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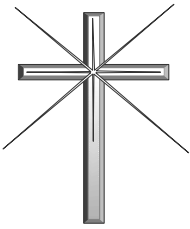
The New Zealand Gunner

Official Journal of

THE ROYAL NEW ZEALAND ARTILLERY ASSOCIATION (INCORPORATED)

Issue Number 137 Dated March 2008

⇒ LAST POST



STEPHENSON, William Neil. Bill passed away January 2008. He was born in 1918 and died three months short of his 90th birthday, joining the NZ Army in 1937 and after active service in WW2 he served in various postings, including at Waiouru and Papakura. Bill was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal (MSM) and retired in 1958.

⇒ NEW MEMBERS



HOPKIRK, William Spottiswoode. Bill graduated from Duntroon and served the guns between 1947 and 1956, retiring as a Capt. During his time with the gunners he served with: 13 Comp AA Regt RNZA (A/Adjnt) Narrow Neck, Army School of Artillery (Instructor Gunnery), Waiouru, 16 Fd Regt Korea (GPO, CPO, Tp Cdr, Adjnt), 15 Comp AA Bty (Adjnt), Godley Heads Christchurch. He is currently retired and comes from below the Bombays.

DUGGAN, Patrick John. Pat served the guns between 1964 and 1987. He was prior to this a RF Cadet (Gentry Class). During his time with the guns he served with: 161 Bty, School of Artillery, NSTU, 1st Bty RA, 32(E) Bty, 3 Fd Regt. He spent time at Papakura, Waiouru, Christchurch and completed 2 tours to South Vietnam with 161 Bty.

Outside of the guns he served with 1RNZIR, Singapore and RSM Fort Dorset. On resigning from the regular force Pat joined the TF and was the Regt Sigs Officer for 3 Fd Regt.

He is currently working at Academy New Zealand, Christchurch and is Vice President and Secretary/Treasurer of the Canterbury District RSA's. Pat's Dad, John William Harold (aka Jack) Duggan was also a gunner, serving with 7th Anti-Tank Regt, (33 Bty).



⇒ NEW YEAR'S HONOURS - QUEEN'S SERVICE MEDAL

The New Year's Honours saw the awarding of the Queen's Service Medal (QSM) to two of our members: Pat Duggan and Hugh Vercoe. Our congratulations go to both of them.

George Walter Hugh VERCOE

Hugh was born in Hamilton and attended Hamilton Boys High School. He worked as a full time sheep farmer shearer in the King Country for 5 years. Joining the ranks of the Territorial Army (RNZA) he was in due course promoted through the ranks to BC of 4(G) Medium Battery. Hugh established his own Insurance Broking business and has branches in Morrinsville and Matamata employing a staff of 9 in addition he has a sheep and beef property at Morrinsville.

His community involvement started in 1976 when he joined the local school PTA and continues to this day, consisting of a number of Chairman positions including: Morrinsville Rotary Club and Community Board, Westpac Events Centre , Zone 2 Local Government NZ , Thames Valley Civil Defence Emergency Group, Waikato Mayoral Forum and Mayor of Matamata Piako District. Hugh has received the Efficiency Decoration for TF Service and through Rotary a Paul Harris Fellowship; in addition he is a Justice of the Peace.



For 20 years he has been the partner of Jill and has four children, 2 girls and 2 boys.

Patrick John DUGGAN



Pat retired after giving the Queen 25 years of RF service and 1 year of TF service. for the welfare of Returned and Services personnel. Pat would honestly say that was probably the most rewarding part of those 6 years. In 1987 he was employed as the founding registrar of Academy New Zealand, Christchurch setting the Academy up along with other Academies in Timaru, Dunedin and Invercargill. He worked there for 9 years before taking his leave and moving to the Christchurch RSA as their Secretary/manager

Pat spent the next 6 years there and it was during that time that he developed a bit of a passion for the welfare of Returned and Services personnel. In 2002 he was tempted to come back to the Academy, his old job was vacant and they needed the skills he had to offer. Pat has written a book about the history of the Academy and the historic building it occupies and it was published last year (limited edition). One role he retained after leaving the RSA was as a voluntary War pensions advocate for them, he helps Returned and Services personnel who are needing pensions advice or assistance. They simply ring the Christchurch RSA who in turn refer them to him. Pat quite often holds small pensions clinics during his lunch hour at the Academy. The pension work he does is not necessarily for the RSA; he offers his services to any Returned and Services person needing help, they don't have to be a RSA member. Pat also work with widows and widowers of Returned and Service Personnel.



When the PM and the Governor General told him by letter of the honour he was absolutely gob smacked, in fact he is still finding it hard to realise. He thinks that once he has been invested with the medal then it might all seem real. Pat is still happily married to Elly, 40 years this year. They have a son and a daughter, 3 grandsons and a wee grand daughter.

⇒ THE SIGNIFICANCE OF OUR COLOURS



What is the significance of our colours and in particular the layout of the stable belt?

The colours of the stable belt simply represent the colours of the Regimental full dress, *i.e. the **blue** of the uniform*
*the **red** stripe on the trousers*
*and the **gold** (yellow) of the frogging (braid).*

As advised by the Research Department at the Royal Artillery Museum, via Capt (Rtd) AL Solly, RA Comradeship Webmaster/ RAA Membership Secretary

⇒ **Part Two: STEVE WEIR NEW ZEALAND. MASTER GUNNER**
by SSgt Tim Rowe

By 1939-40, however, defence spending cutbacks and apathy in the inter-war years had taken a noticeable toll on the Royal Artillery. Even with developments such as the establishment of a School of Artillery at Larkhill in 1920, wide-scale mechanisation and significantly improved radio communications, there was no likelihood of maintaining the efficiency achieved in 1918. The inter-war years 'were hard going for professional soldiers since their governments, almost without exception, starved them of money and gave them no chance to deploy large amounts of artillery and actually try out some of the techniques and doctrines which were developed during and after the war'. The New Zealand Artillery was no exception, suffering neglect in the inter-war years with a dearth of funding, training and resources. In 1939, the New Zealand Artillery had barely advanced from 1918 and although some trials had been held at Waiouru in 1937 to find suitable vehicles, it remained very horse dependent. The field artillery still consisted of obsolescent (First World War-era) 18-pounder guns and 4.5-inch howitzers. Training had similarly been neglected with it rarely if ever going beyond battery level.

