



The New Zealand Gunner

Official Journal of the

Royal New Zealand Artillery Association (Inc)

Founded 1934

Issue # 164

Dated December 2014

1. **PRESIDENTS REPORT**

Firstly, a big congratulations and thanks to David Weston and his team for organising a memorable reunion in Wellington. It was hugely successful in bringing the Wellington gunners together, and to have over one hundred guests sit down for dinner was a credit to the organisers. Our special thanks also go to Maj Gen Dave Gawn MBE, the Chief of Army, for proposing the toast to the Royal Regiment; his presence certainly gave the event dignity and status.

It was an honour to be able to present 'Life Membership' Certificates to our two new Life Members; Col (Rtd) Peter Hanson, and Mr Bob Kerslake. Both of these gentlemen had distinguished careers as gunners and have actively continued to support the Association in the years since they retired. It was also very special to be able to share in the 60th wedding anniversary of Bob and Betty at the dinner. We wish them well for their second 60 years together.

It was also an honour to be able to present the 'RNZA Association Trophy' for the fourth time, on this occasion to Bdr Rikki Simmonds. This trophy was presented for the first time in 2011 and is for that gunner (of any rank) who has best displayed the character and qualities expected of a gunner, during the previous year. Bdr Simmonds's citation is later in the newsletter, and I not only congratulate him for his past effort, but also wish him well for his future career in the RNZA.

The dinner was a very enjoyable occasion, punctuated with great speeches from a variety of speakers, ably lead by the witty repartee of the Dining-President Ron Turner. A big thank you to all those who spoke for making the evening so entertaining; a memorable occasion.

May I also make mention of Padre David Bahler for the very warm and moving service in the 'Ladies Chapel' of the Wellington Cathedral. Prayers and readings by different members of the Assn make this a very special service. So on behalf of all members, not just those who were fortunate enough to get to the reunion, thanks to the two Davids, David W and David B, for your hard work in producing a great weekend.

And so on to the next year. Your executive

committee is smaller this year, but these office holders have all been on the committee for at least a year (in some cases up to 5 years) and so there is some real continuity in the development of the Association. Our intention in the coming year is to continue to try to reconnect with gunners who have served over the past 40 years, and further develop the links with the serving soldiers, and how we plan to do this is by 'pushing' the activities which are already in place; more on this in the next newsletter.

May I wish all fellow gunners and your families a very Merry Xmas and a Happy New Year.

Ubique. Tony McLeod, President RNZA Assn

September 2014 Update:

Hugh **OAKLEY-BROWNE** was on the same 3* Bty Syv Course as me in 1963 having just done a National Service intake at the end of 1962 His Corp was RNZA one of a handful on that course still above ground, he then went off to PORTSEA and graduated into RNZIR. None of our instructors are above ground although the CI Col Don Kenning is.

UBIQUE. Brian Meyer

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2. LAST POST

4216544 **BOOT** Capt Leonard (Murray), Capt, ED RNZA (TF) Passed away at Ernest Rutherford Rest Home on 6 Dec 2014, aged 93 years. Father of Major John Boot RNZA ex 22(D) Bty and 3 Fd Regt

602254 **CARR**, Paul Kimiora (Truck), Gnr, RNZIR/RNZA, Toured SVN with 161 Fd Bty in 1966 and 1968 (No 2 Gun). Died peacefully at home in Wellington on 13 November 2014 in his 70th year.

816735/206174 **HOLTHAM**, Arthur James (Jim, Cobber) RNZA. BCOF Japan, and 162 Bty K Force. Passed away on 3 December 2014 at Palmerston North Hospital, in his 88th year.

286606 **O'SULLIVAN** William James (Bill) Gnr, RNZA. 4 Fd Regt 2 NZEF. Passed away peacefully on 25 October 2014 at Wellington, aged 93 years.

350648 **PANOHO** Hohepa Joseph (Joe), RNZA. 1NZ Regt 1961-63 Malaya, and 161 Bty SVN 1966 on No 3 Gun. Joe passed away on Monday 20 October 2014 at the North Shore Hospital,

436230 **RYAN** Terence Peter (Terry) Gnr, RNZA. 4 Fd Regt 2NZEF. Passed away peacefully on 30 October 2014 at the Home of Compassion Heretaunga.

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

3. COL COMDT RNZA REPORTS IN

Firstly, Christmas greetings to all members of the Royal New Zealand Artillery Association, and to all gunners and their families. I wish you all a relaxing and enjoyable festive season break and an outstanding 2015. This last year has been a good one for the gunner fraternity and next year has the makings for an even better 12 months.

Activities

The first gunner event, in early October, was the Cordite Cup, the multisport competitive event between the Artillery and Armoured Corps of the New Zealand Army. Once again, the Gunners won. After losing the first event, they romped to a 4-1 victory. Well done the Gunners.

On the 11th October 161 Battery exercised the Charter held by 16 Field Regiment in Raglan. There was a very good turnout of 161 Battery old timers and Vietnam veterans and families to support the Battery for the parade, sports, and social events around the occasion. The weather was superb, the crowd was good and all in all it was a successful

weekend.

