

NEW ZEALAND PERMANENT FORCE OLD COMRADES ASSN INC

June 1986

NEWSLETTER No 50

A registered publication.

LAST POST: 1693 Major L. (Les) Rawley, 11 Apr 86, at Auckland.  
1971 H.W. (Hunter) Leggett, 19 Apr 86, at Dunedin.  
1848 S.M. (Stan) Harding, 25 Jul 85, at Christchurch.  
31289 L.A. (Laurie) Adam, 17 May 86, at Lower Hutt.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS: W.G. Anderson to CSO Hostel, Laing Lane, Waiouru.  
Major E.W. Anker to RNZAF Command & Staff College, RNZAF Base Auckland, Whenuapai.

Lt Col B.D. Dreyer to 22 Charles Dickens Dr, Howick.  
Capt D.S.J. Dwane to HQ Papakura Camp.  
D.L. George to 44 Beach Rd, Waikawa Bay, Picton.  
Maj Gen R.D.P. Hassett CB CBE to 10 Cheviot Rd, Lowry Bay, Wellington.  
Sgt P.L. McInerney to 6 Bullot St, Waiouru.  
J.F. Nagle to 33 McInnes Rd, Weymouth, Auckland.  
S Sgt G.J. Pickering to 161 Bty, 16 Fd Regt, Papakura Camp.  
Capt M.I. Pope to c/o CPO, Auckland.  
Lt Col A.J. Rivers to 4 Jacquinet St, Te Rapa, Hamilton.  
S Sgt A.H. Whyte to 25 Caughtley Cres, Waiouru

RESIGNATIONS: The following are received with regret:

Major M.W. Thornton wef 24 Apr 86. WO2 M.J. Te Pou wef 31 Dec 86.  
Major N.C. Thornton wef 29 Apr 86. S.F. Rankin wef 31 Dec 86.  
K.R. Turner wef 7 May 86. G. Elsdon wef 31 Dec 86.

STRUCK OFF STRENGTH FOR FAILURE TO PAY DUES - RULE 4F:

K.I. Bensemam	P. Kearney
G.L. Brennan	H.A.L. Laing
C.W. Dennis	S.M. Maioha
E.I. Dingle	M.J. McIver
S.N. Ehau	J.F. Nagle
D. Flux	S.A. Paul
J.E. Hancox	C.H. Steedman
P. Hickey	H. Tobin
R.J. Hitchings	

GONE NO ADDRESS: Anyone knowing the address of any of the following please contact Secretary. If they have not been located by 30 Sep 86 they will be struck off strength:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>LAST KNOWN ADDRESS OR LOCATION</u>
Capt J.P. Bellamy	Defence HQ
W.J. Brown	1329 Great North Rd, Auckland 3
E. Carrington	6 Lake Rd, Auckland 9
P. Carmichael	5 Hannan St, Levin
H.K.C. Crawford	88 Arimu Rd, Papakura
J.F. Donnelly	27 Rembrandt Pl, Papakura
R.J. Down	186 Northrow Rd, Avondale
R.A. Fairburn	Burnham Camp
J.T. Gallagher	61 Rangipo Pl, Turangi
H. Gibson	2 Hosking Pl, Clarks Beach, Pukekohe RD4
S.V. Harris	Australia
D.J. Harborne	Fort Dorset
W.N. Jones	7 Totara Vale Dr, Auckland 10
E.L. Kellas	Police Station, Palmerston South.
J.L. Levens	41 Sidlaw St, Wellington E5
M.W. Maunsell	SCE, Ardmore
E.L. McClintoch	Dunedin
A.L. Portman	RTD, Waiouru



GONE NO ADDRESS (con t):

C.W. Reid	51A Seabrook Ave, Auckland 7
Major D.H. Rollo MBE	16A Sweetman Ave, Paraparaumu
A. Scott	10 Langstone Pl. Auckland 10
B.P. Shaw	70 Clark Rd, Papakura
A. Strahan	2/7 Jesmond St, Auckland 3.
L.J. Webster	Waiouru
H.I. Williams	9RD, Stanway, Feilding
R.T. Wirihana	Papakura.