The emergence of the German Blitzkrieg doctrine of mobile warfare brought with it enormous challenges for the artillery and appeared for a time to threaten its very existence as an integral arm. Indeed, one of the principal aims of Blitzkrieg warfare was to avoid the immensely costly and artillery-dominated attrition warfare of the previous conflict. Artillery was now increasingly vulnerable, both from the air, and from tanks that were capable of advancing at unprecedented rates. The artillery though, successfully responded to the new threat of armoured Blitzkrieg. 'A natural law which governs military evolution began to assert itself; this is that a new weapon rapidly generates a counter-weapon, and so on'. Guns deployed correctly, with infantry protection and with the proper ammunition, were able to successfully defend against armour. The use of artillery guns in an anti-tank role was a major development that had been refined by 1940.

There was much disagreement among British commanders over the best use of artillery in the Western Desert. Large-scale artillery barrages were anathema to some commanders who were determined to avoid the attrition battles characteristic of the First World War and who preferred mobile warfare fought by brigade groups. The failures of Operations *Brevity* and *Battleaxe* in April and June 1941 revealed the brigade group's fundamental weaknesses of dispersion of strength and the frequent separation of mutually supporting arms. *Battleaxe* appeared to mark the first use of armour operating alone and the artillery (including anti-tank guns) was dispersed in a manner not seen before.

By June 1941, the New Zealand Artillery (like the rest of the New Zealand Division) was in a depleted state after the successive defeats in Greece and Crete. The exceptions were Weir's 6 Field Regiment and much of the 7th Anti-Tank Regiment. Both of these units were evacuated directly from Greece to Egypt and were thus spared the mauling in Crete. Losses in gunners, guns, vehicles and equipment were severe and replacements were needed before the New Zealand Artillery could again be used in action.

Deficiencies in the capability of the New Zealand Artillery were revealed from the fighting in Greece and Crete. No divisional drills or doctrine existed and the Divisional Artillery was incapable of firing above regimental level. Even firing above battery level had been little practised in action due to the dispersed deployment of the artillery, especially in Greece. Other problems included shortages of ammunition and the lack of any medium guns. An inquiry into the lessons from Greece highlighted the need for larger quantities of light anti-aircraft weapons and better anti-tank guns (than the 2-pounder) for the New Zealand Division.

Nonetheless, despite the heavy losses and problems experienced, the New Zealand Artillery emerged from Greece and Crete with a reputation for performing well under the direst conditions. Officers and soldiers of the Divisional Artillery had distinguished themselves in several actions, including Weir who had been mentioned in dispatches. Reinforcements soon arrived and 25-pounders re-equipped the field regiments. By the end of July 1941, virtually all the losses were replaced and training began for the desert warfare of the North African campaign.

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Chapter 2 - First Blood in the Desert: Operation Crusader

July and August were months of reorganisation and consolidation for the New Zealand Division in the aftermath of Greece and Crete. With little expectation of action in the immediate future, Weir's 6 Field Regiment trained at Mahfouz (next to Helwan Camp, 15 miles from Cairo) with the 5th Field and 7th Anti-Tank Regiments. This training consisted of a series of practice shoots although the training was hampered by a shortage of transport. On 30 July, Weir was promoted to substantive Lieutenant Colonel.

August saw the field regiments adopt the new RA three-battery organisation with a total of 689 personnel (formerly 611) all ranks. 6 Field Regiment's batteries were re-numbered as 29, 30 and 48 Batteries and additional Quad gun tractors and 25-pounder guns arrived to bring all the New Zealand field regiments up to full strength. The following month 6 Field Regiment took part in exercises with 6 Brigade, before the Division moved to the Baggush Box on 13 September. This location was a sharp contrast to the more regulated camps near Cairo and the stay there was generally welcomed by most of the gunners.

Once at Baggush, the New Zealand Division began training for the upcoming *Crusader* offensive almost immediately. Emphasis was put on moving the brigades in open formation, both by night and day. A brigade group contained about 1000 vehicles, which when spread out at 16 vehicles to a mile, made up a column 100 miles long that took over seven hours to pass a given point. In the absence of any divisional tanks the artillery had the role of protecting the columns on the move. 6 Field Regiment conducted troop and battery-level exercises in fighting armour on the move with the first full-scale brigade exercise carried out on 8 October. This was the first of three separate brigade group exercises with 6 Brigade over rough terrain.

The New Zealand Artillery was originally intended to be concentrated at divisional level. 'Freyberg therefore specified at the first *Crusader* conference with his brigadiers on 17 October that the field regiments were "not to be decentralised unless necessary". Brigadier Reggie Miles, the NZ Division CRA, supported Freyberg's decision, but nonetheless, the New Zealand Artillery field regiments fought in *Crusader* under the command of their respective infantry brigades. By early November, the New Zealand Division had conducted extensive training and Freyberg wrote 'our preparations were as complete as we could make them' and that 'nothing appeared to have been left to chance in the preparations for the Second Battle of Cyrenaica'.

On 14 November, virtually all the New Zealand Division was assembled in its entirety for the first time in the Second World War, on the Siwa Road (about 40 miles south of Matruh). The next day it completed a 70-mile day move, which Weir described as 'rather ragged'. After a further day spent halted under camouflage nets, the Division (along with virtually all of the 8th Army) finally set off for the front in the first of several night moves, each of about 15-20 miles. These moves were fraught with problems and highlighted the inexperience of the New Zealand Division in functioning as a complete formation.

Operation *Crusader* was one of the most fluid and complex battles fought in the North African campaign. Lieutenant General Sir Alan Cunningham (GOC 8th Army) planned to drive the newly formed XXX (Armoured) Corps towards Tobruk from the south, and engage and destroy the bulk of the German armour when it confronted its advancing British counterpart. Simultaneously XIII Corps (which included the New Zealand Division) would by-pass and then isolate the Axis frontier garrisons and prevent them from intervening in the main battle near Tobruk. Once XXX Corps had defeated the German armour, XIII Corps could turn westward and attack the Axis forces besieging Tobruk. A portion of the Tobruk garrison would also stage a breakout and entrap Axis forces between the 32nd Army Tank Brigade (leading the Tobruk garrison's spearhead) and XIII Corps. Cunningham envisaged the relief of Tobruk occurring by the end of the first week.

