



# NZ GUNNER

Royal New Zealand Artillery Association Newsletter

Issue #179 - December 2017

## RNZA Association; Presidents Report 2017

Presented by Tony McLeod, President RNZAA, 30 September 2017.

### General/Membership

This year has seen active building of the Association based on **the changes** that we made to our Constitution in November 2012, when full membership was opened to all those who have served as gunners and membership became FREE, the member being deemed to have paid his or her dues to the RNZA Association by virtue of their service to the RNZA. This was a fundamental change to our Constitution and I don't mind repeating it again and again, as it changed our structure and how we should do business. In previous years reports I have referred to consolidation of those changes, but this year I believe we have seen actual growth in many respects based on those changes. We have definitely strengthened our 'nation-wide framework', with a very strong group now of Regional Reps and c'ttee at Large, and we have begun to 'flesh out' the bones with larger numbers of active members and relevant and meaningful activities. We now have over 1400 names in the membership database, 880 of which we have email addresses for (up from the 640 that we had last year).

It was a huge honour for the RNZA and the RNZA Assn when, in November 2016, Her Excellency the Governor General Dame Patsy Reddy accepted the appointment of Patron. It now behoves the Assn to conduct all its business, and pursue all its goals in the most exemplary manner. We have gladly accepted this challenge and welcome the honour of having Her Excellency as our patron. Our past Col Commandant, Col Barry Dreyer, has accepted the role of Vice-Patron.

At the last AGM I formally thanked Col Dreyer for his outstanding contribution to the Association as Colonel Commandant, and it is now my pleasure to formally welcome Col Matt Beattie as our new Col Commandant. I know the Assn and the RNZA as a whole will continue to flourish with Col Beattie in that role.

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

ANZAC Day: The 'Wreaths on ANZAC Day' initiative was

Regional Reps. I would like to thank our Regional Reps/Committee at Large for the part they have played in keeping the

## Last Post



39536 AVENELL, Kenneth James: , Spr RNZE,  
161 Bty VN—7/7/2017

211545, GREEN, Stanley John, Bdr RNZA, 161  
Bty VN, 12 July 2017

ROCH, Graham, ED, Maj, RNZA, 22(D) Bty, 4 (G)  
Mdm Bty, 13 July 2017

W74438, MARSTERS, Howard Nooroa (Howie),  
Sgt, 4 (G) Mdm Bty, 31 July 2017

971432, HASTIE, Ewan Douglas (Doug), Gnr, 16  
Fd Regt Korea, 4 August 2017

430121, Smith, Eric William, Gnr NZEF , 61st Bty  
NZA, WW2, 7 August 2017

937666, TILLEYSHORT, John Michael, Sgt 31  
Bty, 3 Fd Regt, 8 August 2017

339689, HAIRA, Ronald Michael (Ron), Lt (Rtd)  
RNZA, 16 August 2017

MEADS, Sir Colin Earl, KNZM, MBE, Gun Sgt,  
RNZA, 16th Intake CMT, 42 Bty, 4 (G) Mdm Bty,  
22 August 2017

326136, PARKINSON, Vivian Hugh, Dvr RNZA/  
RNZASC, Korea, 23 August 2017

351080, LOVEGROVE, Maurice (ED), 4 (G) Mdm  
Bty, RNZA, 24 August 2017

SLOANE, Dunbar Russell, 22(D) Bty 28/8/17

4548938, HAMBLING, Geoffrey Lawrence  
(Geoff), Gnr 4 (G) Mdm Bty 1/9/2017

for wreaths where a group of gunners are assembled, and photographed, in one location. There was however only one uptaker for payment this year. I would ask those here today to remember this offer for next ANZAC Day.

Gunners Day: The day was once again actively celebrated throughout the country and in the Islands, ranging from formal dinners in Auckland, Wellington (Bellamys), Christchurch and Rarotonga, to lunches in Katikati and beers in the tavern at Dunedin and various other locations. I would like to thank the organisers of the various celebrations held on Gunners Day, as this event (other than funerals) is the major activity which really does unite us in our common bond of service to the Royal Regt of NZ Artillery. I would stress that these celebrations do not need to be formal dinners; a sociable gathering at a local bar or RSA still shows that 'we have remembered'.

