



NEW ZEALAND PERMANENT FORCE  
OLD COMRADES' ASSOCIATION (INC)

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

## NEWSLETTER No. 100

DECEMBER 1998

ROUTINE ORDERS

### SEASON'S GREETINGS:

Our President and Executive send all members their best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

### LAST POST:

Mrs Molly Cumming  
1704 J.F. (Jack) Frame  
31023 Clifford Bragg  
33751 Tom Swift

22 Jun 98 at Wellington.  
18 Aug 98 at Devonport.  
7 Nov 98 at Auckland.  
2 Dec 98 in U.K.

### CHANGE OF ADDRESS:

Lt Col P.J. Calvert to  
W.F. Giles to  
W.N. Stephenson to  
Col G.R. Williams to

RMB 813 Newmans Rd, Wootton NSW 2423 Australia.  
C/- NZMCA, PO Box 147, Papakura, Auckland.  
180 Kauri Rd, Whenuapai 1250, Auckland.  
C/- DPOC/ UNMOP, Land Command, Pte Bag 900,  
Upper Hutt.  
38 Will James Ave, Algies Bay 1241.  
Hides Hotel, PO Box 8082, Cairns, Q4870, Australia.  
C/- 6 Kowhai Court, 17 Johns St, Upper Hutt.  
24B Hazelwood Ave, Hamilton.

F.B. Wood to  
B.R. Edmonds to  
Lt Col John Wasson to  
R.G. Blankley, MBE to

### LIFE MEMBER:

A. E. Miln w.e.f. - 31 Jan 96

### RESIGNATION:

Mrs Sylvia Rudge resigns as Lady Associate w.e.f - 7 Sept 98.

### NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING:

This will be held at 1000hrs on Saturday 27 Feb 99 at Birkenhead RSA.

### SUBSCRIPTIONS:

### INTERNET WEB SITE:

### APPOINTMENTS OF OFFICERS:

} See Report on Annual General Meeting.

## GUEST EDITORIAL

These extracts from Maj Gen Ron Hassett's address at the Reunion Dinner at Taupo on 14 Nov 98 are featured as a Guest Editorial, in part to acknowledge his great service in his ten years as our Patron, and also because he expresses so well the spirit behind our Association, strongly evident at that gathering:

I am grateful for being given the opportunity to thank you all personally for the privilege you have accorded me these past ten years of making me your patron.

Since retiring 22 years ago I have had the good fortune to have held a number of Army related retirement appointments. They have all been rewarding but there are two that stand out as being very special. They are the Army Memorial Museum and the New Zealand Permanent Forces Old Comrades Association. It is the New Zealand Permanent Forces Old Comrades Association however that is closest to my heart for it is in this organisation that the spirit of our great Regiment truly rests. Seated around this dinner table is a group of old and dedicated gunners who have spent the greater part of their adult lives in the service of the Regiment. It would be interesting to total the number of collective years there are between us; Jim Gilbert alone would contribute sixty seven years and



Tom Chapman, now in his ninetieth year, has had almost a life long EME association with the Regiment. A manifestation of the great spirit that pervades the Old Comrades is the fact that Tom caught a bus from Waikanae to be with us this weekend. The really sad thing for me is that while there is no organisation, other than the Old Comrades Association which has the interests of the serving regiment at heart, the Old Comrades have been largely ignored. It is a pity that the young gunners of today are not given the opportunity to brush shoulders with you and thus absorb some of the real spirit of our traditions and the service of the gun. My ambition when first appointed as your Patron was to draw the serving gunner closer to the Old Comrades and I am sorry to say that I have failed you in this regard. I will be perfectly frank and say that I have been sadly disappointed at the lack of backing and support which 16 Field Regiment has given to us despite the many requests that have been made to them. Just a small token of interest at our annual gatherings, not involving any great effort on their part, would mean so much.

However I like to think that I had one success. The visit of the Master Gunner, St James's Park to our Taupo gathering some years back was a very special occasion. General Sir Martin Farndale was greatly impressed with the Old Comrades and was fulsome in his praise for the spirit of this "unique gunner association" and the "calibre of its members".

I am delighted that the recently appointed Colonel Commandant, Brigadier Ray Andrews has accepted the appointment of Patron. I hope that his close association with serving gunners, and 16 Field Regiment in particular, will serve to bring the Old Comrades in much closer contact with the young gunners of today.

Finally may I once again say thank you for the privilege of being your Patron.