On 24th October the Regular Force Staff Sergeants course finished in Linton after a long and arduous coursing period covering all of the trades in the RNZA. This is the most technical of all the courses run by the School of Artillery and prepares NCOs for senior regimental and trade leadership positions. Congratulations to the group that graduated from this program. The RNZA is well served by the work of the School of Artillery and the School continues to produce well rounded and well-trained students. The rounding particularly is the hallmark of the RNZA.

The November highlight was the RNZA Association reunion in Wellington. Others will have written about this in the Newsletter. Suffice to say it was an outstanding weekend with a good mix of long-standing Association members, more recent gunners, and Regular Force. The Wellington organising committee did a great job. I am sure everyone had an enjoyable, relaxing and stimulating weekend, catching up with old and new friends.

On Armistice Day I laid a wreath on behalf of all ranks RNZA at the commemoration service at the Auckland War Memorial Museum.

The Band of the RNZA had also performed at a Memorial Service on Remembrance Sunday at St Matthew's-in-the-City Auckland.

In mid November the Band of the RNZA had their annual Morning Melodies concert at the Bruce Mason centre in Takapuna. The show was a sell-out and the Band did the Regiment proud with an entertaining and enjoyable stage performance in front of more than 1000 people. The Band continue their tradition of representing the Army and particularly the Artillery to the people of Auckland. They do an outstanding job for us.

In early December I attended the Corps Review Board over a couple of days in Linton followed by a Regimental Formal Dinner. The Corps Review Board sets gunner policies and processes, and provides guidance and direction on future activities, equipment, training and planning. It provides a forum where these matters can be rigorously discussed and then agreed.

The Regimental Dinner is attended by all officers and senior NCOs and I am sure a good night was had by all; I certainly enjoyed it. There were a number of presentations, including 20 year certificates.

This last week has been mostly social, with Regimental Sports Day and family barbecue in Linton mid week, and the 11/4 Battery stables and family Christmas barbecue in Auckland. At the 11/4 Battery function there were a number of post-training course presentations, promotions and Battery awards.

The Standish Medals

Unfortunately we were beaten to the purchase of the Standish medals. They have gone to a private collector in New Zealand and we have first right of refusal if they come up for sale again. The collection money which was raised from the gunner fraternity has been set aside in the Association accounts for the Heritage Trust to use to purchase medals they may want in the future.

While we are on medals, the Heritage Trust is to be gifted the medals of Sgt Reg Reid MM, who was Pronto 162 Battery with 16 Field Regiment in Korea and was killed in action earning his Military Medal while he was laying line behind a Canadian position under severe attack by the Chinese. These will eventually be displayed in the Regiment.

Additionally, 5 RAR in Darwin have asked that we provide a framed photo and medals of the late Captain Peter Williams who was killed in action with the Battalion in Vietnam in 1966. The Battalion regards Peter as one of theirs and wish to display his portrait with all those of the Battalion who have been killed in action over the years.

Next Year

2015 is an historically important year for the nation and for the guns, with the hundredth anniversary of the Anzac landings. There will be a range of activities that the Regiment will be involved with and we should all look to support any of the World War I or Regimental activities that occur in our areas. The Association Web Page will keep you up-to-date with locations and activities.

The main Association activities will be the midyear Exercise Ben Cat in Waiouru and the November reunion in Christchurch. The Association will also provide any necessary support to the reunion 14 – 16 July in Linton for veterans who served with 161 Battery in Vietnam.

Finally

16 Field Regiment is in good shape and has had a very busy year. They have developed and practised new tactical skills and procedures at the battle group level, and live fired from an air mobile lift into a gun position. They continue to develop skills and procedures that will enhance the gunner ability to support a deployed force.

Equally the Association is going from strength to strength, as is the Band of the RNZA. The gunners are well served by all those involved.

Have a very good Christmas. Best wishes to you all and to your families. We will see you in the new year.

Ubique. Barry Dreyer. Col Comdt RNZA

4. 2014 RNZA ASSN REUNION AND AGM

A. PRESIDENTS REPORT

This year has seen further **consolidation of the changes** that we made to our Constitution in November 2012, when full membership was opened to all those who have served as a gunner for more than 3 months, and subscriptions for Full Members were scrubbed, the member being deemed to have paid his or her dues to the RNZA Association by virtue of their service to the RNZA. This important change to our structure has led to the requirement to connect (and reconnect) with a wider grouping of gunners than ever before, and I think we are making slow, but steady, progress.

Membership.

There have been **43 new members** register through our website during the year, and our registered membership stands at around 450 Full Members, although only about 110 of those old members have 'registered' their membership via the new website. Our list of names of those eligible for Full Membership stands at about 650.

Honorary/Life Membership. In the 2012 amendments to the Constitution we addressed the wording of our membership categories, in particular the 'Honorary Member' and 'Life Member' Categories. This has led to the awarding of 'Life Membership' status to eight of our senior members in 2012 and 2013, and to two members this year, in recognition of their distinguished careers as gunners and their continued support of the Association over the past 30 years. This years new 'Life Members' are Col (Rtd) Peter Hanson and Mr Bob Kerslake. (I would ask you to put your hands together to congratulate these members on their selection to 'Life Membership' status.