D Battery Sesquicentennial Over the weekend 21-23 July 17 we celebrated the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of D Battery in Wellington, in conjunction with a reunion of past members of 22D Battery personnel. The weekend was a great success with over 110 pers attending. Special thanks to Craig Hewett and Martin Coomber for all their efforts in organising this event. The celebrations included some very special activities; a 15 Gun salute from Pt Jerningham (one round for each decade) with ex members of 22 D Battery rotating through the 16 Fd Regt gun detachments- a big thanks to BSM 163 Bty and everyone along the chain who made this salute possible especially the RSM WO1 Richard Theodore; normally a salute is initiated by the political/diplomatic process and the orders are passed down to 16 Fd Regt, this time it started at the bottom and went upwards for approval, no mean feat!. Another 'special' element is the bronze plaque which was presented to record the occasion, which has now been positioned on the saluting officer's dais.

Funerals. Once again, funerals formed the basis of a lot of reunions through the year. We will commemorate those who passed away at our wreath laying service this afternoon in Linton.

### Support (Welfare)

Veterans Support Act 2014. In December 2014 the Veterans Support Act became law, mainly we believe for the better. During August 17 the Review Panel of the VSA, chaired by Prof Ron Paterson, conducted a series of meetings around the country at which many of our members made presentations. I would like to thank all those who participated in this review, and in particular Col Barry Dreyer (for presenting the findings of the RNZAA Review Panel as well as his own submission), Bernie McCort, Greg Thwaite, Patrick McInerney and David Weston for their submissions. It was a great comfort to me as I motorbiked my way across America to know that we had such a strong group of advocates representing our veterans (past, present and future) involved in the review process.

## Last Post

206742, LOFTUS, Thomas Marshall (Alan), Capt, 13 September 2017

40360, BOYES, William A (Bill), RNZASC, 161 Bty VN, 14 September 2017

339577, DONNELLY, Joseph Francis (Joe), WO2, NZ Regt Band 1957/59, 161 Bty VN 1965/66 & 1968/69, 16 September 2017

BRAMLEY, Alan (Jack), Sgt, 163 Bty 16 Fd Regt Korea, 16 September 2017

579477, PEARSON, Malcolm John (George), WO1 (Rtd) RNZASC, 161 Bty VN 16/9/2017

MORRISON, Spencer Edward, 31(B) Bty, RNZA, 19 September 2017

538447, GOILE, Ivan Graham, BEM, ED, RNZEME, 4 (G) Mdm & 3 Fd Regt LAD, 27 September 2017

342322 EDMONDS, Waikena Taonui (Ken), CMT, Gnr 1 October 2017

254207, HAYLOCK, Harry Oriano, Sgt, WW2 29th LAA Regt NZA, 1 October 2017

970369, SPEDEN, Raymond Adam (Big Ray), Gnr CMT, 7 October 2017

MASTERS, Alison Margaret, Widow of the late LtCol John Masters, 26 October 2017

H783157, WHYTE, Colin David, Ssgt (Rtd) RNZAMC, 161 Bty VN, 31 October 2017

46205 FLAY, Gaidyn Clough, LBdr RNZA, 14 November 2017

367808, WYNYARD, Bruce Allan (Chubby) QCBC, Gnr 161 Bty VN, 16 November 2017

T775600, CORNISH, Gary Charles, LBdr 31(B) Bty, 23 November 2017

648869, OLSEN, Norman Ronald (Norm), LBdr 2NZEF 25 Fd Bty WW2, J Force, 25 Nov 2017

621575, O'CONNOR, Laurence (Laurie), RNZA WW2 & Korea

## **PRESIDENTS REPORT - Continued**

Regional Reps I would like to thank our Regional Reps/Committee at large for the part they have played in keeping the Association alive throughout the country; Northland –John Osborne, Auckland Elected C`tee Greg Thwaite, Colin Jansen, Peter Miles, Andrew Donnellan, Waikato Hugh Vercoe, Barry Cooke, Chris Morris, Rotorua- Danny and Bernie McCort; Palmerston North- Tom Roche, Steve Harvey; Paraparaumu/Levin- Roger Newth; Wellington- David Weston, Lindsay Skinner; Christchurch-Skin Frances, Paul O`Connor; Dunedin-Chris Diedtrichs, Robbie Gardiner; Regimental-Catherine Dymock; Australia-Brian Jerry Meyer. The number and level of participation of these Regional Representatives shows just how much we have become a truly `nation-wide` organisation.