## **THE TAUPO WEEKEND: 13 TO 15 NOV 98**

### **PART I: ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

#### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT: By Ian Foster**

Welcome. It is good to see so many here today. I would like to thank you for making the effort. We are expecting 55 at the dinner tonight which is very pleasing. I would like to thank the District Representatives for their efforts over the past year. Thank you for keeping in touch with those who are poorly and less mobile. Membership has slipped slightly compared with last year. Our current membership stands at:

Association	45
Life	45
Honorary	5
Ordinary	252

Total 347 compared with 362 last year. I am not standing for President, due to the increase in my work load and our family business. I would like to thank the Committee for their support and in particular Wally Ruffell, Des O'Connor, Jim Ross and Barney Harrop. In closing I would like to thank our Patron, Gen Hassett for his guidance over the past years. To all members I wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

#### **DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVES:**

Reports were received from Jim Gilberd (Bay of Plenty, Hawkes Bay), Angus Rivers (Wanganui, Manawatu), Roger Newth (Wellington, Marlborough) and Graeme Henderson (Southland — on behalf of Spencer Morrison).

#### **RESOLUTIONS:**

The following resolutions were passed.

- (a) **Subscriptions:** The annual subscription will be \$10 and \$5 for Lady Associates, as from 1999 inclusive.
- (b) **Officers:** All officers and the Executive Committee were reappointed, except for the following changes -  
**Patron:** Brig R.J. Andrews CBE replaces Maj Gen R.D.P. Hassett CB CBE.  
**President:** Mr D.P. O'Connor replaces Mr I.S. Foster.  
**District Reps -**  
           Northland: Brig H.B. Honnor CB MVO replaces Mr W.N. Stephenson.  
           Canterbury/ Westland/ Nelson: Lt Col J.M. Masters MC replaces P.B. O'Connor MBE.
- (c) **Web Site: Internet:** Lt Col Angus Rivers was authorised to establish a trial internet web site to be at no cost to the Association, for one year.
- (d) **Next Reunion:** This will be held at Taupo on the weekend 12,13,14 Nov 99.



## **PART II: REUNION DINNER**

### **ATTENDANCE:**

Dinner, held at the splendid yacht club venue, was distinguished by the quality of the speeches. Guests of Honour were Brig R.J. Andrews CBE and Mrs Laurie Andrews. Also attending were: Doug Adams, Bill and Jasmin Beveridge, Iris Boytor, Tom Chapman, Murray Connor, Matt Crawley, Leroy Forrester, Wally and Alison Fraser, Jim Gilberd, Bill and Emma Giles, Joe and Grace Hanvey, Bryce and Joan Harrison, Barney Harrop, Ron and Mike Hassett, Graeme Henderson, David Hughes, Terry Hughes, Jack Kearney, Don and Noeline Kenning, Bob and Betty Kerslake, Frank and Denise Lupo, Helen and Neil McMahon, Brian Meyer, Vic and Audrey Meyle, Brian Millyn, George and Patti Miln, Dick Mitchell, Roger and Lois Newth, Des and Bunty O'Connor, Jim and Ruby Ross, Wally Ruffell, Robby and Joyce Robinson, Bill Stephenson and Violet, Jock Taylor, Tony Tustin, Gordon and Nora Weaver, Roger and Jean Wylde. Once more Angus Rivers came to the AGM but, being in the front line in the battle against the Y2K bug, could not attend the dinner.

Gratifying is this attendance, 20% above last years, and 50% greater than the graphologist forecast.

### **TOAST — HER MAJESTY:**

The loyal Toast to our Captain General was conducted by Ian Foster, Dining President, and Paul Galloway as Mr Vice.

### **THE REGIMENT:**

In proposing; this toast, Leroy Forrester struck a sincere and serious note, which set the tone for subsequent speakers. He had this to say:

The following is not a speech as such but a list of five personal observations and may not represent the view of the New Zealand Defence Force or the majority of the RNZA.

I recently had the pleasure of attending 16 Field Regiment's 48 Birthday celebrations. The parade, the ceremonies, the displays and dinner were fine affairs but during the weekend celebrations I wondered what reply I would have received from a gunner on parade if I had asked him what is the 'Regiment'. I was concerned that he would have said 16 Field Regiment. This is not meant to be an indictment of 16 Field Regiment but it concerns me. The Regiment is more than one unit. It is more than those here tonight. It is the gunners who have gone before us. It is the gunners who currently wear the 'Badge' and it is the gunners to come.

My second observation is that New Zealanders pride themselves on the 'Can Do Attitude'. That ability to overcome any situation with a piece of number eight wire and bailing twine. The Can Do Attitude is two edged sword.

In my opinion it is an attitude that the system relies upon to under-resource us.

