



*Established in 1934 as:
THE NEW ZEALAND PERMANENT FORCE OLD COMRADES ASSOCIATION (INCORPORATED)
Now officially renamed as*

THE ROYAL NEW ZEALAND ARTILLERY OLD COMRADES ASSOCIATION (INCORPORATED)

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Palmerston North

President

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NEWSLETTER No. 130

August 2006

ROUTINE ORDERS

LAST POST:

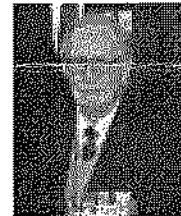
266137 Dick Mitchell. Takapuna 9 January 2006.

Dick was a staunch member of the Old Comrades and regularly attended the annual reunions. His happy nature will be sadly missed from future gatherings.



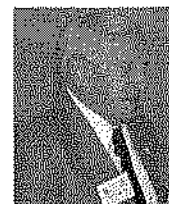
36425 David Ralph 'Spike' Hughes. Wellington Wednesday 19 July 2006.

I first met Spike in 1958 when posted as an Anti Aircraft instructor at the School of Artillery. 1959 saw the disbanding of Anti Aircraft so I was changed into and Field Artillery instructor. The transition would have been a challenge if it had not been for Spike, he was an extremely accomplished instructor and I was forever at his elbow asking for advice about this and that. Never once did I leave him without the knowledge I sought. He was a great inspiration and friend amongst the staff of the School and the Old Comrades.



31051 Rupert John 'Matt' Crawley. Tauranga 15 August 2006

Matt and I first met in Sep 1952 when, as a Regular Force Cadet I attended an Anti Aircraft Instructors Course. Being only 17 ½ Matt became a father figure to me and with his great instructional ability was able to penetrate my head with all the intricacies of radar. He was also a very staunch member of the Old Comrades and carried out the task of Bay of Plenty Area Rep with enjoyment. Matt's recent claim to fame was the almost permanent presenter of the Toast to Absent Friends at the Annual Reunion, a task that he delivered with a degree of solemnity and light heartedness. He will also be sadly missed from our gatherings



NEW MEMBERS

David Lackey joins us from Australia. **David** was with 161 Battery from 1965 to 1968 and saw service in Vietnam as a Section Commander.

Brian Inns from New Plymouth served with 62 Battery 6th Light Anti Aircraft Regiment and with 21 Battery 2nd Field Regiment from 1949 to 1961. Since 1991 **Brian** has been producing and directing 'Searchlight Tattoos' in New Plymouth. He has been asked to produce and direct a "Musical Military Pageant" for RNZRSA to mark their 90th year and the "Year of the Veteran" in Wellington Friday 3 November 2006.

Neil MacMillan from Okaihau started his military career in the Regular Force Cadets in January 1968 and saw active service with 161 Battery Vietnam as a Battery Surveyor in 1970. **Neil** also did a stint on the Big Guns with 4th Medium Battery.

Clayton John from Australia. **Clayton** came over to Jeff Waters' Gunner's Day Dinner and asked if he could join the Old Comrades, absolutely! He joined the TF in 32(D) Battery in 1974, 31(B) Battery in 1975 then joined the RF but remained in 31 Battery until 1976 when he was posted to 161 Battery, back to 3rd Field Regiment in 1978 and again to 161 Battery in 1980. After five years with 161 Battery he went to RHQ and in 1986 took his discharge. Here is a real Gunner, his son is currently serving with 103 Medium Battery, 8/12 Regiment RAA. Not satisfied with that his father also served in WW2 on 25 pounders. I am currently waiting for **Clayton's** dad to send me his Membership form.

James Heard from Pukekohe. **James** saw service with 161 Battery in Vietnam as a Section Commander and later with the NZ Army Training Team. **James** attended the Long Gunnery Staff Course at Larkhill, UK, returned to command the School of Artillery, finally to HQ 1 Task Force as Chief of Staff and Dep. Commander, retiring as a Lt Col.

Lee Jordan from Tauranga. **Lee** started his service in 1970 as a National Serviceman after which he was posted to 4(G) Medium Battery as a Driver Operator and retired in 1990 as Battery Commander 4 Mdm Bty. A great accomplishment from the bottom to the top and a well deserved appointment after years of hard work and study, all of which had to be done in his own time.

Ivan John from Australia. **Ivan** served from 1942 in the Coast Artillery on Norfolk Island then on to J Force and then served with 3 Field Regiment and Div Arty. However, I notice son **Clayton**, has completed some of the membership form and has not mentioned his earlier war service because he has the Italy Star.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Many subscriptions have been received and I thank you, the arrears are now \$485 which is great. Again, to those who have not yet paid, if you are computerised and on the Internet we now have 'On Line' Banking available. If you wish to use this facility please bank into the following account.

