



The New Zealand Gunner

Official Journal of the

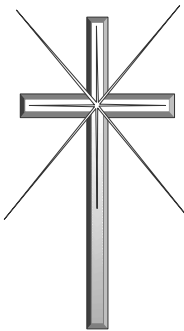
Royal New Zealand Artillery Association (Inc)

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1. LAST POST



*Do not stand at my grave and weep
I am not there. I do not sleep.
I am thousand winds that blow.
I am diamond glints on snow.
I am sunlight on ripened grain.
I am the gentle autumn rain.
When you awaken in the morning's hush
I am the swift uplifting rush
Of quiet birds in circled flight.
I am the soft stars that shine at night.
Do not stand at my grave and cry;
I am not there, I did not die*

1750 WO1 (Rtd) Roland Edward (Ted) Morrissey RNZA – passed away 25 April 2008

Ted enlisted in the Permanent Force as an Acting Gunner on Feb 11 1936, shortly after his 18th birthday. After a probationary period he became a substantive gunner and was posted to Fort Dorset in the original 22 (D) Bty where he worked on the six inch coastal guns and the newly installed 3.7 Anti Aircraft Guns.

Early in his career he was part of the full guard at the opening of Parliament by Lord Galway and was also part of the full guard for Sir Cyril Newall. This was the day of the infamous "men of the Army, men of the Navy and gentlemen of the Air Force. Ted's explanation was that Sir Cyril actually said, "**Men of the Army, Men of the Navy and Gentlemen....., the Air Force.**"

The day before the outbreak of the 2nd World War Ted was involved in a working party erecting numerous Bell Tents at Seatoun Park, the tents were for the reservists and Territorials expected to be called for service. He was one of the gunners who fired a couple of six inch shells across the first foreign ship to enter the Wellington Heads after war was declared. The first shot (according to Ted) landed somewhere over Eastbourne. The Gunners next shot cut straight across the ships bows. Ted said the ship stopped alright and in fact to him at the time, it appeared to be going backwards.

Ted and his comrades then transferred to the 2nd

Expeditionary Force and were sent first to Mt Victoria and then to Ngaruawahia to convert to 18 pounders sailing shortly afterwards with the 6th Field Regiment on the Aquatania. He had to convert to the 25 pounders in Egypt. his regiment was in the forefront in Greece. When back in action in Egypt, Ted was taken POW when his Battery was captured by the Germans and he spent the remainder of the War in captivity in Germany near the Polish border. After his release he returned to NZ on the Dominion Monarch and was posted back to Fort Dorset. He was also involved in training CMT gunners and K Force gunners. With the passage of time he eventually became a WO and was posted to Godley Head, retiring in 1956 as a WO1 after 20 years service..

Article supplied by Don Donaldson

Joe Fallon RNZA - passed away in Australia, 27 April 2008

Joe was called up for National Service (UK) in 1952. He was posted to 27 Stranges Bty, serving with them in Korea. On completion of his National Service he was posted to the Territorial Army from 1954-1957 in the Royal Artillery. In 1957 Joe joined the Regular Army in the Royal Artillery. In 1967 when serving with 6th Fd Regt in 28 Commonwealth Bde he took his release from the British Army and joined the NZ Army, RNZA.

He was posted to 161 Bty Depot in Papakura. In 1968 he served with 161 Bty in Vietnam as Gun Sgt on No 2 Gun (he was at the Battle of Coral and Balmoral in May/June 1968). Completing his TOD he returned to 161 Bty Depot, Papakura.

1970 saw Joe returned for a second tour to Vietnam where he served as Gun Sgt on Echo Gun.. Completion of his tour saw him again posted back to 161 Bty Depot then in 1973 he joined the Training Cell within HQ Bty on the abolition of National Service. Joe took his release from the NZ Army in 1976. He was one of those gunners who got to do all their NZ Service in Papakura!!.

Article supplied by Brian (Jerry) Meyer

33544 Major (Rtd) Jervois Bryan O'Connor RNZA - passed away 31 May 2008

Bryan went off to the War in 1942 and served with 6 Fd Regt in Italy. Upon his return he left the army, but rejoined in 1949 and back into the RNZA. He spent time with 3 Fd Regt as BSM 32 Battery in Addington. By 1955 was posted to Waiouru to the School of Artillery.

Bryan was selected to attend the Long Gunnery Course at 'Larkhill' in England, returning in 1957. He remained at the school until 1961 when he was commissioned and was posted as Adjutant 3 Fd Regt. From there he was sent to Malaya to the Terendak Garrison with 1 RNZIR as the Housing Officer. In 1967 he returned to Christchurch to join the HQ of 3 Bde and went on to become the DAQMG.

One of his main highlights was his return to Cassino in 2005 for the 60th anniversary. He was joined there by a son, two grandsons, a serving daughter in law and a nephew.

His civilian life after the Army involved being the 'Captain Peacock' of Ballantynes Department Store, he then went on to become the Sec/Mgr of the Waitakeri Golf Course and finished his civilian life at the Wines and Spirits Merchants – Quill Morris as one of their despatch clerks.