NEW MEMBERS: 34455 Lt J.R. (Jack) Basham, 12 Papa Pl, Birkdale, Auckland 10 (revived membership).  
 E51041 B.J. (Brenton) Gordon-Glassford, 32(E) Bty, 3 Fd Regt RNZA, Burnham Camp.  
 34656 J.W. (John) Monk, Te Kawa, RD3, Te Awamutu.  
 V49883 Lt C.J. (Christopher) Pearce, 47 Simla Cres, Khandallah, Wellington.

AMENDMENT TO NEWSLETTER No 48: Under 'New Members' delete Ernie Hight .... transferred to Police in 1939. Substitute '1937.'

AROUND AND ABOUT: Slim Gilmer's operation (see NL 49) was 100% successful.

In the report on the Anzac Day Parade 1986 we omitted to say that the Takapuna Silver Band, which provided the music, was capably led by Stan Perrett, one of our members. He has been Drum Major of the band for some years.

GUNNERS DAY CELEBRATIONS: The open week-end 24-24 May 86 advertised in our last Newsletter was well-attended by our members. Members of 16 Fd Regt RNZA excelled themselves in putting on a memorable week-end of equipment demonstrations and entertainment which will be long-remembered. A letter of appreciation on behalf of all members has been sent to the CO, Lt Col Barry Dreyer.

In Wellington Gunners Day was celebrated as usual at the National Memorial where a short service was held, and a wreath laid. Sir Leonard Thornton gave a short but interesting talk on his recent visit to Europe and the Middle East where he visited old battlefields of World Wars I and II. Between fifty and sixty attended, and after the taking of a group photograph most adjourned to the Southern Cross lounge bar. As our Wellington Rep, Jack Baigent reported, it was a pleasant interlude.

MORE FROM AROUND AND ABOUT: In researching his grandfather's record of service Bill Stott recently confirmed that the former served in the Armed Constabulary, and was stationed at Opepe in 1878.

Jim Gibb has had some 'bits and pieces' removed from his anatomy during recent operations but is very well and counting his blessings.

Jack Keinzley and Terry Transom have respectively undertaken to sort and suitably mount our large collection of photographs and newspaper cuttings relevant to the history of the Regiment and our Association.

George Stuart, our Otago Rep, reports that the Government have made a \$300,000 grant towards the restoration of a 6-in disappearing gun at Taiaroa Head, and the provision of tunnel access to it so the existing albatross colony will not be disturbed by visitors. The gun which was made by Sir William Armstrong c 1886 has no breech carrier or screw, and George is seeking drawings or a handbook to enable these



to be constructed. He is also seeking a 6-in shot or shell (empty!). If anyone can assist please get in touch with George at 39A Factory Rd, Mosgiel.

AUCKLAND SOCIAL 28 May 86: held at Takapuna RSA. Attendance was rather disappointing, but as usual an enjoyable time was had by all. Those present were: Allan and Elsie BOYD, Eric and Patti AUTRIDGE, Slim and Molly Cumming, Jack and Joan KEINZLEY, Terry and Joan TRANSON, Bill and Edna STOTT, John McMEIKEN, Dick and Lorma MITCHELL, Bill and Estelle MORLAND, Vic and Audrey MEYLE, Alf and Vicki SMITH, Cliff and Babs BRAGG, Wally and Ailsa RUFFELL, Harry ANDERSON and May WARD. Winners of the raffles were: Jack Keinzley, Vic Meyle, and Terry Transon. Someone left behind a plate; if it has not been recovered, Alf Smith has it. Phone 468 564.

