



NZ GUNNER

Royal New Zealand Artillery Association Newsletter

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

BY TONY MCLEOD

This is the 14th (approx) report I've written for this journal and will be one of my last. However it's not time for reminiscing just yet as the activity level around the country reflected by gatherings for Gunners Day and the activity level at 16th Field Regt leave little time for sitting on our hands. The Gunners Day activities have now got a life of their own with Chris Morris having established the Waipu Beach RSA luncheon for Waikato/BoP pers, the Horowhenua luncheon, which Roger Newth has held forever (have you been organising it since Alamein, Roger?), a new gathering of gunners at Arch Hill organised by their dynamic new acting BC Stephen Low, regular commemorative activities in the Canterbury area organised by Skin Frances and Pat Duggan, renewed activities in Wellington under the guidance of Shay Bassett, and ongoing gatherings in the Fire Place in Dunedin organised by Robbie. The gunner spirit is alive and well! Now that we have re-established these commemorative celebrations, we recognise it takes more than one person to make them successful, and I could name another hundred people here who have helped the principle organisers. I make a special note of this extended help group because with the committee being spread over such a distance (Akl-Wgtn) the focus is very much on regional activities, not centrally controlled committee-led activities.

The Regimental Parade held at Linton on 18 June

2021 was a wonderful opportunity for awards to be presented and recipients recognised in front of all regimental personnel. The parade saw the handover of Regimental Colonels, from Colonel Andy Shaw who is posted to RCDS London, to Colonel Ben Bagley, who had previously held the appointment when he was Commanding Officer (the appointment was separated from the CO appointment about five years ago). The Col Comdt Brig Paul Southwell thanked Col Shaw for his services as Regtl Colonel and wished both officers all the best for their obviously very bright futures. The main theme of his speech to the regiment was thanks for all their efforts in the battle against COVID-19. The regimental personnel have displayed real professionalism in their work manning the MIQs, and the civilian population certainly appreciate having soldiers on the frontline.

The attendance by 25 association personnel at the live firing in Waiouru on 28 June 2021 was really well received by all participants. The weather was beautiful and the whole occasion was very special. Our thanks go to the Commanding Officer Lt Col Dean Gehrling, BC 163 Bty Maj Johnathon Dick and of course the RSM WO1 Heath Southcombe for their wonderful hospitality. This activity does have limited participation, but we will try to give as many members as possible the opportunity to get a day on the gun line in future years.

Please diarise the Reunion/AGM now; Trentham 29-31 October 2021. It will be great to see a big turnout as we move the new committee to Wellington.

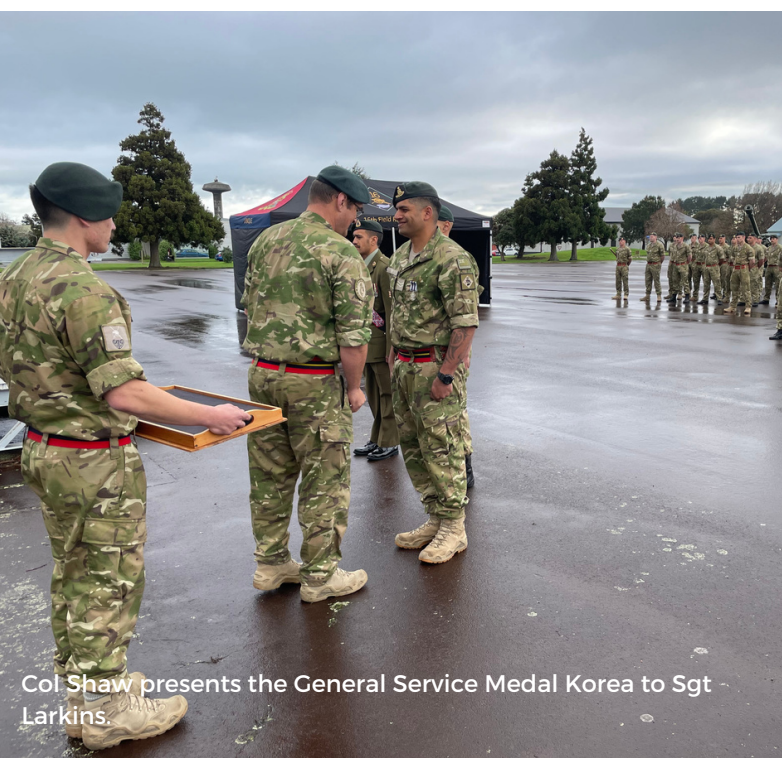
Tony McLeod
President



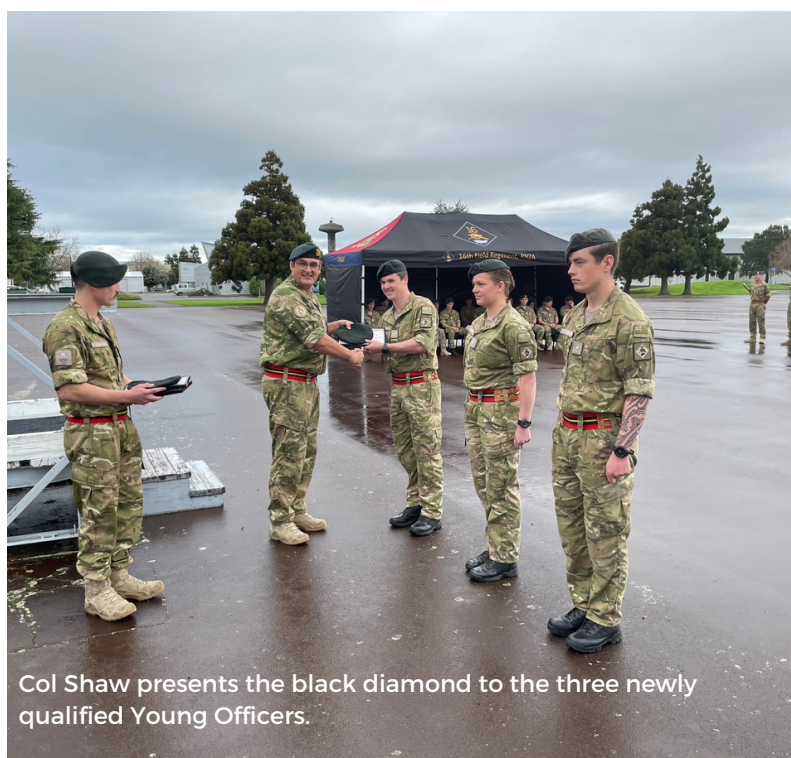
The Col Comdt oversees the handover of Regimental Colonel from Colonel Andy Shaw to Colonel Ben Bagley



Col Comdt presents the RNZA 20 Year Certificate to Lt Col Sandy Patterson



Col Shaw presents the General Service Medal Korea to Sgt Larkins.