Activities. The Association was involved in or represented at the following activities through the year;

ANZAC Day; The 'Wreaths on ANZAC Day' initiative was continued for its 3rd year this year; the aim of this is to rejuvenate gunner networks at the 'local' level, with the Association paying for wreaths where 5 or more gunners are assembled (and photographed) in one location.

Gunners Day; This day was celebrated with dinners in Papakura, Wellington and Christchurch. I would like to thank the organisers of the various celebrations held on Gunners Day throughout the country, as this event (other than funerals) really does unite us in our common bond of service to the Royal Regt of NZ Artillery.

RNZA Assn 80th Birthday. This event was celebrated with a photo of 26 members taken outside the location of the inaugural meeting on 10 July 1934. (Masonic Hall, Devonport, Auckland). It was followed with a morning tea at the Devonport RSA.

Australian Artillery Association inaugural 'National Dinner' held in Coloundra, Qld, 23 Aug 2014. Ten of our NZ members attended this spectacular event and the President presented the Aust Arty Assn with a memento to honour this occasion. Congratulations to the Australian Artillery Assn

President and Secretary (Kim McGrath and Graham Hampton) on a great event.

Exercise Ben Cat on ..Sep was once again a brilliant occasion. I wish to thank the CO, Lt Col Andy Shaw and his staff sincerely for their hosting of this event; to me it is one of the most important (and most interesting) events in our Association Calendar, the opportunity for old to meet current in the `work environment` which binds us together.

A Battery 150th Commemoration, held in Auckland on Sat 27 Sept 14 celebrated 150 years of Artillery in Auckland. Congratulations and thanks to Greg Thwaite, Peter Fraser, Colin Jansen for their efforts.

Support (Welfare)

VANZ. Code of Veterans Rights. Two submissions were made to the Chief of Defence on behalf of the RNZA Assn in October 14 (Greg Thwaite and David Weston), and I will ask Greg Thwaite to address this matter later in the meeting.

Support Advisers. I would also like to thank our support advisers Peter Miles, Lindsay Skinner and Pat Duggan. Their ongoing willingness to help is very appreciated, as their expertise is available to all members to help with advise on pension and other support matters.

Minor Support Initiative. Cards (and a small gift) were again sent to our members serving overseas at Xmas time (the 3rd year) and this small gesture will continue this year.

Donations. I would like to thank all those members who made donations to the Association through the year (predominantly members making a donation in lieu of the previous annual subscription), and in particular Peter Hanson for underwriting the website enhancement.

District Coordinators. I would like to thank our District Coordinators for the part they have played in keeping the Association alive throughout the country; Graeme Black (Waikato, VN Vets and heaps of other groups), Danny and Bernie McCort (BoP and Vietnam vets), Tom Roche (Central), David Weston (Wellington and RNZRSA Rep), Skin Frances (Christchurch), and Chris Diedrichs/Al Martin (Dunedin). Special thanks to David Weston and his team from Wellington who have organised this great weekend. Many thanks to you all.

Media

Website. Our new website was launched in October 2012, and in March of this year we made enhancements which amended the format, simplified the on-line membership registration process, updated the membership list and allowed for on-line registration for functions (unfortunately this last enhancement has not yet been made functional). I would like to thank Skin Frances for taking on the job of webmaster; this is a critical role in the functioning of the Assn.

Newsletter. We made the decision to continue the quarterly `NZ Gunner` in its current form, even though it is now sent out by email to all but about 10 recipients (by snail-mail). These members are mainly the WW2 group in Auckland. If you know of any older members who are not computer savvy and would like a newsletter, please let the secretary know; a \$20 sub to be paid by the

recipient, or a kindly benefactor would also be appreciated. Our ongoing thanks go to Marie Roberts for editing this newsletter. I think the latest September edition reflects the direction the Association is heading, with articles and photos from WW2 Vets, through to articles and photos from three of our serving personnel. Thanks to the article contributors.

Facebook. Many thanks to Colin Jansen who keeps a lively discussion going on our Facebook page. This is another critical `tool` for the Association, and Colin's contribution is to be commended.

Executive Committee.

I would like to thank our Col Comdt, Col Barry Dreyer for his continued help and enthusiasm in all aspects of the Associations activities.

Lastly but by no means least, I would like to thank your elected committee, who meet every two months and whose hard work goes largely unnoticed, but without whom the wheels of the Association would stop turning. So special thanks to Greg Thwaite (our Vice President), Bernie McCort (our Secretary/Treasurer/Chief Clerk), Skin Frances (our webmaster/blogmaster), Colin Jansen (our very enthusiastic Facebook Manager and Quartermaster), Peter Fraser, Peter Miles (Support), Kemp Solomon, Ken Davie, Andrew Donnellan

``He kitenga kanohi, he hokinga whakaaro- To see a face is to stir the memory``.

Tony McLeod, Pres RNZAA, 8 November 2014.

Regional Representation , Manawatu

We are pleased to be able to advise everyone that WO1 (Rtd) Steve Harvey has agreed to assist Tom Roache as a Regional Rep for the Palmerston North area. Steve is an ex RSM of 16 Fd Regt who has now retired in the area, and he and Tom will be working to strengthen the links between the Association and the serving gunners. So for those ex gunners living in the Manawatu, please ensure Steve has your email contact details, and we will try to provide more opportunities for you to engage with the Regimental personnel in Linton.