The third observation is the New Zealand Defence Force recently released a report on the intergration of the sexes in the Defence Force. My belief is that with Lt Kelly May currently in Bosnia with SFOR and by all accounts performing her duties stirringly, the RNZA is in the vanguard of integration of the sexes.

I mentioned earlier the 'Can Do Attitude' and that it is a two edged sword. The primary edge is the ability to overcome problems, to be resourceful and adaptable. Those attributes are seen in the current breed of gunners. As an ex Master Gunner I was always critical of standards and finding fault in procedures and drills. It is the nature of the beast. But the RNZA's ability to adapt, to learn and to overcome can be seen in the gunners deploying on SFOR. They, in a very short time learnt and in some cases mastered a new artillery system, the AS90, and have shown that our gunners are the measure of the Royal Artillery. I also believe that the RNZA gunners that have deployed with the RA, on SFOR, have determined that the grass is not always greener on the other side of the fence.

My last observation is that this week brings the first firing of the Mistral VLLAD missile in New Zealand and opens a new chapter in technology for the RNZA.

On that positive note please charge your glasses and be up standing for the toast to the Regiment.

### **THE REPLY:**

The reply to the toast was delivered by Paul Galloway, Master Gunner at the School, in the manner fitting that proud title. We hope to give the text of his remarks in Newsletter 101.

### **ABSENT COMRADES:**

The traditional toast has often been disposed of in short order, but on this occasion Des O'Connor produced a masterpiece. He quoted that classic poem of 1914-18, "In Flanders Fields", reminding us that the Canadian author, Major John McCrae, had been a gunner in the Boer War, but having then qualified in medecine was not allowed to rejoin the Artillery and became an infantry battalion RMO. After the deep emotion of that piece, Des produced a classic of a different kind, "The Irish Mother's Letter to Her Son", which returned us to living and laughter.



### **ADDRESS BY THE COLONEL COMMANDANT:**

Brig Ray Andrews, our new Patron, introduced himself and let us know of the latest initiatives in the long-heralded production of a history of the RNZA, with which he has been engaged. Recent indications of support from the Secretary of Defence, Chief of Defence Force, and Chief of the General Staff are encouraging, and we look forward to learning of more progress in the New Year.

### **PART III: CHURCH & DISPERSE:**

#### **CHURCH PARADE:**

Once more conducted by Padre Bill McLeay in the impressive surroundings of the historic Te Tiki o Te Tamamutu meeting house. We were glad to see Mrs Tui McLeay restored to health and in good voice. Helen McMahon on the organ led us through four good rousing old hymns.

#### **ONE FOR THE ROAD:**

We again enjoyed the final refreshments of the reunion in Suite A of the Spa Hotel. These were paid for by the proceeds of the raffle of the brass gun produced by Wally Ruffell: a model SBML 24pr on a wooden garrison standing carriage. Then back on the road, leaving the rearguard (excl ranks, Boytor, O'Connor and Ruffell) smiling among the bottles.

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### **FROM & ABOUT MEMBERS**

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**Jim Gilberd:** "had a great time" at the School of Guns reunion at Waiouru, enjoying a session in the layers seat for a direct fire shoot.

**Brian Edmonds:** has recently taken over management of this 110 year old hotel in the centre of Cairns. "where, I might add, today's midday temperature is 34°" (see Changes of Address).

**Matt Crawley:** reports that he has recently had cataracts removed from both eyes, has also had a knee replacement and is now looking forward to getting around and using his now good leg to "kick a few backsides of those GUNNERS who are capable and have not been to a recent reunion. Regards to all fellow OLD COMRADES, especially Dan Foley and his lovely wife." Thanks, Matt, for coming across with those military histories and the 1914 Manual of Military Law — wonder what "rigorous imprisonment" was like?

**Col G.R. Williams:** (see Changes of Address) has been posted to Croatia as head of the peace-keeping mission UNMOP ("UNITED NATIONS MISSION OF OBSERVERS IN PREVLAKA" — Thanks for the translation: other overseas swanners please note). The Mission area is on the SOUTHERN border between CROATIA and MONTE NEGRO (a part of YUGOSLAVIA) with the HQ based in the historic town of DUBROVNIK. "Thank you, and good luck" he writes — and we heartily reciprocate, Graeme.

**Lt Col J. Wasson:** (see Changes of Address) formerly Military Assistant to the Land Force Commander, is off to Baghdad as NZ Senior National Officer and Operations Officer with UNSCOM (UNITED NATIONS SPECIAL COMMISSION), in charge of 12 NZ medics, communicators and maintenance specialists. He has been a UN Military Observer in Sinai, and BC 11 (A) Bty, AUCKLAND. Happy landings, John.