To be continued in the next issue of The NZ Gunner

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Staff Sergeant Tim Rowes' informative and much appreciated abridged version on Steve Weir (The NZ Gunner Christmas 2007 issue) instantly took me back 50 years.

It's Wellington Airport (or was it still an aerodrome in 1957?) and a 'green around the grills' newly commissioned 'one pippet' had just made his way from the DC3 to the terminal. It had been a very bumpy flight from North Taieri. The numerous cups of 'Bushells Coffee and Chicory' consumed in the tiny stuffy kerosine heated waiting room before a weather delayed take off, had not been at all sensible, and the NAC provided paper bags had been grabbed on 3 occasions!

As I waited for army transport a rather imposing, benign, and somewhat shambling figure made his way over to where I was standing and began the briefest of conversations with "and where are going young man"? I was still getting to grips with the shabby gabardine trench coat, battered cap, no rank and SD trousers around the ankles as I stammered "Waiouru Sir". "Good luck" and the figure disappeared into a driving southerly rain squall and climbed into an RNZAF Hastings.

"Who was that" I asked of a fellow 3 Fd Regt traveller, and quick as a flash Lt John Hamel replied "why didn't you salute? That was Steve Weir, Chief of General Staff and First Military Member". Little did I realise at the time that Major-General C.E. Weir had been brought up on a part of Otago Peninsula I was very familiar with and had attended Otago Boys High School with my father. If it wasn't for the old gabardine I would most certainly have been transfixed by the DSO and Bar, CB, CBE, US L of Merit, Green Medal, Campaign Stars and numerous M.I.D.

A good lesson learn't - it's what's on the inside that counts!

Supplied by Huia Ockwell. Mosgiel, Otago

The next morning we surface between 6 and 7 and head for the swimming pool where the first hour or two is spent swimming, eating and drinking, this became a delightful daily ritual. We never actually got drunk until the last day of our leave but then again I don't think that we were actually ever sober. 1000 hours and in accordance with our instructions we report into the NZ Embassy in Bangkok. The receptionist greets us and asks us to wait. After a few minutes an Embassy Secretary approaches us to inform us that the Ambassador will see us now. We are surprised as our understanding was that the call was only an administrative formality however, there is nothing that we can do and we are ushered into the presence of the NZ Ambassador to South East Asia, Major-General Sir Stephen Weir.

Sir Stephen was a perfect gentleman, he had both of us at our ease within minutes and it was soon apparent that he wanted to learn as much as he could about the war in Vietnam from a soldier's point of view. He rejected the Secretary's suggestion of a cup of tea and thrust a decent helping of whisky into each of our hands. After a few minutes the door opened and our two rather bewildered American friends were ushered in, he had seen them waiting in the taxi and had sent a member of his staff out to bring them in, they were over-awed and later could not get over the fact that a real live General had invited them in to his office, given them a drink and talked to them as equals. Sir Stephen was great company and actually aware that we had a limited time of leave, before we became restless we were released and wished well.

Supplied by one of the two Sgts from 161 Bty who were on R and R in Bangkok from South Vietnam in 1966 when they meet the NZ Ambassador to South East Asia, Major-General Sir Stephen Weir

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⇒ **Some comments on the 16 NZ FD Regt RNZA, 1 Commonwealth Division, Korea and its activities, until disbandment in November 1954. following the order at 2200 hrs on 27 July 1951: "Empty Guns, Cease Fire"**

Under Command of Lt-Col "Blackie" Burns DSO, MBE, within days of the Cease Fire Truce, the Regiment moved to its Regimental truce position on the northern bank of the Imjin River, just below the confluence of the Hantang and Imjin Rivers. Here RHQ and the three batteries, together with other support facilities established themselves.

A large Parade Ground from former paddy fields was levelled and the 24 guns of the Regiment were lined up wheel to wheel facing north with their limbers immediately in rear --just in case, as it was only a Truce that had been signed at that stage--the Armistice came a year later. Considerable welfare efforts were made, Sports field, ORs canteen, ablutions blocks, picture theatre, small hospital, RAP and dental surgery and even a substantial timber mill was built for treating all the timber that was obtained/purloined from various sources. Eventually all tentage had wooden floors and many iron framed beds. Behind the gun line, on the small hill, which dominated the area was established the church "Saint Barbara by the Imjin" and a large Kiwi symbol which proclaimed to all visitors this was Kiwi Country.

Before all these were in place a huge effort went into the immediate building of the new defensive Kansas Line south of the Imjin River. Sports days etc were a welcome relief from the back-breaking work in the "Kansas Valley" where deep guns pits and Command Posts with over head cover and sufficient roof support to withstand a direct hit from a 152 mm shell were constructed. A track to a safe swimming beach on the Imjin, constructed below the Regimental area, also gave access for vehicles to the river where foraging parties for timber could use the frozen river which could withstand laden 3 ton trucks and even Centurion tanks. Drivers were always a little apprehensive on the first winter ice trip.

Sporting activities with the football team under the captaincy of the K-Force dentist- Capt Cohn (John?) Wilson vanquished all opposition, including the All Japan university teams. The 16 Fd platoon strength cross country Marching Team under Lt Tom Couzens astonished all the Divisional Infantry teams by winning the arduous 12 mile hill and paddy field course in full battle order in just 1 hour & 59 minutes. Their range shooting was equally impressive and so delighted was the CRA with "HIS Gunners" that he awarded each member of the Team with an inscribed tankard and 5 days leave in Tokyo

Continuous training ensured the Regiment was battle ready with frequent range shoots and "Operation Scram" deployments both day and night. The final Commonwealth Divisional Artillery shoot took place in October 1954 with 13 "Mike" (Regimental) and "Uncle" (Division) Targets being engaged during the day. The last "Uncle Target" fired by the Division was under the control of the NZ OP officer whose 16 Fd Able 1 gun did the ranging. From initial orders to first round was of the order of 1min 40sec with ranging corrections to the report of shot taking 20 seconds--an indication of the proficiency of the NZ Gunner Regiment

In November 1954 immediately prior to boarding the New Australia Troopship in Pusan Harbour, the now de-activated 16 NZ Fd Regiment became "The NZ Contingent". We all felt it was an ignominious demise of a very fine regiment that had upheld splendidly with its citizen volunteer gunners the highest standards and traditions of the RNZA on active service and fired in just 30 months more shells (796,000) at the enemy than any other artillery unit in Korea and reputedly more than any other NZ unit in either WW I or WW II As the NZers boarded the troopship along with the 3Battalion Royal Australian Regiment, whom they had supported for so long in Korea a US Army Band played "So Long It's Been Good To Know You" There at the same port 3 years and 10 months before, a similar welcoming band had played "If We Knew You Were Coming We'd Have Baked A Cake".