CANTERBURY MEETING 17 June 86: Colin Young, our Canterbury/Westland/Nelson Rep, organised a highly successful and convivial meeting of in the Christchurch Central RSA at 1430 hrs, 17 June. After enquiries into the wellbeing of sick comrades and widows, and after having paid the usual tribute to departed members, the meeting considered future activities. Discussion centred round whether the meetings were to be continued (they are), the best time and day of the week, and what form they are to take. It was agreed that they be held on a week-day, and near the end of the year a formal or semi-formal dinner be held. The following members were present: Ian Trott, 'Wingnuts' Gordon-Glassford, N. Gregg, Dave Hughey, Did Hancock, Emil Jennings, Brian O'Connor, Sel Bryant, Del Delaney, Bill Dillon, Ray de la Cour, John Bingham, Ginna Hunter, Mac McMorran, Harry Fantham, Sel Catchpole, Colin Young. We wish them every success in the future.

ANNUAL REUNION: This will be held over the week-end 15-16 November 86. START PLANNING NOW. Accommodation at the Spa Hotel will be at a premium this year because management have demolished Rooms 1 to 7 to make way for increased bar/billiard room space. However, accommodation in Taupo in November is no problem. Those contemplating booking an Army motel should submit their application to reach Waiouru no later than 15 August 86. Application forms may be obtained from any Army Office or from Secretary, and should be submitted to Welfare Section, ATG, Waiouru, in accordance with directions on the back of the forms. Further details will be issued with the September newsletter.

ANOTHER NEW MEMBER: J43984 R. (Raymond) Oakes, 45 Grove Rd, Papakura.

THE PETARDIER first appeared on the artillery establishment in 1618. We know little of his early history, but in 1686 he was accorded the same pay and status as the Bombardier, first appointed the same year. Like the Bombardier he was a specialist, his specialty being the petard, a type of mine.

According to history the Huguenots invented the contrivance around 1589, but we strongly suspect one of Mr Heath Robinson's ancestors had a controlling interest! It was a bell-shaped container of brass or iron filled with gunpowder, closed by a wooden base, and initiated by a suitable length of safety fuze.

By exploding a petard against a door or section of wall of a castle or other work the Petardier hoped to demolish the same. To quote the old drill book '... a strong hook is to be screwed into the substance you intend to ruine, and upon the hooke hangs the wringle (ring) of the Petard, and likewise to be shored up with a strong forked Rest to stay the Reverse of it...' There follow directions for



filling and fuzing the petard, plus a final warning '... the Petardier must be careful to avoid the danger of her Reverse by retreating in a side line from from it! We can well imagine him invoking St Barbara as he lit the fuze!

Without being too technical, but knowing something of action and reaction, we can easily see that if the door etc proved too strong, instead of blowing a hole in it the petard became a projectile - to the extreme 'discomfort' of the Petardier who had not 'retired' far enough. Evidence that petards did in fact backfire comes down to us in the English expression still current 'hoist with his own petard.'

As use of the petard went out of fashion the duties of Petardier and Bombardier became interchangeable, so that eventually one had to go; the Bombardiers survived, while the Petardiers were 'wasted out.' After 1728 they ceased to be held on establishment.

## THE NEW ZEALAND PERMANENT FORCE OLD COMRADES ASSN

### A SHORT HISTORY

By W.L. Ruffell

### CHAPTER VIII

### THE ASSOCIATION POST-WAR

In Chapter VI we read of the demise of the Auckland Section in 1939, and that after World War II Wellington had become by mutual agreement the Headquarters of the Association, and the Wellington Section had assumed the running of it.

A Provincial Representative for Auckland was elected, followed in 1950 by representatives for Canterbury and Otago. However, as membership increased the arrangement became inadequate; more were elected, individual areas of responsibility reduced, and they were re-named District Representatives. To-day (1986), there are 14, from Whangarei to Invercargill, covering the following districts, camps, etc: Northland, Auckland and North Shore, South Auckland, 16 Fd Regt RNZA (Papakura), Thames/Coromandel, Hawke Bay/Taupo, Taranaki, Wanganui, Hutt Valley, Wellington, Canterbury/Westland/Nelson, 3 Fd Regt RNZA (Burnham), Otago, and Southland.

