



NZ GUNNER

Royal New Zealand Artillery Association Newsletter

PRESIDENT'S REPORT: END OF TOUR DECEMBER 2010– OCTOBER 2021

BY TONY MCLEOD

As I come to the end of my term as president, (December 2010–October 2021), I thought it might be worth trying to summarise where the RNZA Assn has gone over the past 10 years.

Change of Constitution (10 November 2012). The most significant occurrence during my tenure as President has been the amendment to the Constitution in 2012 when we made membership free and automatic to all those who had worn the gunner badge. This meant the committee could concentrate on activities and welfare rather than just trying to collect a \$25 annual sub from members, many of whom would simply have forgotten to pay and been 'struck off' the membership roll. With this fresh approach, everyone who had been a gunner in the RNZA, RF, and TF, serving and retired, was now a full member. With the change in the definition of full membership came a redefinition of associate membership, life membership, and honorary membership. Life membership could now be granted to any full member who had given exemplary service to either the RNZA and/or the RNZAA, rather than just reaching the age of 80 years, and honorary membership could be granted to any non-full member who had given significant service. I would like to thank and congratulate all those who have been awarded life and honorary memberships under the new definitions. Life members: 2013: Gus Rivers, Geof Hitchings, Ray Andrews, Barry Dreyer, Graeme Black, Denis Dwayne, Don Kenning, Brian Jerry Meyer. 2014: Peter Hansen. 2015: Paul O'Connor,

Tony McLeod, Pete Dawson. 2016: Ross Goldsworthy, Barry Cook. 2017: Skin Frances, Bernie McCort. 2019: Peter Miles. 2020: Rick Williams, Ron Turner, Nic Thornton, Paul Southwell, Roger Pearce, Roger Newth, Rob Munro, Danny McCort, Kerry Lee, Fred Goodall, Con Flinkenberg, Terry Farrell, John Deazley, Woody Barrett.

Honorary members: Sherwood Young, Rev Derm Buchanan, Catherine Rivers, Pam Miley-Terry, Chris Turver, Kim McGrath, Graham Hampton.

Royal patronage: It came as a surprise to us all when we received news from Government House that Her Excellency Dame Patsy Reddy would become our Patron. We believe it was probably a slip-of-the-pen by some ADC who read our title 'Royal' NZ Artillery Assn as being a Royal Entity in its own right.

Website. With the change in Constitution came the establishment of the RNZAA website (launched in October 2012) due to the efforts of Mike Dakin and Deb Lees of Weblogix, and a Facebook page (launched in March 2013) due to the efforts of Colin Jansen. These two new mediums for communication led to the appointment of a webmaster and the need to not only clearly enunciate our procedures but also to establish nominal rolls of those who qualified for membership. This was a major task to which several members have given considerable effort and has been ongoing for the past 10 years. The website is our window to the world, but I don't believe it has struck home yet with members. Facebook has largely replaced the need for MuzzleFlashes, so I don't think members are really using the website for much at all. It's probably a bit outdated now and could use some attention. Chris Morris has done a sterling job as webmaster (and membership secretary) for the past five years.

NZ Gunner. For many years Marie Roberts was the backbone of the NZ Gunner, maintaining contact with the older members and sourcing anecdotes from a wide range of sources. With the advent of Facebook and the website, the role of the NZ Gunner really became a journal, a record of the RNZAA's activities over the preceding three months. After Marie retired we had considerable difficulty getting a regular editor with Mike Dakin

David Bahler, Michael Doughty, Mike Dakin again, and Woody Barrett all helping to keep the issues coming. It was a relief when Secretary/Treasurer Chris Pearce took on the additional work as editor.

Reunions/AGMs. At the reunion in 2011 in Christchurch it was decided to move the annual reunions around the country. This was a timely initiative as with the aging 161 Battery members in Papakura (and the passing of Jeff Waters in Dec '13) finding people to organise events became an issue. The moving reunions coincided with the commemoration of the sesquicentennials of the Territorial Batteries and reunions in Auckland (11A Battery), Wellington (22D Battery), Christchurch (32E Battery), and Dunedin (31 B Battery), which were extremely well attended. It is incredible how long the esprit de corps of the Territorial Batteries has lasted (25 years after disestablishment) and is testament to the Territorial Force 'system'. Taupo played its part in hosting reunions and we were also very lucky to have the support of 16th Field Regt for a couple of reunions in Palmerston North. I always saw the natural location for the committee of the RNZAA to be in the Palmerston North/Horowhenua area since the move of 16th Field Regt to Linton, but the critical mass of retired members in the area has not yet occurred. Lots of members around the country have been involved in the organisation of these reunions and I would like to thank them all (too many to mention here). I would hope that the reunion might remain in Trentham for the near time frame as the critical mass of gunners is currently in Wellington.

I need to mention the fantastic support we have received from Kim McGrath and Graham Hampton, founders of the Australian Artillery Association. Kim and Graham rounded up a team of 6-10 Australian gunners who attended our reunions for about eight years (until COVID clicked in). They were also very generous in their annual donations to us of banners, flags, table runners, projection prisms, badges, and much more. Thank you Kim and Graham (who were made honorary members in 2018).

Locations of reunions/AGMs: 2009 - Browns Bay, 2010 - Taupo, 2011 - Christchurch, 2012 - Browns Bay, 2013 - Palmerston North, 2014 - Wellington, 2015 - Christchurch, 2016 - Browns Bay, 2017 - Palmerston North, 2018 - Dunedin, 2019 - Taupo, 2020 - Trentham, 2021 - Trentham.