The Royal New Zealand Artillery Old Comrades Association Inc. 123042 0229763 50.

You may wish to advise me that you have done this but it is not essential as I 'log on' daily. If you are not 'On Line' then please do not forget your subs. Receipts will be issued and mailed out with the next Newsletter.

STRUCK OFF FOR NON PAYMENT OF SUBSCRIPTIONS

This is probably the first ever Newsletter where there are no members struck off. However, you know who you are, there may be three next time but I honestly hope not.

FROM AND ABOUT MEMBERS AND INTERESTING REFLECTIONS

- **Lloyd Heuvelhorst**, Michigan Light Artillery sent us the following from **General Dwight D Eisenhower**:

"You do not lead people by hitting them over the head – that is assault not leadership." *I wonder if he said that after old Blood and Guts Patton belted one of his soldiers in hospital?*

Anyone who wishes to contact **Lloyd** let me know and I will direct you to him.

- **Darkie Forrester** writes to apologise for not being at the Reunion this year but asks that I send his greetings to all members. He also included a picture of himself as a young sailor, 16 yrs, on board HMS Wakakura in Akaroa 1938. The most important thing is that **Darkie** included a sizeable contribution to this year's Reunion. *I think I can speak for all members and thank you for that. It is actions of that nature that make me firmly convinced in the good heart that the Association enjoys.*

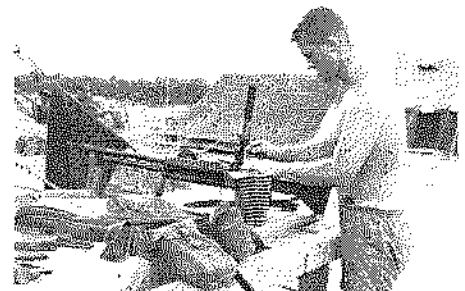
Young 'Darkie' Forrester



- **Neddy Wyld** also apologises that he cannot be at the Reunion and the same as **Darkie**, includes a donation towards the weekend.

- **Barry Hardy** phoned and had a chat about the good old days, especially when he and **Chris Brown** joined the Field Technical Assistants Course in 1959, this was also a conversion course for the Coast and AA Gunners. It was then that **Barry** realised the depth of knowledge, gunnery skills and just plain good old ability of the RNZA Instructors and students and especially their willingness to help each other. We had probably some of the best instructors I have ever experienced while the 'students' added colour to the course, the likes of **Maurie Chittock, Sham Shaw, Terry Transom, Matey Smith** just to name a few. **Barry** sends his best wishes to all the members.
- **Slim Cunningham** called from Dunedin and we were on the phone for about an hour reminiscing about those great days at the School of Artillery, talking about people we had worked with and enjoyed Mess life with even the Scottish dances we 'had to attempt' at the odd School function, names that come back are **Allan Boyd, Bryan O'Connor, Mac Nabbs, Spike Hughes, Darcy Pollard, Jack Osmer, Ghostie Wilson, Matt Crawley, Ralph Porter, Don Kenning, Harold Jones, Banzi Smith, Len Partner, Les Auty, Pud Kerlake, John Bellamy, John Rout, Ross Goldsworthy, Terry Hughes, Dave Roberts, Grant Box, Tom O'Reilly** and even 'Old Brown Boots' **Tony Carroll** and many others whose names don't immediately come to mind. They will all come back in memories in November.
- I am a little humbled by the number of calls, emails and letters I have been receiving regarding the Newsletters from far and wide regarding how interesting they are, **Ian Beker** who was a Corporal in 1 RNZIR and frequently I could hear from Bn HQ the RSM screaming **Cooooorrrrr Beker**, poor **Ian** always seemed to be getting chased by RSM Alan Fletcher, **Noel Brough** who goes back to Arty Wing Papakura in the good old days of Compulsory Military Training, **Barry Hardy, Slim Cunningham, Jan Rout, Marie Roberts, Harry Honnor, Eldon Bryant** from North Queensland Gunners Assn, **Harry Akarana, Heather Hellyer**,
- As we go through this Newsletter there will be pieces of humour that have been submitted by **Andrew Lister, Roger Newth and Larry English**. So I thank them for their assistance in helping me put some humour into your lives.
- A New Plymouth Traffic Patrol Cop was watching for speeders with a mobile radar gun, but wasn't getting many. Then he discovered the problem. A 12-year-old boy was standing up the road with a hand painted sign, which read "RADAR TRAP AHEAD". The officer then found a young accomplice down the road with a sign reading "TIPS" and a bucket full of money (and we only used to sell lemonade)?
- A rather descriptive picture of New Zealanders is taken out of '2 NZEF In The Pacific, The Gunners'. "After taking Nissan Island, in March we received the congratulations of Admiral Nimitz for our successful occupation in the following message:-- 'The bold, skilful and effective manner with which Units of the South Pacific Forces carry out one operation after another has my great admiration. Warm congratulations to you and your entire Command.'
We have remarked before on the generosity of our allies with their equipment, but on 24th March it was deemed necessary by us to call for the collection and return of all American equipment. When one saw the miscellany of things one blushed for one's countrymen and could well understand the feelings of the American who said his solution to the Japanese War was to 'put you Kiwis on one island with all the Japanese and in a week the war would be over for you would have all their equipment.'
Comments like that were to carry on to Korea. I mentioned the above to **Don Kenning** and he related the story of the Kiwi tankie driving down the road in a Centurion tank and as he passed an Aussie, the Aussie called out "You'll never get away with that Kiwi!!!"
And also on to Vietnam, the advance party had only been in Country for two days when after discussing the fact that we only had the heavy barrel FN (a bit like a Bren Gun) for local support weapons we were presented with three brand new US M60 machine guns.