Their gesture was a fitting welcome and farewell.

Written by Maj D.A.Mannering 16 Fd & 4 Med RNZA. Supplied by Frank Hopkinson.

⇒ **AFGHANISTAN**

Not a closely united nation as such, but a country of warring factions and inter-tribal feuds. Over the centuries, from Alexander the Great to the present day, Afghans have resisted invaders from beyond all their borders. Their country, and their climate is harsh, unforgiving and dramatically awe inspiring, and this is reflected in the character of their people.

It is opportune to give some limited background on events that have taken place in this turbulent country, and particularly over the last 170 years....

Britain's involvements began with the East India Company, and then as part of their British Empire's expansion during the period known as "The Great Game". This period from around 1796 to 1903 involved Britain and Russia. The latter, to expand their Empire southwards to the Indian Ocean, and the British efforts to thwart and contain those moves. Eventually, the two main protagonists, by a Treaty in 1903, agreed that Afghanistan was to become the buffer state between the two empires...

Rudyard Kipling summarised the agonies of campaigning in that harsh and inhospitable country with these rather chilling lines -

'When yer lyin' out wounded,- on Afghanistan's plain
An' yer see the womin comin' to get yer
Then learn to die like a man-
Roll over on yer rifle -an' blow out yer brain'

On 29 July 1834 the exiled Emir of Afghanistan, Shah Shuja, attempted to recover the city of Kandahar, from his successor - Dost Muhammad Khan. Shuja was defeated and his forces routed. Later in January 1839 British forces completely routed 3,000 Afghans, in their previously considered impregnable fortress at Ghazni.

A courageous young British Lieutenant, Henry Durand, placed over 200 lbs of gunpowder in barrels against the main gate into the fortress. In spite of the fusillade of rifle fire from the ramparts he lit the fuse, thus blowing in the gates and creating a substantial breach in the wall defences. British troops stormed through, and in spite of casualties routed the Afghans decisively. To-day he would have won a Victoria Cross, but then it was 15 years before it's creation.

Britain now believed that Dost Mohamed was forming an alliance with the Russians, so by force of arms replaced him with the previously exiled and also very unpopular Shah Shuja. An uprising became inevitable.

As all seemed quiet in Kabul, which was occupied by the British, and had a British Residency, the garrison settled down to a typical hill station life. When Shujas' harem arrived from India, the British felt so secure, that the bulk of the troops and their families left the Citadel Fortress and moved into the cantonments that had been built away from the city. Between the city and the cantonments were numerous orchards, crisscrossed with irrigation ditches thus making the rapid deployment of troops and artillery rather difficult. Further the site chosen was overlooked on all sides by hills and Afghan forts. The main cantonment was a rectangle 1,000 yards by 600 yards, surrounded by a low rampart with a narrow ditch. On the northern side another, but smaller rectangle joined the main cantonment making a defence perimeter over two miles long, and with insufficient troops to man the defences should the need arise. Incredibly the Commissariat (Ordnance & Supply) Stores were held in a fort over 300 yards away - outside the defence perimeter of the cantonments! A General Cotton was responsible for the site and the design of the cantonments, who told his successor with the famous last words - "You won't have much to do here"

His successor, appointed by the insistence, and influence of Lord Fitzroy Somerset of the Horse Guards (who virtually controlled the Army) was Maj General Elphinstone. A man of reputedly impeccable family connections and had served under the Duke of Wellington in Spain and at Waterloo with distinction. However since then, 1815, he had been on half pay (a form of Officers Reserve) for almost

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A courageous young British Lieutenant, Henry Durand, placed over 200 lbs of gunpowder in barrels against the main gate into the fortress. In spite of the fusillade of rifle fire from the ramparts he lit the fuse, thus blowing in the gates and creating a substantial breach in the wall defences. British troops stormed through, and in spite of casualties routed the Afghans decisively. To-day he would have won a Victoria Cross, but then it was 15 years before it's creation.

Britain now believed that Dost Mohamed was forming an alliance with the Russians, so by force of arms replaced him with the previously exiled and also very unpopular Shah Shuja. An uprising became inevitable.

As all seemed quiet in Kabul, which was occupied by the British, and had a British Residency, the garrison settled down to a typical hill station life. When Shujas' harem arrived from India, the British felt so secure, that the bulk of the troops and their families left the Citadel Fortress and moved into the cantonments that had been built away from the city. Between the city and the cantonments were numerous orchards, crisscrossed with irrigation ditches thus making the rapid deployment of troops and artillery rather difficult. Further the site chosen was overlooked on all sides by hills and Afghan forts. The main cantonment was a rectangle 1,000 yards by 600 yards, surrounded by a low rampart with a narrow ditch. On the northern side another, but smaller rectangle joined the main cantonment making a defence perimeter over two miles long, and with insufficient troops to man the defences should the need arise. Incredibly the Commissariat (Ordnance & Supply) Stores were held in a fort over 300 yards away - outside the defence perimeter of the cantonments! A General Cotton was responsible for the site and the design of the cantonments, who told his successor with the famous last words - "You won't have much to do here"

His successor, appointed by the insistence, and influence of Lord Fitzroy Somerset of the Horse Guards (who virtually controlled the Army) was Maj General Elphinstone. A man of reputedly impeccable family connections and had served under the Duke of Wellington in Spain and at Waterloo with distinction. However since then, 1815, he had been on half pay (a form of Officers Reserve) for almost

24 years, and now aged 60, plagued with poor health, and so crippled with gout could hardly walk. He tried to refuse the appointment of British Army Commander at Kabul, but the Governor General of India, Lord Auckland, would not hear of it. The one officer of General rank, who was fully aware of the developing unrest by the Afghans, was Maj-General Nott, an "Indian" officer of the East India Company. In 1841 Nott had put down most effectively by decisive action, an uprising in Kandahar. Even then prejudices existed against "Indian Army Officers". General Nott was a tough, no nonsense experienced officer, who should have been appointed to Kabul - the prejudices were to have terrible consequences.