Commemorative activities. Ten years' worth of Gunner's Days and St Barbara Day celebrations have required the ongoing interest and efforts of a variety of regional representatives around the country. The nature of the events has varied from formal dinners to luncheons to gatherings at the local bar, generally dependent on the level of enthusiasm of the gunners in the region at the time. Photos and reports from those

regional events remind us that we are a national organisation and it is significant that we can keep celebrating these occasions. They serve to rejuvenate our networks, our contacts for welfare purposes.

Welfare. The most significant contribution the Assn has made on veteran welfare advocacy has been the submissions made to the Paterson Review (Oct '15) and to the government review of the Veteran Support Act 2014 (Feb and Aug '19). In May 2015, an RNZAA veteran review subcommittee was formed (Rob Munro, Tony Mcleod, Mike Dakin, Peter Miles, David Weston, and Lyndsay Skinner) and met at Porirua to formulate a paper for consideration in the Paterson Review. The subsequent submission 'How Was It For You?' was tabled at the Chief of Army Conference by the Col Comdt (Nov '15), and the Minister of Veterans Affairs Advisory Board by the Chairman of the Board (Lt Col Chris Mullane). In 2019 the government (Mr Ron Mark Minister of Veterans Affairs) conducted a review of the VSA14, so a new RNZAA sub committee was formed, under Rob Munro and Barry Dreyer's guidance, which formulated a written submission to the Review Committee. The chief architect of this submission was Vice President Greg Thwaite, whose incredible efforts produced a logical, succinct, comprehensive paper. Because of upcoming elections (October '19) the time frame for submissions was dramatically curtailed and within three weeks of submission of the written paper, the RNZAA was called upon for an oral submission to the Select Committee for Amdt of VSA14. The team of oral presenters, Greg Thwaite, Barry Dreyer, and Bernie McCort (Tony Mcleod was stuck in Auckland airport due to fog) presented our case, which was supported by seven other Veterans Associations including the Vietnam Veterans Assn, and was extremely well received by the Select Committee. The written submission can be viewed on our website. We owe a debt of gratitude to Greg Thwaite, Barry Dreyer, Rob Munro, and Bernie McCort for their tremendous efforts on this matter.

With Veterans Affairs now being way more active in their attempts to reach out to the veteran community, we have actively participated in all the VA Expos which have been held around the country over the past three years. These Expos allow us to touch base with our members, some of whom we may have lost contact with and Bernie McCort is to be thanked for her active participation in this initiative.

RNZRSA. I have been keen to maintain our affiliation to the RNZRSA despite the obvious problems they have faced in recent years in maintaining numbers, and subsequent branch closures, and wide criticism of a lack of foresight and leadership by the RSA over veteran advocacy.

Whatever its problems, I believe it is an institution which is well worth supporting as it learns to adapt to a changing environment. Our thanks to David Weston who has acted our representative for the past 10 years (he is now the official representative of all the affiliated Associations on the President's Advisory Board).

OP Ubique. This maintenance project kicked off in mid 2016 when Grant Hayes at the National Army Museum in Waiouru asked for assistance in maintaining some guns and equipment which were stored at the museum. Colin Jansen picked up the challenge and gathered a team of volunteers who spent several weekends at the museum. This initiative then grew to include Linton, Trentham, North Head, and Pt Jerningham and the team of volunteers grew across the North Island. In 2019 OP Ubique was extended to the South Island when Burham Military Camp requested assistance with maintaining their display guns and Pete Dawson stepped up to the challenge. When Colin moved to Australia in 2020, Paul Weldram (a non gunner) stepped up to be the national coordinator. Op Ubique has become one of the most significant welfare initiatives of the Assn – not only does it ensure that our colours which are on display around the country are presented at the highest standard, but also has tremendous welfare benefits in the sense of purpose and camaraderie it brings to the participants. Well done to all those involved in Op Ubique, and in particular Colin Jansen.

Interaction with 16th Field Regiment. One of my main goals when I took over as President was to try to establish more relevance for the Assn to the regular force. I had this vision of Assn members lining the streets clapping any time the Regiment paraded in public, and Assn members joining 'the boys' for a beer in the gun park on return from major exercises. These rarely occurred due to the dislocation of the regiment from the Assn committee, but I do feel there was way more awareness of the Assn because of initiatives by COs and RSMs; attendance at Live Shell Practices by Assn members was hugely appreciated, as was help with hosting of RNZAA reunions in Palmerston North and Linton, including static displays of current equipment. Our aim now is to ensure that everyone leaving the Regt is connected with the Assn; I believe that the first five years of civilian life, and later on, around retirement age, are the two stages when the Assn may be of greatest assistance to its members, helping them seeking employment (and often reemployment) upon release from the service and then offering networking associations later in life.

Mentor Scheme. In 2012/13 we established a Mentorship scheme with the Regiment whereby we linked senior ex gunners up with subalterns, with the aim of establishing long term relationships and providing advice, as required. About 20 of these relationships were

established over the course of three years, but then the reality of sustainability clicked in, we ran out of suitable people to be mentors. So the concept changed to the Assn being prepared to provide mentorship to any of the CO's officers as he saw fit. That offer remains in place today.