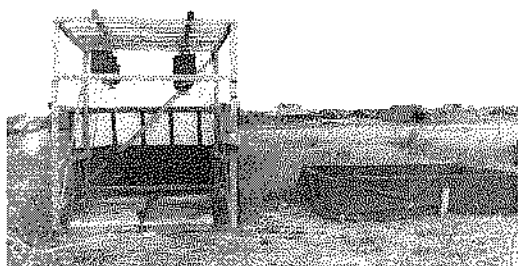
The BQMS, in 'Sunday attire', with one of his newly acquired M60 machine guns.



Again, we had no system of overhead water for the showers so off I went to the US Air Force Base to see some mates and see if we could get an aircraft wing tank. Not a problem, come on we will 'obtain' an F100 Super Sabre wing tank. All was well until I drove back into 161 Battery with this thing in my Land Rover (see below to get an idea how big it was) and who should be in the area of the entrance to the Bty – The Boss – Big **Don Kenning**. I wish I had had my camera to capture the look of sheer horror and a tape recorder to capture the comment "What the hell have you done with the pilot and the rest of the aeroplane?"



An F100 Super Sabre with wing tank, the long one with fins, b ___ huge when it was in a Land Rover



The shower block which is why we needed overhead water instead of the canvas water trough and shower buckets to tow into the air.

- **Malcolm 'Dinga' Bell** apologises that he will not be able to make the reunion this year because his medical grading has gone from BLR (Beyond Local Repair) to BER (Beyond Economical Repair) so does not stray from the cabin these days, however, he sends his regards to all his old mates and wishes us a happy reunion.
- **Shirley Burns** writes how she enjoys keeping in touch with the Old Comrades who were very dear to **Blackie's** heart. For those who did not know him **Brigadier 'Blackie' Burns** was one of our more interesting and respected members. Shirley mentions being 'taken over' by **Ray and Laurie Andrews**, and given the grand tour of many Gunners and their wives from long ago, **Helen Paterson-Agar, Lady Barbara Webb, Elizabeth Joplin, Anne Quinn, Ralph and Maureen Porter. John and Jill Horsford** also gathered another group together and as always **Ron Turner** was on hand to collect her when she arrived back in Wellington and deliver her safely home. **Shirley** will not be able to make the reunion but wishes us all the very best for a great weekend. *It took me a while to realise what the reunions were all about but finally in 1999 I attended my first one and as you get older there are a number of our folk who pass on, at least I can look back and say well I enjoyed Blackie's company at the last reunion he was able to attend.* If you do not attend you may miss out seeing some of your old mates for the last time, no one is getting any younger.