The new District Reps were elected Vice-Presidents, but at the same time it was decided that existing Vice-Presidents (who had no specific responsibilities), should retain their offices - provided they made the usual annual donation in addition to the prescribed subscription. If they failed to do so they were not re-elected! See also Chapter V.

With the end of the war came a significant increase in membership. Men who had resigned from the RNZA continued to be accepted as 'active' members, while those who continued to serve joined as 'honorary' members, but as both paid the same subscription - and Army Headquarters no longer objected to serving soldiers holding office - the distinction was eventually dropped. Both then became ordinary or paying members.

An honorary member is now a person who, while perhaps not qualifying for membership in the regular manner, has given valuable service to the Association over a number of years. He must be elected at an Annual General Meeting by a four-fifths majority of qualified members present. Honorary members are entitled to all the privileges of membership except the right to vote at meetings.

From 1949 any paying member who had rendered distinguished service



over an extended period could be elected to life membership, and the first so elected was No 775 Alex (Okey) Thomson, who had been Secretary of both Wellington Section and the national body since their formation. Regrettably Okey did not long enjoy the distinction for he died in 1950. At the same time it became customary to elect to life membership any paying member upon his attaining the age of 80 years.

In 1969 the Association approved the election as Associate members retired or serving soldiers of other Regular Force corps '... if during their service they have been attached to the RNZA (RF), or who have had a close affinity therewith' by a four-fifths majority of the Executive Committee. Associate membership is also offered to serving or retired regular soldiers of other Commonwealth countries on the same basis. Associate members have the same privileges as honorary members.

Neither honorary nor life members pay dues.

Finding cause for concern over the number of members who, owing to age, physical disability, remoteness of location, or other reasons were unable to attend reunions, in 1949 the Executive resolved to issue newsletters to ensure all were kept supplied with news of comrades as well as activities of the Association. While for various reasons few were published during the years immediately following, in more recent times they have appeared quarterly. In addition to recording news of members, changes of address, notices of reunions etc the newsletters include other items of Gunner interest, e.g. customs, traditions, and history of the Regiment. They have evinced many expressions of appreciation.

Faced with rising costs in the same year the Executive conducted a postal vote on the annual subscription i.e. whether it should remain at one shilling (10c), be raised to 2/6 (25c), or to 5/- (50c). Almost all members replied, 70% of the total strength of 265 voting for 2/6 (the amount required!), which remained in force until 1957 when it was increased to 5/-. As the pound and then the dollar decreased in real value, further increases became necessary: to \$1 in 1973, \$1-50 in 1976, \$2 in 1980, and \$2-50 in 1984. However, it is probably the lowest annual subscription of any similar organisation in the country.

As a matter of interest, one shilling in 1936 was equivalent to \$1-76 in 1983, while 2/6 in 1951 was equivalent to \$2-61 in 1983.

That the Association not only survives on low subscriptions rates but is also able to disburse funds to members suffering hardship is due in no small measure to the generosity of a small band of stalwarts who over the years have made substantial donations in addition to the prescribed dues. For their continued support we are all deeply grateful.

In 1954 the Association received a £50 grant from the Fort Dorset Sports Club funds, to which all RNZA stationed at the Fort prior to the war had contributed. The club's activities had been suspended and its funds frozen on the outbreak of hostilities as fit members of the Regiment were progressively seconded to 2NZEF, or posted to other localities. Making the grant was a thoughtful gesture by the authorities inheriting control of the funds, and was much appreciated by members. After all, it was their money.

A few of the moderns believe that the handouts called 'benefits' now available from the Social Welfare Department take care of all



cases of hardship, that the Old Comrades Association need no longer be concerned with the welfare of members, but should become a 'good-time' club, thus attracting soldiers or ex-soldiers of the younger generation. Like most minorities their outlook is 'one-eyed'; they seem to forget that young soldiers too eventually grow old - if they are lucky!

