

ESTABLISHED 1934
NEW ZEALAND PERMANENT FORCE OLD COMRADES ASSOCIATION (INC)
Now officially known as the

THE ROYAL NEW ZEALAND ARTILLERY OLD COMRADES ASSOCIATION

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NEWSLETTER No. 124

NOVEMBER 2004

ROUTINE ORDERS

SUBSCRIPTIONS

It is that time again to bring your subscription up to date. You currently owe up to and including the 2004/2005 year..

Our Bank account is now THE ROYAL NEW ZEALAND ARTILLERY OLD COMRADES ASSOCIATION

Please bear with me, there is one heck of a lot to cover so this is going to be a long Newsletter.

Where you find little gems throughout Newsletters, they are not mine, simply what I have verheard or read, and I will where possible acknowledge where I have obtained them.

MOST IMPORTANT

It is official, we are now the Royal New Zealand Artillery Old Comrades Association Incorporated, Bank Account and all. However, never forget where we came from, remember those who set this Association up and kept it alive for so many years. Gems may be precious but friendship is priceless, this is one of many requirements of being one of Her Majesty's Gunners.

APOLOGY

I have to apologise most sincerely for not attending this year's reunion, however health problems put paid to that. It is my very good fortune to belong to such a great Corps and a great Association that when members saw help required they all 'took post' without question. Although I had prepared all the documentation, there was still a lot of work to be done behind the scenes, there was the march-in, the AGM, the dinner and the Church parade. Then there was the raffle that was a record due to the generosity of many members, Lyn and Bev Culhane, Tony Tustin, Bob Blankley, Ron Turner, Henry Salt, Matt Crawley, Jasmine Beveridge, David and Marie Roberts and Bill and Emma Giles who really got things going during the weekend, but to name a few. To the others who helped, I thank you sincerely.

LAST POST:

Occasionally I do not receive notices of a member's passing, please let me know if you can. It is from the Last Post in Newsletters that we can keep the Memorial Book up to date.

30173 Major General Ron DP Hassett CB CBE. 13 August 2004. Auckland
372141 Col Alistair D Ross. 18 September 2004. Katikati
1830 WO2 F. Dan Foley. 29 October 2004. Queensland

CHANGE OF ADDRESS:

Bill Powrie. To: Unit 17 Hibiscus Coast Village. Red Beach Rd. RED BEACH. 09-421 0471

Winiata Opai. To: 3-138 MacAndrew Rd. SOUTH DUNEDIN.

Andrew Lister. To: A-204 Ssangyong Villa. 397-4 Doryong-dong, Youseong-gu. Daejeon. SOUTH KOREA

I have suggested to Andrew that next time he shifts, please go some where with a shorter address.

NEW MEMBERS:

339577 WO2 Joe F Donnelly. 524 Fitzgerald Rd. RD 1. DRURY

RESIGNATIONS OR GONE NO ADDRESS

Andrew A Fortune. Gone no address since 2000 and deleted from Roll

PG Monk. Gone no address.

Jackie Partner. Resigned due to ill health.

NEW LIFE MEMBER

Mrs Mike Hassett. 5A Ventnor Rd. Remuera. AUCKLAND. mhassett@xtra.co.nz

From now on Life Membership is not automatic at age 80, it will be an award of excellence for service to the Regiment and Association.

HISTORY

As we change our name, we must not forget our family, those men in the Armed Constabulary, the Permanent Militia, the Torpedo Corps and Submarine Mining Company. We do not appear to have really recognised these people in the past so it was decided that at the 2004 and future Reunions that a Toast will be proposed in their memory at the Formal Dinner. David Roberts kindly accepted this task and following is his Toast.

Time does not permit discussion on the general history of the Armed Constabulary this evening and indeed much of it is not relevant to the RNZA, suffice to state that in the 1880's there existed within the Armed Constabulary's Field Force a Garrison Artillery of some 150 men and it is from this unit that the origins of the Royal Regiment of New Zealand Artillery can be traced. Some of my comments may be incorrect as I found some contradictions with the reference sources I was able to locate.