I would like to personally thank each of the Commanding Officers for their support of the Assn; Lt Colonels Matt Boggs, Matt Weston, Andrew Shaw, Anthony Robinson, Ben Bagley, Kristian Dunne, Dean Gherling and the RSMs, WO1s Evan Kareko, Wayne Mcasey, Richard Theodore, and Heath Southcombe. They all made a significant contribution to the survival of the Assn. I must make a special mention of Administrator Ms Carin Roberts whose corporate memory at 16th Field Regt has been very helpful. In 2011 the **RNZA Assn Trophy** was inaugurated as a means of trying to make more connection and awareness between the Assn and the regiment. The trophy was to be used to identify that person (of any rank) who best epitomised the values expected of a gunner, and came to be associated with that NCO who was nominated 'Gunner of the Year'. The RNZAA Trophy is presented by the President each year at the Annual Dinner and the recipients have been: 2011 Sgt Patrick Brock, 2012 Bdr Andrew Smith, 2013 Sgt Lance Greer, 2014 Bde Riki Simmonds, 2015 Bdr Jordan Griffin, 2016 Lbdr Mason Smith, 2017 Lbdr Cody Lewis, 2018 Bdr Walker, 2019 Bdr Solomomua Falemai, 2020 Bdr Ryan Buchanan.

RNZA Historical Trust. In July 2012 the RNZA Historical Trust was formed as a vehicle for the preservation of Artillery items and pursuance of items of historical interest. This included the recording of all items held at Arch Hill to be held in the 'Register of Items' on the website, raising funds for the purchase of significant medal sets, and writing of the biography of Brig Reginald Miles. At the time of formation, several of the RSAs were closing down around the country so it was felt it was important to make sure any items of interest to the RNZA were recorded and not left to drift off into private ownership. The Historic Items Register and publication of the book are still works in progress. Founding Trustees July 2012; Mathew Weston, Commanding Officer 16th Field Regt, Barry Dreyer, Colonel Commandant, Graham Birch, Chairman, Tony McLeod, President RNZAA, Evan Kareko, RSM 16th Field Regt, Tom Roche, Trustee, David Weston, Trustee, Kerry Lee, Trustee, Michael Doughty, Trustee, Damien Jacques, Trustee Later Appointments: Rob Munro, Chairman, Con Flinkenberg, Historian.

Financial Performance

I do not intend to produce a Balance Sheet, just summarise:

- 1 October 2011 total cash assets were \$25,452
- 1 October 2020 total cash assets were \$59,651.
- This shows a net increase of cash assets over 10 years of \$34,199, an average of \$3,400 per year.

Income. Since we deleted subscriptions in 2012, we have generated our income from donations, Q Store sales, and profits from reunions. Donations: may I make special mention of the Auckland Artillery Officers Mess and 173rd Airborne Assn who both donated the remainder of their cash assets to the RNZAA, and Colonel Peter Hansen who donated very generously for several welfare initiatives (wreaths on ANZAC Day, Op Ubique). Q Store: We are very grateful to Colin Jansen, Andrew Donnellan, and most recently Craig Hewett for their considerable efforts in sourcing suppliers and coordinating sales of a variety of gunner items. With website overheads of about \$1,000 (now only 20% of that amount), we always relied on the Q store to cover those basic expenses.

Expenditure. With the advent of email, our main expense of printing and postage of newsletters was eliminated. We have had very low admin costs, and while we have donated to several charitable causes over the years, we have been careful to ensure we do not duplicate contributions where other government sources are available. We provide Op Ubique with travel vouchers to help offset the personal expenses associated with attendance at these weekends.

Committee. I have tallied up the names of 38 members who have volunteered for committee duties over the past ten years. The average age of the executive committee has dropped from early 70s to around 60 yrs, a natural change which reflects the age of our active members. All these volunteers are to be thanked for their hard work in keeping the wheels of the Assn turning; (my apologies for any errors or omissions).

Executive Committee.

- President: Tony McLeod ('10-'21)
- Vice President: Kemp Solomon ('13), Greg Thwaite ('14-'21)
- Secretary/Treasurer: Tony McLeod('09-'12), Bernie McCort, Chris Pearce
- Treasurer: John Botica, Trevor Higginson, Peter Fraser
- Webmaster: Mike Dakin, Deb Giles, Skin Frances, Chris Morris
- Quarter Master: Colin Jansen, Andrew Donnellan, Craig Hewett
- Op Ubique Coordinator: Colin Jansen, Paul Weldran
- Editor NZ Gunner: Marie Roberts, David Bahler, Mikey Doughty, Woody Barrett, Chris Pearce
- RNZRSA Representative: David Weston

- Account Inspectors: Wayne Anker, Greg Thwaite, Alistair Irving, Craig Hewett
- Committee members: Mike Dakin ('08-)Bill Stewart ('09-), Alan Taylor ('09-), Jeff Waters ('09-), Colin Jansen ('10-'20), Bob Kerslake ('09-'10), John Botica('10-'12), Joe Panoho ('09-'10), Denis Schofield ('11), Greg Thwaite('11-), Peter Miles ('12-'16), Kemp Solomon ('12-'13), Ken Davies ('12-'13), Bernie McCort ('13-'18), Peter Fraser ('12-'13), Andrew Donnellan ('13-'20), Woody Barrett ('16-'17), Maaka McKinney ('16), Shay Bassett ('20-), Bryan Moles ('20-), Paul Weldram('20-).

The structure of our 'doers' (not just committee) has varied over the years with the availability of volunteers at the time. In the early days, I tried to establish a formalised structure of regional reps and these pers were not only the coordinators of activities in their areas but also the organisers of reunions. As time went by the structure became far more informal, with assistance being sought wherever the reunion was to be held or help was needed. There are too many volunteers to mention by name here, but they have all done their bit to keep the 'network' of gunners alive.

Personal thanks. I would like to single out one person who has provided guidance and assistance to me for the whole 10 years, our ex Colonel Comdt Barry Dreyer. Barry was tireless in his support of all aspects of the Assn's performance, and he thoroughly deserved the Defence Distinguished Service Award he received in 2016. Thank you and congratulations Barry.