Elphinstone, called "Elphy Bey" by his troops, arrived in Kabul in April 1841, and was immediately laid up with fever and rheumatic gout. He sought his release from his appointment on health grounds. However political events in Britain overtook events in Kabul, Britain's new political masters, concerned at the cost of maintaining military forces overseas and the indebted East India Company, embarked on cost saving measures. The British Envoy in Kabul, Sir William Macnaghten decided to do his bit, and cut the subsidies paid to the Ghilzais tribesmen, who controlled the passes from Kabul to the Khyber. Needless to say, the tribesmen, to make up the deficiencies in their income, simply plundered the next caravans coming through the passes! To effect further economies, Sir William then ordered Colonel Sir Robert Sale to take his Brigade back to Jallalabad, and thence to India. Word was received of Elphinstone's release, and General Nott was to march from Kandahar to Kabul, and take over as Military Commander at Kabul. But alas it was all too late! Colonel Sale had to fight his way through the passes to Jallalabad, and his Brigade was badly cut up in the fighting with the Ghilzais. The whole country then rose up in rebellion. On the 2 November 1841 at dawn, the Rebels attacked the British Residency, which was some distance from the Citadel and the cantonments. The British Political Officer, Sir Alexander Burns, tried to escape dressed as a native, but was caught and immediately hacked to pieces. Elphinstone, unaware that Shujas troops had been ambushed in the narrow streets and annihilated, was completely unable to exercise command or decisive action! The Rebels now besieged the cantonments of 4,500 British and East Indian Company Troops, their families, and 12,000 camp followers. On the 5 November the Rebels captured the Commissariat Stores fort. The following day - 6 November, Elphinstone advised Macnaghten - whose actions had lit the fuse to the uprising; that as ammunition was low, to seek terms with the Rebels. Lady Sale, the wife of Colonel Sale, understood there was sufficient shot and powder to withstand a 12 months siege! Elphinstone was losing what little control he had. By ordering Brigadier Shelton to bring his remaining troops from the Citadel to the assistance of the cantonments, instead of the other way round. The Citadel was a massive fort and had withstood previous sieges.

Macnaghten then tried to bribe some of the tribal chiefs to abandon the rebellion. He was not successful. An attempt was then made by the troops to clear Afghan artillery from one of the heights overlooking the cantonment. The attack failed. The Rebels then offered the British a truce. Some of the Rebels with an eye to the future were fearful the British would avenge the events at Kabul, with a much larger force from India.

Macnaghten, now supported by Elphinstone agreed to the re-instatement of Dost Muhammad as ruler in exchange for safe withdrawal through the Passes and back to India through the Khyber Pass. Unbelievably Macnaghten then tried to double cross Dost Muhammad's son, Akbar Khan the leading Afghan Chief, by trying to bribe other tribal chiefs who were afraid of Dost Muhammad and his Sons authoritarian rule, to join with the British and desert the rebellion! The treachery was quickly uncovered, and when Macnaghten and his political officer left the cantonment on the 23 December to "discuss new terms" with Akbar Khan, whilst within sight of the cantonment, Akbar murdered both men with his own hand. Macnaghten's headless corpse was then hung from a meat hook in the bazaar visible from the cantonment. This now presented the British with a "delicate and somewhat tricky situation" A young Major Eldred Pottinger then took over the role of British Resident He wanted to make an immediate attack on the Rebels and gain the safety of the Citadel and hold out until the spring and for a relief force from India. His other plan was to fight their way out through the passes to Jallalabad. At a council of war the senior officers under Elphinstone would not agree to either course., even though Pottinger stressed that Akbar Khan could not be trusted..

To be continued in the next issue of *The NZ Gunner*
***Flashman and the Mountain of Light* by George MacDonald Fraser covers this article in a very well-told story. A great way to read history.**

⇒ **THE GUNNERS**

Our history is now with the printers and will be available early March 2008. It is a handsome book edited on the Regiments behalf by the Ministry for Culture and Heritage (which we used to know as the War History Branch), with full input from the RNZA Historical Committee and from many serving and retired members of the Regiment. It is over 500 pages in length with more than 140 black and white and coloured photos and maps, comprehensively covering all aspects of the Regiments activities in war and peace; RF and TF; Field, Coast, Air Defence, Locating, Anti-Tank, Survey and Bands; from the early 1800s up to 2007. It complements the war histories. It is a 'living' book with personal recollections, outline organisations and details of our weapons.

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Foreword: By The Master Gunner, St James Park.

Introduction: An outline of the development of artillery.

Chapter 1: Early Artillery in New Zealand.
First Contact, Maori Artillery, The Northern War 1845-46, The Taranaki War 1860-61, The Waikato War 1863-64, Colonial Artillery in the NZ Wars, Coastal Defences 1850s-60s, The Armed Constabulary, Artillery Volunteers, Training, Professionals and Volunteers, The 1890s.

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Chapter 5: Battle Rejoined: The Second Divisional Artillery 1940-41.
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⇒ **WIT AND WIT AND WISDOM FROM MILITARY MANUALS**

- If the enemy is in range, so are you.
- It is generally inadvisable to eject over the area you have just bombed.
- Aim towards the enemy.
- When the pin is pulled, Mr Grenade is not our friend.
- You, you and you, panic. The rest of you come with me.
- Tracers work both ways.
- Five second fuses only last three seconds.
- Don't ever be the first, don't ever be the last, and don't ever volunteer to do anything.
- Bravery is being the only one who knows you're afraid.
- If your attack is going too well, you're walking into an ambush.