- **Col Bert 'Flaps' Dyson** also apologises for not going to the reunion but is suffering from arthritis caused by an old sports injury. *I wonder if it may have something to do with landing an Auster aircraft in a hedge or was that Rusty Vail, and didn't Barry Hardy and Chris Brown have a similar experience???? We used to have a number of these lovely little aeroplanes until some naughty people bent them.*

An Auster AOP (Air Observation Post)



- **Don Kenning** loaned me a book 'Korea Remembered' compiled by Maurie Pears and Fred Kirkland. Although it is mainly about the Australian commitment in Korea, many of the stories are quite relevant to our own people so I will share some with you. **Laurie Clark** who graduated from RMC Duntroon in 1947 writes "Late in 1951 we observed a big build-up for a major Chinese offensive. During one day we pinpointed at least 13 tanks moving into an assault position and called for fighter ground attack support. We got a squadron of USAF F80s (Shooting Stars) which, after flying around for a while and shooting off their rockets, duly reported that all tanks were destroyed. This sounded like success, except that after the planes left, all 13 tanks opened up with their main guns – damage assessment on the ground seems to have been not much better in the Iraq war of 1991. The tanks assault, however, was only the beginning of a major attack. This started at about eight o'clock that night. We had access to direct support from a New Zealand artillery battery; when needed, all I had to do was to

get on my radio and say: 'Hello, might 62 fire task Zebra, out' and within two minutes a battery of eight guns should give 20 minutes fire, or fire as required. In the darkness we could hear the enemy infantry on our wire about a hundred yards forward of the position, so I sent out the call for artillery fire. The fire did not arrive.

Two minutes went by and we could hear the enemy getting further and further through the wire. Twenty minutes passed and I was a bit concerned. I called again on the radio to a New Zealand forward observer, noting a bit irately, the time that had elapsed since my first fire support request. Actually I said, 'Hello 62, fire, (*naughty word*)-- you, FIRE!' Out of the darkness came a great barrage: the eight guns of the New Zealand supporting battery fired; then the 16 remaining guns of the New Zealand Regiment, next the 48 guns of the Canadian Field Regiment and the British Field Regiment, then the 36 guns of the adjoining United States Second Infantry Division, and all the guns of the flanking Republic of Korea Infantry Division, plus the Corps Artillery of medium and heavy guns. In all, 208 guns rained fire for 20 minutes. I realised I was not alone, after all.

The next day, the Chinese equivalent of a brigade major of their artillery supporting this attack surrendered himself to us. He said he was disgusted at the way things had gone and told us that it had been a 5000 man Chinese brigade attack which had been crushed by our artillery bombardment, and that 1042 men had been killed in this 20 minute period. Surely this is something for the *Guinness Book of Records* for a junior officer to call down such a volume of fire and to have such a spectacular result!" *Maybe this illustrates the justification of the use of naughty words to get some action?*

- ☉ What Do Fish Say When They Hit a Concrete Wall?
Dam!

Why Don't Blind People Like To Sky Dive?
Because It Scares The Dog.

What's The Difference Between Roast Beef And Pea Soup?
Anyone Can Roast Beef

What Do You Get When You Cross a Snowman With a Vampire?
Frostbite.

- ☉ **General Sir Francis Hassett AC, KBE, CB, DSO, LVO, (RL)**, in 'Korea Remembered' writes about Courage, Mateship and Leadership:

Courage.

Courage is usually held to be the most important quality on the premise that, without it, other soldierly virtues do not really matter. Troops expect to be led from the front. As Field Marshal Sir William Slim once said, it is not a case of 'go on', but 'come on'. If a soldier knows what he has to do and why, then he will do it. He respects courage, as soldiers do the world over. The biggest problems in the battalion team arise when troops are tired: exhausted by the strain, noise and sights of battle. Inertia and lethargy set in, even though all are aware that inaction can be highly dangerous. That is when a good leader is effective, not through oratory or histrionics, but by quiet reasoning and example, he can bring the team together.

A commander should not forget that too much battle stress, for too long, will render soldiers incapable of efficient performance. The signs are there when good officers and men fail to react effectively. Sometimes troops have to be driven beyond this point, but the commander must know that there is a price to pay.

There have been rare instances, throughout history, where our soldiers have not performed well, but they have occurred when other factors have been paramount, such as inadequate time for training, shortage of equipment, low morale within units, lack of sound planning and indifferent or bad leadership. The fall of Singapore was a classic example of this.

Mateship.

Soldiers in other battles and wars fought better because they were part of a team of mates – a team which would come to help you, when you were in trouble. He gained strength from them and they from him. The many arduous and hard-fought battles in Korea owed their success to the strong spirit of mateship which existed within the battalions, notably at platoon and section level, among subalterns, sergeants, corporals and infantrymen. *I think it is fair to say that this spirit exists throughout all ANZAC units and personnel. It certainly existed in places like the School of Artillery where staff numbers were small so everyone had to help and where required give advice to each other. With that mateship the School of Artillery was a great unit. Even though it was in Waiouru.*

Leadership.