Col Shaw presents the black diamond to the three newly qualified Young Officers.



Col Shaw presents the YOs Mere to 2Lt Zane Larkin: The award was instituted in 1982 by the then Chief Instructor Major Jim Heard.



Col Shaw presents the award for the top student on the RNZA Ssgts Promotion Course to Ssgt Andrew Andrew Smith, recipient of the RNZAA trophy in 2012 (when he was a Bombardier)

LAST POST

BY RNZAA

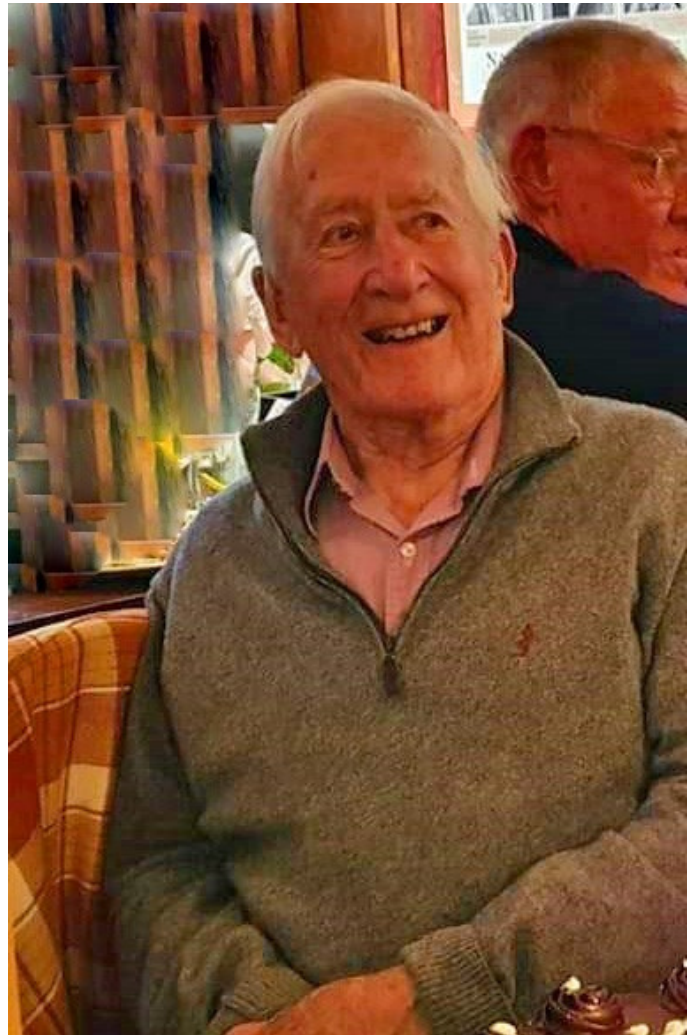
- OSBORNE, Lawrence George (Laurie). 32(E) Bty RNZA. Peacefully passed away on June 13, 2021, at Burwood Hospital, Christchurch, aged 89.
- PALMER, Dennis Stuart. 37187, SSgt, 161 Bty RNZA, Vietnam (2 tours). Passed away at Helensville on 11th June 2021, aged 83.
- WILLS, John. 33639, Sgt, 7th NZ Anti-Tank Regt, WWII. formerly of Kaukapakapa. Passed away on June 2, 2021, peacefully, at Evelyn Page Rest Home. Aged 103 years.
- MIHINUI, Mahara (Min). 16 Fd Regt RNZA. Passed way in early June 2021, in Rotorua.
- MITCHELL, Arthur Leslie (Les). 250343, Gnr, 10th Heavy Regt. Passed away on 23rd May 2021 at Foxton, aged 101 years.
- ATUA, John Bernard. 722409, 161 Bty RNZA, Vietnam. Passed away peacefully on 17 May 2021 at Heretaunga Rest Home, Silverstream.
- GIBBISON, Francis Hume (Frank). 662719 and 203678, Major, RNZA, Japan - JForce, 16th Fd Regt Korea, UNMOGIP (Kashmir). Passed away peacefully in Tauranga on 4 May 2021, aged 94.
- MASON, David Hunter. 831499, Lt, 161 Bty, RNZASC, Vietnam. Passed away on 30 April 2021 in Wellington hospital.
- MCKAIN, Clive. RNZA, Japan - JForce and 16th Fd Regt Korea. Passed away on 24 April 2021 in Auckland.
- GALLAWAY, Iain Watson: QSO, MBE. 2Lt, NZ Artillery (Anti-Aircraft Regts), and RNZN, WW2. Very well-known radio cricket commentator for many years. Passed away peacefully on April 18, 2021 in Dunedin, aged 98 years.
- FEARON, Ivan James Patrick (Pip). M330590, Sgt, 161 Bty, RNZEME, Vietnam. Passed away peacefully on 16th April 2021 in Auckland, aged 89.
- WAHO, Colin Tamaroa. 32(E) Bty, RNZA. Passed away suddenly on April 10, 2021, in Christchurch, aged 69 years.
- LEWELL, Dale (Baldy). 161 Bty RNZA. Passed away on April 15 2021, in Auckland.
- ARNDT, Ross Gordon. 461422, 4th Mdm Bty (or Regt) RNZA, CMT. Passed away on 5th April 2021, at Waikato Hospital, formerly of Aria, aged 86.



KEN LONGMORE'S 103RD BIRTHDAY

BY CHRIS MORRIS

My WW2 gunner uncle Ken Longmore celebrated his 103rd Birthday on 15th May 2021, having been born while WW1 was still underway. We had a special night with Ken in Petone, with family gathering from all around the country for the occasion. Ken served before WW2 in 1938-39 as a young TF subaltern with 15th Heavy Coast Bty at Fort Dorset in Wellington, saw action in Greece in 1941 against Hitler's Panzers with 7th Anti-Tank Regt as a Troop Commander, and later served with 6th Fd Regt in North Africa including at the Minqar Qaim breakout in Western Egypt. He was eventually taken prisoner by a German tank crew during the 1st battle of Alamein in mid-July 1942, and then spent 3 years in POW camps in Italy, Germany, and Poland, for some of the time with Charlie Upham as a camp mate.



