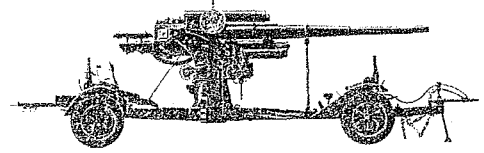


British 5.5 Inch Mk II



German 88mm

ESTABLISHED 1934

NEW ZEALAND PERMANENT FORCE OLD COMRADES ASSOCIATION (INC)  
Known as the

# ROYAL NEW ZEALAND ARTILLERY COMRADES ASSOCIATION

Secretary. (John Rout)

P.O. BOX 72-140 PAPA KURA. PHONE 09 298 0446. E MAIL johnbr@paradise.net.nz  
WEB SITE - [www.riv.co.nz/rnza/](http://www.riv.co.nz/rnza/) Webmaster Catherine Rivers PhD.

## NEWSLETTER No. 121

March 2004

ROUTINE ORDERS

### SUBSCRIPTION FEES

In the past a few members have allowed their subscription arrears to build up and then when they see how much they owe they resign or don't do anything and get written off the role for non payment over three years. This rather sneaky practice is not very gunner like and in fact means that some are getting a free ride. If you decide you want out please pay the amount owing when you send in your resignation. During the last two years we have lost almost \$1000 for non payment over 3 years.

Subscriptions for 2004 are now due. Honorary and Life Members are not required to pay a subscription. Lady Associates pay \$10 and all other members \$20 per year. All members are eligible for election as a Life Member on reaching the age of 80. When you reach the age of 80 please let the Secretary know as records of birth dates are not held.

**To be financial to Dec 2004 you are required to pay \$ .....**

If an amount is not shown above you are financial. If paying by cheque (preferred) please make it payable to NZPFOCA and send it to the secretary. To save postage, receipts will not be returned but will be held by the Treasurer for audit requirements or your inspection if required. We will accept more than one years subscription if you wish to send more.

Remember we need the subscriptions for the production of this News Letter and other administration costs. Non payment for a period greater than three years will result in a warning note and cancellation of membership if payment is not received.

### LAST POST:

Mrs J. Sherson  
Mike McMahon

In Hamilton not sure when.  
In Auckland on 8 January 2004. Mike was a Life Member.

**CHANGE OF ADDRESS:**

John Gatley to: 35/2 Ngauruhoe Street, TAUPO 2730  
 Alistair Ross to: Idleway, 746 Esdaile Road, Pahoia, RD 6 TAURANGA  
 Andrew Lister to: 143 rue des Sapins Nargess II, El Kantaoui 4089,  
 Hammam Sousse, TUNISIA

**NEW MEMBERS:**

Frank Hopkinson, P.O. Box 32 395 Devonport, North Shore, AUCKLAND.  
 Lt Col (R) Frank will be well known to many of our members. For many years he was a very strong member of our Territorial Force Gunners. In 1967/68 he was attached to 161 Battery, as a Forward Observer in Vietnam.  
 Charles Patchin 711 East Willow Street, Syracuse, New York 13203-1989, USA.  
 Charles, better known as Pappy, is our first United States Army member. He was attached to 161 Battery in Vietnam in August 1965 and again in Jun/July 1966. Pappy was Lt Col when he retired.

**RESIGNATIONS:**

Mrs Joyce Vine, Paul Kitney.

**NEW LIFE MEMBER (On reaching the age of 80).**

Bernie Ayling, Gerald Cassidy.

In the last News Letter new Life Member Bill Morland's name was incorrectly spelt. Sorry Bill.

**COMING EVENTS**

Gunners Day Dinner, Papakura. 26 May 2004. Invited will be sent out shortly.

161 Battery Vietnam Reunion. A reunion in July 2005 in Palmerston North, is being planned to celebrate 40 years from the time the first 161 Bty Gun reported ready in Vietnam. All personnel who served in Vietnam on the posted strength of 161 Bty during the Vietnam War are eligible to attend. More details about this will be published in future News Letters. In the interim you can record your interest to attend by contacting John Rout at the above address or Graeme Black email [sunray79@xtra.co.nz](mailto:sunray79@xtra.co.nz).