"You get out what you put in." I have gained so much from my participation in the RNZA Assn but the most significant would be the relationships I have enjoyed and respect I have developed for those who I have had the good fortune to work closely with, most particularly Barry Dreyer and Mike Dakin, and more latterly the hard workers like Bernie McCort, Greg Thwaite, Skin Frances, Chris Morris, Chris Pearce, those who I have sought guidance from, like Ray Andrews, Rob Munro, and those whose company I have come to look forward to at reunions like Paul O'Connor, Barry Cook, and Danny McCort. It has been a wonderful tenure. I intend to nominate Maj Shay Bassett as my replacement at the AGM in October '21. This will mean that the committee will become Wellington-based (as it was in the immediate post-WW2 years) and, hopefully, this closer proximity to Linton will lead to even closer links with 16th Field Regt. Good luck Shay.

Ubique

Tony McLeod

LAST POST

BY RNZAA

- SOPER, Murray Allen: 96960, Gnr, K-Force. Passed peacefully at home on September 7, 2021 in Invercargill, in his 89th year.
- JOHNS, Donald Ivan: 243908, Gnr, 6th Fd Regt WW2. Passed away peacefully in Waimate in August 2021.
- YATES, Robert John (Bob): 821362, RNZA. Passed away on August 8, 2021, in his 93rd year in Ta Anau.
- DONNELLY, John Frank: K691182, Spr, RNZE, 161 Bty Vietnam. Passed away peacefully on 30th July 2021 at Palmerston North Hospital
- HADDON, Oriwa Taiaroa. 626073, L/Bdr, 161 Bty, Vietnam. Passed away 20 July 2021 aged 80 in Whanganui.
- LONGMORE, Kenneth Alfred (Ken): 20853, Captain, 15th Heavy Coast Bty, Fort Dorset Wgtn (pre-WW2 1938-39), 7th Anti-Tank Regt and 6th Fd Regt (Greece and North Africa), POW July 1942-1945, NZ Artillery, WW2 . Passed away peacefully on July 18, 2021 at Woburn Presbyterian Home and Hospital in Lower Hutt, aged 103. Full obituary on Stuff website. <https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/125974899/obituary-ken-longmore-soldier-who-served-with-charles-upham>
- BARTLETT, Stanley Maxwell 627973, Gnr, NZ Artillery, and 43229, Leading Aircraftsman, RNZAF, WW2. Passed away on 7th July, 2021, peacefully at Whangarei Hospital, aged 97 years.



COLONEL COMMANDANT'S CORNER

BRIGADIER (RTD) PAUL SOUTHWELL

The last few months have seen the soldiers of 16 Fd Regiment back on OP Protect looking after managed isolation facilities, made all the more difficult by the outbreak of the delta version. A big well done to those soldiers.

The rest of us have had yet another forced holiday eagerly awaiting those midday news specials announcing the latest 24hr COVID count. I hope it has not been too hard on any of you and that you have enjoyed the occasional neighborhood walk.

The representative Colonel Commandant of the Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery (Brigadier Roach retired) recently sent a letter to all of our members and families recognizing the 74th anniversary of the Royal New Zealand Artillery. Our anniversary is 1 September, which marks the amalgamation of the regular and volunteer corps of artillery in 1947. The Australians are commemorating their 150th anniversary this year but have postponed many of the events due to COVID.

Passchendaele: New Zealand Artillery in the battle of 4th October 1917.

Picking up on our journey with New Zealand Artillery in WW1, we last looked at the successful attack at Messines in June 1917, a prelude to the third battle of Ypres (commonly known as Passchendaele).

The Passchendaele ridge dominated the Ypres salient. General Haig's plan was to break out from the Ypres salient then encircle the German right flank and capture the German submarine base at Bruges. His plan was strongly opposed by the French and many British politicians. In the end it was agreed to, probably on the back of the decisive victory at Messines. Haig also wanted to get the operation completed before the onset of winter.

The attack started on 31 July but lost momentum, bogged down by ceaseless rain. NZ Div Artillery initially operated outside of the main attack, supporting minor operations such as raids, and harassing fire often with gas shells with the purpose of drawing German resources from the main area of battle. Counter battery (CB) fire was severe and caused the loss of many guns but relatively light casualties.

After a short period of recreation and training in September the gunners were returned to the front to support the NZ Division in the next major assault.

After taking serious losses to CB fire on their first gun positions the NZ gunners deployed to new positions, which at least offered some scant cover behind a small hill where the guns had to be deployed wheel to wheel and within 800yds of enemy positions. A slight break in weather and reduced CB fire allowed them to prepare pits, dump ammunition (960rds per 18-pdr), and conduct registration and calibration.

The 4 Oct battle was fought on a seven-mile front, with the NZ frontage being 2000yds. To cover this frontage the New Zealand Commander Div Arty (CDA) (Brigadier Johnston) had under his command 10 brigades of artillery (a brigade being the equivalent of a Regiment in modern terms). His artillery plan had five barrages, separated by 200yds:

- "A" barrage, was a creeping barrage moving just forward of the infantry, and halting forward of objective lines to provide protection while troops consolidated. It had 132 x18-pr guns.
- "B" barrage 200 yds ahead of "A" barrage consisted of 48 x18-prs and 60 x4.5in howitzers.
- "C" barrage was 65 machine guns. Machine guns were held as a separate corps rather than integrated into infantry sections, and in this case used in the indirect role.
- "D" barrage consisted of 6in howitzers.
- "E" barrage was a mixture of real heavy hitters: 60-prs, 8in, and 9.2in howitzers.

Zero hr was 0600 hrs on 4 Oct. The barrages went well and the NZ Div secured both objective lines, taking over 1000 prisoners and gaining valuable ground in preparation for the next phase of the battle.