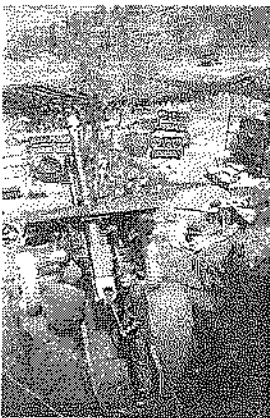
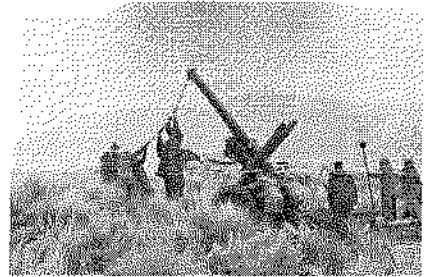
Good leadership embodies all the personal qualities already mentioned and much more. It is essential to the success of the military team. We tend to forget that leadership is not confined to senior command level.

Every member of the team, from the commander to the private soldier, must be able to lead and influence his own particular group. *In the NZ Forces this would be best illustrated by the leadership shown during the days of Compulsory Military Training and National Service*

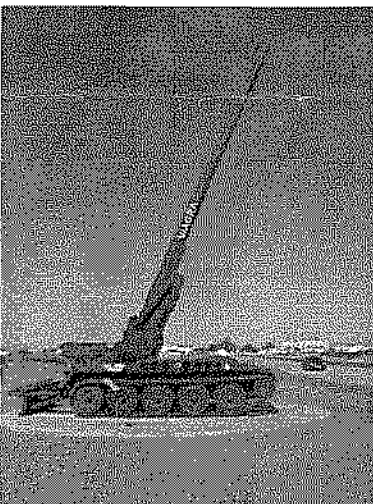
- **Captain Eddie Rickenbaker** US WW1 Ace said that "courage is doing what you're scared to do, there is no courage without being scared". *I think there is also the matter of training, and confidence in that training. Without that then there is little point in being courageous. Do what you are scared to do but with confidence.*
- **Alex Weir** writes of the final stages of the Korean War where both side wanted as much land as they could prior to the 27 July which was when the war was supposed to cease. **Alex** has included some snaps of 25 pounders in high angle (i.e. above 45 degrees). Very handy when the bad guys are tucked in behind hills where they thought they would be able to hide from normal flat trajectory rounds, but here we can lob them up into the air much like a mortar. And for the bad guys 'oh dear, how sad, never mind.' Below are some pictures of various guns in 'high angle'. The 25 pounder and the 5.5 inch gun had to have a large hole dug so as to lower the trails into it to achieve the above 45 degree elevation. For the 5.5 inch it was not a large hole it was a **bloody big** hole.



5.5-inch in high angle. The rope was needed to pull the barrel down to load.



25 pounders in high angle in Korea



A US 175 mm in high angle. You have heard about the 'cow jumping over the moon', well in this case I think the shell may had had to pass through a lunar orbit.

Alex also included a Christmas Card from the Korean People's Army and the Chinese People's Volunteers that was sent to them for Christmas '52-'53. *It is not suitable for scanning, however I thought mention the really kind heartedness of the Communists to make such a gesture and the way they explain that America is responsible for all the pain and suffering. Now correct me if I am wrong but didn't North Korea invade the South. Actually if you were to see this Card you could be mistaken for the designer being Gobbels who had no , oh what was it????*

- **Rupert Robinson** apologises for not being able to attend the Reunion and comments that he attended the very first that was held in Taupo. Old age is catching him up and he asks to be remembered to all. *Actually there is a way to slow the aging process down and that is to ask for Resource Consent to Age. That should delay it for a few years!!!*
- **Ralph Porter** also apologises for not being able to attend the reunion, he is running in a new hip.
- **Ted Holmes** thanking us for permitting him to join the Assn so that he can keep up with news about old friends and in particular **Allan Boyd** who he refers to as 'Cobber', so there is another nickname to Allan's credit. **Ted** also sent some photos that had been photocopied but are not clear enough to scan and share. One of the Hospital Ship 'Oranje', another of six of he and his mates with a mountain of patriotic parcels, a 25 pounder with 'Cobber' Boyd in the layer's seat and **Ted** at the ready with a '119' (i.e. high explosive with No 119 fuze fitted, **Ted** is 86 and still remembers the correct nomenclature of his ammo). And another of **Ted** and 'Cobber' (*I just love that nickname, heh Allan just wait until the reunion!!*) sitting on a German field gun.
- **Lt Col Martin Neale**, CO 16th Field Regiment writes of the State of the Regiment.
Fellow gunners,
I thought it timely to bring you all up to date on developments in the RNZA in the 6 months since our Corps conference in Dec 05.