GUNNERS DAY IN THE CAPITAL

RNZAA

Gunners Day in the capital commenced at the leisurely hour of 1pm, rather than with gun fire (blank and liquid) at dawn, with a combination of retired and serving RNZA comrades coming together for a commemorative service at the Lady Chapel of St Paul's Anglican Cathedral of Wellington. We were very fortunate in having Army's Principal Chaplain, Dave Lacey, oversee proceedings, which combined long-standing religious traditions of the Royal Regiment with more recent, very Kiwi, aspects of remembering those who have deployed to 'the great gun park in the sky' before us. We were also lucky enough to have the keynote address delivered by the current senior serving Gunner, Deputy Chief of Army Brigadier Matt Weston (whose father – a retired long-serving member of the RNZA – was also in attendance). At the conclusion of the service, extremely brief 'road movement orders' were given to those who had not already received them, and the bulk of the congregation relocated across and down the road to The Back Bencher hotel. Once there, imbibing ensued together with increasingly enhanced tales of the past! As the afternoon continued, others who could not make the service joined our happy throng (some after work, and others as they were able to find an excuse to sneak away). All in all, it was a pleasant Gunners Day in Te Whanganui-a-Tara and, judging by the feedback, one that those in attendance wished to replicate (NOT repeat) again soon.

WAIHI BEACH GATHERING AT RSA



NOTICE BOARD

AGM REMINDER: TRENTHAM CAMP, 29-31 OCTOBER 2021

The 2021 AGM information has been confirmed.
Please mark the following dates in your calendar.

- Friday evening, 29 October: meet and greet, WO/Sgt or Offr Mess
- Saturday morning, 30 October: AGM
- Saturday afternoon, 30 October: activities for attendees and partners
- Saturday evening, 30 October: dinner
- Sunday morning, 31 October: church service

Brian Hjort (brihj@hotmail.com) sent a message using the contact form at rnzaa.org.nz/contact:

Hi,

My name is Brian Hjort, I am looking for anyone that served with Frank Toko in Bien Hoa in 1965, and I am looking for any informations where they were based in Bien Hoa and if any old pics exist.

A friend of mine from the Remuera Club (Dick Davidson) recently showed me a "Report of Good and Valuable Service". I believe the gunner referred to was Dick's father and he has asked me to find out anything I can about him and his service and his comrades in arms. The details from the document are:

XVth Corps

No. 9/266 Gunner E L DAVIDSON.

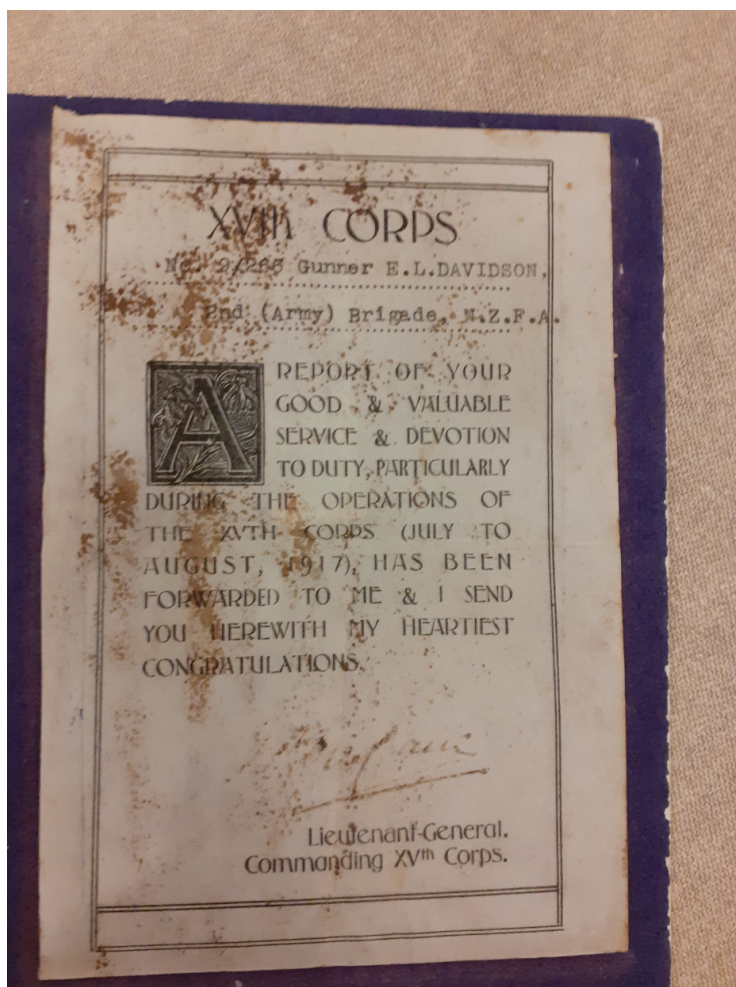
2nd (Army) Brigade, N.Z.F.A.

"A report of your good & valuable service & devotion to duty, particularly during the operations of the XVth Corps (July to August 1917) has been forwarded to me & I send you herewith my heartiest congratulations".

I cannot read the signature for "Lieutenant General, Commanding XVth Corps.

I would be grateful if you could provide me with what information you may have or direct me to a resource where I can do further research. From what I have discovered to date, it would appear that the period particularly mentioned related to just after the battle for Messines and before the battle for Passchendaele.

Thank you in advance for any help you can give,
S R Barrett



COLONEL COMMANDANT'S CORNER

BRIGADIER (RTD) PAUL SOUTHWELL

Ex Brimstone and Regimental Parade and Formal lunch

The Regiment returned from exercise Brimstone and a weapons effect demonstration having fired 1700 rounds. The exercise was attended by 26 of our association members who were very well received by the gunners. Much thanks to the Commanding Officer, Lt Col Dean Gerling and RSM, WO1 Heath Southcombe for organising the visit.

The exercise was an important return to gunnery for the soldiers after so long on Operation Protect (COVID-19 duties). When I visited Linton on 17/18 June there was a vibrant spirit in the Regiment after having enjoyed a good live firing exercise.

Before returning to their Op Protect role, the Regiment was able to fit in a day for a Regimental photo, parade, and a formal lunch for officers and SNCOs. A busy day for the RSM, being on tender hooks with the weather gods, who smiled on the Regiment holding the showers off until the parade marched off.

The parade acknowledged the performance of school students with awards to the top students. Long service and operational service metals were presented along with certificates for 20 years' service. We also said farewell to Colonel Andrew Shaw as RNZA Regimental Colonel (primary advisor to Chief of Army on matters artillery). Col Shaw, who heads to the UK to attend the Royal College of Defence Studies, passed the ceremonial patu to the new Regimental Colonel, Col Ben Bagley

A very special thanks to our soldiers protecting us from COVID-19

Our soldiers (among other units) have been on various duties at the managed isolation hotels for close to a year now. It has taken a big chunk out of their normal training and daily lives, with six weeks away from family and a six-week break before returning to the hotels. We can all imagine this is not the most exciting role for a gunner, and constant interruption to family routines brings its own frustrations. It is nonetheless a critical service to the people of New Zealand and our soldiers have earned the respect and gratitude of every Kiwi. As I mentioned to the soldiers on parade, there was a collective sigh of relief from the nation when finally the government assigned the task of managing COVID-19

isolation to the Defence Force.