By the time of the Russian scare of 1885 the Armed Constabulary's Field Force also had within its structure, a 20 man Engineer submarine mining corps and a 50 man torpedo corps both of which had been formed to man the hastily thrown up coastal defences. The Defence Act of 1886 saw these units become part of the Permanent Militia (which, from 1902 became known as the Permanent Force) and the Torpedo Corps was redesignated the Submarine Mining branch, in 1897 the artillery component of the Permanent Militia was designated No. 1 Company, and the torpedo men No. 2 Company. Around this time the usual government parsimony had seen a number of reductions within the Permanent Militia and, the Engineers of the old submarine mining corps had been absorbed into the old torpedo corps. Five years later, in 1892, No 1 Company became the Royal New Zealand Artillery and No 2 Company the Royal New Zealand Engineers. The abandonment of the submarine defences of the harbours in

1907 resulted in the Engineers being absorbed into the RNZA and by the reorganization of 1911 the army consisted of the RNZA and the newly created NZ Staff Corps.

The Submarine Mining Corps was a fairly conventional unit that laid moored mines beneath the surface in the main harbours and manned observation posts from which they would observe the approach of enemy ships and then electrically detonate the mines as the ships passed over them. Contrary to the opinion of our esteemed secretary we did not utilize early U-boats!!

The Torpedo Corps came about after a British officer, Lt. Col. (later Maj. Gen. Sir) Peter Henry SCRATCHLEY officially visited New Zealand in 1880 and advised the government to purchase 12 spar torpedo craft to support the heavy guns in the coastal defence role, three each for Auckland, Wellington, Lyttleton and Dunedin harbours. His report was, naturally, put to one side probably because the expenditure of money was involved. Finally, in late 1882 the generous government ordered four Thornycroft 2nd Class Torpedo boats at a cost of about £4,000 each, these were delivered in about mid 1884 and were distributed one to each harbour. These vessels are described as being 63 feet (19.2 metres) in length, displacing 12.2 tons with a 1 metre draught, powered by a 173 h.p. 2 cylinder compound steam engine that gave an official speed of 17 knots although 15 knots appears to be the actual maximum and had a crew of 5 men, each boat was equipped with a 1 inch Nordenfelt gun mounted on top of the conning tower. The Spar Torpedo was simply an iron cylinder of two compartments each holding 16.5 lbs of wet gun cotton, a fulminate of mercury detonator and 6v battery on the end of an 11 metre spar or pole. When an enemy vessel was to be attacked the crew closed all hatches (probably to prevent the faint hearted from shooting through) and when about 60 yards from the target rigged out the spar from its retracted position on the deck, at its full extension the spar dipped the payload in to the water at an angle of about 25° and when the torpedo was within a few feet of the enemies hull a crew member closed the electrical circuit and there was a nice satisfying bang. Just what this explosion would achieve is debatable but the Thornycroft was only clad with 1.6mm stainless steel and one would suspect that the concussion from the torpedo would not do the hull a lot of good.

One reference describes the Thornycroft as *"a most formidable weapon in the hands of daring and determined men"*, this reference goes on to suggest *"that it is a very dangerous one for its crew as they would have had to endure heavy enemy fire from a close range as they manoeuvred their craft into position to explode the mine"*. An understatement if ever I heard one.

Now the amazing bit; a year after these daring and determined men received these formidable weapons they learnt that the system had never been tested and that it was thought possible that the explosion may prove fatal to the boat. Who said that the Japanese were the first to devise a Kamikaze concept. I also note that in the same batch of boats as ours there were some sold to Chile, perhaps the crafty poms hoped that the colonials or the dagos would try the system out and save them the possible embarrassment

In the late 1880's the Auckland and Wellington boats were fitted with dropping gear for the Whithead or fish type torpedo. But the boats poor sea-keeping qualities made them unsuitable for launching such weapons as in all but calm seas it was predicted that they would capsize on doing so. In 1893 the government was warned that it would be: *"perfectly hopeless to use these boats in daylight against a vessel carrying quickfiring guns"*.

Considered obsolete they were stripped of fittings in the early 1900's and left to rust away. Submarine harbour defences were abandoned in 1907.

Ladies and Gentlemen I ask you to fill your glasses, rise and drink a toast to the intrepid men of the Armed Constabulary, the Torpedo Corps and the Submarine Mining Corps, our predecessors.