**Lt Col P.J. Calvert:** who has recently purchased a small farm on the mid-NORTH coast of NSW looks forward to a new lifestyle and sends his best regards to his Gunner friends in NZ, "who probably haven't enjoyed the Rugby as much this year as I have". We would like to see you in your bowyangs and cork-dangling Akubra, Phil.

**Lt Col Russ Martin:** sends his regards, and advises his old acquaintances that he is in good health and better spirits.

**Don Donaldson, QSM JP:** is National Secretary of the Ex Regular Force Senior NCO's Assn, PO Box 107, Palmerston North. All ex Snr NCO's or equivalent from the three services of the Commonwealth are eligible. This is a very active body of over 120 members, which produces a monthly newsletter — "The Communicator".

### **TO MEMBERS WHO COULD NOT ATTEND:**

We sympathise with you who were unable to attend through illness, disability, or exigencies of service, and hope to see you next year. If you have no such reason, look out for Mat Crawley!

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### **THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME: AN OPENING MESSAGE FROM RIVERS PARTNERS**

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### Old Comrades Association Trial Website

The AGM approved a trial website for the Association. Catherine Rivers created the site and it can be viewed at the following Internet address:

**<http://OurWorld.compuserve.com/HomePages/RiversPartners/OldComrades/index.htm>**

It is important to include all letters and punctuation exactly as they appear above. After you have reached the site, you should save it as a "favourite place", or a "bookmark", so that you can return to it in future without having to type in the address again.

If you do not have access to the Internet yourself, you should be able to find a friend or relative who can take you to the site on their system. Show them this Newsletter item.

The Old Comrades' website starts with a cover page, from which you can navigate using the menu buttons or by clicking on an underlined word or phrase. Any place where your cursor changes into a pointing hand can be clicked on to navigate to a different page. The site includes a Welcome page, a list of members, recent newsletters, links to other organisations, activities, obituaries, historical notes, and a photo or two of recent events of interest to members. You can influence the arrangement of the website by sending email from the site to the Webmaster (Catherine). Also, you can send comments and material for inclusion to the Association Secretary, who will vet everything that appears on the site. Members' personal affairs, their addresses and other contact details will not appear on the site without the express permission of the member(s) concerned. If you would like to publish your photo and/or a paragraph or two of personal details, please contact the Association Secretary, and a page will be opened for you for access from the Members' List on the site. The site will be updated at least monthly.

This trial will last until after the next AGM, at which the Association should decide whether to continue with an Internet presence.

### THE GUN

Continued from Newsletter 99.

By Wally Ruffell.

Although wooden carriages and platforms as shown in Figs 90 and 91 could easily have been constructed in New Zealand where suitable timber was readily available it seems our Government was not prepared to meet the cost. The 1893 report on the state of the country's defences classified half of the 64-pr 71-cwt carriages unserviceable. They had simply been permitted to rot where they stood.

In situations where carriages and platforms depicted in Figs. 90 and 91 were not available and guns were exposed to the weather, garrison standing carriages of wrought iron as shown in Fig. 92 were used. In addition to being better able to stand the weather than the wooden Naval types they were an improvement on the latter as they carried an elevating screw operated by a ratchet. These carriages could be adapted for certain other guns, e.g. RBL 40-pr, SBML 32-pr.

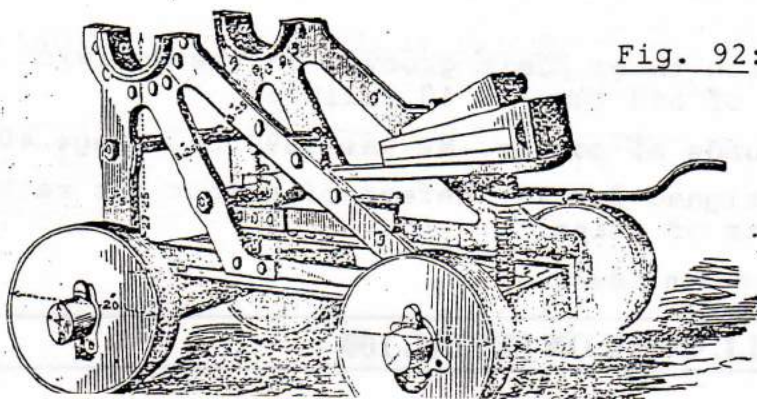


Fig. 92: Wrought iron garrison standing carriage with wooden wheels. Carriage dates from about 1867.