It would be a welcomed touch if some of you could find a minute or so to draft up a short note or card of appreciation to members of the Regiment (maybe something that could be placed on Bty and Regt notice boards). Addressed to 16 Field Regiment, 1 Puttick Rd, Linton Camp, Palmerston North 4820.

A show of appreciation from fellow soldiers, especially the retired ones, can go a long way to supporting our soldiers in this mission.

Trusting you are all as healthy as you can be and enjoying the occasional visit to the gym or at least a casual walk in the park.

In the meantime have some fun with the grandkids and encourage them to do what their parents did.



A WIFE'S STORY

Richard, (my husband), never really talked a lot about his time in Viet Nam, other than he had been shot by a sniper. However, he had a rather grainy, 8x10 black-and-white photo he had taken at a USO show of Ann Margret with Bob Hope in the background that was one of his treasures.

A few years ago, Ann Margaret was doing a book signing at a local bookstore. Richard wanted to see if he could get her to sign the treasured photo so he arrived at the bookstore at 12 o'clock for the 7:30pm signing.

When I got there after work, the line went all the way around the bookstore, circled the parking lot, and disappeared behind a parking garage. Before her appearance, bookstore employees announced that she would sign only her book and no memorabilia would be permitted.

Richard was disappointed, but wanted to show her the photo and let her know how much those shows meant to lonely GIs so far from home.. Ann Margaret came out looking as beautiful as ever and, as second in line, it was soon Richard's turn.

He presented the book for her signature and then took out the photo. When he did, there were many shouts from the employees that she would not sign it. Richard said, "I understand. I just wanted her to see it."

She took one look at the photo, tears welled up in her eyes and she said, "This is one of my gentlemen from Viet Nam and I most certainly will sign his photo. I know what these men did for their country and I always have time for 'my gentlemen.'" With that, she pulled Richard across the table and planted a big kiss on him. She then made quite a to-do about the bravery of the young men she met over the years, how much she admired them, and how much she appreciated them. There weren't too many dry eyes among those close enough to hear. She then posed for pictures and acted as if he were the only one there.

That night was a turning point for him. He walked a little straighter and, for the first time in years, was proud to have been a Vet. I'll never forget Ann Margaret for her graciousness and how much that small act of kindness meant to my husband.

Later at dinner, Richard was very quiet. When I asked if he'd like to talk about it, my big, strong husband broke down in tears.. "That's the first time anyone ever thanked me for my time in the Army," he said.

I now make it a point to say 'thank you' to every person I come across who served in our Armed Forces. Freedom does not come cheap and I am grateful for all those who have served their country.

If you'd like to pass on this story, feel free to do so. Perhaps it will help others to become aware of how important it is to acknowledge the contribution our service people make.



QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY 21 GUN SALUTE FIRE

BY SKIN FRANCES

1500 hours on Saturday 5 June saw personnel from the Southern Gunners and Godley Head Heritage Trust (GHHT) fire a 21 Gun Queen's Birthday Salute at Dudley Park in Rangiora. The idea came to a group of Southern Gunners while sampling a couple of Artillery Ports at Godley Head during celebrations of St Barbara's day in 2020.

An organising committee of Pete Dawson, Neil Stewart, Craig Ruane, Pat Duggan, and Skin Frances, with Alex Smith from GHHT, were the key players in putting it all together. Pat and Craig were 'forced' to take leading roles on the day, Craig as the Battery Commander and Pat as the Master of Ceremonies. Pat also provided interviews for the local paper and radio station in the lead up to the salute.

The saluting battery was an interesting mix of guns, personnel dress.

- No 1 Gun was a M101A1, with Willie Wilson, ex 32 Bty & 2 Cants, as number one. The gun detachment was made up of ex soldiers from the NZ and British Armies, all dressed in green DPM, berets, and stable belts.
- No 2 Gun was a 25 pdr, with Grant Hunter, ex 32 Bty & 2 Cants, as number one. The gun detachment was made up of members of the Paparua RSA, all dressed smartly in jackets and ties. One of these gentlemen was a South Africa born, ex 161 Bty Vietnam gunner, who has had both his lower arms amputated. As number 3, he performed the required drills with élan.
- No 3 Gun was a WWII 6 pdr Anti-Tank, with Sonny Manuel, ex 161, 32 Bty and many other places, as number one. The gun detachment was made up of members of GHHT, with most dressed WWII uniforms.
- No 4 Gun was a WWI German Krupp 77mm gun, with Grant Taylor ('Tails') ex 32 Bty & 2 Cants as number one. The gun detachment was made up of members of GHHT.

The guns, and some military equipment from GHHT, was on display before and after firing the salute at 1500 hours. The salute drew a crowd of almost 500 members

of the public.

To cover the cost of the salute, members of the public were offered a 'once in a lifetime' opportunity to purchase a blank round and fire it from an Artillery gun. This generated great interest and all rounds were sold. It was planned to fire 28 rounds. This wasn't because we could not count, but since all guns were of different calibres we had to allow for a possible equipment failure on any one gun, so each gun was provided with seven rounds.

On the day, firers included Bill Mitchell, a 108-year-old RNZAF WW11 veteran, gunners' wives, and sons/daughters and grandsons/granddaughters of gunners. Prior to firing the salute, individual firers were trained to fire the gun they were assigned to. A slow time dry firing rehearsal of the complete salute was conducted under the control of the Battery Commander and Detachments Commanders.

At 1455 guns were ordered to 'Take Post'. At 1459 'Load' was ordered, then the first round was fired by Bill Mitchell at exactly 1500 hours. The Battery used a 15-second interval between rounds, rather than the normal 10 seconds, to allow for the change around of fires required after each round. The adrenaline rush felt by the firers was obvious on their faces and by their comments after the salute.

There are now plans afoot to fire another salute on Queen's Birthday in 2022 at Rangiora, as part of a much larger display of equipment owned by the GHHT. The plans also include a couple of social events at the Rangiora RSA. The Southern Gunners want to expand the number of guns in the Saluting Battery and hope to be able use only 25 pdr and 105mm guns. Any owners of 25 pdr and 105mm guns wishing to participate should contact Skin Frances.

Photos on the following page.



RNZAA MEMBER ATTENDANCE AT EX BRIMSTONE, WAIOURU

RNZAA

The RNZAA received an invitation to attend 16 Fd Regt's support firing for the Sch of Arty student assessment exercise, Ex Brimstone on Saturday 12 June. As with 2019 (and the cancelled 2020) shoot, we remain hugely indebted to the efforts of 16 Fd Regt and school for including us in this activity. As always, attendance at live firing exercises is hugely popular with our members and provides a connection with our past that simply can't be replicated in any other form. What a weekend and to the RSM, CO, BC, and CI, a huge thank you for the invitation, your continued willingness to include us, and your hospitality.