THE 70th ANNIVERSARY REUNION

A great weekend held in Taupo over 5 – 7 November 2004 and attended by sixty-one members their wives, partners and friends. Messages of Goodwill were received from the President of the North Queensland Gunners Association Eldon Bryant and Geoff Annett RAA and many of our own people with their apologies. All apologies and attendees are attached.

Friday evening the mix and mingle was held in the Spa Hotel Bar, where a memorable evening in a relaxed and pleasant atmosphere was enjoyed by all. The cleanup next day was as normal, mountains of bovine waste!! shell cases, sand, blinds and broken light fittings from what could have been a "Fire Mission AGRA"

Saturday the AGM was notable for the Notice of Motion to change the Name and Membership Rules. With one minor amendment the Notice was 'Carried'. The new Name, Heading and Rules 4 and 5 are attached. The Rule change and Name have been accepted by the Registrar of the Incorporated Societies and our Bank.

The full Motion is attached but basically the following changes were approved:

1. We are now the **Royal New Zealand Artillery Old Comrades Association**, with the memory of our forebears in the heading
2. **Full Members.** ALL Gunners be they NZA, RF, TF, K Force, Bandsmen etc are now eligible to apply for, membership, provided the intending member has completed a minimum of three years service or an Operational Tour.
3. **Life Members.** Is now an award of excellent service to the Association.
4. **Associate Members.** Any Corps, any Service of any Country provided the intending member was attached to an RNZA Unit or have a close affinity thereto.
Also, individuals with a close association to a Full or Life Member, e.g. immediate family
Note: The committee still retains the absolute right to reject an application.
5. **Rule 5 Membership General. Becoming a member, Cessation of Membership, Subscriptions, Financial Year and Voting.** Included in Rule 5 is the reduction from three years to two years where if a Member allows their subscription to go into arrears then their membership shall be terminated, subject to the Secretary advising the Member that their membership is about to be terminated.

Saturday evening the Formal Dinner was held at the extremely pleasant surroundings of the Taupo Bowling Club. Peter Baker toasted the Queen our Captain General, Matt Crawley Absent Friends, David Roberts the Armed Constabulary, Permanent Militia, Torpedo Corps and Submarine Mining Corps, Chief Inspector Sherwood Young the Regiment and they were followed by an informative brief on the RNZA today by Brigadier Graham Birch MBE our Colonel Commandant.

Sunday, the Church parade was a resounding success with the attendance of the Royal Marine Association. I understand Padre Derm Buchanan was overjoyed at the attendance of about 100 people at the Service.

FROM AND ABOUT MEMBERS AND INTERESTING REFLECTIONS

☞ Blessed are those who run around in circles – for they shall be known as big wheels.

☞ **Brian Edmonds** writes from Cairns apologizing for not being at the Reunion and wishing us well. He also talks of his days in the Transport Section 161 Bty Vietnam 68-69 when they were known as 'The Dirty 13 Trucking Company', 13 of course being the Tac Sign. Brian had a smile over the one-upmanship mentioned in Newsletter 123 and mentioned how the D13 had their own one-upmanship.

They would collect rations from the Australian RQMS where they were left on pallets with a large sign to say which Battery they were for. They often noticed that the rations for 161 Bty were not in

such good condition as the Australian Btys rations, in some cases not even fit for the dump. So being good Kiwis they would arrive at smoko when no one was around and swap signs and depart smartly before someone spotted them doing the swap. *Very naughty.*