**FROM THE EDITOR****AGM and Reunion 2004.**

You may recall in the December News Letter that the committee would decide what to do with money granted to the Assn by the Lotteries Grants Board. As mentioned in that News Letter the amount granted was a long way short of the amount requested. Originally we were hoping the grant would be large enough to provide some travel and accommodation assistance for our South Island Members to come to Papakura for this years AGM/Reunion. Clearly this is now not possible. Related to this years AGM/Reunion and the Lotteries Grant your committee made the following decisions during the February Committee Meeting:

- This years AGM/Reunion is to be held, once again in Taupo, over the period 5 to 7 November.
- During the AGM members present will decide how to use the Lotteries Commision Grant.
- The amount of the grant is \$1,600, \$800 for Bus Hire and \$800 for Reunion Administration Costs. We have been given two years to claim the Grant and it must be used within two years from the time the grant is received. I will be contacting the commision to see if it is possible to vary the criteria for the use of the grant.
- The committee is working on a suggestion for the use of the grant which will be tabled at the AGM. If you want your say on how to use the Grant you will need to come to the AGM.

I know of some members who reside north of the Bombay Hills and find it difficult to travel will be disappointed this years reunion in Papakura is cancelled. To them I suggest attendance at this years Gunners Day Dinner in Papakura. A large number of our members normally attend this dinner. If you are interested please let me know, by 31 March 2004, and I will arrange for an invitation to be sent to you.

### **Our Patron Saint**

Saint Barbara provides patronage to the very long list shown below. The rather long list was copied from the Catholic Forum website. Note that not only is she the Patron Saint of Artillery, Artillerymen and Gunners but is also the Patron Saint against death by Artillery. Also note that 'persons of ill repute' are not mentioned.

Patronage;

against death by artillery, against explosions, against fire, against impenitence, against lightning, against mine collapse, against storms, ammunition magazines, ammunition workers, architects, armourers, artillery, artillerymen, boatmen, bomb technicians, brass workers, brewers, builders, carpenters, construction workers, dying people, explosives workers, fire, fire prevention, firefighters, fireworks, fireworks manufacturers, fortifications, founders, geologists, gravediggers, gunners, hatmakers, hatters, lightning, mariners, martyrs, masons, mathematicians, military engineers, milliners, miners, ordnance workers, prisoners, safety from storms, sailors, saltpetre workers, smelters, stone masons, stonecutters, storms, sudden death, Syria, tilers, warehouses, watermen.

There are a number of Saint Barbara Legends, here is one of them:

'St. Barbara was the daughter of a rich nobleman of Heliopolis in Egypt, martyred by her father about A.D. 303 for becoming a Christian. As he descended the mountain where he had cut off her head with his own hands a "fearful tempest arose with thunder and lightning, and fire fell upon this cruel father and consumed him utterly, so that not a vestige of him remained". St Barbara then became "patron saint of armourers and gun-smiths". She is invoked against thunder and lightning and all accidents arising from explosions of gunpowder. It was thought possible that she was selected as a patron Saint for artillery because in early days cannon usually blew up on discharge and therefore artillerymen were always liable to sudden death from explosions of gunpowder.

### FROM AND ABOUT MEMBERS

A plea from the editor.

Please remember that this news letter is yours. If you have a tale, truth or fiction, that you think may be of interest to our members please send it to me. I am sure there are many stories, old and new, that are suitable for this publication. As an example the following account on the German Eighty Eight has been sent in by:

**Col Bert Dyson.**

Eighty-Eight-The Popular Name for the Unpopular German 88mm Gun.

The following photo is of a WWII German 88mm Gun which is manned by Mac Troop Royal Artillery. Mac Troop was attached to the NZ Div Arty from immediately after the Battle of El Alamein until the closing Battle of Enfidaville in Tunisia, North Africa. (Editors note; it is my understanding that Mac Troop's normal gun equipment was the 4.5inch Gun, the baby brother of the 5.5inch Gun, there must be an interesting story about how they managed to get hold of a German 88mm). The presence of Mac Troop in the gun area was never welcome because of the German reaction to its fire. What made our chaps cross was the fact that, because of its very high Muzzle Velocity, there was no warning an 88mm Shell was coming. The Shell arrived, then you heard it coming, then you heard the gun firing. In general terms the 88mm MV was three times the speed of sound.

**WOI Paul Galloway** was awarded the MNZM, Member of the NZ Order of Merit in the New Years Honours. Congratulations Paul.

**Pam Milely Terry** was awarded the QSM, Queens Service Medal, for Public Service, in the New Years Honours. Pam is not a member but was our guest speaker at the 2003 Reunion Dinner.

**Spencer Morrison.** Sadly, Spencer has informed us that the Gunners Assn Southland is about to fold up, mainly because of a lack of members. They are hopeful that their final event will be the firing of a gun from Bluff Hill.

## THE GUN

By Wally Ruffell

Continued From NL 120

The QF 18-pr continued.