Because the 2020 shoot was cancelled due to COVID-19 it was decided to offer up positions for this year's shoot to last year's confirmed attendees. The response was tremendous. We managed to fill our quota from these ranks within days. As you will see from the photos, Waiouru turned on one of its best winters' days. The day we were in the field was one of those 'one in one hundred' perfect winter weather days.

We assembled on Friday afternoon around 1500 and allocated beds and rooms. It's all very genteel these days – warm, four beds to a room, a complimentary bottle of water, mints, and beds already made up! A coffee in the camp café and a chance for a yarn and musings over "it was never like this in our day". Spirits were high. A hot meal in the All Ranks mess followed by a welcome to the WO/Sgt Mess and an opportunity to mingle with a number of serving gunners, including senior Regt and Sch staff. It's Fri and it's Waiouru – people could be elsewhere.

Saturday saw us bundle into vehicles after breakfast and head up the valley to join the guns firing across to the Fingers. Following a safety briefing, the issue of ear protection and a rat pack for lunch, we were split into groups and invited onto the 4 gun platforms and CP. An enemy scenario evolved, and the firing commenced with high angle indirect fire missions. Nice to see 2, 3, and 4 rounds FFE. As the enemy scenario unfolded it became apparent that the battery would need to move into a direct fire response. Missions continued. With the sun beating down, smoke drifting slowly across the position

and the smell of cordite bringing back memories of past days served, it was easy to forget that this place can be horrible at its worst. For the writer (and others I spoke to), it doesn't get much better than this on a warm Saturday in the middle of the North Island.

The WO/Sgt Mess was again open to members on Saturday and those who chose to stay had another opportunity to story tell and reflect on the day's activities.

This was probably the last exercise that the incumbent RSM will organise for the Assn, as his next posting is on the immediate horizon. Hopefully timing will enable attendance at our October AGM. I know organising activities to include the Assn is an interruption to the routine, and I wish to convey my gratitude for his efforts in helping our membership retain their links with the Regt – whether this has been an LFX, a parade, a Regtl event, or even representation at a veteran book signing! Thank you.

Photos on the following page.



VETERAN AFFAIRS

ROB MCAULAY

On a typical sunny Tai Tokerau day I had the opportunity to represent the RNZAA at the Veterans Affairs Forum in Whangarei, with Tony McLeod out of action this meant i was on my own, no problem, what could possibly go wrong, nothing. I arrived to set up and found our table strategically located near the door and beside the Vietnam Veterans Association, and very conveniently for any deaf gunners, across from the Bay Audiology table.

Unfortunately, I did not have a RNZAA banner but did have a number of Gunner related items from the Q store and was wearing my RNZAA polo shirt so there was no mistaking our stand. A number of retired gunners dropped by and introduced themselves and confirmed they were members of the Association, which was great, I was also able to get a ex RNZA Band member, who served on the guns in Vietnam to sign up, or at least his wife said she would sign him up, so that was a good outcome. I also attempted to recruit a couple of ex Navy gunners through offering them a dispensation for being gunner albeit not in the RNZA.

On a more serious note, it was a good event and great to see many veterans taking advantage of the opportunity to connect with services that could assist them now and in the future. The RNZAA even received an acknowledgment from the Minister, who encouraged us to continue the work we are doing on behalf of veterans.

Lastly, I would encourage all members of the Association who have what they call qualifying service i.e. have deployed operationally overseas, and haven't already done so to register with Veterans Affairs now rather than later.

Hon Meka Whaitiri

MP for Ikaroa-Rāwhiti

Minister of Customs

Minister for Veterans

Associate Minister of Agriculture (Animal Welfare)

Associate Minister of Statistics



03 MAY 2021

Rob Munro

munro.law1@gmail.com

Dear Mr Munro

Thank you for your email regarding the addition of a census question in the UK that asks "Have you previously served in the UK Armed Forces?" and whether there are any plans to ask a similar question in New Zealand's next census.

At this time no decision has been made as to whether or not a similar question will be included in the New Zealand Census. I am conscious of the need to have accurate data. Currently there are a range of options to gather such data being considered. A decision will then be made on which is the best approach.

Thank you for taking the time to write.

Yours sincerely

Hon Meka Whaitiri

Minister for Veterans

OP UBIQUE SOUTH ISLAND

RNZAA

We have just accomplished a Queen's Birthday 21 Gun Salute in Rangiora using four restored guns, an M101A1 105mm howitzer, a QF 25pdr, a 6pdr antitank gun, and a captured WW1 German Krupp 77mm gun. The salute was a joint venture with the Godley Head Historic Trust who are protecting and restoring our Gunner heritage at the 11 Coastal Bty camp at Godley Head at the head of Lyttelton Harbour.

With this increased activity we are trying to increase contact with Gunners from across the South Island in an effort to bring us all closer together and to offer opportunities for more Gunners to become involved in our increasing number of events and activities.

QUEENSLAND ANZAC DAY 2021

ELDON BRYANT

ANZAC Day 2021 will be my eighth consecutive year as an Australian licenced amateur radio operator VK4GUN, to again find additional use of my long-standing hobby for the annual Remembrance ANZAC Day each year. In previous years, my QSL cards have always been artillery themed, the attached card for ANZAC Day 2021 being no exception.

I believe the information contained on the front and rear of my 2021 QSL CARD will be of interest and appropriate enjoyment, especially for those old Gunners familiar with service on the 25-pounder, one of the several loves in my life.

In conclusion may I say, please enjoy the following content as much as I have enjoyed putting the card together.

Ubique

Respectfully yours

Eldon Bryant

Imagery on following page.

GORE AND DISTRICT MEMORIAL RSA WELCOME HOME DINNER

BRADLEY BRIDGMAN - VP GORE RSA

The Gore and District memorial RSA formally invites return service personnel from the Rhodesian conflict to present day of the Otago Southland region to a welcome home dinner.

The event aim is for a well overdue welcome home to those who have served operationally in the military and services (police) and hopefully capturing them within the RSA for further events and support.

The event will be held in the function room at the Gore RSA from 1300 on the 21st August 2021. The outline timeline for the event will be:

- 1300 Veterans Affairs briefing (TBC)
- 1400 SSAANZ Briefing
- 1500 Afternoon tea
- 1600 Pre drinks socialising
- 1700 Photo and toast by mural and cenotaph
- 1730 till late meal & guest speaker

The dinner itself has been donated by the RSA and subsidies may be available via Veterans Affairs for travel and accommodation.

Point of contact for the event will be:

Aaron Horrell 0272520878 or adhorrrell@hotmail.com

Bradley Bridgman 0274057732.

RSVP will be via facebook or email by the 23rd July 2021.