In this area, (due to the ground being reclaimed swamp) the Germans had abandoned their defense tactic of lines of trenches and adopted a series of concrete bunkers. MG teams would take cover in them during bombardment. Although these bunkers had firing slits it was common for the Germans to set up on top of these bunkers once heavy bombardment ceased. Much of their infantry was held back in preparation for counter attacks. You can see how the series of barrages was designed to overcome this, with hvy guns and howitzers aimed at shock effect, destruction of bunkers, and wire, followed by machine guns raking the tops of the bunkers, while infantry continued to close under covering fire from the lighter guns.

If you ever visit the Tyne cot cemetery you will see one of these bunkers. The British soldiers called them Tyne cots as they reminded them of Tyneside workers cottages.

NZ Artillery remained in the field while the NZ Div was relieved. Heavier rain was to fall in the days after the 4 Oct attack foretelling of the tragic events of 12 Oct, which we will look at next edition.



An Australian 9.2in (230mm) howitzer in action in Passchendaele.



A MG group at Passchendaele. The terrain typical of conditions throughout the battle. Worsening as the battle progressed.



German bunker at Tyne Cot Cemetery close to Passchendaele.

2021 AGM UPDATE

RNZAA

The RNZAA committee has been monitoring the current COVID-19 levels across NZ in the knowledge that Trentham Camp can only host our AGM weekend if Wellington is at COVID-19 Alert Level 1. We also note that a number of key committee members, and members in general, reside in Auckland, and their ability to attend the AGM also needs consideration.

The Association committee reviewed this position today (decision D Day) and determined that the likelihood of NZ being at COVID-19 Alert Level 1 on 30 October with unrestricted travel nationally was not high. A decision has, therefore, been made to cancel the RNZAA AGM weekend scheduled for 29–31 October 2021.

The AGM meeting itself will instead be conducted as a virtual meeting in order to fulfil the Association's constitutional requirements.

The virtual AGM will be held on Saturday 30 October 2021 at 1100hrs.

The committee is now working on the mechanics of this meeting and advice on how to join this meeting will be circulated once planning is complete. An agenda and accounts will be circulated by email to the membership for review no later than 23 October 2021.

Should there be any committee member nominations, motions, or general business for inclusion in the AGM agenda, please email these to me by 16 October.

I appreciate the advice above is very disappointing, but we look forward to being able to come together for regional and national events in 2022.

Regards
Chris Pearce
Secretary
rnza.association@gmail.com
021918821

DAVID BAHLER

RNZAA

The RNZAA and its membership were horrified to hear that one of our own, and past editor of this publication, was the driver who has been subjected to two attacks whilst performing.

Our thoughts are with you David.

Ubique

JOIN THE COMMITTEE

RNZAA

Dear RNZA Association members.

Your committee is made up of volunteers who through their interest in the Association, contribute to the running of your organisation in many ways.

These functions are varied and include membership, website, finance, Q Store, Veteran Affairs, legal, e-newsletter, administration, and activities such as reunions, AGMs, Operation Ubique, LSP's liaison with Regt.

At the moment we are seeking volunteers/helpers to join the committee (or even outside of the formal committee) to 'spread the load'.

Two roles that do need filling are:

- NZ Gunner newsletter editor
- Secretary to deal with correspondence

However if you have a particular interest in either role or just wish to contribute to the committee then, please, let's hear from you.

With current committee members located across the whole country, all of these roles can be managed remotely. Future committee meetings will more than likely be held via a media such as Zoom, Skype, etc., — one common to all.

You do not need to be at the upcoming Assn AGM/reunion to put your name forward. Just email us at rnza.association@gmail.com



SAILING VESSEL ESSENCE

BY STEPHEN NEWMAN

Continued from last issue...

When we arrived at the bow of the life raft I remember thinking how tired I was and how flimsy the handholds on it looked from the water. I clutched a handgrip and expected it to pull off with my desperate clinging – I remember seeing it was a piece of synthetic material that had been heat glued to the raft and thinking there is no way that is going to stay on. It did. Over time we worked our way down the raft to the entry chute. Bruce disappeared up it first and my tether to him helped me get onto the chute. Getting stuck on the chute was when I noticed the tangle that I was in with Stuart, Pamela, the life ring, grab bag, dan-buoy and water bottle.

Bruce reached from inside the life raft and tried to pull me up from low down my back. This jammed my head into the side of the life raft (as it has two/three round tubes as walls) and my head was stuck in the cleft between two and bending as I was pulled backwards by the weight of the others and up by Bruce. I recall shouting: “stop pulling you are breaking my neck.” I don’t know if Bruce heard that, but he stopped pulling and appeared to lean over me. I suddenly felt the tangled weight leave me and I think Bruce had figured out we needed to release the tether to Pamela from me. I scrambled and was pulled up and into the bottom of the life raft.

Scrambling to my knees in the pitching life raft I saw Bruce had managed to catch hold of Pamela. As I arrived at the side Stuart floated into the side of the raft. I recall he look exhausted and was very pale. I grabbed Stuart and tried heaving up as Bruce tried to do the same with Pamela. The inability to get a grip in the life raft was awful. The most I managed was to get Stuart’s head and shoulders onto the top of the life raft, but he was then pulled down again by a surging sea which I battled repeatedly with to keep him alongside. One of his hands was locked on Pamela’s hand and I couldn’t get him to let go to try and hold the boat to help me lift him up.