Tony Mc Leod, President RNZA Assn



B. RNZA Assn 2014 FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS

The Royal New Zealand Artillery Association Inc
Statement of Financial Performance and Financial Position
For Financial Year 1 October 2013 -30 September 2014

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

<u>Income</u>	<u>Last Year</u>	<u>This Year YTD</u>
Subscriptions	\$ 295.32	\$ -
Q.Store Sales	\$ 1,087.50	\$ 5,583.79
Donations(subs)	\$ 2,370.00	\$ 2,700.00
Reunion (12 and 13)	\$ 5,277.00	\$ -
Reunion 13	\$ 6,995.00	\$ 657.00
Reunion 14	\$ -	\$ 6,953.00
Interest Received	\$ 839.47	\$ 885.09
Newsletter	\$ 160.00	\$ -
Special Fund;G Greening	\$ 2,280.00	\$ -
Sundry	\$ -	\$ -
Total	\$ 19,304.29	\$ 16,778.88

Expenditure

Honoraria	\$ -	\$ 750.00
Newsletter	\$ 508.60	\$ -
Q.Store Purchases	\$ 435.27	\$ 4,944.40
Reunions (12 and 13)	\$ 3,494.90	\$ -
Reunion 13	\$ -	\$ 5,347.53
Reunion 14	\$ -	\$ 800.00
Bank Fees	\$ 23.50	\$ 27.15
Web Costs	\$ 1,842.10	\$ 1,451.16
Affiliation Fees	\$ 115.00	\$ 158.61
Wreaths	\$ 288.00	\$ 168.85
Spec Fund G Greening	\$ 2,780.00	\$ -
Donations	\$ 10.00	\$ -
RNZA Assn Trophy	\$ 162.50	\$ -
General Expenses	\$ 100.00	\$ 90.00
Total	\$ 9,759.87	\$ 13,737.70
Change in Cash Position	\$ 9,544.42	\$ 3,041.18

FINANCIAL POSITION

<u>Bank Accounts</u>	<u>1-Oct-13</u>	<u>30-Sep-14</u>
00 Cheque	\$ 10,508.70	\$ 3,664.79 *
01 OnLine Call	\$ 2,905.60	\$ 12,055.58
05 Welfare On Call	\$ 10,491.08	\$ 10,816.08
06 Term Deposit	\$ 6,004.17	\$ 6,250.24
07 Term Deposit	\$ 5,948.56	\$ 6,112.60
Total Current Assets	\$ 35,858.11	\$ 38,899.29
Change in Nett Position to Date, Cash Profit	\$ 9,544.42	\$ 3,041.18

* Includes Current Liability; \$500 16 Fd Regt RL Donation

Funds held in trust

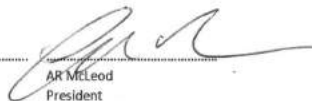
02 161 Battery	\$ 6,534.33	\$ 6,603.98
03 Ch 19, 173 AB	\$ 2,160.30	\$ 2,183.37
04 Special Projects; Standish Medals	\$ -	\$ 3,736.64

Q Store Performance	Net Trading Profit	\$ 639.39
	Stock on Hand	\$ 1,122.06
	Net Profit	\$ 1,761.45



BM McCort
Treasurer

Date



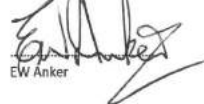
AR McLeod
President

16/10/14
Date

Certificate of Examination of Accounts

We the examiners appointed under Rule 49 of the Constitution and Rule of the RNZA Association Inc to review the Associations accounts certify that we;

- 1.Had full access to the financial books and accounts and vouchers of the Assn.
- 2.Had from officers and members, such information and explanations as we deemed necessary for the performance of our duties.
- 3.Have examined the Treasurers Statement of Financial Performance which we find correct for the period 1 Oct 13-30 Sept 14.



EW Anker

16/10/14
Date



CF Hewett (CP)

16/10/14
Date

C. 2014 RNZA Assn TROPHY WINNER

Q1024181 Bdr Rikki SIMMONDS, Command Systems Bdr, 161 Bty, 16 Fd Regt, RNZA

Early in 2014 Bdr Simmonds volunteered for a tour of duty to TAD at very short notice, and in doing so, he placed the requirements of the Regiment above his own personal situation. Reports from TAD suggest he performed very strongly during his attachment.

Bdr Simmonds demonstrated very good technical proficiency in the role of Command Post Bdr, and he has shown a positive and adaptive leadership style in developing some very junior soldiers to the point where 161 Battery has a very effective Command Post. In conjunction with his CPO, his CP was able to report "Shot" within one minute of receiving corrections from the observer.

Bdr Simmonds has achieved a very high level of sporting success, having represented NZDF in rugby league. He has also been a strong performer on the field for the Regiment which was evident during the Cordite Cup Competition and during the successful 16 Fd Regt Rugby League tour to Australia.