Due to limited seating space there will be a maximum number of 180 pers for the dinner however could be extended if larger numbers are known before 23rd July.

Dress will be mufti and medals for a commemorative photo prior to the dinner. Further information and details to follow via Facebook and email.

EIGHTH (8th) CONTINUOUS YEAR OF ON-AIR PARTICIPATION BY LICENCED AUSTRALIAN AMATEUR RADIO STATION VK4GUN...

Greetings and salutations
from tropical paradise,
unofficial Capitol and
Garrison City of North
Queensland, Townsville.
AUSTRALIA...

AX4GUN..

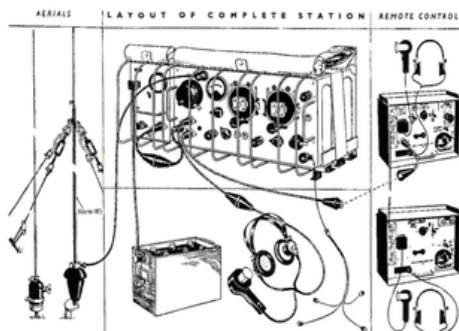
The AX4 prefix [AX4GUN] is a Special Event
Call Sign used in VK each year by participating
Australian amateur radio station operators during
the annual Remembrance of **ANZAC Day** each year and
this QSL CARD document confirms proof of on-air contact.

QSL POSTAL ADDRESS:

Eldon R. J. [Don] Bryant,
266 McLeod Avenue,
' Carlyle Gardens Townsville ',
60 Beck Drive North,
CONDON, Q'LD. 4815.
< AUSTRALIA >

E-MAIL ADDRESSES:

vk4gun@wia.org.au
artillery.oz@bigpond.com



AUSTRALIAN ARMY FIELD HF WIRELESS SET # 22...



CALL SIGN	DATE	UTC	MHz	MODE	REPORT
	April 25, 2021.			HF / AM	

HEAD TO HEAD: *Ordnance, Q.F. 25 pdr Mk 2* VERSUS

One of the most famous artillery pieces of World War II, the 25-pounder was designed between the wars to provide the British Army with a versatile weapon that could fulfil the role of both a gun and a howitzer. The weapon took centre stage during the heavy bombardment that preceded the offensive at El Alamein.

- **VK4GUN** / Eldon's [Alias Don / Matman 'himself'] claim to fame in the Australian Army - Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery was plied on 25-pounder field guns >>>
- Gunner, Gun Layer, B.C.P. sighting plotter, Battery perimeter security, and of course, Arty Sigs... [B.C.P. Call Sign " **SUNRAY MINOR** "]... Sergeant [Honourable Discharge 1960's]
5 Field Regiment – **RAA Northern Command**...

Ordnance Q.F., 25 pdr

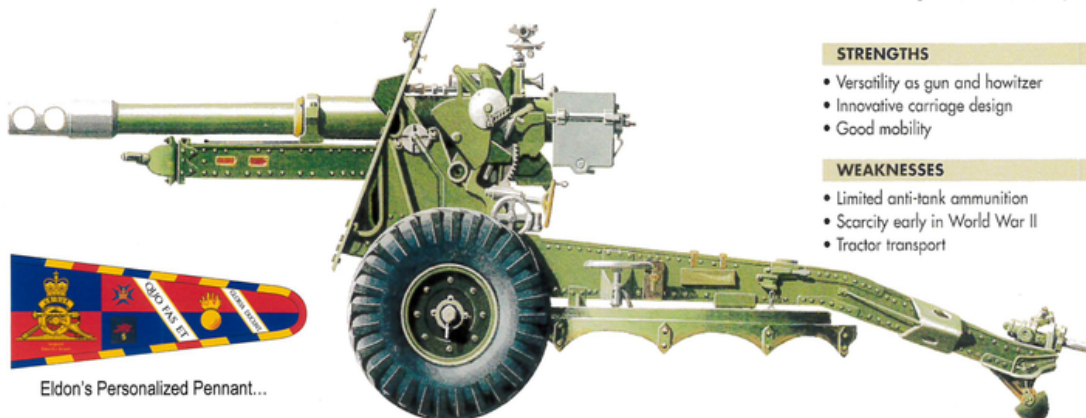
Calibre: 87.6mm (3.45in)
Weight in action: 1800kg (3968lb)
Length: 2.4m (7ft 11in)
Elevation: -5° to +40°
Traverse: on carriage 8°; on firing table 360°
Shell type & weight: 11.34kg (25lb)
Muzzle velocity: 532m/sec (1745ft/sec)
Maximum range: 12,253m (13,400yds)

STRENGTHS

- Versatility as gun and howitzer
- Innovative carriage design
- Good mobility

WEAKNESSES

- Limited anti-tank ammunition
- Scarcity early in World War II
- Tractor transport



Eldon's Personalized Pennant...

SAILING VESSEL ESSENCE

BY STEPHEN NEWMAN

Continued from last issue...

Fearing I was trapped under water and that the yacht could be coming down on top of me, I fumbled around and found my lifejacket's deployment cord. I can't actually remember pulling it, but must have, as the next thing I knew was emerging in about mid-thigh water in a devastated saloon; standing where the saloon table had been, in a deployed inflatable life jacket. Pamela was wedged beside the radio and chart table with her face sporting a running band of blood from a cut across her forehead.

As I looked at Pamela we shared a 'what the hell'sort of moment, with Pamela looking at the shattered windows as waves at times entered through the frames. Looking about her and the amount of water and internal damage (torn out staircases, floorboards wrenched up etc.), Pamela said: "It's going to sink - I need to send out a Mayday. I agreed and moved towards her and used some debris (to replace the stairs to the cockpit that had been ripped out) to peer up out of the boat and into the cockpit. There I could see Stuart and Bruce. It appeared to me that Stuart was flat on his back, possibly under a crushed Bimini frame, and that Bruce was bending over him giving assistance while scrambling back from the aft of the boat. Waves were continuing to hit the boat and wash over the deck.

I passed on to Pamela that I could see both of them and that they appeared OK. Pamela in the meantime was focused on sending out the MAYDAY call. She (in a very controlled voice) sent out "MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY SV ESSENCE is sinking." There was a pause and I saw Pamela looking at the GPS, then saying something like "we have lost our GPS position." This prompted me to look from where I was perched under the hatch coaming to where the EPIRB was normally stored. It was not there. I advised this to Pamela who like me started to visually search the inundated floor that was a jumble of torn planks, stairs, tables, books, squabs etc. Pamela then advised via radio "Our EPIRB has gone" and at this point I succeeded in sliding open the cockpit hatch, and was in the process of opening the door slide to get into the cockpit and help Bruce and Stuart (who were still near the steering pedestal). Stuart saw me opening the hatch and shouted for me to stay inside the boat and to

close up. The noise on deck was loud and waves were hammering the boat on the side. I replaced the hatches and dropped into the cabin again. Once more I started looking for the EPIRB and thinking if there was anything to fother the windows with - which were occasionally taking in water as the seas surged past outside.