I looked over at Bruce and said that we needed a knife or something to clear the tangle. We, I think, both knew that using a knife was dangerous as by freeing one we could easily lose the other. As we stared at each other I remember thinking “What the xxxx are we going to do now?” Looking down at Stuart, I noticed he had gone

from pale to really pale with markedly blue lips. His eyes kept closing and looked unfocused. I recall yelling at him to keep his eyes open and to give me his hand. Pamela seemed to hear this as I heard her shout: “You keep those eyes open Stuart – don’t you give up – keep them open.” He seemed to rally a little at her voice and his eyes focused a bit.

As this happened I was suddenly conscious of a big shadow over us. The Westpac Helicopter had arrived and already they had a diver at the door. As I watched, he jumped into the sea and with about three massive strokes was at the side of our raft. I was holding Stuart and shouted that he was the worst of us and needed help first and that he was all tangled. I doubt the crewman heard me, but nonetheless he grabbed hold of Stuart, pulled out a knife and began cutting ropes and tethers. At some stage Bruce came over to help me, as I recall him helping to hold Stuart. Before Stuart could have his rescue sling fitted I remember telling Stuart that he had to: “Let go of Pamela...we are safe...let her go.” He let go and as the slack of the rescue loop was taken up, I am positive I heard him say “Where’s Pammie?”

Stuart was quickly winched up. I remember he was festooned in claggage like the dan-buoy, life ring and grab bag. These appeared to fall off him as he went up, so I guess the crewman freed this encumbrance from him. Even as Stuart was heading up to the helicopter it was already departing to chase after Pamela who had been released from us when the tangle was cut away. Bruce and I finally sat in the raft and saw the helicopter hover, and the diver again dive in and shortly afterwards the welcome sight of Pamela ascending to the helicopter.

The helicopter then disappeared from our sight, so Bruce and I set about closing up the roof of the life raft, which was flapping like crazy (not that I had noticed that before). Upon closing up one side, I was disappointed to find that there was the hilt of a knife sticking out from a scabbard on the supporting canopy frame above the entry chute. I hadn’t seen it earlier. Maybe that could have helped us get Pamela and Stuart apart and into the raft. I suspect it would have made little difference based on the speed of arrival of the helicopter – but guess I will always wonder.

Once closed up, Bruce and I huddled together near the one open side. We discussed who would go up next and on me saying I was really worried that my lifejacket was failing, Bruce immediately said “You go up next.” The helicopter arrived overhead and the crewman again came down. He looked into the raft saw Bruce and grabbed him ...exiting right away. I recall thinking: “I hope there’s still room up there.”

And in case there wasn't I thought I might have to wait for a second helicopter so I had better plan and ready myself for that. Looking around I thought that it was a pretty good and comfortable looking life raft compared to the horrible octagonal one I had used in the Freyberg pool for Advanced Sea Survivor (where I had said that you would never get me in a life raft when it made me sea sick in the pool. I have changed my mind since then!). I also was surprised that there seemed to be no survival stores bag attached to the raft inside (and wonder if this was thrown outside the raft and added to Stuarts tangled state).

Fortunately the crewman appeared again and I put the sling on with his help and left the boat. On arrival in the helicopter, I saw that Bruce and Pamela were well wrapped in survival blankets...the fact Stuart wasn't I knew meant that he had died. It seemed unreal. My initial euphoria dissipated and it was a grim, long (45 minute) and silent flight back to Whangarei. This was further deepened by the need for me to identify all on-board the aircraft on a clip board handed to me - and I realised the crew were trying to establish which of the two fifty year old men on-board (myself or Stuart) was deceased.

After Recovery

Before Pamela had left intensive care, Pamela, Bruce and I had various discussions that we had to honour Stuart by ensuring we factually told what had happened, so that lessons could be identified. We discussed that the Police interviews we had were of limited value. They were not 'yachties' and that we needed to make sure Maritime NZ used yachties to individually debrief us, so that good questions were asked and lessons learned. We also discussed that none of us had seen all things and that if any report was going to be best it would ultimately be Maritime NZ's collective, date-timed investigation. We all agreed to be as frank with them as possible and to not parrot each other - only saying what we had seen or felt.

We all agreed that Stuart's death was a great tragedy - only two hours from safety afforded by the shelter of Cape Brett and that he had died for the want of a few minutes or changes in our passage.

But so many things could have been different, prior to the loss of SV Essence, that would have saved time. There is not now and never will be a need for a "What if?" blame game. Sometimes really awful things just happen - and Stuart's death is one.

The Lessons

In no priority order:

1. Weather forecasts: This needs a look at. How can six models/forecasts be so different from presumably the same data? Does there need to be a standard (like for farming), where the worst scenario is presented as the forecast - as any 'good' to a secondary consideration

will always suffer from positive bias.

2. Reefs: Why do riggers put the most common reefs into the mast as opposed to negatively work back? That is, why isn't the No. 3 reef the first to be cockpit rigged...with the easiest rig being left for on-deck rigging.

3. Drogue: More advice around the use of drogues is needed in Advanced Sea handling courses and Advanced Sea Survivors courses. Realistically you cannot deploy a drogue in the midst of a storm without risk to the boat.

4. Weatherboards: More advice around these is needed. These should have been capable of fitting as part of heavy weather preparation. The notion that you had to crack out current windows is unrealistic. This is a design flaw of the Bavaria.

5. Hoving-to: Like drogues, more advice around this is necessary. Like when is it safe to do this basically broaching manoeuvre? If expecting certain wind strengths, should the recommended action always be - Hove to?

6. Heavy weather process sheets: Heavy weather is something dreaded and actively avoided by sailors. Sometimes it is inevitable and when this is realised beforehand (as it was for us), a check or process sheet would be a good idea. Have you reefed? Secured the boat? Ordered all crew into full survival gear? Established communications with shore about your location and intentions? Can you establish communications via Iridium? HF? Have you considered what you will take with you if forced to abandon ship/is the grab bag fully stocked and contents known to all? Etc.