⇒ **REMEMBERING WAIOURU**

The SMIG(Tech) at the School of Artillery in the mid 1970's was scheduled to accompany a number of courses on a four day live firing exercise. On the day before the exercise started the CI of the school enquired, for reasons not known or explained, if the SMIG(Tech) was all that keen to go on the exercise. He was given an honest answer, no he wasn't, the CI then said that he was happy to go and that he, the SMIG (Tech), could remain at the School. The next morning was one of those cold and bleak days that only those who have been to Waiouru know about however, the CI departed happily with the guns and the SMIG(Tech) retired to the warmth.

Four miserable days passed and the exercise group returned to the School, bringing with it a CI who was decidedly sour and ungracious, the SMIG(Tech) was accused of being a cunning, conniving bastard amongst other unkind suggestions, his feelings were hurt but he bore it bravely, he had been warm! It was assumed that the CI's enthusiasm for an exercise had been severely dented by snow, sleet, wind and rain and the fact that for the four days he was in the field the temperature did not rise above 0.5°C.

⇒ **FACT OR FICTION**

It was reported that at a formal mess presided over by Col Kim Morrison, who inevitably always had a cavalry charge to wind up the evening, on the command "Charge", a 25 pdr had at the instigation of the Sgt's mess been wheeled to the vicinity of the Officer's Mess, fired a blank with some result.

Can anyone confirm or add to this story???

⇒ **JOB TITLES**

Vision Clearance Engineer - Window Cleaner

Waste Removal Engineer - Binman

Stock Replenishment Advisor - Supermarket shelf stacker

Knowledge Navigator -Teacher

Head of Verbal Communications - Receptionist/secretary

Cash Relation Officer - Banker

Petroleum Transfer Engineer - Petrol Station worker

Flueologist - Chimney Sweep

Environment Improvement Technician - Cleaner

Space Consultant - Real Estate Agent

Foot Health Gain Facilitator - Chiropodist

Revenue Protection Officer - Transport Ticket Inspector

Media Distribution Officer - Paper Boy/Girl

Technical Horticultural Maintenance Officer – Gardener

Education Centre Nourishment Production – Dinner Lady

⇒ GUNNER TRADITIONS

With Gunners' Day formal dining-in coming up in May, we recall that one of the objectives of our Association is: 'To perpetuate the "*esprit de corps*" of the Royal Regiment of New Zealand Artillery and keep alive the spirit of comradeship among Gunners'.

Over the years there has been a diminishing of those things which make us 'Gunners':

- We are no longer the numerical power we were.
- We do not 'stand out' in our dress as we used to with everything being 'one Army'.
- We have lost our distinctive Mess Kit as well as our 'Royal New Zealand Artillery' shoulder flashes, Berets, Badges, Stable belts.

I have also from time to time, noticed, that due to the apparent high cost of paint, our colours are often not kept in a pristine condition at all times as they once were.

One tradition they haven't touched yet is our **Regimental Grace** and the manner in which we drink **The Loyal Toast**. (Of course, should we become a Republic even the latter may at risk. Hopefully that will be many years after the writer has 'popped off'.)

I suggest that, when dining together and a Grace and Toasts are to be part of the occasion, our members and their guests be requested (before the event) to conform to the format which we have inherited from the Royal Artillery mess at Woolwich.

The Regimental Grace - '*For what we are about to receive - Thank God*'

The Loyal Toast

- After the Port has been circulated the President will tap the table, stand up and say:
'Mr. Vice - The Queen - Our Captain-General'
- Everyone will then stand up with their glass in their hand. and the Vice-President will say:
'Gentlemen - The Queen'
- If a band is present the first six bars of the National Anthem will then be played before the Toast is drunk.
- After the Vice-President has spoken, or the band has finished playing, each person will say the words **'The Queen'** before drinking the Toast. **No other words should be added**
- If Ladies are present the Vice-President will say **'Ladies and Gentlemen'** before announcing the Toast.

The chief duty of the Dining President and Vice is to ensure the ceremony of proposing the loyal toast is performed without a hitch. It is not a good thing for everyone to stand with glasses raised at the ready waiting in a deathly hush for the band to strike up after Mr Vice has proposed the toast.

In the very early days of the British Army, the Sovereign of the day made quite a practice of giving certain regiments a dispensation from drinking a Loyal Toast as their loyalty was never in question. There must have been some cause for doubt about the RA however, for our custom of drinking one owes its origin to such suspicions. Nowadays 'proper precautions are taken to ensure the loyal toast is drunk by all officers'.

- When the port is going round, those who do not take wine are invited to fill their glasses with water; then when standing for the toast, officers hold their glass with forearm extended in front of them for all to see.
- When dining by candlelight, the main lights are switched on for the period of the loyal toast so that the president may see that all present drink the toast.
- We should request whoever is asked to say Grace, be it a clergyman or other person, to use our Regimental Grace.
- If possible, we should organize the clearing of the tables before the port is passed around.
- Mr. Vice should seat him/herself at the dinner so he/she can see all the guests.

Extracted from a book about the Royal Artillery mess at Woolwich - 'Officers' Mess' by Lt Col R J Dickinson and supplied by Frank Hopkinson, Committee, Heritage & Protocol February 2008.

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⇒ **AN UPDATE FROM NICK GILLARD, LIEUTENANT COLONEL ,
COMMANDING OFFICER 16TH FIELD REGIMENT RNZA**

2008 has begun for 16 Field Regiment in the same manner as 2007 ended - flat out. From an operational perspective the 41 gunners currently serving with the NZ Provincial Reconstruction Team in Bamyan Province, Afghanistan are in the depths of winter. Temperatures are averaging -20 degree's celcius and the Area of Operations is deep in snow. Movement is difficult but they continue with their tasks of providing security, liaison and co-ordinating reconstruction efforts throughout the province.

Those of us back in New Zealand have commenced the year with Exercise TITAN 7. Set at both battery and regimental levels for the guns and troop level for the Air Defenders the intent has been to re-integrate the 54 gunners who returned from Afghanistan in October 2007. Having been well rested those officers and soldiers have re-roled themselves back to gunnery with a good degree of enthusiasm. Procedures and drills have been slow initially but have not been forgotten and the transition has gone well.