Stuart and Bruce opened the hatches shortly after this and entered the cabin; with Stuart stunned to see the windows gone and the amount of (ever increasing) water in the boat. Pamela was still talking with Coastguard NZ and advised Stuart that she was sending a MAYDAY, the EPIRB was gone and GPS had failed. Stuart swore about the windows and that he had never liked them being so big and advised Pamela, who was still on the radio, that the life raft had also been swept off the boat.

I think we all coped quite well with this unfortunate news. Pamela reverted back to Coastguard NZ and advised that them that the life raft was also gone. I remember there being some miscommunication about this, with Coastguard NZ confused and thinking our EPIRB had been set off and that we had deployed the life raft only for it to be ripped away. Pamela ended the conversation saying the boat was sinking and we needed rescue.

The four of us looked at the windows taking in water, with Pamela moving from the radio to try and block water ingress with a squab. There was a brief discussion about locating and fitting the internal storm shutters and that to fit them required us to find a drill to fit them -this was dismissed as too late and near impossible, as that they hadn't been designed to be fitted prior to a storm breaking the windows.

At this point the boat started to take more of a forward list and the water lifted well past my knees. Bruce announced he was going forward into his cabin, as he had a personal locator beacon (PLB) in his locker. Very bravely he strode off and pushed the ajar front cabin door fully open. He called out that the cabin hatch (all of which had been triple checked prior to the storm arriving) had burst open and waves were entering.

He managed to close this, but I am unsure if the handles were able to be used to actually secure it shut. He grabbed his PLB and came back to the cabin, fitting it around his neck and activating it. He asked me to check that it was on and I confirmed that the strobe was flashing. I remember saying to Bruce to the laugh of others that Bruce was now our new best friend and he would never be alone till we stood on dry land.

Stuart took one last look in the cabin, turned to me and apologised for telling me to get back into a sinking boat. I think we all said "Hey apologies later – let's go." Stuart led the way out of the cabin with a helpful push from Bruce to get him up into the cockpit...and then a haul and push from us saw Bruce join Stuart, followed by a large floating water bottle, the grab bag and a spare life jacket (floating in the cabin). I then boosted Pamela and she was up. I scrambled on boxes to get up and we as a group assembled, seated beside the shattered steering pedestal. Stuart fitted the hand pump onto a manual bilge and started pumping, whilst Bruce redistributed the tethers and we all checked we had one correctly fastened to our D rings, our lifejackets were inflated and our crotch straps on tightly. I couldn't find a neck tie on my life jacket nor could Bruce, when he too looked for me.

The best thing then happened in the ensuing survival phase. We sat down and calmly discussed what we would do, how we all intended to survive, how and when we would leave the boat and the need for us to stay together and to keep talking to keep our spirits up. We agreed that our goal was for us all to survive and go home. In this discussion I informed the group that we had a minimum period of two hours to survive in the water before an Orion would be on station –so we should assume two and a half hours to allow for transit time. I also said the Orion would drop us a life-raft once it located us.

I recall that we had some general discussion that was almost clinical in nature. We didn't get negative and stayed positive about what we could see and do. One enduring image was looking up at the mast and seeing stuck on the spreaders a T-shirt of Bruce's that had been sucked out of the cabin through the broken windows. We even discussed hand pumping a SUP that was in a locker near us – before dismissing that as a notion.

I relieved Stuart in hand pumping the bilge, although it was readily apparent that pumping wasn't making any difference. Stuart meantime scrambled to the backstay and collected the dan-buoy and brought that back to the group. The water bottle was passed around and we had a drink of fresh water followed by a couple of pieces of chocolate (that Pamela had seen floating past and grabbed). Again we were all in surprising good humour with Bruce making a joke that Pamela was still a pretty

amazing cook in looking after our needs around lunch time. Pamela responded by pointing primly past Bruce to the entrance way on the boat's safety lines behind him and said it would be better if he opened the exit. Which he did. I think Stuart then attached the grab bag to himself with a sail tie and then the water bottle (1/2 empty) to Pamela, as well as the spare lifejacket. Pamela took the life ring in hand whilst Stuart held the float and rope.

By now the boat was turgid in the water and moving sluggishly – giving us a pretty firm ride – and indicating that it wasn't much longer before it would go under. We readied ourselves to go, with Bruce leading, followed by Stuart, Pamela and then myself. We affirmed we would stay together and tether to each other once clear of the boat, to reduce any risk of one of us being caught on exit by the boat and being pulled down by it – along with any tethered others. After maybe 15 minutes on deck (approximately 1250) SV Essence's stern started to rise and its bow was slowly consumed by the sea. We moved as a tight line, each holding one in front, and exited into the sea, stepping through the life rails. Bruce led, then Stuart, then Pamela and me being last off the boat. It sank quickly very when it finally went as I remember stepping onto a horizontal (normally vertical) stanchion to be able exit through the life lines.

Sea survival

The sea seemed surprisingly warm on entry and calm enough for us to not to have to shout too much to be heard. Bruce clipped his tether onto me and I clipped onto Pamela, who clipped onto Stuart (who either clipped onto the dan-buoy held or the grab bag). We first tried to stay together as a tight group to see if we could share any warmth, but the heaving of the sea made this hazardous – as if held by others you seemed to lose buoyancy and in my case I felt I was being pushed under. As we took stock of this first few minutes, we were all surprised to see that an albatross had landed less than 3 metres away from us and that it was happily bobbing about on the seas. It departed about 5 -10 minutes later as we all experienced the first breaking surf to violently push us, as a group, deep into the sea.

Appreciation of time left us and we all seemed at times to be struggling to stay afloat. Pamela went into a semi-comatose state as she got colder and doubtlessly as shock settled in. Stuart was constantly by her side, talking to her and supporting either her head or holding her firmly about the shoulders and arms.

As time passed the waves got bigger and bigger –until well over 10 M. I noticed from the crest of the rollers the amazing blue of the phosphorescence of surf waves atop other mountainous rollers. This surf became more and more problematic for us as it swept towards us and at times broke over us, at least three times precipitated us being pushed deep under the sea. I heard Stuart trying to call out when surf was approaching us, to give us warning of its approach and to hold our breath. He could do this as he used the life ring with Pamela to try and face forward to stare into the waves – whereas my back was presented to the waves (and also to Bruce who appeared to be floating well in the sea survivor position). From our first dunking under water, I struggled with my life jacket. Twice it was pulled over and off my head as we were pushed under and each time we emerged it was (to my eyes at least) noticeably less inflated than others. I used the mouthpiece to try and re-inflate it, which worked up until the next dunking when again it would be flat. I suspect there was a hole in the lifejacket – probably collected inside the yacht cabin when it inflated – that allowed air to be forced out when it was squeezed. I also noticed that after each dunking that I was being tangled with a rope or cord of some sort and that I had to actively free myself each time. With hindsight I think this was the 8M dan-buoy cord that secured the float to the life ring, as the dan-buoy was always in grabbing distance to at least three of us.

