



Incorporated

NEW ZEALAND PERMANENT FORCE OLD COMRADES ASSOCIATION

PO BOX 33 710, TAKAPUNA, AUCKLAND 1309

NEWSLETTER No 96

December 1997

A Registered Publication

SEASONS GREETINGS: Our President and Executive extend to all members best wishes for the festive season and a Happy New Year.

LAST POST:

1586 E.J. (Eddie) Ryan, 29 May 97, at Auckland (Life Member).  
1859 G.J. (Gordon) Thomas, Sep 97, at Levin (Life Member).  
327625 I.M. (Mervyn) Hammond, 21 Oct 97, at Auckland.  
345674 B.M. (Ben) Minhinick, 8 Nov 97, at Auckland.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS:

HG Bigg-Wither to RD4, Kaitaia 0500.  
Lt Col WBF McAllum to 8/9 Burgess St, Sumner, Christchurch 8.  
CJ McIsaac to 1/3 Tavistock Av, Papatoetoe.  
HGC Salt MBE to c/o WJ Salt, 13 Henry St, Ringwood, Melbourne, VIC 3134.  
Major RG Stephens to PDC, St Arnand 7150.

GONE NO ADDRESS:

PREVIOUS ADDRESS

AH Bissett	119 St Martins Rd, Christchurch 2.
Lt Col JL Castell	19 Weir Tce, Waiouru.
Capt JE Fitzgerald	32 Chapman St, Invercargill.
WO2 KC Solomon	12 Taiping Tce, Linton MC.

Anyone knowing new locations please inform Secretary.

NEW MEMBERS:

1240 W. (William) McKenzie, 86 Churchill Rd, Mairangi Bay, Auckland 10.  
Mrs DM (Dawn) Nicholson, 147 Victoria Rd, Devonport, Auck. 9 (Assoc.)

LIFE MEMBERSHIP:

When members reach the age of 80 years they automatically become Life Members and no longer need to pay the annual subscription. However, we do not have birth dates for all members. Therefore, if you have turned 80 but we are still charging you \$5 per annum PLEASE LET US KNOW!

COMMITTEE MEETING:

The next Committee Meeting will be held in the Board Room, Papakura RSA, Elliott St, Papakura, at 1000 hrs Saturday 14 Feb 98. Any member who is interested may attend.

ST BARBARAS DAY SOCIAL:

but

St Barbara's Day falls on 4 December, we have to vary the day of celebration according to the availability of premises. This year it will be celebrated at the Papakura RSA on Saturday 13 Dec 97 commencing at 1100 hrs. It is essential those attending inform Secretary (Jim Ross) on 09/416 8662 no later than 6 Dec 97.



SOCIALS ETC IN OTHER DISTRICTS: We realise that the greater numbers of members resident in the Auckland area favour the holding of social functions there, while the fewer numbers in other districts do not. We are therefore prepared to assist Reps in districts north or south of Auckland who wish to organise such functions. Contact Secretary.

GUNNERS DAY LADIES DINING-IN: Following the outstanding success of the dinner held in the Papakura RSA on 26 May 97 another is planned for 26 May 98, probably under the auspices of the NZPFOCA. Watch the March newsletter for further details.

PRESIDENTS REPORT FOR 1996-97 delivered at AGM: "Gentlemen, I would like to thank you all for making the effort to come to the 1997 AGM.

First, I would like to thank the District Reps for their efforts, especially those who have kept in touch with the members who are less mobile than the rest of us.

Membership is currently a worry. Although Wally and Jeff Waters did a big push, press-ganging 27 new members in one month our membership is still decreasing steadily. It currently stands at Associates 46, Life 40, Honorary 5, Ordinary 271, making a total of 362.

The last meeting in Auckland was held in the Papakura RSA. We did this to try and increase the number of members attending. This did not work. We will continue to have them in the Birkenhead RSA if after a trial period there is no change to attendance.

Before I close I would like to thank Des O'Connor for his effort and time as Treasurer, 21 years in all. I would like to thank Wally Ruffell who served as Secretary for 13 years. Without this champion effort by these two gentlemen I do not know where the Association would be. On behalf of the Association, Gentlemen I thank you."

(Sgd) I.S. Foster.

Reports were also received from District Reps as follows: Joe Hanvey (Auckland/N. Shore), Jeff Waters (S. Auckland), Jim Gilberd (Bay of Plenty/Hawkes Bay), Angus Rivers (Wanganui/Manawatu) and Roger Newth (Wellington/Marlborough).