7. Lifejackets: Lifejackets are fundamental to survival. At the Advanced Sea Survivors course, time was spent on how important crotch straps were. I know mine was tightly applied but still not tight enough and its value was degraded by missing or un-locatable neck clips. Neck clips need to be bigger. The crotch straps need to be mounted on your chest and wider strapped so you can see how to tighten it in the water. The mouthpiece needs to be softer at its ends and smaller - mine kept poking me in the back of the throat and bent awkwardly during inflation attempts. The jacket should (possibly) carry a sharp sheathed knife - or everyone should have a diver's knife available to them somewhere. Ropes are ever present in boats and whilst they can keep a group together in the water they can also tangle you irreversibly. The odds of being found dramatically increase if you have a PLB. I believe they should be standard on all Coastal and Ocean approved life jackets. If not standard yacht clubs and marine shops should be encouraged to have a 'rent' pool available.

8. Life raft: On the Advanced Sea Survivor course,

the ripping off of life rafts from decks featured. Maybe it's time to act and realise it is too common an occurrence and require Cat 1 boats to have them ready to hand – but in a rear hatch and not secured to the deck. Yachts rarely go down immediately – we would have had time to extract the life raft from an aft hatch (maybe with help of a solo winch?). Loss of the EPIRB was devastating. Maybe the fact that life rafts and PLB's need servicing at about the same time lends itself to the notion that the life raft too should have a PLB located inside it.

9. Dan-buoy: The dan-buoy is designed only to be useful in a man-overboard situation. Maybe it needs the mandatory addition of a radar reflector to enable quicker searches. Whilst at it maybe it should also have a strobe attached to it? (If it doesn't already?). Our situation needs to be learned from; we could have either fully deployed the dan-buoy so the float was away from us and the rope not curling around us – or on deck we should have tied the rope so it couldn't come adrift as it is designed to. Our tangling experience needs to be discussed and maybe added as a consideration to the heavy weather process sheet (and use of a knife to shorten the rope). Radar reflector. Process sheet advice to cut its length or allow its full deployment (reduce the tangle threat).

10. Position identification from water: Stuart used the port and starboard indications from the water. This has the potential to be confusing as to whose Port or Starboard is being discussed. Maybe the standard should be taught that indicating one's position should be clock based. That is; the plane's nose is at 12 o'clock to the pilot and when in the water refer to this to indicate where you are from the pilot's perspective.

11. PANPAN/ SEARCH AIRCRAFT Readiness: On reflection I am thinking that instruction around what is a PANPAN situation is deficient. Realistically when Pamela asked for a one hourly report time, Coastguard could have confirmed/queried whether we were actually in a PANPAN situation. The answer is we were. I am not sure what Search and Rescue processes are activated on this, but would think as a minimum that SAR elements are warned out and prepared to deploy if a report deadline is

missed. Active AIS plotting/monitoring could also occur etc. With an eye to the future the imminent replacement of the six RNZAF P3K2 Orion with four P8 Poseidon poses a response delay as the new planes will be located in central North Island vice current P3 location in Auckland. Increased transit times and the reduction of available air-frames need to be factors in future SAR response planning.

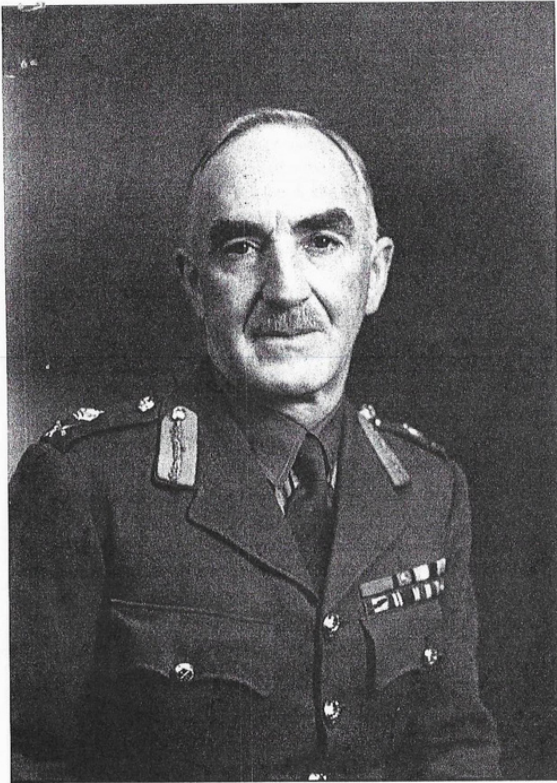
12. Mental Fortitude: I think the fact that we have three survivors and almost four is testament to mental fortitude. We all stayed positive. We all planned to

survive. We encouraged each other with jokes and other observations. Mental fortitude can be gained in stressful situations by return to a familiar process – hence the need for a heavy weather process sheet to remind all to stay calm and plan. I think for me military experience provided this and I was planning all the time – including when I was the last in the life raft and I looked around to figure out where and how I would wait for another helicopter, should the one above me have been full. I would recommend all survivors are asked if they could support Sea Survivor courses in the future. I for one would welcome the opportunity to discuss survival strategies and the need to be calm and ever planning next steps.

The end.

SPEECHES THAT SHAPED NEW ZEALAND 1814-1956

HUGH TEMPLETON, IAN TEMPLETON AND JOSH EASBY



Edward Puttick (1890-1976)

312

confront you in the future. The course provides a means of acquiring knowledge but it requires each of you to make a special personal endeavour to benefit to the utmost from it ... in matters such as word of command, methods of instruction ... and improving your own methods.

