**ROTORUA 3010** **rnza.association@gmail.com**

**Committee:** Greg Thwaite (Vice President)  
Colin Jansen (Asst Sec Facebook Mgr and Quartermaster)  
Andrew Donellan  
Peter Miles

**Committee Members at Large:**

Graeme Black (Waikato)	Brian Jerry Meyer (Australia)
Bob Kerslake (Auckland)	Danny and Bernie McCort (BOP)
Tom Roche/Steve Harvey (Manawatu)	Roger Newth (Horowhenua)
Lindsay Skinner (Wellington)	Rob Hitchings (Wellington)
Rob Munro (Wgtn)	Brian (Skin) Frances (Upper Sth Island)
Chris Diedrichs/Al Martin (Dunedin)	John Osborne (Northland)
Catherine Dymock (16 Fd Regt)	Dave Weston (Wgtn, RNZRSA Delegate)

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Central: Lindsay Skinner 027 5303319  
Southern: Pat Duggan 021 02615773

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

**RNZA Historian:**

**Facebook Site:** [Facebook, RNZA Assn](#)

**Subscriptions:** For those members wishing to receive a printed copy of the Newsletter a \$20 fee is payable. Please forward by cheque to The Secretary 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](http://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](mailto:muzzleflashesnz@gmail.com)

**Secretarial/Treasurer matters to:** [rnza.association@gmail.com](mailto:rnza.association@gmail.com)

**Items for The NZ Gunner to Marie at:** [dgroberts@xtra.co.nz](mailto:dgroberts@xtra.co.nz)

**RNZA Assn Bank Ac # 38 9007 0694501 00**