When we entered the water, we were talking to each other and making observations. As time passed this dried up to shorter, more factual statements – such as Stuart's statement that he was cold or that it would be good to see an Orion now. Certainly time had passed and we were all getting more tired and cold. [Post the event we learned we were probably in the water for two hours plus before being found.]

In what seemed a 'short' time I spotted an Orion approaching us. I was delighted to share the news with the others as it transited past us. Its arrival perked us all up and we discussed that it seemed to be here quite quickly – "lucky it's a weekday and work hours" – and that it would find us soon. I advised the group that the first we would know if it saw us would be a 'wing waggle' and probably smoke and then hopefully a life raft. The Orion tracked past us on a N-S heading at least two times. Stuart then remembered that he had a SSB handheld radio in the grab bag and was able to extricate it and on the Orion's third pass established communications. I couldn't hear the Orion crew, but I

could hear Stuart trying to give directions to the crew as us being off to their Starboard or Port side. I joined in trying to make us stand out by picking up the dan-buoy and waving it in the air...until it was too heavy and I resorted to waving my arms.

The passes of the Orion directly overhead seemed to be very quick and it also seemed to be out of our sight for quite some time. I remember assuring people it would find us as we were definitely in its repeating search pattern and to watch for the plane's waggle. About the fifth or sixth time it passed, I saw a waggle and said: "it's waggling" with great delight. Minutes later it returned and dropped a smoke flare onto the sea downwind of us.

The plane then disappeared and came back much lower than ever before. It was a great sight to see about four or five small parachutes deploy out the back and then one large parachute. The small parachutes extended a floating bright white line, which I saw on eventually grabbing it, when it drifted to us, had arrows pointing in the direction of the largest parachute (which had carried the life raft). From where we bobbed in the water we could see the bright pink and yellow life raft which had successfully inflated maybe 100m away.

Bruce shouted "come on we have to swim"...which I countered with "there should be a floating line. We have to grab it and pull." The rope floated perfectly to us in a wide arc that reached Bruce first, then me and presumably the others behind me. At this stage we all knew we had to pull and swim as hard as we could to the life raft. Getting it to us (or us to it) seemed to take forever (this took maybe 10 -20 minutes). I could see Bruce pulling in front of me and was conscious that Pamela and Stuart were hard up against me. I think Stuart had one hand on the rope but the other remained locked onto Pamela who had ceased speaking at this stage.

We'll be continuing this series in the next issue.

Q STORE

CONTACT: RNZAAQSTORE@GMAIL.COM



Back in the store: Royal NZ Artillery Table Runners

Length: 2.65m

Width: 52cm

\$55 each + shipping



We have sourced an exclusive supplier of artillery neckties made to the association's own specifications.

These ties come in two fabrics: silk or polyester.

Pricing:

Polyester: \$20 + shipping

Silk: \$35 + shipping

International: POA



Q Store Price List

As at 1 July 2021

Item	Price
RNZA Assn Polo shirt *	\$65.00
Fleece Beanie	\$35.00
Baseball Cap	\$35.00
Tee-Shirt (Obsolete) *	\$45.00
RNZA Blazer pocket badge	TBA
Name Tag	TBA
Beret Patch	\$5.00
RNZA Lapel Pin	\$15.00
Once a Gunner pin	\$35.00
RNZA Bumper sticker	\$6.00
13 Tac Sign	\$6.00
43 Tac Sign	\$6.00
Kiwi Bumper sticker	\$6.00
Artillery Tie. Polyester	\$20.00
Artillery Tie. Silk	\$35.00
Operational Tie	\$10.00
Table Runners	\$55.00
Beret - Navy Blue	\$20.00
Beret - Khaki	\$20.00

* New stock of Assn Polo shirts being ordered.

Please note.

Prices no longer include postage.

When placing an order email the Quartermaster with the items you are wanting and they will notify you of the cost plus postage. Once the funds have been [receipted](#) then the Q items will be [despatched](#) to your address.

161 Battery 16 Field Regiment RNZA Vietnam Veterans Polo Shirt. Only available to those who served with 161 Bty in Vietnam.

Pricing: approx \$65 + shipping

Sizes available: S, M, L, XL, 2XL, 3XL, 5XL

Payment to be made once final orders are confirmed.

Contact: craighewett@extra.co.nz with your size and quantity.

Q STORE

CONTACT: RNZAAQSTORE@GMAIL.COM

New to the Q Store

Berets

We now have a supply of Navy Blue and Khaki Berets of sizes 57cm (7-1/8) to 62cm (7-3/4).

These have been selling steadily. With the Navy Blue we also have a fresh supply of Red/Blue beret patches. The black beret patches that were worn with the Khaki beret we do not have a supply, but suggest you make your own out of a good black material.

Artillery Ties

The Artillery ties have been also been selling steadily. Remember these were made to our own specifications and come in Silk and Polyester.

161 Battery South Vietnam Veterans Polo shirt

The uptake of this from our Vietnam Veterans has been fantastic with 85 shirt purchased and are now being sent to those who ordered them. As you can understand, sending 80 odd packages can take time. I went to Auckland to collect the 1st batch and meet with the manufacturers. They have done a great job. The second batch of mainly 2XL are being made right now. (We cleaned out their original stock).

It has been a very rewarding exercise and many calling me directly from within NZ and Australia. It was great to hear their stories and to have a chat. The many thanks have been extended to me for organising the shirts and that has been gratifying. Some are buying them for their mates as well, such as one whose mate who is not well, living of his Veterans pension in a small flat.

Several orders have come from members who we have lost contact with, through change of email and localities, so have been able to reconnect with them as a result of their own networks and contacts. Thank you.

For those Vietnam Veteran who may now wish to order a Polo Shirt, give me a call, it's not too late.

What's next

Other Q items being looked at are a RNZA Flag (5ft x 3ft) for those of you that have a flag pole at home or now wish to get one. Currently talking to possible suppliers. Blazer Pocket badges. Currently speaking to several suppliers overseas and have sent them our specification and design requirements. These are made with 'woven bullion wire' and as we require a high standard, will want view samples electronically. Also investigating a supply of beret badges and cuff links. If there are any items that we can add to the Q Store, I am happy to receive suggestions.

Ubique,

Craig F Hewett ED
Quartermaster,
Royal NZ Artillery Association.
(Just call me Q)
027 4736004