- **Joyce Bickerton** telling us 'young folk' to keep up the old traditions and included a very kind donation.
- **Terry Hughes** another very kind donation and apologising for not attending the Reunion due to knee problems he occurred whilst begging for mercy. *Now let us get one thing straight Mr, it was you who sent Peter Baker and I up Greentop thinking we were going to have to walk. Surprise, surprise I found a natural bridge across a stream so we drove up there. Oh dear, how sad, never mind, no one was supposed to go there due to a number of 'blinds' – oops!!*
- **Brig Les Wright** another very kind donation and apology for not attending the Reunion.
- **Julie Jones** a pleasant note thanking us for keeping her informed of what is going on around the Association.
- **Grace Hanvey** with another kind donation and wishing Sel Bryant all the best. *If these wonderful people keep sending donations at this rate they will soon overtake receipts for subs!!*
- **Ray Cousineau** is under a pall of smoke from 570 forest fires in British Columbia where the daytime temperature is seldom below 30°C. Ray also sent a card that he had mailed to us in Dec 2002 and just received it back undelivered. *Now that is what I call 'snail mail'!*
- **Bert Dyson** with apologies for not attending the reunion and a very kind donation. Also a clipping with information regarding the USS Harry S Truman. This is not really a ship, more like a floating town, a bit bigger than Taihape. The ship holds 80 aircraft, a crew of 5000 700 of whom are women (*beauty, cast off the lifeboats I'm in*). The deck covers 4 ½ acres (*if wa is not imminent a kiwi would probably put it down in spuds*). 3+ million gallons of Avgas. Goes for 20 years and one tank of fuel (*oh the joys of nuclear power*) and will turn 90 degrees in 500 yards if pushed. It is twenty stories high (9 to the flight deck) and its propellers weigh 50 tons a piece. The fascination is not in the figures, however, but in the routines and practices. The Captain runs this monster from a bridge little bigger than those found on your average frigate (albeit from a much fluffier chair). Down below one of his men runs the flight deck with a series of models and pins on something called a ouji board. The 'low tech' nature of the system is too much for some, who suggest that computers should really be involved somewhere. Much to the delight of those of us who believe that digitisation is alright in moderation, the cheerful 'deck boss' explains to us that they had not come up with a computer that could do the job as fast as the human operators. It is interesting to note that the skipper has to keep the ship's listing to less than 2 degrees, that should not be a problem to an experienced mariner, but that they are not, all carrier skippers are pilots with a fair degree of basic ship handling. *I could fill a whole Newsletter with the rest of the facts. Should anyone wish to have a look at these clippings please let me know.*
- **Darkie Forrester** writes regarding Colin Ryan's funeral. Colin served in Korea(mid), SAS Malaya and Borneo, 161 Bty Vietnam.
- **Sel Bryant** just been in hospital again and does not get around too much. Sel's wife, of 64 years, is in a Rest Home in Palmerston North so life for him is not all 'sunny days'. *Maybe someone in Palmerston North could look in on him occasionally.*
- **Danny Watson**, cricketing great, heard on Radio talkback. "Why don't we jump out of tall buildings? It is not the fun of the flight but the sudden painful stop at the bottom."
- **Waikato Times 28 Oct**, Letters to the Editor. Defending the Faith. "The recent Muslim Awareness Week has resulted in a number of letters from supporters of both Islam and Christianity. Most writers have attempted to defend their faith by pointing to the misdeeds of the followers of the other. The essence of any movement should be sought in its founders. The Quran mentions Jesus 97 times and Mohammed 25. According to both the Quran and the Bible, Jesus never sinned, and Mohammed prayed often for the forgiveness of his sins. Jesus waged no war, taught mercy and love and established a spiritual kingdom. Mohammed waged 66 battles, showed no mercy and established an earthly empire by the sword. While Jesus taught his followers to love their enemies, Mohammed taught his to kill theirs and the Quran consents 103

times to the beheading of any non-Muslim. Jesus never married and taught that each man should have one wife. Mohammed had 15 wives and taught that a man could exchange wives provided he had no more than four at a time – including temporary ones. According to both the Quran and the Bible, Jesus rose from the grave, while Mohammed is still dead. *I found that this made interesting reading and share it with you.*

- ☛ **Iris Rowntree** has sent us a very nice Christmas card and another donation, Iris wishes all her old friends and our Members the very best for Christmas and the New Year.
- ☛ **An old Cherokee saying**, “Fresh fish and visitors go off after three days!” *That really needs to be made into a wall plaque and hung in a very prominent place.*
- ☛ **From the Office of Hugh Vercoe, ex BC 4th Medium Battery, Mayor of Matamata-Piako District.** Hugh has his own Insurance Brokering, Finance Company and Financial Consultancy business in Morrinsville. Should anyone have Insurance or financial problems they need seen to, I would strongly recommend a call to Hugh.