Xmas Appreciation In December 2016 a card and small gift were sent to gunners serving overseas at xmas time. This is the 6th year we have made this small gesture to thank our serving gunners for their commitment, and we will continue it again this year.

Mentor program, RNZAA/16 Fd Regt In October last year four RNZAA retired officers participated in a `mentor` session with the serving officers of the Regt. The session was social and informal and included dinner and an after-dinner discussion about service life. The aim was and is , to establish an ongoing link between serving and ex personnel such that the older gunners may be available to provide `wise council` should a serving soldier feel the need.

Life Members I think now would be an appropriate time to announce our two new Life Members, both of whom have given exceptional service in their careers in the RNZA, and for the past 40 years in support of the Association

Firstly, Maj (rtd) David Weston. I would like to say a special thanks to David, not only for his role as the Wgtn Regional Rep for the past 6 years but also for his contribution as our RNZRSA delegate.

Secondly, Maj (rtd) Tom Roche. Tom has given selflessly as our Regional Rep here in the Manawatu for the past 6 years.

I`m sure both these gentleman will look forward to a new generation of gunners picking up the banner which they have carried for `The Gunners` for so long. Can I just mention and thank Mr Martin Coomber, a principal organiser of the D Battery celebrations, for agreeing to take over as Wgtn Regional Rep from David. We are still looking for someone to replace Tom.

Operation Ubique, This initiative started last year as a monthly assistance program for the maintenance of equipment held at the National Army Museum in Waiouru. This year Colin Jansen and his team have extended the program to include maintaining guns held in other locations, especially Linton. This program not only improves the presentation of the commemorative equipment held around the country, but also has huge benefits to all those who participate, generating fellowship and camaraderie. Well done Colin and all those who have participated in Op Ubique.

## **Media**

Website. I would like to thank Chris Morris for his work not only as our webmaster but also as our Membership Secretary. Chris puts in a lot of `invisible` but critical effort.

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

Newsletter. The relevance of a quarterly newsletter as means of conveying news is an anachronism in this modern technological age; our news is conveyed much quicker via Facebook and the website. However it still has relevance as a journal of Association activities, and as a means of retaining contact with members. An electronic newsletter was trialled in July, and our thanks to Mike Dakin for his work on that. The committee will look at how we can maintain this amenity.

Executive Committee. I would like to thank your elected committee, who meet every two months and whose work goes largely unnoticed, but without whom the wheels of the Association would stop turning. So special thanks to Bernie McCort (our Secretary/ Treasurer/Chief Clerk), Greg Thwaite (Vice-President), Colin Jansen (our very enthusiastic Facebook Manager, Quartermaster and `tiffy`), Peter Miles (Support), Andrew Donnellan.

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

# THE PASSCHENDAELE SALUTE, 2017

A NEW ZEALAND PERSPECTIVE - BY TOM ELLEN



## THE KIWI GUN FIRING

Early in 2017, with commemorative events to mark the centenary of the Battle of 3<sup>rd</sup> Ypres (Passchendaele) in the offing, the opportunity arose for New Zealand to participate in a rather special salute, with particular relevance for Kiwi Gunners. This is a brief and personal memoir of that salute – The Passchendaele Salute 2017, at Fort de Seclin, a few miles south of Lille, on 10 November 2017.

John Slough is a British Master Gunmaker, and a well-known and respected event planner as well; his family run the 'Battle Proms' every summer at such iconic venues as Highclere Castle and Blenheim Palace. His grandfather was killed during the Battle of Passchendaele, and John was determined to mark the end of the battle on 10 November 1917 (and in particular the sacrifice of the gunners) by firing a 100-round salute 100 years later. To mark the significance of the Canadian effort in eventually capturing the Passchendaele objective, the Canadian High Commissioner in London, Ms Janice Charette, kindly agreed to be patron. For various reasons it was not possible to conduct the salute on the site of the battle itself; but John located an alternative venue near Lille, organised the event, assembled three batteries of 16 vintage Great War guns and approached representatives of the Allied Nations who fought at Passchendaele (Britain, France, Belgium, Canada, Australia and New Zealand) to provide the crews.