Personnel.

This table shows the current manning of the Regt versus its establishment.

<u>Rank</u>	<u>DLOC Establishment</u>	<u>Actual</u>
Total	291	254
Capt	13	7
2 Lt/Lt	12 Lt	5 Lt
	5 2Lt	5 2Lt
Sgt	31	22
Bdr/Cpl	9 Cpl	6 Cpl,
	40 Bdr	23 Bdr
LBdr/LCpl	14 LCpl	9 LCpl
	38 LBdr	41 LBdr

As you can see the only serious remaining deficit is at the Capt level. Of the 7 on posted strength two are currently deployed. There are no more promotions to Capt until Jan 2008, which is a concern.

There have been a total of 49 promotions within the Regt since Jul 05, which is very healthy, we are promoting our way out of the Bdr and Sgt deficit we had.

In the current year 2005 Regt. personnel attended over 500 courses.

We lost a total of 28 soldiers to releases of various forms since Jul 05, however we initiated 9 of these releases. This represents an 11% attrition which is very good.

There are currently only three active Request for Discharge in the Regt, we are at our highest manning and lowest attrition in years. This (I think) reflects the excellent work being done by leaders at all levels to provide exciting and challenging training. Discipline problems are also very low. These two facts taken together, indicate that morale is high and the soldiers are doing well.

Equipment

WO Galloway is pushing the Vanguard computer replacement project and a User Requirement has been written and should be out for completion later this year.

We have permanently mounted muzzle velocity chronographs on most of the guns, which gives us accurate MVs all the time.

VACs is coming, we have two SSgts in Spain at the moment and expect the equipment in our hands in Sep / Oct. We will be training with it prior to Xmas and expect to be operational with VACs by mid 2007.

We are participating in a UAV trial in the Regt, we have resurrected 1 Locating Troop. The current plan is to be issued 5 airframes and 2 ground control units prior to Xmas and be operating them effectively in the New Year. We have selected three LBdrs to lead the push on this and they are currently attending training at Massey University.

Infrastructure

The new Air Defence (AD) building is being built with a completion date of early Nov. Once the AD troop moves into this building, we will put Locating Troop, Signals Troop and HQ Bty in the old AD bldg. Hopefully we can create a RQM out of the old simulator room as well.

Hopefully the School of Artillery will receive a new building next year, we are waiting to find out if it will be built in Linton or Waiouru.

Regt History

The Regt History has undergone its final edit and we are trying to source a few more pictures. I remain confident we will see it published by the end of the year.

Op Deployments

We have a team of 8 in Bosnia as part of Op FORD.

We are anticipating some involvement in Op CRIB (Afghanistan) in the near future, which is great.

Upcoming events

We have a busy time ahead over the next few months, key events are

22 - 30 Jul - Ex QUAD ENJOY – S of A LFX graduating the SSgts course.

1 - 25 Aug - 20 soldiers will be deployed to Brunei with Officer Cadet School as a Light Infantry

18 Aug - We are sending a gun detachment to Australia for the Lon Tan ceremony. We had a film company here in mid Jun filming for a Lon Tan movie for the history channel.

28 Aug - 22 Sep - Ex Gibraltar Hill, 161 Bty LFX in Tekapo

28 Sep - 16 Oct - 163 LFX incl Ex Takrouna with OCS

Conclusion

All in all, the RNZA is quite healthy. The soldiers are happy and productive and we are seeing progress on some of our strategic concerns.

Here I must thank Col Neale for his input into this Newsletter, although to some it may be a bit of gobbledygook. I feel it is a sign of things to come where we can now take an interest in our Corps. I will say this many times - 'Once a Gunner always a Gunner'. A representation would really top off our Reunion.

☉ **Some interesting notes about the Battle of Long Tan, Vietnam 1966**

Details of the battle of Long Tan as seen from the other side are now emerging for the first time. And they confirm the analysis of the battle by the Australian officer in command in the rubber plantation on that fateful day.

D Company commander Major Harry Smith has long believed that his men did not walk into a Vietcong ambush but had inadvertently stumbled on a major VC encampment. Interviews with VC field commanders by Australian film-maker Damien Lay for his documentary *The Battle of Long Tan*, leave little doubt about the truth of this.

These commanders reveal to Lay that an ambush had been set up for the Australians - but 1.5km away from where the battle unfolded. The Australians, says Nguyen Minh Ninh, then deputy commander of D445 Battalion, took "a detour" and avoided what would probably have been much heavier casualties.