If a dog were the teacher, you would learn things like:

When it is in your best interest, learn obedience.	Thrive on attention and let people touch you.
Avoid biting when a simple growl will do.	If what you want lies buried, dig until you find it.
No matter how often you are scolded, don't buy into the guilt thing and put...run right back and make friends.	When loved ones come home always run to greet them.
Be loyal , never pretend to be something you're not.	When someone is having a bad day, be silent, sit close by and nuzzle them gently.

Yes, we certainly could learn a thing or two from man's best friend.

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The Insurance Adviser

- ☛ **It was once said** about a very dedicated and esteemed CI School of Guns from about the '58-'59 period that 'if he cut his finger he would probably bleed buffer oil'. *Yes, I would believe it and I had the privilege of being under his command during those years. Lt Col Ron Cross went up to him recently and said "You wouldn't remember me, I was always hiding from you!!!"*

Notice of Motion

Moved by Graeme Black and Seconded by Denis Dwane:

“That the Heading and Rules 1, 4 and 5 be repealed and replaced by the following:

Heading

The Royal New Zealand Artillery Old Comrades Association (Incorporated)
Constitution and Rules.

The Association was originally formed for ex members of the New Zealand Armed Constabulary, Permanent Militia, Permanent Artillery, Torpedo Corps, Submarine Mining Corps and Royal New Zealand Artillery Regular Force and was named The New Zealand Permanent Force Old Comrades Association (Incorporated)

Rule 1 CONSTITUTION

The name of the Association shall be:

- a. The Royal New Zealand Artillery Old Comrades Association (Incorporated)
- b. The Association shall be non-political and non-sectarian.

Rule 4. MEMBERSHIP

The members of the Association may consist of:

- a. Full Members

Former and current serving members of the Royal New Zealand Artillery and former members of the New Zealand Artillery who have had Operational Service or a minimum of three years service in Royal New Zealand Artillery or New Zealand Artillery Units.

- b. Life Membership
Any financial Full Member who has rendered valuable service to the Association over an extended period.
- c. Associate Members
 - i. Former members and serving members of the New Zealand Defence Force or foreign Armed Services if during their service they have been attached to the Royal New Zealand Artillery, or have a close affinity therewith.
 - ii. Individuals with a close association to a Full of Life member, such as immediate family.
- d. Honorary Members
Any person who has rendered valuable service to the Association over an extended period and is not eligible by way of Rule 4. a. b. or c.

Rule 5. MEMBERSHIP GENERAL, Becoming a Member, Cessation of Membership, Subscriptions, Financial Year and Voting.

- a. Becoming a Member
 - i. All intending Full and Associate Members must complete the Application Form and hand, or mail, it to the Secretary with the Annual Subscription.
 - ii. Applications for Life Membership shall be in the form of a letter outlining fully the reasons that the person should be considered, proposed and seconded by two Full and Financial Members or Life Members of the Association and handed, or mailed, to the Secretary. Life Membership shall be for Life.
 - iii. Widows or widowers of Full or Life Members shall be invited by the Committee to become Associate Members of the Association.
 - iv. Applications for Honorary Membership shall be in the form of a letter outlining fully the reasons that the person should be considered, proposed and seconded by two Full and Financial Members or Life Members of the Association and handed, or mailed, to the Secretary. Honorary Membership shall be reviewed annually at the AGM.
 - v. ALL Applications shall be considered by the Committee and to be accepted must be approved by a minimum of four fifths of the Committee .
 - vi. The Committee shall have the absolute authority and power to refuse any application for membership, reinstatement of membership or to dismiss any member for good and sufficient reason, subject to that member being given the right to state their case before the Committee.
- b. Membership shall cease:
 - i. On the death of a Member.
 - ii. By resignation in writing.
 - iii. By being dismissed from the Association.
 - iv. Where a Member allows their subscription to become in arrears for two years they shall *ipso facto* cease to be a Member of the Association. Any person shall not be eligible for re-election or re-instatement until the arrears at the time of cessation are paid in full. The Secretary shall advise the member that the cessation of their membership is being considered.
- c. Subscriptions and Financial Year
 - i. Subscriptions for Full and Associate Members shall be set at the Annual General Meeting and shall be due from that date.
 - ii. Life Member and Honorary Members shall not be required to pay any subscription.
 - iii. The Committee may, after due enquiry, release a member from subscriptions either fully or in part where they are unable to pay their subscription through adversity or misfortune. Such a release shall be reviewed annually and not normally extended beyond two years.
- d. Voting
Only financial Full Members and Life Members shall be entitled to vote at any General, Special or Committee Meeting.”