Despite the welfare state there is still a need for the Association to continue its present policy of giving assistance, as well as organising functions, reunions etc. Ever since the founding of the Association funds have been continually spent on welfare, and there is little doubt they will continue to be spent; for confirmation one has only to peruse the Treasurer's annual financial statements and balance sheets. Amounts are generally small, but occasionally there arises the need for more substantial assistance, as illustrated by the following recent examples:

'A' was a member in his eighties; he had given the best 31 years of his life to the service of the State, including active service in World War I, and was fast going blind. The most the state he had served so well would do was to book him into a public hospital which could not perform the operation necessary to restore his sight for three years, for the greater part of which he would have been totally blind. But a private hospital could operate without delay - for a very fat fee - to which the state would not contribute. To raise the 'A' sold his car, but the price he realised together with his savings was still some three hundred dollars short. The Association made up the difference.

Member 'B' had the back entrance to his home blocked by spoil from a slip on his section, but having been incapacitated by a stroke could not clear up the resulting mess himself. Neither the state, his insurance company, the local city council, the Army Welfare Fund, nor anyone else was prepared to assist. He was obliged to engage a local civilian contractor at over a thousand dollars (the lowest of three quotes), to do the job which made inroads on his savings he could ill afford. Not only was the Association able to ease his burden but it was instrumental in obtaining a grant from National Patriotic Funds (instituted during World War II and still in existence), through the local RSA.

We realise cash alone is not the complete answer; it should be complemented by the benefits of comradeship, the comradeship we claim to foster. To this end District Reps should endeavour to keep in touch with members, visit them when they are sick, bring them together for local reunions or social gatherings, generally '...Keep alive the old spirit ...' and not let them think they are forgotten as they grow old. At the same time we invite members who may be 'down on their luck' not to be too proud to let their District Reps, Secretary, or any other members of the Executive know the details, so that help can be arranged where possible.

We extend the same invitation to widows of members 'gone west.'

## CHAPTER IX

### LEST WE FORGET

Members of the New Zealand Permanent Force Old Comrades Association never fail to turn out in strength on Anzac Day, or



rather that part of it the nation now sees fit to set aside for remembering the fallen.

Some years ago one of our members, H.G.C. (Henry) Salt MBE, kindly made for our Headquarters in Takapuna a wreath of permanent materials featuring artificial laurel leaves surrounding a large hand-carved version of the Association's badge suitably coloured. This wreath together with wreaths from other organisations is laid at the foot of the memorial at Takapuna RSA where the Anzac Day service is held. It is usually laid by two members of the Executive.

Appropriately enough the most prominent portion of the memorial where the wreath is laid is a 25-pr gun which is maintained by members of the Association.

Our rules state that when individual members 'go west' we should endeavour to pay our last respects in the customary manner. However, fifty years ago the Executive took steps to ensure that in addition we should preserve a permanent record of those departed. It first took the form of an 'honours board' on which were inscribed the names of members who had died, and which was displayed at the Headquarters of the Association, at that time the Wellington RSA. The board was unveiled on 20 July 1938 by the late Major General G.B. Parkinson CBE DSO, then a Lieutenant Colonel holding the appointment of ~~Commander~~, Royal N.Z. Artillery.

But honours boards fill up, are extended or replaced, and tend to be relegated to a store-room or lost, so in 1952 the Executive decided an 'honours book' would be more fitting. Provided it was large enough a book would permit more detail to be recorded, would outlast a family of boards, and would be easily portable should the Headquarters move. Such a book was obtained the following year, and the names of the deceased on the existing boards entered into it together with brief details of their service. The book measures 19 x 13 x 13½ inches (48 x 33 x 9 cm), and weighs 22 lbs (10 kg), so it is unlikely to be easily lost or misplaced!