Calibre: 3.3 inches (83.8-mm)	MV: 1615 fs (492 ms).
Range: 11,100 yards (10,150 m)	Elevation: 37° 30'.
Top traverse: 9°.	Shell: 18.5 lbs (8.39 kg).
Weight in action: 3228 lbs (1464 kg) (not including platform).	

A Mark 5 carriage with split trail was also produced, but while it proved ideal in the anti-tank role it was found rather too heavy for the normal (field) role so was discarded.

To assist in engaging tanks the firing platform was added during the 1920s.

Conversion to 25-pr Mk 1 (also known as the 18/25-pr) was carried out in 1935 by increasing the calibre from 3.3 inches to 3.45 (87.6 mm). As the gun was fitted with a loose barrel the modification process was comparatively straightforward.

How the calibre of 3.45 inches came about is interesting. The RA claimed that World War 1 showed the 18-pr Mk 4 incapable of meeting the needs of field artillery in any future conflict. They wanted a gun around 3.7 inches in calibre with a range of not less than 15,000 yards (13,716 metres). The only 'snag' was the cost.

The British Government said they could not afford a new gun. If the RA wanted a bigger gun they would have to modify those they already had or go without. But the most the Royal Gun Factory (RGF) could increase the calibre and retain an acceptable degree of safety was 0.15 inch. Hence the 25-pr of 3.45 inches

Financial constraints after World War 1 stopped manufacture of the 18-pr Mk 4 in quantities sufficient to replace Mks 1 and 2 (a Mk 3 did not progress beyond the experimental stage), many of which remained in service until World War 2. New Zealand Gunners never saw a Mk 4; both Regulars and Territorials had to put up with old Mk 1 or 2 guns on Mk 1 or 2 carriages until 1938 when the latter were changed to Mk 2P by the fitting of the Martin Parry pneumatic-tyred conversion kit. In 1941 25-prs arrived in New Zealand but 7 Anti-tank Regiment, 2NZEF, went into action in the Middle East with 18-prs Mk 2P the same year.

Note that the sole difference between a Mk 1 and a Mk 2 18-pr piece was the shape of the 'A' tube. In the Mk 1 which was built up by shrinkage the 'A' tube was cylindrical in shape while in the Mk 2 it was tapered to enable assembly by hydraulic pressure. From the outside both pieces appeared identical.

The Mk 1 carriage was fitted with an oil buffer and spring recuperator while the Mk 2 had a hydro-pneumatic (oil and air) recoil system, of a slightly different size and shape. The Mk 2 carriage was designed to take the HP system.

The 15-pr as well as 18-prs Mks 1,2, and 4 and the 13-pr had interrupted screw breech mechanisms with percussion firing gear and single motion actions. However, the 18-pr Mk 4 had a more advanced mechanism with a vertical-acting LBM as shown in Fig. 150. See also Figs 130 and 133.