The Notice of Motion was ‘carried’ by 90% of the members present. The Rules require acceptance of not less than two thirds (66.6%) of the members present shall represent a majority.

The following people attended the Reunion.

Peter and Josephine Baker, Shay Bassett, John and Teri Bellamy, Jasmine and son Daniel Beveridge, Graham and Janine Birch, Bob Blankley, Matt Crawley Rita Moore Doug and Carolyn Moore, Ron and Caroline Cross, Bevan and Lyn Culhane, Denis and Margaret Dwane, Bill and Emma Giles, Frank and Pat Hopkinson, Jack Kearney, Kerry and Lyn Lee, Ted and Nes Lile, Russell and Kate Martin, Jerry Meyer Linda Novotny Alan Ford and Joan Beard, George Patti and Clive Miln, Bill and Estelle Morland, Roger and Lois Newth, Des O’Connor,

Michael and Sandy Pearce, Neil and Shelagh Rhynd, Dave and Marie Roberts, Arthur and Kitty Simeon, Morrie and Alva Stanley, Ron Turner, Tony Tustin and Patricia Murray, Graeme Williams, Roger and Jean Wylde, our Padre Derm Buchanan and Organist Helen MacMahon.

Apologies and Messages of Goodwill were received from

John Blaker, Sel Bryant, The CO Michael Baker, Graeme Black (malingerer), Grant Box(genuinely in hospital), Shirley Burns, Barry Cook (in Rarotonga!!!his excuse was worse than mine), Ian Cunningham, Barry Dreyer, Bert (Flaps) Dyson, Brian Edmonds, Darkie Forrester, Bill Godfrey, Ross Goldsworthy, Barry Hardy, Joyce Hankey, Grace Hanvey, Heather Hellyer, Graeme Henderson, Jack Hickson, Geoff Hitchings, Harry Honnor, Bill Hopkins, David Hughes, Terry Hughes, Howard Jones, Don Kenning, Bob Kerslake, Andrew Lister, Rob McAulay, Jim O'Meara, Don Potter, Bill Powrie, Tom Roche, Jim Ross, Iris Rowntree, Pat Shirley, Lindsay Skinner, The RSM Solly Solomon, Clyde Stewart, Jeff Waters, Nora Weaver and Les Wright.

REUNION 2005

At the AGM discussion took place as to how to put to best use the \$1600.00 Lottery Grant which was to be used for reunion and bus hire expenses. It was proposed that the grant be used to cover the expenses of South Island members with the view that the next reunion be held in **Palmerston North** to allow the SI members a minimum travel time.

The Kingsgate Hotel is the obvious accommodation venue and RSA mix and mingle, Formal Dinner and Church Service. The Kingsgate is one of the top Hotels and is sympathetic to our cause, the 161 Bty Reunion and Ex Vietnam Assn Reunions. Mini buses will be available for transport to the RSA. The Kingsgate has offered us the following prices that are better than the Spa.

Premium Room	\$105-00
Standard Room	\$95-00
Economy Room	\$75-00

Due to this, we now need some urgent action so planning can take place. We would like to see 16th Field Regiment given the opportunity to attend, heaven knows we tend to lean on them a lot and that is the reason for the dates which are **14,15,16 Oct OR 18,19,20 Nov**. Other dates are out due to Regimental exercise restrictions. I ask you please to read the following, **complete it and return it to me ASAP, all I need is YES or NO you will give it serious consideration. You WILL NOT be bound by your reply.**

NAME.....

I will seriously consider attending the Reunion YES NO. Numbers.....

I would prefer the prefer the weekend 14, 15, 16 Oct 18, 19 20 Nov

I will seriously consider accommodation at the Kingsgate. YES NO

On behalf of the President and myself, please have a happy and prosperous Christmas and New Year. This has been a challenging year but I feel we move towards 2005 in good shape and good heart.