**PASSCHENDAELE SALUTE 2017 COMMEMORATIVE PLACQUE**

Which is where this story starts.

During World War 1, 100,000 New Zealanders served their country out of a population of just over one million. This was a huge commitment for such a small nation. Of those who served, a total of 58% were casualties; 20,000 died. Following their blooding at Gallipoli in 1915, New Zealand's forces reorganised in 1916 into a Mounted Rifles Brigade to serve in the middle-east and a Division of (eventually) four infantry brigades assigned to the Western Front. By 1917 the NZ Division's artillery comprised 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> NZ Field Artillery Brigades (each artillery brigade approximating to a modern regiment and consisting of three batteries equipped with 18-pounder guns and a fourth with 4.5" howitzers).

Following their capture of Messines and La Basseville in June and July 1917, a fresh, well-trained and rested NZ Division was committed to the Ypres sector in September. The Battle of 3<sup>rd</sup> Ypres had opened on 31<sup>st</sup> July; there was thus no possibility of strategic surprise and little opportunity for tactical finesse by the time the NZ Division conducted a well-prepared and highly successful attack at Broodseinde on 3/4 October. The Division was then committed to a further assault only nine days later onto the key terrain of Gravenstafel Spur, which led into Passchendaele itself. The infantry brigades had inadequate rest and preparation and the weather was appalling. The attack on 12 October was anticipated by the Germans, who reinforced their front line trenches. A lack of shells (caused by having to man-pack ammunition into the forward gun positions) and the soft ground resulted in the artillery failing to cut the barbed wire. The rain continued; the bottom fell out of the Flanders floodplain, creating a boggy featureless morass into which shells fell without exploding and men and horses disappeared. Nonetheless, the British high command insisted the operation continue.

The two infantry brigades comprising the NZ Division's assaulting troops were pinned-down from the very start; the attack stalled and ground to a halt by early afternoon as did the adjacent attack by the British 9<sup>th</sup> Division.

Popular reflection in New Zealand tends to focus on ANZAC Day and the Dardanelles Campaign rather than the far longer and incomparably more lethal industrial-age conflict on the Western Front. But 960 New Zealanders died in those few short hours on 12 October 1917, the greatest loss of New Zealand life in a single day and the single most lethal disaster in NZ recorded history.

The effects reverberated around the country. To quote the Duke of Cambridge, speaking at the recent commemorative service at Tyne Cot Cemetery:

“Half a world away, news of the losses was felt like a shock wave – every death here left a shattered family there. No part of New Zealand was untouched by loss”.

After recovering those dead and wounded they could, the NZ Division was relieved in the line by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Canadian Division; but the guns of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> NZ Field Artillery Brigades remained in action after the infantry brigades were replaced. The NZ Gunners provided additional fire support to shoot the Canadians onto their preliminary objectives through until early November.

So Passchendaele has special significance for Kiwi Gunners. And when Colonel (Retd) Barry Dreyer, at that time the Colonel Commandant of the Royal New Zealand Artillery (and also the Chair of the RNZA Historic Trust) was approached by John Slough and asked if an NZ-crewed gun might be available to participate in the salute 100 years later, it was too good an opportunity to miss.



**KIWI DETACHMENT WITH MASTER GUNMAKER AND EVENT ORGANISER JOHN SLOUGH**

(From Left: Tom Ellen, John Slough, Dean Russell, John Tulloch and Dennis Dwane)

It was right and proper that the NZ Division’s Gunners should be represented, and it was decided to provide a crew of ex-Royal New Zealand Artillery veterans. Official sponsorship was sought, but none was forthcoming; the crew would have to be funded in some other way. Fortunately, a combination of self-pay and generous

contributions from sponsors, supporters and individual RNZAA members (all corralled by David Weston) meant that the funds were sufficient to allow an NZ detachment to participate.