Capt Wendy Wright reads the citation for Gunner of the Year, Bdr Rikki Simmonds



THANKS TO THE RAA LOCATORS ASSN

I would like to pass on my thanks to Jim Bushel and Bobby Smith, and the RAA Locators Assn, for the fantastic shirt that "fell off a truck" in my direction. I wore it with pride over the recent RNZA Association AGM weekend in Wellington. **Skin Francis RNZA**

D. SELECTION OF PHOTOS TAKEN OVER THE REUNION WEEKEND.



Attendees at the AGM



Scribe Vice President Greg Thwaite and President Tony McLeod



Organiser David Weston



Group Photo of those who visited Wrights Hill



Looking down into where one of the guns was located



David Weston drawing the raffle and the winner Gary Pickering acknowledging his win



CO 16 Fd Regt Lt Col Andy Shaw and RNZA Col Comdt Lt Col Barry Dreyer



The “Old” and “New” Gunners in conversation.; Graeme Black, Capt Catherin Dymock and Mike Bushell



RNZA Assn Secretary Bernie and Gunner Danny McCort



A group of Gunners who attended the Reunion Dinner



David Weston's 1968 OP Party reunite for the first time since Vietnam; Lt Col (Rtd) Graeme Ready, David Weston, Peter Miles, with wives. Out of frame Neville Mersky.



Greg Thwaite carries the RNZA Assn banner into the church, flanked by Kim McGrath and John Deasley, followed by Padre David Bahler.



Our own RNZA Padre David Bahler



5. IN KOREA WITH AD WATT

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

This part of the story continues on from Newsletter 163 (Sept 2014)

The battery captain when I arrived was Capt Colin Stanbridge, who'd had experience in the UK Army (in infantry) before moving to New Zealand and joining Kayforce at the start. Among his duties in Korea he had been a GPO at Kapyong, a CPO at Maryang San and an observation post officer (OPO) including four months on 355. As a result he had a sound understanding of the functioning of the battery and an excellent rapport with all ranks. As he was also calm and most reliable he was a first class battery captain. As I was to spend six months straight in the line at battalion it was most important to have a trusted 2IC at the battery and I was fortunate to have Capt Stanbridge there.

Another officer, who left the battery very soon after I took over, was E troop commander Capt Colin Peterson, a WW2 veteran. I had two very able troop commanders for almost all of my time with 163 Bty, Capts Kelly Griffiths and Murray Stanaway both Kayforce originals. As well as being very good troop commanders they were first rate OPOs. Kelly Griffiths had come under notice as an Intelligence officer at Kapyong and later as an FOO in a number of actions and was awarded a Mention in Despatches (MID). He was a very valuable officer. Murray Stanaway also excelled as an OPO and gained something of a reputation for his 'nose' for likely enemy movements. Later he was awarded the MC.

Their work was very stressful. Their OPs were necessarily located at good observing spots, which were inevitably detected by the enemy despite camouflage and concealment (Kelly preferred to observe from an open trench) and subject to special attention, at the same time sharing with the forward infantry the continual shelling and mortaring of their positions. As the enemy were most aggressive with their probing and raids the OPOs had to be very vigilant.

Experienced and astute observers, as Griffiths and Stanaway were, noticed and reported small things that added to the intelligence that I and the battalion 10, as well as RHQ and Brigade could use to fit into the bigger picture. During an action I often stayed in contact with one of them, if the line was intact, receiving a continuous stream of information.

A fourth officer who stands out in my mind is Capt Bill Hickey, the CPO, who had taken over from Vern Duley shortly after I arrived. He combined a delightful, calm personality with a head for accuracy and attention to detail - just the sort of officer for the command post of a field battery.

Two other officers I remember well were Lieutenants Brian 'Tam' Fraser and Doug 'Prang' Oliver, GPOs and, occasionally, short-time reliefs for their troop commanders at the observation posts. Tam was worthy of promotion: that it did not happen in my time was due, I think, to New Zealand's reluctance to release more senior officers who would have welcomed their release back to New Zealand and created vacancies in Korea. Prang showed the potential to become an able troop commander.

I can't recall the names of all the NCOs but I was aware that their officers regarded most as being very reliable. What I do remember is that wherever fire was required it almost invariably arrived quickly and accurately and, at times, for hours on end. There is no doubt that the high regard in which the battery was held by both 3RAR and later DLI owed a great deal to the NCOs and men of 163 Battery. (After reading this Colin Stanbridge said he totally agreed, adding: "After weeding out a few failures in the early days, those who remained were first class and I would have gone anywhere with them.")

We had an excellent signals detachment under Sgt Redfearn, a very experienced WW2 veteran. He was knowledgeable, skilful and fearless, eventually winning the MM. He knew the advantage of line, especially between OPOs and BC and as soon as there was a line break he didn't hesitate to go out to repair the line, often exposing himself to danger. One morning after a night of heavy shelling, when things were very quiet I went around with him and noted the speed of his work. I was reminded of a dictum expressed by a SM I G (Sgt Maj I G) at Larkhill at the end of the Signals Wing: "Remember gentlemen BAGS OF SLACK." Sgt Redfearn always had a coil of slack at frequent break points, which made repair work easier and saved a lot of time.

While the battery trained I also had some other duties with 3RAR. The battalion commander had the important task of planning for a counter attack to re-take 355 in event of the Chinese capturing all or part of it. I was told by my CO to prepare the artillery fire plan. Following a few earlier reconnaissances I was told to meet Lt Col Hassett at a vantage point, which was to be his Tac HQ. The battalion 10 and company commanders were present. Shortly after (1 May) Lt Col Hassett held a coordinating conference with all concerned to work out a final plan.