This was followed by an opportunity to deploy and fire with 23 Singaporean Artillery. The Singaporeans were here as part of their annual Exercise THUNDER WARRIOR. This year they have deployed the 155mm FH-2000, 155mm PEGASUS Super Lightweight Howitzer (five tonnes), ANTPQ-37 and ARTHUR Locating Radars, SPIKE anti-armour missile and Tactical UAV. The opportunity to exercise with another Army contained all of the usual issues of different procedures but a common ground was found and the exercise was a valuable one.



This was immediately followed by the regimental range week in Waiouru where we completed all of our annual weapons and fitness tests. This culminated in a regimental activity involving completing the 20 km Tongariro Crossing across Mt's Ngarahoe and Tongariro. The normal eight hour walk was completed in two hours by the regimental 'rabbits'. The final activity for a busy January - February period has been Exercise NORTHERN KIWI. This is the annual TF field exercise. This year 11/4 Bty was supported by KAPYONG Bty with the TF augmenting posts within a six gun fire unit. This hectic start to the year has shaken all of the Christmas cobwebs away and the regiment is now well placed to meet its commitments to the School of Artillery, combined arms training and future operations. The 'el nino' summer has been appreciated and apart from some ammunition restrictions because of the fire risk it has been the perfect time to conduct collective training.

Time now for a few days stand down to watch our wives and partners spend the field allowance.

⇒ **HISTORIC GUN MOVED BY 3WORKSHOPS COMPANY**

A Maxim-Nordenfelt gun dating from the Boer War was given a new home recently, courtesy of HQ 3LFG. In March 2007 HQ3 LFG was asked by the Christchurch City Council if it could help move the gun. The request was initiated by a letter to the council seeking clarification of what had become of the gun that used to sit outside the old Magistrates Court until 1973 when it was removed to Ripapa Island by 3 Fd Sqn, RNZE. Gun Number 2125, manufactured in 1896 and dispatched to the Boer Republic in October 1896 was brought back to NZ by the returning 4th contingent. The gun was still in the hands of a private collector after being removed from Ripapa Island. He had given it a secure environment and had refurbished the gun (less the breech block), although the carriage was in a poor state regarding the woodwork, missing fittings and paint but was sturdy enough to allow the mounting and transport of the gun. The workshops 1089 Wrecker and a U1700 conducted the task. The Gun was taken to Godley Heads where it is now under the care of the Godley Heads Heritage Trust. It will be held in the CQMS building of the old Military Camp and will be open to the public for viewing a few times a year. Further restoration work on the carriage is planned by the trust and it is hoped to be completed sometime in 2008.

⇒ **ITEMS OF INTEREST FROM LAST COMMITTEE MEETING**

- The Associations name changes and new constitution have been registered with the **Registrar of Incorporated Societies**
- The Constitution and Rules are available on line at **www.societies.govt.nzRegister**
- A quote is being obtained for the production of new Association badges.
- Resignations: The following have tendered their resignations which have been accepted by the Committee: Tony Pawloski and Greg Allen.
- Our (we)blog site. The Association has its own (we)blog site. It is called Muzzle Flashes and can be viewed at **www.kiwigunners.blogspot.com**
- The Committee have co-opted Bob Kerslake and Graeme Black as Committee members at large (previous called area reps).

⇒ **TIME FOR A QUIZ**

1. Name the one sport in which neither the spectators nor the participants know the score or the leader until the contest ends?
2. What famous North American landmark is constantly moving backwards?
3. Of all vegetables, only two can live to produce on their own for several growing seasons. All other vegetables must be replanted every year. What are the two perennial vegetables?
4. What fruit has its seeds on the outside?
5. In many liquor stores, you can buy pear brandy, with a real pear inside the bottle. The pear is whole and ripe and the bottle is genuine; it hasn't been cut in any way. How did the pear get inside the bottle?
6. Only three words in the standard English language begin with the letters "dw" and they are all common words, Name two of them?
7. There are 14 punctuation marks in English grammar. Can you name at least half of them?
8. Name the only vegetable or fruit that is never sold frozen, canned, processed, cooked, or in any other form except fresh?
9. Name 6 or more things that you can wear on your feet beginning with the letter "S".

⇒ **TIMINGS FOR FUTURE ISSUES OF THE NZ GUNNER**

The following is an indication of when the issues of **The NZ Gunner** are likely to come out in 2008/09:

Period	Close Off Date for Articles	The NZ Gunner to Printer	The NZ Gunner Posted Out
Apr—June	14 Jun	19 Jun	30 June
July—Sept	20 Sept	25 Sept	6 Oct
Oct—Dec	3 Dec	5 Dec	16 Dec
Jan—Mar	15 Mar	18 Mar	31 Mar

⇒ **IT COULD ONLY HAPPEN IN AMERICA**

A man comes into the Accident and Emergency Department and yells, "My wife's going to have her baby in the cab!" I grabbed my stuff, rushed out to the cab, lifted the lady's dress, and began to take off her underwear. Suddenly I noticed that there were several cabs—and I was in the wrong one.

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⇒ NOTICE BOARD

Bob and Betty Kerslake recently visited the South Island and while in Dunedin called to see **Ian (Slim) Cunningham**. Ian was back in hospital and in isolation. He was in good spirits and Bob said that as they were unable to touch him in case they contaminated him, they had to shake hands by touching his toes through the blankets. Ian is allowed a couple of whiskies at night thus was in good spirits. You may recall that Ian had the misfortune to get that “flesh eating disease” and spent some considerable time in the Christchurch hospital. It is understood that the medical staff are trying to get him stabilized so that they can do another skin graft or two. When in Christchurch Robert visited **Darkie Forrester**. He was also in good spirits and was down at the Papanui RSA playing cards the day before they visited. Both Ian and Darkie sent their regards to all fellow Gunners.

Our thoughts go to:

Vic Colson on the passing of his loved wife of 54 years Joce (died 13 December 2007).

Paddy Ryan who was recently involved in a motor accident just outside of Blenheim. It is understood that Paddy is ok but his car was written off, and,

Our congratulations go to:

Wally and Alison Fraser who were married 50 years ago on 6 February 1958 (It is amazing what you read in the Dominion).

Yeah Right: Rick Williams and Nick Thornton supervised by Ron Turner have just completed a canoeing/kayaking trip down the Wanganui River. They should have known better! Ron has the record for being tossed out of the kayak by the raging rapids They did however really enjoy the exercise. Camping out over the three nights on the river, boiling the billy for morning and afternoon tea, and telling stories to the attractive guide young enough to be their granddaughter who knew that they needed looking after.