But in relation to Flanders, New Zealand really is 'the uttermost ends of the earth'. Therefore, the only responsible and cost-effective way to provide a crew of 4 was to enlist the participation of as many 'non-travellers' as possible – which is why the selectors eventually settled on a detachment made up of the following:

- John Tulloch: ex-Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment and RNZA 1965-73, including a 12-month operational tour with 161 Bty in South Vietnam in 1968/69; followed by service in the Royal Artillery 1973-2003.
- Dean Russell: RNZA 1994-2000, including an operational tour in Bosnia in 1998.
- Tom Ellen: ex-RNZIR and RNZA 1977-1987; joined the Royal Artillery in 1988 and is still serving.
- Dennis Dwane: ex-RNZA 1958-2007, including two operational tours with 161 Bty in South Vietnam in 1965/66 (18 months) and 1967/68 (12 months).



**VIETNAM VETERANS JOHN TULLOCH AND DENNIS DWANE**

Three of us would take the train from UK to France; Dennis, our Detachment Commander, would fly-in from the Cook Islands; we would assemble as a crew the day before the Salute. John hired four sets of uniforms so we could conduct the salute in WW1 period dress, complete with 'NZFA' brass shoulder-titles specially cast for us. While Dennis sported his distinctive 'lemon-squeezer' hat, the rest of us would wear 'brodie helmets'. The UK-based contingent visited John Slough's factory in Hereford a couple of weeks before the event to meet each other for the first time, and for a session of gun drill on 'our' gun, a 13-pounder. One of two owned by Sir Michael Savory's Muckleburgh Collection, fittingly it bore the identifying number '13' – a reminder of 16 Field Regiment's old tac sign. Because of its fine state of repair it was to be one of four guns drawn onto the gun-line by horse.



**KIWI DETACHMENT WITH THE OWNER OF GUN NUMBER 13, SIR MICHAEL SAVORY**

The morning of Thursday 9 November saw 16 guns lined-up on a grassy meadow outside the Fort de Seclin gates. They were as close together as the guns were 100 years ago; in some cases the batteries at Passchendaele deployed wheel to wheel and within 800 yards of the front line. Two guns were manned by regular troops from the Royal Canadian Horse Artillery and from E Battery Royal Horse Artillery (on the right of the line, representing the E Bty which fired the first British artillery rounds of WW1 and which subsequently fought at Passchendaele). The remaining guns were crewed by other unit, association and 'official' national representative detachments; our contingent had come the furthest. We spent the rest of the day rehearsing for the salute. The weather was grey and cold. Just like 100 years ago.

Strapping-on my puttees on the morning of 10 November, struggling into the itchy heavy woollen jacket and grabbing my 'brodie helmet', it was impossible not to identify with those who went before us. We all have our family stories and myths; in my case both grandfathers served in WW1 and both came back. They returned as changed men who did not live long thereafter; but they were young in 1917, full of hopes and fears and a long way from home. In their essential humanity they were not really that different from you and me. John carried, in his tunic pocket, his grandfather's Aldershot whistle which his grandfather carried throughout the Great War. He was at Passchendaele and survived the war.

Once the team of horses had positioned the final four guns, ours included, an expectant and emotional hush settled on the gun-line. Shortly before the salute was fired, the Canadian High Commissioner in London, Ms Janice Charette, inspected the detachments in her role as Patron. We then 'took post' on our gun in preparation for the Salute itself. While most of us had fired salutes before, nothing compared to what we were about to participate in. I wish I could say that it all ran like clockwork; but it didn't, and it didn't matter. Many of the old guns misfired, and some of those on the gun line were a bit rusty, and none of us could really

hear the Master Gunner who controlled the salute. But all the 16 guns fired at least six rounds each, to complete the 100-round salute. And fittingly our 13-pounder was one of only three guns not to misfire – testament to the work of John Slough, who had restored the gun; and to some snappy gun drill by that well-oiled machine, the Kiwi Gun detachment!

At the conclusion of the Salute, the gun detachments withdrew and breathed a sigh of relief that all had gone so well. Following a short commemorative service and addresses by the various dignitaries (primarily Canadian, but also British, French and Australian) we had the opportunity to mingle with our families, friends, supporters and well-wishers – a great way to end a great day!