When I asked my CO about resources he told me I could plan on having the whole of the divisional artillery, including the 4.2-in mortars plus some corps Artillery; thus it was a sizable plan. My CO was very pleased with it, as was Lt Col Hassett when he had looked it over and it was adopted at divisional level and included substantially in 3RAR's plan for operation "AJAX".

Of course I'd had plenty of time to prepare the plan but I think that for any task that involves the lives of men it is common sense to make full use of the time available to produce the best possible plan. There would be more fire plans, albeit lesser which had to be produced quickly. 3RAR had a second task while in reserve in which I was involved. The battalion was required to plan for the move to and occupation of fall-back positions on lines Wyoming and Kansas, several miles to the south, north of the Imjin River. Arthur had already accompanied the acting battalion commander and his company commanders on a reconnaissance 'to familiarise all concerned with the routes of withdrawal to Line Wyoming and the positions to be occupied on Line Kansas' (3 WD).

After more reconnaissances, I joined in one with Lt Col Hassett, his IO and company commanders of feature 208. Afterwards 3RAR companies were kept busy on wiring and digging programmes on line Wyoming at a feature called the Lozenge, which was

selected as the area to be occupied by the battalion in the withdrawal operation "Buckingham".

My task was to reconnoitre the Lozenge and possible enemy positions and prepare a fire plan for the defence of the Lozenge. During several reconnaissances it was obvious that the area had been much fought over, especially by old diggings and numerous minefields, which had all (I hoped as I tramped around) been enclosed in wire fences.

During these recesses I had occasionally seen a soldier running along the track obviously in training. It was Capt Claude Smail of 3RAR who was selected at the end of June to represent Australia at the Helsinki Olympics.

One day I was driving towards 355 when a jeep coming from there passed, stopped after passing me, reversed in a great enshroud of dust and drew up alongside. The officer alighted and walked across and to my surprise and delight I recognised Des Cable, whom I mentioned earlier in connection with battery training in Germany. He was now BC on 355 in direct support of the Royal Welsh Battalion. He was a real character and we had many laughs. He then enquired whether I could get him a pair of those "duckbill gaiters". The British troops still wore the small, loose WW2 gaiters and ours were greatly prized. I had a spare pair in my kit so gave him the near-new pair I was wearing, which he put on as we talked. Des Cable, MC. did very well in Korea and later was appointed Brigade Major RA (BMRA) at HQ Div Arty. Meeting old friends and mates on service is one of the joys of military life.

During the first two or three weeks I wore the Australian army uniform including slouch hat. One day the CO said that now I was part of a New Zealand unit, perhaps I should look like a Kiwi. I forthwith repaired to the unit Q store and from then on wore the unit beret and other gear. I might add that I wore them with pride and still have my black scarf with silver fern.

Being in reserve gave me the opportunity to look into the administration and basic papers such as the War Establishment. I found a number of matters during the next month or so, which I took up with the CO Lt Col Paterson. He always listened thoughtfully, said he'd look into it and invariably did. He was always reasonable and friendly and certainly had my respect. The battery had been through tough times with supplies during the mobile phase but by the time I took over supply arrangements were working reasonably well. Even so there never was enough food to satisfy all the troops (is it possible?) and problems with the LAD (probably hard pressed) were not uncommon.

Not long after I arrived, a second Australian officer joined 16 Fd Regt on secondment. Capt John Salmon, a Duntroon graduate and WW2 veteran, was already an experienced officer when he was appointed Troop commander in 162 Battery and, as a fellow Australian, it was gratifying to hear from both his BC and the CO, unsolicited comments about how well he was performing. Later in the year John was wounded in a significant operation (FAUNA) in which he was a Forward Observation Officer.

From the time Arthur Roxborough had mentioned it to me, I continued to hear of heavy US losses which seemed to stem from their policy of tactical deployment. As I understand it, unlike British

troops, which established strong defensive positions and patrolled rigorously forward of them, US battalions established outposts of up to company strength forward of their main defences. This tended, I believe, to weaken their main defensive line but worse, exposed the outposts to being taken out piecemeal. This danger was exacerbated by the slowness of their artillery to respond to urgent requests for fire. Unlike British artillery where, at all levels, the senior gunner was with the infantry commander and had immediate call on his own guns and could call for, and expect, rapid response from the guns at higher levels, the US placed comparatively junior officers with no direct call on any guns with the battalion commander, etc and they simply requested fire and waited for something to happen. More often than not, apparently, the fire arrived too late.