Luck was definitely with the Australians that day, according to Nguyen Duc Thu, a company commander, who was wounded late in the battle. Once the VC realised the Australians had avoided their trap, the ambush troops were moved up into the rubber plantation to try to surround D Company.

These encircling troops, including Nguyen Duc Thu himself, were ambushed in turn by the Australian relief force.

Because of the monsoonal rain and the sound of explosions and gunfire "we did not hear the tanks when they arrived. We had to turn and fire at them with our rifles", says Nguyen Duc Thu. Those "tanks" (in fact armoured personnel carriers with mounted machine guns) killed an estimated 75 Vietnamese.

Despite those losses, and the evident admiration for the professionalism of the Australian soldiers ("they fought like guerillas," the commanders say) the Vietnamese attribute their heavy casualties to the New Zealand artillery firing from the Australian base at Nui Dat. Nearly 3500 shells landed among the Vietnamese in an area of about two or three football fields.

Today the now Brigadier General Nguyen Minh Ninh can joke about this "awesome" barrage, referring to the "NZ orchestra -- boom, boom-boom, boom".

Stories of the devastation wreaked by the artillery spread to the ranks of communist fighters elsewhere in Vietnam. Doan Nhu Tang, who now lives in Sydney, served in the North Vietnamese army from 1967 until 1975 and fought at Khe Sanh. Doan (not his real name) told *The Bulletin* that he met soldiers who had fought at Long Tan. "The Australians were well dug in and we were caught out in the open and suffered a lot from your artillery."

The interviews with the VC vets are also remarkable for what they don't say. Surprisingly, there is no mention of the morality of Australia's intervention in the war. All the interviewees are army officers and probably members of the Communist Party. Certainly they all toe the current party line about leaving the rights and wrongs of the war in the past in order to smooth the flow of tourists, trade and aid from the West to Vietnam.

☉ **From Roger Newth**

Little Davie's kindergarten class was on a field trip to their local police station where they saw pictures tacked to a bulletin board of the 10 most wanted criminals. One of the youngsters pointed to a picture and asked if it really was the photo of a wanted person.

"Yes," said the policeman. "The detectives want very badly to capture him."

Little Davie asked, "Why didn't you keep him when you took his picture?"

☉ **Reunion 2006**

Friday 10, Saturday 11 and Sunday 12 November 2006 at Taupo.

The Weekend

Register in at your accommodation during Friday afternoon

Friday mix and mingle at the Taupo RSA 4.00pm to 6.00pm

Friday night dinner and drinks at the Spa. (Dinner menu is at the end)

Saturday Breakfast at the Spa. (Breakfast menu is at the end)

Saturday AGM at the Spa 'Old Dining Room' 10.00a.m. And 1 minute silence for the 11th hour of the

11th day of the 11th month, Armistice Day.

Saturday Formal Dinner Taupo Bowling Club 6.30pm for 7.00pm.

Sunday Breakfast at the Spa

Sunday Church Parade in the Spa Meeting House 9.30a.m.

Sunday 'One for the Road' or tea and coffee in the Spa bar after the Church Parade.

Accommodation, use your own accommodation if you wish

The Spa Hotel

10 Studio Units, one double and 1 single bed. \$65 per night for two people.

15 Chalets, two separate rooms with double and single beds \$95 per night for two people.

All Spa accommodation is to be booked through me.

Meals at the Spa in the Bar Restaurant

Full breakfast Saturday and Sunday 7.30am, \$10 per head, this will be charged to your room.

Friday night smorgasbord from 7.00pm, \$25 per head, charged to your room.

The Spa Bar will be open on Friday and Saturday nights.

Taxis

Friday, Taxis will collect members from Spa and Acacia Bay at 3.30pm and deliver them to the RSA.

Friday, Taxis will collect members from RSA and deliver back to Spa and Acacia Bay.

Saturday, Taxis will collect members from Spa and Acacia Bay at 6.00pm and deliver to Bowling Club.

Saturday, Taxis will make return journey when called for, about 9.30pm

AGM

Notices of Motion must be in the hands of the Secretary 14 days before the AGM.

Formal Dinner

Saturday 6.30pm for 7.00pm

Minimum dress, jacket and tie, miniatures.

There will be a Sherry Table and Port will be provided. Table wines are 'user pays'.

Our Guest this year is John and Ann Osborne. John is from the NZ Society of Gunsmiths, the Commandant of the Armed Constabulary Re-Enactment Society and an authority and collector of small arms and guns. Ann comes from a family of gun and bayonet makers.

Church Parade

We have been given permission to attend the Church Parade wearing footwear.