**KIWI DETACHMENT WITH FAMILY SUPPORTERS AFTER THE SALUTE**

The following day, Armistice Day, we were back in action taking part in the Fort de Seclin Armistice Day Service. The Canadian gun fired a single round at 1100 hours and the two minute silence began. Unerringly a couple of seconds later we could hear the sound of church bells. At two minutes past, we all fired one round fire for effect. Historically, the two minutes allowed for all guns both Allied and German to fall silent by 1102 hours. And so the two minute silence was born.

The Passchendaele Salute was a fitting commemoration to the sacrifice of the Gunners of the Allied Nations 100 years ago. It was a privilege to have represented our Nation, our Army and the Royal Regiment of New Zealand Artillery and its forbears at this splendid and quite unique event. But without the numerous donors and supporters who gave generously of their time and (especially) money the Kiwi Gun detachment could not have participated. So in conclusion I'd like to offer my grateful thanks on behalf of the Kiwi Detachment and the RNZA Association to all those individuals and groups who contributed to making New Zealand's participation in the Passchendaele Salute 2017 possible.

## **Vodafone Email Address Shutdown.**

**Date:** Monday, 4 December, 2017

With the shut down last week of all Vodafone NZ email addresses, which affects all email addresses ending with the suffixes in the list below, the Royal NZ Artillery Association is concerned that we could potentially lose contact with some members who have been using those addresses, so this is a reminder to all association members who are changing their email address as a result of this change, to please send an email to the secretary of the association at [rnza.association@gmail.com](mailto:rnza.association@gmail.com) letting the association know what your new email address is.

@clear.net.nz

@es.co.nz

@ihug.co.nz

@paradise.net.nz

@pcconnect.co.nz

@quik.co.nz

@vodafone.co.nz

@vodafone.net.nz

@wave.co.nz

Ubique.

## **9 RAR Reunion attended by RNZA Gunners**

**Date:** Wednesday, 15 November, 2017

David Weston, Graeme Ready, Peter Miles and Nev Mersky have all attended the 9RAR reunion in Adelaide this week - 50 years since they were raised in Keswick barracks, Adelaide (November 1967) after 3 RAR sailed for South Vietnam - 9RAR replaced them in 1 ATF 1 year later. The four New Zealand attendees were all members of David Weston's FO party (c/s33) from Nov 68 until March when Peter RTNZ, and then May when David started his wind-down prior to RTNZ.

Photo of our four Kiwi gunners at the reunion with the Australian Governor General, General Sir Peter Cosgrove AK, MC, who is also a 9RAR Vietnam veteran.



## **50th Anniversary Commemorations of the Battles of Coral and Balmoral 1968**

The 50th Anniversary of the battles of FSBs Coral and Balmoral will be commemorated in May 2018. The Commonwealth Government of Australia made an election commitment to conduct and fund commemorative activities, and planning has now begun under the auspices of the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA). The commemorations will include all veterans of all units/subunits that participated in the Coral Balmoral battles.

For full details, please see the last page of this newsletter.

## **Behind the Lines: The Editor's Page**

**Patron** HE The Governor General, The Rt Hon Dame Patsy Reddy, GMNZN, QSO.  
**Vice Patron** Lt Col (Rtd) Barry Dreyer RNZA  
**Colonel Commandant** Colonel Matt Beattie. The Col Comdt is an ex officio member of the Association  
**President** Lt Col (Rtd) Tony McLeod, 09 486 0910, 027 269 8472  
**Vice President** Gregory Thwaite  
**Secretary/Treasurer** Bernie McCort, 07 345 3643, 18 Walford Drive, ROTORUA 3010  
**Email:** [rnza.association@gmail.com](mailto:rnza.association@gmail.com)

**Committee:** Colin Jansen (Q Store/Facebook/Op Ubique)), Chris Morriss (Webmaster),  
John (Woody) Barrett (NZ Gunner editor), Andrew Donellan

### **Committee at Large/ Regional Representatives:**

John Osborne (Northland), Jack Mills (Waikato), Danny & Bernie McCort (BOP), Chris Morriss (BOP), Kent Horsfield (Manawatu), Roger Newth (Horowhenua), Lyndsay Skinner (Wellington), Martin Coomber (Wellington), Brian (Skin) Francis (Christchurch), Robbie Gardner (Dunedin) Al Martin (Dunedin),  
David Weston (RNZRSA Delegate)