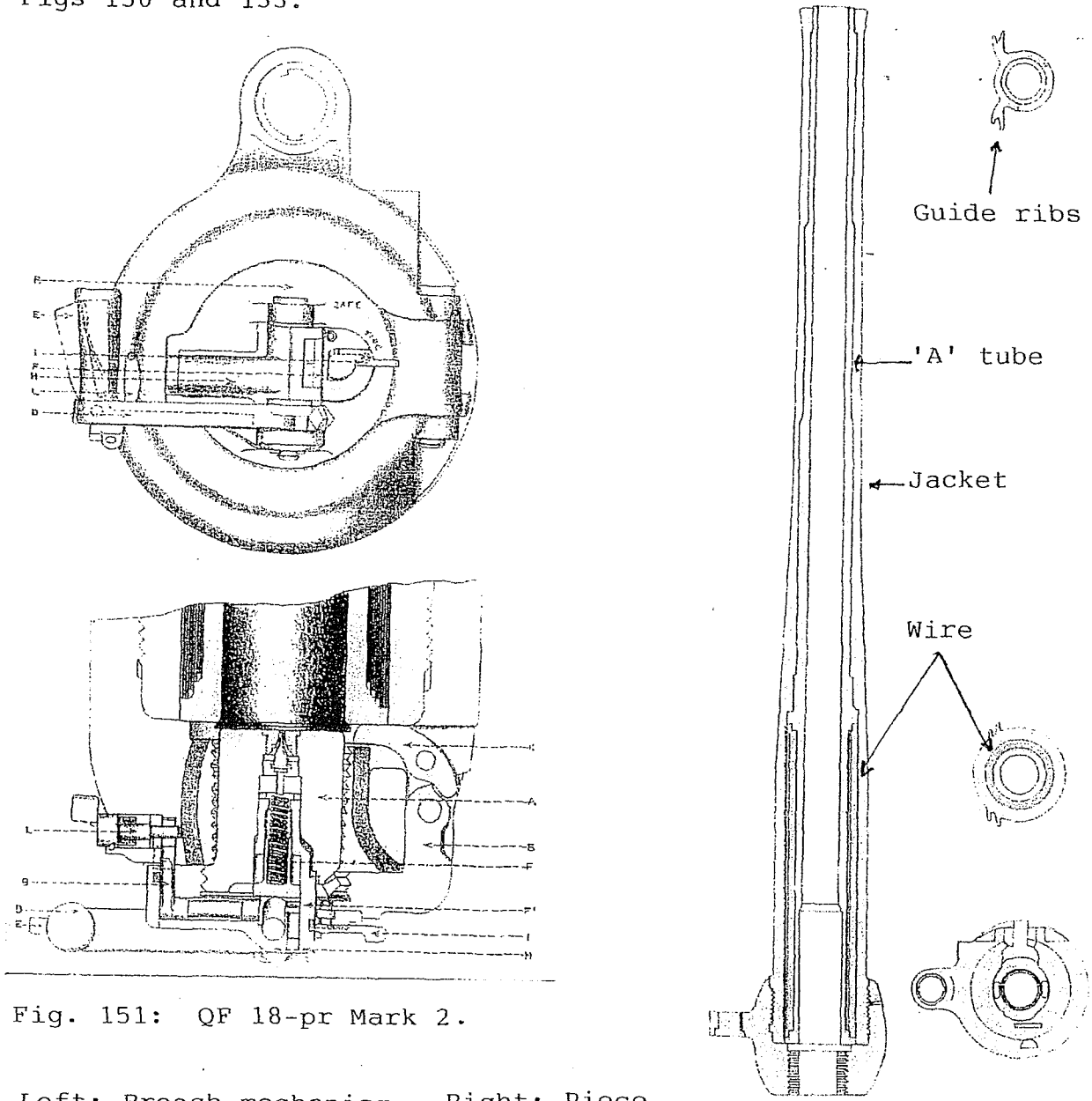
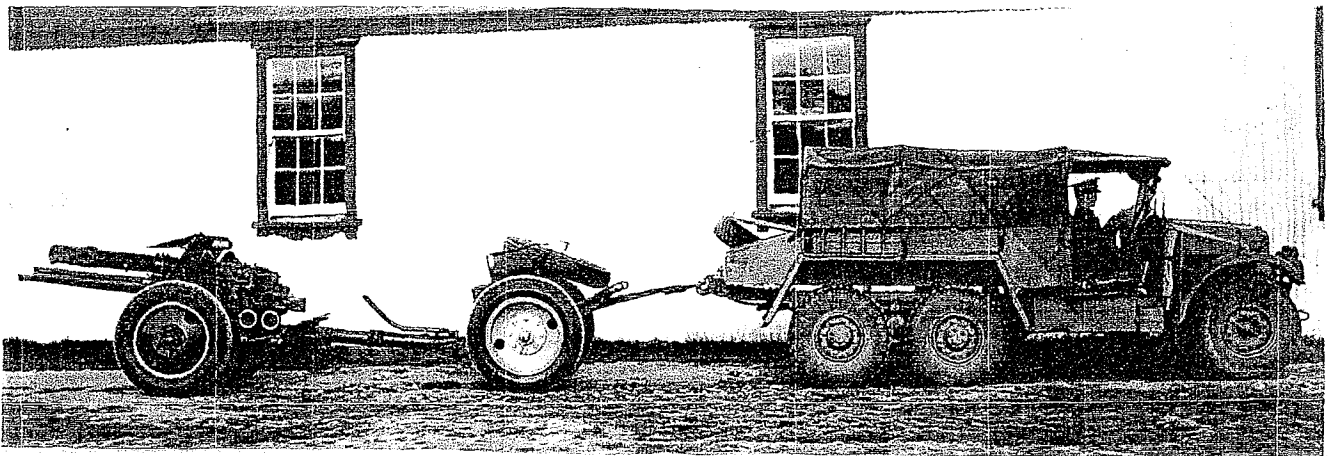


Fig. 151: QF 18-pr Mark 2.

Left: Breech mechanism Right: Piece.



QF 18-pr Mk 2 on Carriage Mk 2P and trailer hooked in to Morris Commercial Field Artillery Tractor. Trentham 1938. Fig. 152