Secretary to be Major J. McL. (Jim) Ross, 143 Kauri Rd, Whenuapai, Phone 09/416 8662, Treasurer to be Mr D. (Barney) Harrop, 2B Wolseley Ave, Milford, Auckland 1309, Phone 09/410 3702.

Executive were re-elected except HGC Salt MBE who has moved to Australia. Annual subscription and Secretary's honorarium to remain as for 1996-97.

Apologies were received from 63 members. Names will accompany minutes at next AGM.

REUNION DINNER: Our Guest of Honour this year was the Mayor of Taupo. Mrs Joan Williamson. In addition the following attended: Doug Adams, 'Tommy' Atkins, Sel Bryant, Tom Chapman, Matt Crawley, Ian Foster, Leroy Forrester, Jim Gilberd, Bill and Emma Giles, Ron and 'Mike' Hassett, Joe Hanvey and friend, Terry Hughes, Jack Kearney, Bob and Betty Kerslake, Frank and Denise Lupo, Vic and Audrey Meyle, Bill Morland, Neil and Helen McMahon, George and Patti Miln, Roger Newth, Des and Buntie O'Connor, Bill and Joyce Powrie, Dave and Marie Roberts, Jim and Ruby Ross, Wally Ruffell, Rupert and Joyce Robinson, Bill and Ruth Thornton, Jock Taylor, Tony Tustin, Roger and Jean Wylde, Jeff Waters. Unfortunately Bill and Tui McLeay could not be with us as they had both been badly injured in a motor accident prior to the reunion which put Tui in hospital. We sincerely hope you are now fully recovered Tui. Bill and Jasmine Beveridge also missed the dinner because Bill became ill and had to go to hospital. We hope you are now well, Bill. Angus Rivers attended the AGM but could not make it to the dinner. Better luck next time, Angus.



TOAST TO THE REGIMENT: By Leroy Forrester.

Mr President, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

During the last two years, since we last saw each other, the RNZA has had some dealings with the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF).

The SAF is a well-equipped organisation that can boast some of the most modern pieces of equipment in the region. In July of 96, 163 Bty, 16 Fd Regt, went to Singapore and trained on the SAF FH2000 155-mm Gun. The FH2000 is a state of the art gun that was the first 52-calibre towed gun in operational service anywhere in the world. It weighs some 12 tonnes and when connected to its prime mover it measures some 22 metres in length. In a short time they had mastered the gun and were smashing the SAF times for getting the gun into and out of action. They displayed the Kiwi gunner ability <sup>of</sup> having a good gunnery foundation, to learn and master new pieces of equipment with very little difficulty.

This contact has made me realise that no matter how well equipped a defence force is, it is only as good as the people who operate that equipment.

With that in mind you can find the REGIMENT in good form.

Please charge your glasses and be upstanding for the toast to The Regiment.

REPLY: By Jim Ross.

Mr President, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

Thank you for honouring the toast to the Royal Regiment of N.Z. Artillery, and to Leroy for the manner in which he proposed it. We are grateful to him, as a serving soldier, for giving us the benefit of his recent experience and knowledge of technical developments under way in the field of gunnery.

It is fitting that we consider the health of the regiment, which appears at the moment to be at a low ebb. The whole Defence Force has suffered from diminishing resources for some years now, and this has most severely affected the artillery branch.

The basic cause of this decline is faulty defence policy.

For example, we no longer have a Defence Department, but a Defence Force on one hand and a Ministry of Defence on the other. The Force comprises the Army, Navy and Air Force, and has a Mission Statement remarkable on two counts. Firstly, it does NOT mention "Defending" anything. Secondly, the only military aim it lays down is "To deal with small contingencies affecting NZ and its region." Note the "small contingencies."

The Ministry, on the other hand, is the policy-making body, and is staffed by civilian officials with no apparent credentials for this role. Its Mission Statement lays down its purpose as being to "provide high quality advice and make available resources," i.e. advise and procure, the role of the procurer (to use a polite term) through the ages.

This is NO way to obtain effective defence.

No wonder the Minister, the Hon. Paul East, was reported recently as saying, "We might find ourselves reinventing departments that we extracted from the public service with much effort and anguish only a few years ago." I agree with him, he will be glad to hear, and the sooner he gets on with it the better.

Well, what's wrong with current policy?

It is based on four fallacies. The first is that there is "no threat." This seems fair enough, but carries with it the unspoken rider "and there is never going to be any." We all hope this is true, but it is inexcusably reckless to gamble the future of NZ on it, when the nations of the Asia Pacific region, in the main, are subject to tremendous pressures of population and poverty, and are armed to the teeth.



our field regiment would be completely outranged. Without hope of retaliation, those light guns would be blown to smithereens, and their detachments with them.