**Welfare Support:** Northern: TBA Central: Lyndsay Skinner 027 5303319  
Southern: Pat Duggan: 021 02615773

**The Gunner News Editor:** John (Woody) Barrett, 10 Gordet Drive, KATIKATI 3129. Ph 027 583 1338  
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**Webmaster** Chris Morriss [webmaster.rnzaa@gmail.com](mailto:webmaster.rnzaa@gmail.com)

**Facebook Site:** [Facebook, RNZA Assn](https://www.facebook.com/RNZA.Assn)

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

**Associate membership:** No annual subscription is payable, but any donations are gratefully received.

**Donations:** All charitable and welfare donations over \$5 are now tax deductible as the Association is a Registered Charity. Donations can be made by Internet Banking to the Associations Bank Account, or by cheque to the secretary (address above). If you wish to receive a receipt, please let the secretary know by email.

**Email Addresses:** Are you connected to the Internet? The Secretary may not be aware of your address. If you are not getting messages from the RNZA Association and wish to do so, please forward your address.

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

**Input into Gunner News:** Short stories, especially with accompanying photographs, are always welcome for inclusion. The Editor's email address is: [editor.rnzaa@gmail.com](mailto:editor.rnzaa@gmail.com). Please send contributions as an attachment in MS Word format.

**Muzzle Flashes & website items to Chris at:** [webmaster.rnzaa@gmail.com](mailto:webmaster.rnzaa@gmail.com)

**Secretarial/Treasurer matters to Bernie:** [rnza.association@gmail.com](mailto:rnza.association@gmail.com)

**Items for Gunner News to Woody at:** [editor.rnzaa@gmail.com](mailto:editor.rnzaa@gmail.com)

**RNZA Assn Bank:** **Ac # 38 9007 0694501 00**

The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Royal NZ Artillery Assn, The Royal Regiment Of NZ Artillery, or NZDEF.

### [THE Q STORE](#)

Quartermaster: Colin Jansen

Orders and enquiries to: [rnzaaQstore@gmail.com](mailto:rnzaaQstore@gmail.com)

**Polo :** Gunners logo on right breast, with Gun crest on left. Black with red piping and embroidered logo's.

**\$65.00 each**



**Fleece Beanie:** \$30 inc post



**Gunners Tee Shirt:**

Quick-dry breathable sports fabric.

**\$25 each free-post in NZ**



**Gunners Hoodie Sweatshirt:**

**\$75 each free-post in NZ**



**Baseball Cap:** Black with red piping and embroidered Gun crest **\$35 each.**



**RNZAA Blazer Pocket Patch:**

Edged and ready for adding to a jacket.

**\$20 each free-post in NZ**



**13 Tac Sign Bumper sticker:**

90mm x 90mm UV resistant for up to two years.

**\$5 each free-post in NZ**



**RNZAA Coffee Mugs:**

Cobalt blue with gold print

**\$25 each**



**RNZAA Lapel Pins: \$10 each**



**RNZAA Name Tag:**

Laser etched with gold lapel pin permanently affixed. Note: Remember to advise preferred name to be etched on it.

**\$35 each**



**RNZAA Bumper Sticker:**

70mm x 70mm UV resistant up to two years

**\$5 each free-post in NZ**

**Ordering details and other useful information:**

- Post is included on all items within New Zealand. Please enquire for costs to post overseas.
- Please include all relevant details when placing an order, including correct name, size where relevant and delivery address. Purchasers will have 14 days from placement of order to complete payment. If payment is not received within that time, the order will be deemed void. When making payment, remember to include your name and the item being purchased: in the reference fields of the RNZAA account, so that the treasurer can identify who and what the payment refers to.
- Some items are made to order, and requests for items such as name tags or special sized articles will not be placed with our suppliers, nor items dispatched to prospective purchasers until payment has been identified as received from the purchaser.
- We are working on additional items as well as future promotion of items available from the 16th Field Regt UPF, to create a central point of purchase. Keep an eye on this and the website Q-Store pages for future developments.