One day I was told by my CO that General Rowell, the Australian CGS, during his visit in early April, would attend an observation post with a couple of US senior officers to observe some shoots to demonstrate British procedures. He told me to get there early as I would be doing the shoots. After the shooting the group conferred for a while and, when on our own, the CO told me that the visitors were impressed. (Years later, when I was a GSO 1 in the Directorate of Military Operations and Plans, a colleague who was researching something for the Military board drew my attention to some remarks General Rowell had made on his return from Korea. Alluding to the occasion he said: "Shoots done by a young Major A.D. Watt had been excellent. All his efforts were quite first class.") As I said 'few inhibitions at ninety'. As a probable aftermath, on 16 October I was required to repeat the performance to a group that included the Commander US Field Forces and Commandant US School of Artillery. 16 Fd Regt War Diary has the bland entry that "the visitors witnessed several shoots and were suitably impressed." Later, I did hear that the US were examining their artillery procedures but I was sceptical about their making any major change. In such a large army which seemed to me to operate very much to the letter of the book, a change to our procedures would have been an enormous undertaking organisationally, administratively and in attitude. Whether they made any change at all I do not know but as time went on, with all the standardisation taking place and the ever increasing number of aircraft in the combat zones, I came to think that any change might well be the other way. These thoughts tended to be confirmed years later when, during a four nation exercise at Shoalwater Bay over several days, I was the Chief Artillery Umpire. The old must often give way to the new, sadly so sometimes but nostalgia doesn't win wars.

On 27 May, as part of 3 RAR's training programme I was asked to give a lecture to 3RAR officers on target grid procedure. A word on target grid as I knew it. It is a method of engaging observed targets by correcting along the line OT (observer to target). Previously they were engaged with the observer correcting along the visualised line BT (battery to target). Target Grid was introduced into British artillery not very long before my LGSC (Fd) and had the thumbs up of our WW2 instructors. The whole point of my talking to infantry officers, most

with no experience at all in engaging observed targets with artillery fire, was to explain how they could do so in an emergency when no gunner was in a position or able to do so. I was asked more than once to give such a lecture to the battalion officers.

Target Grid did involve additional tasks in the Battery Command Post, which came to be handled with skill and speed. In early June Capt B.T. Luscombe, an RAA officer, who was attached to 1903 Independent Air OP Fight RAF, was killed when, as a result of enemy anti-aircraft fire, which badly damaged his controls, he crashed while landing after a mission.

In June 3RAR prepared an exercise (STRENUOUS) for I RAR. Two companies of 3RAR acted as enemy detachments and the officers provided the umpires. I found Lt Col Hassett's excellent critique at the end to be very interesting and informative. On June 14 the British Defence Minister Field Marshal Lord Alexander and a number of senior officers visited 163 Battery. He inspected some of the gun positions and the command post. Although he would have been used to dealing with artillery at a high level, he asked many questions which seemed to me to display both a knowledge of artillery at a lower level and a genuine interest.

On 20 June I took part in Exercise EXAMINE, which was designed to test 3RAR's ability to launch a battalion attack. I was glad that my troop commanders and I were involved. For myself I appreciated the opportunity to work with Frank Hassett in a phase of war in which he had displayed mastery and I learned a great deal from the exercise. The battery had been training hard when I was informed by my CO that 3RAR would be going into the line at the end of June, which meant that my troop commanders and I, together with our parties would be moving to the OPs and battalion HQ. During 29-30 June 3RAR relieved the 22nd Cdn Bn. A few days earlier I had joined the battalion commander and his company commanders in a recon of the new position.

On 2 July Lt Col R.L. Hughes assumed command of 3RAR and on 9 July Lt Col F.G. Hassett returned to Australia to be CO/CI of the Army School of Infantry. When the CGS, Lt Gen Rowell, had visited Korea in April he'd told a gathering of all the Australian officers that now that another Australian battalion was in Korea the Brigade was to be commanded by an Australian and that Brigadier Tom Daley 'our most brilliant officer' was being sent. While I was a bit surprised to hear such a personal appraisal from the CGS to mainly comparatively junior officers, I doubt if there was anyone in the army who would have disagreed with it. Brig Daley assumed command of 28 Brigade on 27 June and visited 163 Bty soon after. He was very much a hands on leader and I appreciated several talks with him and his keen interest in gunner matters, including counter

bombardment.

While in reserve I had given a lot of thought to the kind of control arrangements I would like to have at battalion HQ. British text books suggested, and I agreed entirely, that this sort of thing was best left to the artillery commander (Sheldrake) and the supported arm commander in light of the prevailing circumstances at the time. I explained my ideas to Lt Col Hughes and after some discussion he accepted them.

He had his engineer officer Capt John Hutchinson design and build a new command post to replace the dilapidated and inadequate one already there. It was very strong and spacious and gave me exactly what I wanted. When I returned to Australia I wrote an article "The Battery Commander in Defence" (Australian Army Journal, No. 44, January 1953) which fully explained these arrangements. I won't repeat them here.

**To be continued in the next edition of
The NZ Gunner**

6. KASHMIR

Maj (Rtd) Kerry Lee served with the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) between August 1970 and September 1971.

This part of the story continues on from Newsletter 163 (Sept 2014)

Sometimes the soldiers took over the huts in spring, so that often the first difference between a village summer site and a platoon HQ location was the siting of Mortar pits or a volleyball court. The latter was usually about the size of a helipad.

Mules: One of the pleasures of being a gunner among gunners was that whenever I had to patrol in the Tangdhar Sector where there was a lot of artillery, the RHQ always arranged for me to ride an Artillery mule. These animals [RQ designation, Mules Arty not Mules GS] were bigger, more sure footed and moved faster than the local ponies to the point that made climbing a real pleasure. In another area, on a mules arty, I was map reading as I rode along the floor of the pass and noted that the contour was 12,450 feet. Who needs to climb Mount Cook?