But, we have none of this equipment, and the reason is not far to seek. NZ has opted for a light infantry army because:

Fire power is pricey; manpower is cheap.

I may have been too gloomy. NZ has a uniquely Kiwi secret weapon, of which you won't find mention in the media. It is the taiaha. As you know, this is similar to a pick handle, but lighter. I am not joking, but will quote from an annual report of the Defence Force:

"Soldiers continue to undergo taiaha training in traditional Maori close-quarter combat technique."

Now mind that the Maori in the 19th century had the wits to lay aside their taiaha when they could lay hands on muskets. Taiahas! Words fail me, you'll be glad to know.

To summarise, then:

- (a) NZ needs a cohesive Defence Department.
- (b) NZ deserves a defence policy which does NOT depend on self-indulgent self-deluding fallacies.
- (d) NZ needs more guns!

What can we do about it? Spread the word, lobby the Government, and in particular tackle your MPs and see if they can understand the risks of neglecting defence. When danger is imminent (which is likely within 5 to 10 years, and certain within 20) New Zealanders will be HORRIBLY surprised to find their Army is an under-gunned political toy.

AN UNDER-GUNNED POLITICAL TOY.

When day dawns, they may well say'

"Where are those old gunners?

We spent a lot of money training the ruffians

They should have warned us - why didn't they?

We don't want this to happen do we? That's all I have for you folks.

"O be joyful in the Lord.

May God defend New Zealand."

PATRON: Omitted from section on election of Officers above. Our present Patron, General Ron Hassett, was re-elected for another term.

CHURCH PARADE: Held in the historic meeting house, Tiki o te Tamamutu, the parade was very well attended. Our thanks, as well as our admiration, go to our Padre, Rev. Bill McLeay, who conducted the service despite a badly injured collar bone. We missed his good lady, Tui, who so ably leads the singing.

ONE FOR THE ROAD: Drinks for this part of the reunion were purchased with the proceeds of the raffle for the model gun. They were enjoyed especially by those who stayed the Sunday night and made a 'real' week-end of the reunion.

TRANSPORT: Members who stayed at the Spa Hotel or the Army Leave Centre at Acacia Bay were transported to and from the RSA and Yacht Club during the reunion so had no need to worry about driving over the limit.

NEWS FROM MEMBERS: Paul Galloway is attending a course at the Royal Canadian Artillery School and will be returning to New Zealand in July 1998. His address is: 11 Restigouche Rd, Oromocto, New Brunswick E2V 1T6, Canada.



A long letter from Daphne and Fred (Zig) Schroder describes their ups and downs with operations etc but that they are both now OK. Although they both like living in Aussie they still have a soft spot for NZ - and greatly enjoyed seeing the All Blacks beat the Wallabies. But Daphne says they daren't voice their opinions - or they would be told to get back to NZ! Their address is: 2/21 Diggers Beach Rd, Coffs Harbour, NSW 2450.

Roger Wylde, 1/13 Ranfurly St, Upper Hutt, is busy making models of 19th century artillery pieces.

Joe Panoho's photo featured in a local paper of 11 Sep 97 at a presentation of silver General Service Medals by Major General Les Pearce to soldiers who had served in Malaya during the 1960s - medals for which they had been waiting over 30 years! Unfortunately our copies would not reproduce the photo well enough for the newsletter. Our best wishes, Joe. His address is 8 Beeche Place, North Shore City.5

Bob Harris, 3/3 Teloepa St, Booker Bay, NSW 2257, could not attend our reunion owing to his having to undergo an operation for the removal of cataracts, but hopes to make it in 1998.

Red Potts, prompted by our remarks about servicemen building leave centres with money earned by serving as 'wharfies' in 1951, writes: "As I mentioned to you on the phone, we recently returned from a visit to Queensland where I had a good yarn with Dan Foley who seems most content with life on the Sunshine Coast. He asked me to pass on his greetings to everyone back here, as did Margaret Pollard who sent her regards to all her and Darcy's friends on the Shore. She is busy with her bowls, like most of the local population it appears, although Dan has become involved with the Coastguard which I thought very apt for an old 4-star RNZA Coxswain.

Your comments on the '51 Wharf Strike reminded me of a little incident on the Auckland wharf, when I was a young L Bdr from Papakura. We were quartered at North Head and taken across to Auckland each day on a Naval Liberty Boat. I was a member of the gang led by Harry Anderson, the "Dally from Dargaville," and one of our early tasks was to load butter on the Port Auckland. The 56-lb cartons of frozen butter were brought each morning by rail from Westfield, about 24 waggon loads on the first day. We soon got into the swing of things, and had the whole lot stowed in the hold by 3 pm, which left us hanging about for the Liberty Boat to leave at knock-off time.