## 50th Anniversary Commemorations of the Battles of Coral and Balmoral May 2018

**Date:** Saturday, 16 September, 2017

From Geof Hitchings.

To 3RAR Group Veterans, first tour South Vietnam -BHQ, all companies and attached units/subunits,  
From Bob Dabinett [President, 3RAR Corporation] and John Robbins [3RAR member, DVA Coral and Balmoral Consultative Committee]

PLEASE PASS THIS WIDELY WITHIN COMPANIES AND SUBUNITS:

The 50th Anniversary of the battles of FSBs Coral and Balmoral will be commemorated in May 2018. The Commonwealth Government made an election commitment to conduct and fund commemorative activities, and planning has now begun under the auspices of the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA). The commemorations will include all veterans of all units/subunits that participated in the Coral Balmoral battles.

Consultative Committee

A Coral and Balmoral Consultative Committee (CBCC) has been established, chaired by MAJGEN Dave Chalmers, FAS Client and Commemorations, DVA, and with a membership broadly representing major units, Corps and Veteran's associations. John Robbins is 3RAR member. The CBCC first met on Thursday 31 August and will meet in Canberra about once per month.

Proposed major event

The baseline proposal is that a National Service of Commemoration will be held on the morning of Sunday 13 May 2018 [probably 1100 hrs or earlier] at the Australian Vietnam Forces National Memorial on ANZAC Parade in Canberra. This would be followed on the same day by a Luncheon Reception for each veteran and a guest, probably in the National Convention Centre in Canberra.

- DVA will cover all costs of the Service and Luncheon Reception for each veteran and guest.
- Veterans will be responsible for the cost of travel and accommodation to/from and in Canberra; except that, as was done for the 40th Anniversary, two Next of Kin of each soldier killed in the battles will be invited as guests of government, and their travel and accommodation will be paid by DVA.

As a separate activity, 3RAR commemorations will be held in the period Thursday 24 May to Sunday 27 May 2018, in the battalion lines and other venues in Townsville, as arranged by CO 3RAR and his staff, in conjunction with the President of the 3RAR Corporation. Veterans will be able to attend this event at own expense. Details are still being discussed.

Your representatives

3RAR interests and arrangements for these events are being represented by:

- John Robbins (B /Admin Coy)[who lives in Canberra] is the 3RAR member on the Coral and Balmoral Consultative Committee and will represent 3RAR Group interests at CBCC meetings in Canberra [nominated by the President, 3RAR Corporation]. He will provide information on the event in Canberra as details develop and be the contact for Canberra events.
- Bob Dabinett (A Coy), President of the 3RAR Corporation [who lives in Townsville] is coordinating with 3RAR on the details of battalion/3RAR Corporation activities, and will provide information on the activities in Townsville and be the contact for Townsville events.
- As Patron of 3RAR Corporation, MAJGEN Hori Howard is providing advice and support as needed.

3RAR activities in Canberra

From informal consultation among the companies, the general view seems to be that we should not attempt a battalion reunion on the scale of the 40th Anniversary; rather, activities should be arranged by company groups as they see fit. Given that the national commemorative activities will all be held on Sunday 13 May 2018, companies could have the scope to arrange reunion activities for Friday 11 – Saturday 12 May, and then attend the commemorative events on 13 May, as they wish.

I am aware that A and B Companies have previously decided to hold their regular reunion in Canberra over the weekend 11-13 May 2018, and are booked into the Hotel Mercure, while D Company has booked a hotel with a similar intention. I am also aware that C Company is going to Darwin for a reunion in June 2018. BHQ/Spt, C and Admin may care to consider what they would like to do. The key priority is probably to book hotel accommodation; Canberra-based veterans [not many of us] might be able to assist. If companies are not coming en masse, there is no reason why individual veterans and family should not come if they wish.

It would be useful if companies could nominate a Company Representative(s) to me and Bob Dabinett, so that we can pass on information about the events for onforwarding to all veterans – and also if you could give us a brief reply on your intentions. I also anticipate that DVA will ask unit associations to provide lists of names and addresses of veterans wishing to attend the service and reception with a guest. This happened for the 40th and most companies have got lists based on their last reunion.

Regards. Please pass this on to people I have missed. For questions and comments, please call me.

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