Full size medals and again the minimum dress is jacket and tie.

Raffle

We will run our normal raffle to defray costs so if you have any items you can spare for the raffle table please bring them along.

So far I have, model canon from Tony Tustin, petrol vouchers from Marie Roberts, many donations from members to spend how we wish, unfortunately I cannot divulge amounts because I have been told not to, and a selection of 'Granny's Finest Preservatives'.

Friday night dinner

Fish & Chips Roast Pork Crumbed Schnitzel Curry & rice

Green salad

Cauliflower, broccoli, carrots, mixed veg., cheese sauce

Roast potatoes, mashed potatoes.

Bread basket

Cheese cake, pavlova, fruit salad and ice cream.

Breakfasts

Muesli, cornflakes, weetbix.

Bacon, eggs, sausages, hash browns, grilled tomatoes, mushrooms.

Toast, tea, coffee, orange juice

● **Medium Gunners and interested Gunners.**

Hugh Vercoe, Mayor of Matamata/Piako, an ex BC of 4th Medium Battery and a member of the Old Comrades has obtained a 5.5-in gun which is currently being refurbished and is to be put on permanent display at Memorial Park, Hamilton. The Freedom of the City Parade, Dedication of the Gun and Formal Dinner will be on Saturday 2 December 2006. Any ex Medium Gunner or interested people are welcome and should contact me so that I can put you on the roll to keep you informed of progress in the planning of this event.

His Excellency the Governor General will be attending the dedication.

☉ **And just to finish with, from the RF Cadet Assn**

A couple are going out for a night on the town. They're all dolled up, ready to go; the lights left on, the dog put out.

But just as the taxi arrives and they step out of the house, the dog darts back inside and won't come out.

They don't want to leave the dog inside, so the husband goes upstairs to find it, while the wife goes to wait in the taxi.

Not wanting it known that the house will be empty, she explains to the driver that her husband had just gone "to say good-bye to my mother".

A few minutes later, the husband gets into the cab.

"Sorry I took so long," he says. "Stupid bitch was hiding under the bed and I had to poke her with a coat-hanger to get her to come out! Then I had to wrap her in a blanket to keep her from scratching and biting me as I hauled her downstairs and tossed her in the backyard! And she'd better not poo in the vegetable garden again!"

☉ **From Roger Newth**

Here's a quote from a government employee who witnessed a recent interaction between an elderly woman and an antiwar protester in a train station in Sydney.

There were protesters on the train platform handing out pamphlets on the evils of Australia.

An elderly woman was behind me getting off the escalator and a young (20ish) female protester offered her a pamphlet, which she politely declined.

The young protester put her hand on the old woman's shoulder as a gesture of friendship and in a very soft voice said, "Lady, don't you care about the children of Iraq?"

The old woman looked up at her and said, "Honey, my father died in France during World War I, I lost my husband in Korea and a son in Vietnam. All three died so you could have the right to stand here and bad mouth our country. If you touch me again. I'll stick this umbrella where the sun doesn't shine – and open it!"

☉ **From Andrew Lister**

Steven Wright one-liners

"You can't have everything. Where would you put it?"

"I'd kill for a Nobel Peace Prize."

"I used to work in a fire hydrant factory. You couldn't park anywhere near the place."

"It's a small world, but I wouldn't want to paint it."

"Everywhere is walking distance if you have the time."

"I bought some batteries, but they weren't included."

"One day I put instant coffee in a microwave and almost went back in time."

"I got a packet of powdered water but I don't know what to put in it."

"I had some eyeglasses. I was walking down the street when suddenly the prescription ran out."

"When the guy who made the first drawing board got it wrong, what did he go back to?"

"What's another word for thesaurus?"

"I'm writing an unauthorized autobiography. When it's finished I'm going to sue myself."

"Curiosity killed the cat, but for a while I was a suspect."

"I hate it when my foot falls asleep during the day because that means it's going to be up all night."

"The early bird gets the worm, but the second mouse gets the cheese."

"Last night I stayed up late playing poker with Tarot cards. I got a full house and four people died."

"If the pen is mightier than the sword, in a duel I'll let you take the pen."

"I broke a mirror the other day. Seven years bad luck. My lawyer says he can get me five."

"I spilled spot remover on my dog, and now he's gone."

- ☉ The page after this one gives an update on who is going to the reunion so far. For those who have replied please check that I have entered your info correctly. i.e. Breakfasts, Dinner taxis etc. If it is correct do not bother to reply.

As you will see there is still some vacant Studio Units and Chalets at the Spa

Take it easy out there

God Bless you all.