The next day we arrived to find about 30 waggons waiting for us some sort of compliment I suppose, since the wharfies only loaded about a dozen a day. We finished that day rather weary but just in time to catch our boat back to North Head. Harry informed the powers that be that the quantity now seemed to be about right, but the following day there were 34 waggons waiting for us, together with the news that we'd have to load it all, because they couldn't schedule a train to rail any back to Westfield!

To our astonishment, the Dally ordered a "Go Slow," and we spent the day being told to take smoko breaks upstairs, not to work together so well, and to move slowly in case we hurt ourselves. The shipowner reps, stevedores and port authorities were beside themselves, while our officers studiously avoided interfering in any way. The Dally remained calm and unruffled in his wise old way. At day's end there were about a dozen full waggons left on the wharf, and frantic efforts were being made to get Railways to take them back to the freezing works.

For the remainder of that job on the Port Auckland we found 28 waggons of butter waiting for us each morning. The irony of strike-breakers taking industrial action caused great merriment around the wharves, and I remember thinking that perhaps the wharfies might not have been entirely responsible for all the troubles on the waterfront..

Reds address is: "Wharemoana," 4A North Ave, Devonport.



Bill Beveridge came to Taupo but became ill before he was able to take part in reunion activities and was taken to hospital. We sincerely hope you have now recovered, Bill.

At time of writing Blackie Burns was in Italy visiting people who hid him after his escape from a POW camp during World War 2. He was accompanied by his daughter who acted as interpreter.

Eric Autridge and Les Wilson have both been 'in the wars' owing to accidents and have both suffered short spells in hospital. They are now on the mend.

CHANGE IN THE ASSOCIATION ADDRESS: Following the election of new Secretary and Treasurer the postal address of the Association from 1 Jan 98 will be: PO Box 79 371, Royal Heights, Massey, Auckland.

### THE GUN

Continued from Newsletter 95

By Wally Ruffell



A: Standard



B:  
Stream-  
lined



C: Armour-piercing

Fig. 83: Whitworth projectiles

Although Whitworth amply demonstrated the advantages of a streamlined projectile during the 1860s the idea was not taken up for another 60 or 70 years. Why this was so is hard to understand.

In trials against armour he demonstrated that the shot shaped like a punch (Fig. 83C) was the most effective for the purpose. The principle still holds good, but of course modern projectiles are fitted with ballistic caps to reduce air resistance.

The calibre of Whitworth projectiles was measured across two opposite flats.

The precision of their manufacture was probably the chief reason why his guns did not become popular. Projectiles were very accurately planed to shape, a more difficult process than turning, and fitted the bores extremely closely. Obviously neither bores nor projectiles were suited to mass production. Furthermore reports from America indicated bores had to be kept scrupulously clean at all times, not always possible on the battlefield, otherwise projectiles were inclined to jam.

Whitworth's system applied to small arms worked very well as already shown. Some of his rifles found their way to New Zealand and examples may be seen in the Army Memorial Museum, Waiouru. Outwardly they closely resemble the Pattern 1853 Enfield.

THE ARMSTRONG GUN: As his system was initially adopted in 1858 'for special service in the field,' at first Armstrong produced the smaller



[illegible]

A schematic diagram of a vent-piece assembly. On the left, a hatched area represents the main body, with a vertical section labeled "Vent-piece". This section is connected to a horizontal section labeled "Bore". The connection point is labeled "Breech Plug". Above the breech plug, a small vertical tube is labeled "'A' tube". The bore section is filled with horizontal lines.

The term 'RBL' was given to Armstrong guns in later years to distinguish them from the 'BL' types introduced from 1880.

ORDNANCE: The gun was of 'built-up' construction consisting of an 'A' tube comprising the bore over which were shrunk a breech piece, trunnion ring, and smaller tubes as shown in the drawing. Material was wrought iron.

Rifling was a well-designed poly-groove 'hook section' type as shown in Fig. 84D. It consisted of 38 grooves with a uniform twist of one turn in 38 calibres. Calibre was 3-inch (76.2 mm).

A feature usually associated with World War 2 guns was its 'squeeze bore' which Armstrong called a 'grip.' The last six inches of the bore at the muzzle was slightly reduced in diameter, the purpose being to ensure precise centring of the projectile before it left the gun. At the same time it swaged down the lead sheathing slightly reducing the diameter and thus improving its ballistic shape.

To be continued.