On the arrival of the men on October 3, all of you, officers and non commissioned officers, must, in your own sphere, make a special effort to ensure that all the arrangements work smoothly. Avoid fuss and excitement ... use your imagination, think well ahead, know your job, and be prepared for all eventualities.

With regard to uniforms ... you should remember that everything was in train for the provision of better uniforms ... Your duty is to see that the uniforms fit properly and pay particular attention to the fitting of boots. Nothing is more trying than ill-fitting boots. They can cause infinite harm to the feet and interrupt training.

You yourselves as leaders have a duty to maintain the highest possible standards. You must cultivate self-discipline in order to be able to maintain, as is your duty, good discipline throughout the force. You must take special care to see that orders are properly promulgated, so that the men know them.

You yourselves must scrupulously obey all orders you receive, and similarly must insist upon those under you also obeying orders.

So far as training is concerned, unless you make a prior study of the work to be done each day, you will not get the best results. You must cultivate the habit of loyalty to the organisation to which you belong, and loyalty not only to your superiors but also to the men under you.

As an indication of the high standards we must aspire to, our responsibility is to maintain the tradition New Zealanders established during the Great War ... a tradition that is recorded in Army Orders in Paris November 1919:

'The President of the Council of the Ministry of War mentions the name of ... Major General Sir Andrew Russell of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force, who has led a splendid division to countless victories. Its exploits have not been equalled ... its reputation was such that on the arrival of the division on the Somme battlefield during the most critical days of March 1918, the flight of the inhabitants immediately

professional officers. Haddon Donald, later Major Haddon Donald, told of there being only two professional officers allocated to the Wellington battalion of 900 citizen soldiers. Their lack of preparedness was to wreak havoc in the early disastrous campaigns, best told in Sir Geoffrey Cox's¹³¹ book *Two Battles — of Crete and Sidi Rezegh*.

Only out of those painful fields did the 2nd NZEF emerge, like its predecessor, with pride. By the end of the Italian campaign, Donald called it the best and most versatile heavy division in the world. In Geoff Cox's term, and he was a part, NZ Div was 'the Xth Legion of the 8th Army'. Its soldiers wore the black flash with pride.

It all began with the rousing call to arms by Colonel Puttick, Officer Commanding the Central Military District, at Trentham on September 27, 1939.¹³²

War demands efficiency, especially efficiency in leaders. We need have no doubt about the quality of our men. They will be equal to any in the world. The need is for you leaders, as far as possible, to measure up to the same heights.

So far as I have any part in this Force, I would like to make it quite clear that no considerations whatsoever other than those of efficiency in the officers and NCOs will have any influence on me. If an officer or NCO is not up to the standard required, I shall have no hesitation in taking him away and substituting a better man.

In welcoming you to this historic ground for our military forces, you should remember the big part Trentham played in the last war, when assemblies like this were frequent, and since the war, in the courses of instruction that have influenced the military efficiency of our country.

You yourselves are now to enter on a course of instruction.

It will prove valuable learning for you, and for setting the standard of instruction when training your men. You will find it a very hard course, with long hours, but as time is all too short, you will welcome the opportunity to fit yourselves for the very responsible task which will

¹³¹ Geoffrey Cox, URL: <http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/people/geoffrey-cox>, (Ministry for Culture and Heritage).

¹³² Adapted from the Evening Post report of September 30, 1939.

313

ceased. The division covered itself with fresh glory during the battles of Ancre, at the Sambre, at Puesceux au Mont, Bapaume, Crevecoeur and Le Quesnoy ...'

Now I ask you to take notice of one fact: that on the arrival on the battlefield of these soldiers the flight of the inhabitants immediately ceased. It was indeed one of the most critical periods of the war. The line had been broken, the enemy was pressing through to anticipated victory, and the unfortunate people of the countryside were fleeing in terror from the horrors of the Boche invasion.

Figure to yourselves what it all meant. The road was crowded with fugitives, old men, despairing and weeping women and children, bearing with them such few household treasures as they could drag along. Then the arrival of troop trains with reinforcements — company after company of khaki men detrain and hurry into the firing line.

'Qui sont ces gens,'¹³³ the people ask? It was then the flight was stayed. The officer directing the evacuation sent his aide de camp to inquire the reason. 'General, the people say they are not going any further. These soldiers are from New Zealand et tout va bien.'¹³⁴ They will soon be back in their homes — in fact they are getting ready to return now.'

Such was the reputation of our men for valour and manhood, and conduct, that these war-stricken countrymen knew that they could confide their goods and chattels, and their lives, and the honour of their women in their safekeeping.

I can hold up to you no finer model as soldiers than was shown by the men that a little nation in a far off island in the Pacific sent to the aid of France in her hour of peril.

Puttick's words continued to inspire long after the war.

His son-in-law, Ralph Mullins, a brilliant External Affairs officer (1953-70) kept a copy of the General's Trentham address at his desk to provide inspiration in advising on our complex military involvement in South East Asia after World War Two.

¹³³ Translation from French: 'Who are these people?'

¹³⁴ Translation from French: '...and all is well.'

Q STORE SOON TO 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.



Kiwi bumper stickers
95mm x 95mm



Hand embroidered'
Wire Bullion Blazer jacket pocket badge
80mm x 68mm
\$35.00 each.



'Hand embroidered'
Wire Bullion Officer Beret Badge
45mm x 38mm (for Navy Blue beret)
\$20.00 Each

Ubique,

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

COMING SOON TO Q STORE

CONTACT: RNZAAQSTORE@GMAIL.COM

RNZAA FACE MASKS



NZ ARTILLERY FLAGS FOR FLAG POLES