On the cover embossed in gold are the words 'In Memoriam,' the badge, and beneath that 'New Zealand Permanent Force Old Comrades Assn Inc.' In the book are recorded each deceased's regimental number, name, dates of birth (where known), enlistment, discharge or retirement, death, highest rank attained, plus any other relevant details e.g. decorations awarded. Inscriptions are made in a modern formal calligraphy expertly penned by Charles Cranmer BEM, one of our Associate Members. At reunions and Annual General Meetings the book lies open for perusal.

In 1964 Army sought donations towards a memorial window to be installed in St Paul's Cathedral, Wellington, and the Association gave £25 (\$50), with the proviso the amount be recorded as a grant in memory of Old Comrades of the Permanent Force.

The window was unveiled and dedicated on 9 August 1966, and a letter was received from the CGS thanking the Association for assisting in making the provision of the window possible.

About this time the Executive gave some thought to commemorating the members of the New Zealand Armed Constabulary who fell during the land wars of the nineteenth century. Few realise that between July 1868 and February 1870 alone no less than 64 AC Officers, NCOs and Constables were killed in action or died of wounds. Not for them the costly monuments of bronze and marble erected to the memory of men



who made the supreme sacrifice in later wars. Many still lay in lonely graves, some unmarked, others overgrown with scrub, identities lost through neglect or destruction by vandals, completely forgotten by the government and people they had served so well. The opportunity to do something presented itself in 1969.

In that year occurred the centenary of Taupo which a hundred years earlier was a strategic area during operations involving the AC in the central North Island. The Executive therefore proposed that a bronze plaque be erected at the Taupo Courthouse in memory of members of the AC Force who fell during the Land Wars. Approval from the Historic Places trust was duly obtained, the wording of the plaque to be:

'This tablet commemorates the 64 members of the Armed Constabulary who fell during the Wars of 1867-1872 and was erected in their memory by the New Zealand Permanent Force Old Comrades Association in 1969.'

Cast in relief on the top of the plaque were to be the badges of the N.Z. Armed Constabulary and the Royal N.Z. Artillery.

In the meantime the Taupo Borough Council suggested an alternate site for the plaque in the entrance hall of the new AC Baths project, a modern facility planned to replace the existing baths built on the site of the originals constructed by the AC over a century earlier. The plaque was unveiled on 24 January 1970, the date 1969 having been changed accordingly.

As the baths project had not been completed the plaque was temporarily attached to a large stone on the site. The actual unveiling by the Mayoress, assisted by Captain A.J. (Jack) Baigent MBE, then President of the Association, was the culminating point of the day's celebrations which included a Taupo Centennial Procession featuring troops in period uniforms, an RF Cadet Guard of Honour, and members of the Old Comrades Association. In a speech to mark the occasion Captain Baigent referred to the connection between the AC and the Old Comrades Association, and the tribute paid to the latter by the playing of the march 'Old Comrades' by the massed bands at the commencement of the ceremony. Upon returning to Taupo members of the Association were royally entertained in the Borough Council chambers by members of the Council.

At every annual reunion Old Comrades who have 'passed beyond the veil' are remembered at a Church Parade. Since 1976 annual reunions have been held at Taupo, while divine service, at first conducted by our Padre at the Opepe Military Cemetery (on the Taupo-Napier road), is now conducted in the lounge of the Spa Hotel, on the site of the original Armed Constabulary Depot in Taupo. The lounge is actually a Maori meeting house, itself of great historical interest. More on reunions and the Taupo story will appear in ensuing chapters.

To be continued.

ANOTHER NEW MEMBER: 1582 Lt Col P.M. (Phil) Barclay, 106 Scenic Drive, Titirangi, Auckland 7.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: Please remit to Secretary, Box 33 710, Takapuna, Auckland 9, at your earliest opportunity. Receipts will be enclosed with the next newsletter. Subscriptions will probably be increased at the AGM in November, but subs paid in advance NOW will be credited at the present rate, To be financial to 31 Dec 86 you owe us \$ 2.50

Best regards,

Wally Ruffell