Patrolling Hazards: We had no special gear for moving at high altitudes or in mountains. Our uniform issue included the parka jersey and BD serge trousers – no waterproof or cold climate gear there. I managed to obtain Canadian aircrew underwear, gloves and jacket. For navigation we had to rely on the prismatic compass and the maps provided by USGS and British OS to UNMOGIP. Old British issue maps were the most interesting as the detail had changed since they were drawn in the 1930's.

There was little movement by either side during the winter. Spring meant a steady increase in reported activity while Summer was mostly taken

up with routine visits to know unit locations in the forward areas. Since the main line of separation was along the river valley, movement into and along the forward areas involved a great deal of tramping in very steep country.

I had one nasty moment crossing a thawing icefall in a gully, when my NZ issue rubber soled boots slipped on the ice and sent me 100 feet down the slope before I got my walking stick dug in enough to stop the rush. There were no ropes or crampons etc and the early season patrols were often with the first troops into a winter closed area. We joked that if one side needed to check the going in a specific location they reported a suspected violation and the opposing military had to take a UN Observer in to check. Anyway, we saw some pristine snow in the passes in spring.

Frank Gibbison (RNZA) and Dick Graham (Canadian Infantry): Patrolling was often risky in the Spring and Autumn as the weather changed very quickly. A case in point was one of Frank Gibbison's trips into the valley along the Jelum River. He and Dick were trapped in the valley by a heavy snowfall in the pass and had a long wrangle with the local commander while UNMOGIP Headquarters arranged for a helicopter to fly in when the weather cleared. The other possible option was to cross the river to join another road over there but that road was blocked by snow, and the crossing involved getting permission from both the Indian and the Pakistan authorities. At that place the river was the cease fire line. Eventually they made it out by Indian Air Force helicopter.

Communications: Field communications were a constant problem. Base stations were Racal SSB and had huge aerial installations, so communications between headquarters and field stations were pretty reliable. But the pack sets for patrol duty where heavy to carry, [the porters hated them], chewed through batteries, were difficult to set up and more often limited by the extreme terrain. To set up the ¼ wave aerial involved a hundred feet or so of steel tape with two strong line, some 100s of feet of co-axial cable and line of sight down a valley to a base station. That often meant having to rely messages through another station to your base with the added complication of officers who had difficulty with English. Try to imagine a Belgian speaking to an Italian to relay for a Chilean using weak batteries. In times of stress we often resorted to using ANZAC and Canadian Officers on the stations to speed communication.

Helipads: As a sportsman I was intrigued by the Indian Army development of volleyball, basketball and football playing areas in the remote infantry positions. For many years afterwards I was able to assess pad requirements for specific helicopters by visualising the appropriate playing area.

Article supplied by U344489 Major (Rtd)
Kerry Lee, ED BA, RNZA

Warning Order: 161 Battery (Vietnam) Reunion.

A committee has been formed and planning is under way for a reunion to commemorate the 50th anniversary of 161 Battery reporting one gun ready in Bien Hoa, South Vietnam. The reunion will be held at Palmerston North as close as possible to the 15th of July 2015. The reunion is open to all personnel who served with or were attached to 161 Battery in South Vietnam between 1965 and 1971. An invitation to attend is also extended to the widows and descendants of any 161 Battery (Vietnam) veteran.

As soon as the final details have been decided, they will be promulgated throughout the gunner network. For further information you can contact the reunion secretary/treasurer John (Woody) Barrett on (07) 5494829 or jonlynbar@yahoo.com

Warning Order: RNZAA Reunion and AGM 2015:

- **Friday 13 - Sunday 15 November 2015 in Christchurch.**
- This is also NZ Cup and Show Week in Canterbury. NZ Racing Cup on Tue 10 Nov. A&P Show week. Canterbury Anniversary Day on Friday 13th. Consider making the trip a LONG weekend.
- Activities based at the NEW Christchurch Memorial RSA (in the CBD).
- Book cheap flights as they come available.

More details soon.



NZ WW1 Soldiers in the trenches Gallipoli Peninsula 1915

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Donations: All charitable and welfare donations over \$5 are now tax deductible as the Association is a Registered Charity.

Email Addresses: Are you on the Internet? The Secretary may not be aware of your address. If you are not getting messages from the RNZA Association and wish to do so, please forward your address. Have you changed ISPs? Have you updated your Internet address? Some mail is being returned.

Input into *The New Zealand Gunner*: Short stories, especially with accompanying photographs are always welcome for inclusion. The Editor's email address is **dgroberts@xtra.co.nz**

Member Registration: New members are most welcome. **ALL** Gunners are eligible for Full Membership, it is **FREE**, and automatic once a gunner has served in the Regiment for more than 3 months. Associate Membership is available to anyone who has been attached to an RNZA Unit or has had a close affiliation therewith, and to close family of RNZA Gunners and to Gunners of any nation around the world. Membership application forms are on-line at the new website: rnzaa.org.nz.

Death of a Member: If you know of the passing of someone who was a Gunner or a member please tell the Secretary. Where possible a representative of the Association will attend the funeral.

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

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

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

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