It seems the New Zealand Government could not afford any of these either.



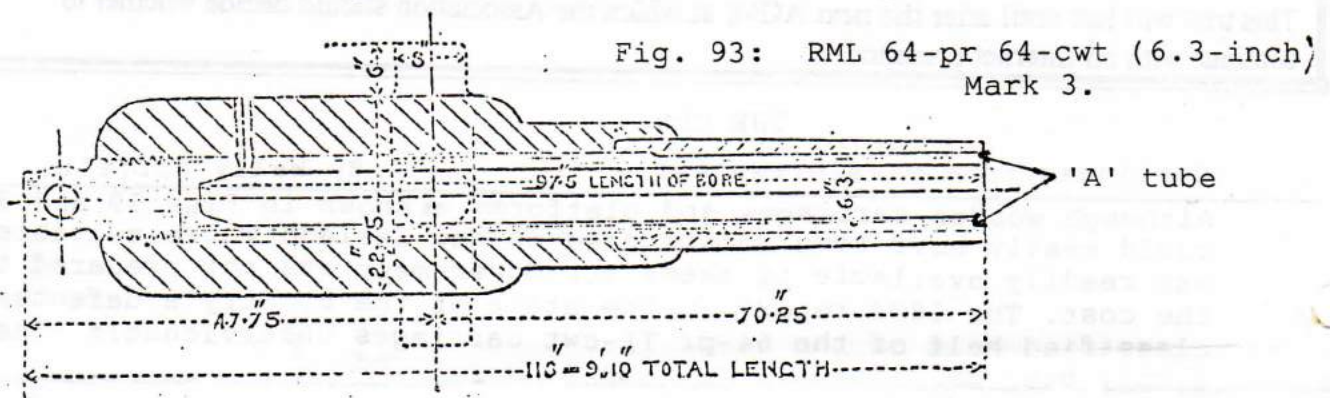
### NEW HEAVY RML EQUIPMENTS:

**ORDNANCE:** Heavy guns, where used for both land and sea services, were identical.

During the 1860s the British were concerned at the increasing strength of iron-clad ships, especially those of the French fleet across the channel. The heaviest Armstrong rifled breech-loader, the RBL 110-pr (7-inch) had not come up to expectations. As Armstrong himself had foretold, his system was not entirely suitable for heavy guns; the muzzle velocity of the 110-pr was not high enough to defeat the warships' armour - and the breech mechanism would not stand any increase in propellant charge to make it higher. Priority was therefore given to the construction of the heavy natures of RML guns which began with the recommendation of the Ordnance Select Committee which sat in 1866.

Four systems of construction ensued; the 'original' followed Armstrong's 'built-up' system, the superiority of which had been duly recognised by the Committee. Subsequently three other systems evolved, the 'modified,' 'Fraser,' and 'Royal Gun Factory' (RGF), incorporating improvements in strength and simplicity, but all retained the same basic principles shown in Fig. 84, i.e. a steel 'A' tube over which other tubes and/or fittings of wrought iron were shrunk. Fig. 93 shows a typical example

Guns included the 64-pr 64-cwt, 7-inch  $4\frac{1}{2}$ ,  $6\frac{1}{2}$ , and 7-ton, 8-in 9-ton, 9-in 12-ton, 10-in 18-ton, 10.4-in 28-ton, 11-in 25-ton, 12-in 35-ton, 12.5-in 38-ton etc etc up to 17.72 of 100 tons. The New Zealand Government bought eleven each of the 64-pr 64-cwt and 7-in 7-ton guns in 1878 at the time of the 'first Russian scare.' However, by the time they arrived here in 1879 the 'scare' had passed so they were put into store and apparently forgotten until the next 'scare' in 1885 when they were mounted '... in all haste' to quote the Fort Record Book. The Kiwi 'she's right' attitude is older than you think!



Manufacture of the Mark 3 gun began in 1867 although the guns received in New Zealand in 1879 were made in 1878.

It differed from earlier marks mainly in having fewer parts. It is built up of four portions, i.e. the 'A' tube of steel, the breech coil to which the trunnion piece is welded before being shrunk on the gun, the 'B' tube, and the cascable screw, all of wrought iron. On the right of the cascable is a gas escape leading to the end of the 'A' tube.

The bore is rifled with three plain grooves on the Woolwich system with a uniform twist of one turn in 40 calibres.

Full charge was 8 pounds of powder, MV was 1390 fs, range 4000 yards.

The 64-pr was not designed for the defeat of armour but rather to attack the upper works of ships.

(To be continued.)