⇒ ANZAC DAY 2008, QUEENSTOWN



ANZAC Day parade 2007

938731 Gn Sgt Lyall McGregor 31 Bty, now Vice President of the Queenstown RSA writes to say that he has organised for a 25 pounder to fire three (3) rounds at their 2008 ANZAC Day in Queenstown.



The Bluff F Gun 43444

⇒ ANZAC DAY 2008, WAIROA

Selwyn Robert Lilley, who served in 16th Fd Reg., 161 Bty Depot, 161 Bty Vietnam and 22 (D) Bty and is currently on the executive committee of the Wairoa Returned and Services Association writes:

He would like to know if anyone could advise him as to the likely whereabouts or even the existence of a pair of tyres for their gun. His reasons for wanting to know are simply that they, in Wairoa have a 6lb anti-tank gun, that has, at times, been used as a centre piece in Coronation Square, their towns rose garden and outside their district council building. It has suffered two moves since then, both to be outside their cadets building, and is in a bit of a sad state. The gun may have to be moved again, in all likeness back to Coronation Square. It seems to him that it would be a good chance to “patch the old girl up a bit” maintenance wise. The tyres are in a very cracked and in a perished condition. He doesn't know if these tyres are available, but would welcome any assistance with the procuring of any of them.



⇒ **3 RAR Gp REUNION 23—25 May 2008**

Ossie Kleinig, Pronto of 3 RAR, SVN 1967/68 advises of the above reunion. For further details contact him at doklein@dodo.com.au

⇒ **GUNNERS DAY 2008 (26 May 2008)**

PAPAKURA—Ladies Formal Dining In

Gunners past and present, attached personnel and partners are once again invited to attend this years celebrations of Gunners Day which is the 13th Anniversary of our dinner. It is again being held in the Monte Casino Lounge, Papakura RSA, Monday, May 26 2008. 1830 for 1900.

This year the cost will be \$55.00 per person, due to meal price increases You can be assured of another splendid evening of renewing old acquaintances and camaraderie. Dress is formal (Gentlemen a minimum standard of jacket and tie) with medals or miniatures.

Administration

Please send your remittance by 7 May 2008 to
Gunners Day 2008
c/o Jeff Waters
47A Youngs Road
Papakura 2110
(Please note new address) cheques payable to J D Waters

For further information contact: Jeff Waters 09 296 2457

Email: e42669jdw@xtra.co.nz

CHRISTCHURCH - Gunners Only

A Gunners Day dinner will be held at the Christchurch RSA on Thursday 29 May 2008, 1830 for 1900. Dress is suit and miniatures. Artillery Port of course will be served. Cost the dinner to TBA. Names of Gunners wishing to attend to Pat Duggan, 70 Green Park Street, Christchurch. 03 980 7233. patrick.duggan@paradise.net.nz

WELLINGTON

It is understood that a function similar to that held last year at the Johnsonville RSA is likely to occur again this year. Contact one of the Wellington Gunners for further details.

LEVIN

The Horowhenua Artillery Association propose to have a lunch at the Levin RSA on Wednesday 21 May 2008.

ANSWERS TO THE QUIZZ

1. Boxing
2. Niagara Falls - The rim is worn down about two and half feet each year due to the millions of gallons of water that over it every minute.
3. Asparagus and rhubarb
4. Strawberry
5. The bottles are placed over pear buds when they are small, and are wired in place on the tree. The bottle is left in place for the entire growing season. When the pears are ripe, they are snipped off at the stems.
6. Dwarf, dwell and dwindle (Dwane)
7. Period/Full stop (.), comma(,), colon(;), semicolon(;), dash (_), hyphen(-), apostrophe('), question mark(?), exclamation mark(!), quotation mark("), parenthesis/brackets (), braces ([]), ellipses (...), capital letter (A).
8. Lettuce
9. Shoes, socks, sandals, sneakers, slippers, skis, skates, snowshoes, stocking stilts.

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Editors Page

Who's Who

<i>Patron</i>	Col (Rtd) Donal R KENNING MBE	06 3582849
<i>Colonel Commandant</i>	Brig (Rtd) Graham BIRCH MBE	07 5481193
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<i>Blog</i>	'Muzzle Flashes' www.kiwigunners.blogspot.com	

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING, IT IS IMPORTANT

- ⇒ **ACCOUNT INFORMATION:** Association Account Name & Number for Cheques and On Line Banking is:
Royal New Zealand Artillery Assn Inc. ASB 12 3042 0229763 00 ('RNZA Association is acceptable').
- ⇒ **INTERNET ADDRESSES:** A number of you are on the internet but the Secretary may not be aware of your address. If you are not getting messages from him and wish to do so then let him know your address. Please note that Mike has emailed all members many times since 1 December, and many of these have been rejected - please let him know if that includes you.
- ⇒ **SUBSCRIPTIONS:** Annual subscriptions of \$20 (Full and Associate members) are due on 1 January each year. Please keep your membership up-to-date. **Arrears:** Currently, two members are overdue two years (2006-2007), 17 are overdue for 2007, and 116 subscriptions are currently due - *the total outstanding is \$3120. Can you help?*
- ⇒ **RECEIPTS:** Receipts will be issued for all incoming monies and will be sent out with the next issue of "The NZ Gunner".
- ⇒ **INPUT INTO "THE NZ GUNNER":** Short stories, especially with accompanying photographs are always welcome for inclusion. The Editor's e-mail address is dgroberts@xtra.co.nz
- ⇒ **NEW MEMBERS:** New members are most welcome. Membership rules are: **ALL** Gunners with a minimum of 3 years service or an Operational Tour are eligible for Full Membership, Associate Membership is available to anyone who has been attached to an RNZA Unit or has had a close affiliation therewith, and close family of Full or Life Members. Membership forms are on-line at www.riv.co.nz/rnza/members/joining
- ⇒ **DEATH OF A MEMBER:** If you know of the passing of someone who you think may have been a member please let someone from the Committee (preferably the Secretary). Where possible a representative of the Association will attend the funeral.