Bryan enjoyed his golf and maintained his association with his 'Wednesday Wanderers' and the Halswell Tavern 'Stayers Syndicate'. He was a keen rose grower and each had their name tag (although he knew them all anyway) and were arranged in neat Parade Ground order. He also enjoyed painting with oils and there are a number of his favourite roses and places that he had visited over the years.

Article supplied by Bryan's son Paul

⇒ **Condolences :**

The President and Members extend condolences to:

- * John Bellamy on the passing of his beloved wife Terri.
- * Fred Goodall on the passing of his beloved mother.
- * Paul O'Connor on the passing of his beloved father.
- * The family of Joyce Bickerton (wife of the Eric Bickerton)
- * Greg Thwaite on the passing of his loved mother

2. NEW MEMBERS

This quarter we have 37 new members joining us: four ex TF gunners, twenty-three RF 50's - 90's gunners, five from other corps (ASC, Sigs, Medical and Armoured) who did a tour with the gunners, four members of the RNZA Band and 1 Assoc.



ANDREWS, Ross. Ross has served the guns for two periods; 1975 - 1978 and 1984 - 2008. He is currently a member of the RNZA Band and he lives in South Auckland.

ANKER, Wayne E. Wayne served the guns from 1967 to 1990. He joined as an Offr Cdt, attending Portsea. On graduating he was posted to 161 Bty Depot. He did time at HQ Home Comd, 16 Fd Regt, HQ 1 Inf Bde Gp, RF Cadet School and HQ Land Forces Comd, RNZAF Staff College and HQ NZ Force SEA. On retiring from the Army Wayne has been self employed. He and Yoshiko live over the Harbour Bridge on the North Shore.

COLLINS, David W. Dave served in the Army, RNZ Signals for 14 years from 1959 to 1973. In 1967 he did a tour of duty with 161 Bty to Vietnam as Tpt NCO. He and Mae live at Bunnythorpe.

DALLAS, Graham R. Graham served the guns between 1980-85 ins TF with 4 (G) Med Bty, Hamilton, (1980-82) and 11A Bty, Auckland, (1983-85). He works for the Corrections Department with fellow gunners Paul Gregg, Mike Subritzky and Vic Wehipeihana. Graham resides in Cambridge.

DAVIS, Robert A. Bob served the guns, the Royal Artillery (UK) between 1955 and 1959 as a result of being called up for National Service. He was commissioned with his main service being for 49th Field Regiment RA and in Hong Kong. In July 2002 he emigrated to New Zealand. Bob is both a member of the RNZA Band and Hon. Secretary of the Auckland Artillery Band Assn Inc (RNZA Band). He is also the National Representative of the International Military Music Society, (NZ Branch). Bob resides on the North Shore.

DAVIE, Kenneth G. Ken served the guns between 1959 and 1970 with 121 Bty, 12th HAA Regt, (during this time he also served with 1 Ranger Sqn (SAS) and 3 Bn (RNZIR). He joined the RNZA Band in 1989. In civvie street he was engaged in the Telcom and Insurance fields. He and Alicia reside in the South Auckland area.

DAWSON, Pete. Pete served the guns (TF) for 18 years (1972 -1989) with 3 Fd Regt RNZA. Pete lives in Lyttelton.

DILGER, Brian G (Scruff). Brian served the guns from 1956 to 1980. During this period he was: Instructor A Bty Papakura, Pilot Recce Flt Hosonville, Pilot 6 Lt Regt RA Terendak, BK 161 Depot Bty Papakura, 2IC Army Schools, Waiouru, OC Recruit Trg Depot NSTU Burnham and SO2 Log 3 Bde Christchurch. Brian is now Chairman of the Nova Trust Board where he had previously worked for ten years. He and Maureen live in Christchurch.

EDWARDS, Kenneth G. KG Served with 10 Coy.

RNZASC in Korea between 1955 - 1957 and with the guns from 1966 - 1976. He did three tours with 161 Bty to South Vietnam. 1967 on No 6 gun, 1968 in Tpt and 1970 on No 4 gun. On discharge he joined the private industry in the stores area. Since retiring he has taken up mo vanning, and has a 5m Transit called Safri So Good. KG and Sylvia reside in Kawerau.

ELDER, Bruce A. Bruce served the guns between 1965 and 1969. After completing Basic and Corp Trg in 1966 he was posted to 161 Bty Vietnam as a Dvr Op. Returning to NZ at the end of his TOD he was posted to 1 Loc Tp. In 1969 Bruce transferred to RNZEME and remained with them until 1973. On discharge he joined the TF and served with the Infantry. In civvy street he worked for NZ Police, Transport Department and crossed the ditch for a while. Bruce and Viki-Anne live over the Harbour Bridge.

EVEREST, Neville H. Mount served the guns in 1970 and 1971. He did a tour to Vietnam with 161 Bty on No 6 gun. He and Grace live in Taupiri.

FALLON, Marina. Widow of Joe Fallon. She resides in Australia.

HANSON, Peter H. C. Peter served the guns between 1960 and 1988 as a TF Officer with 1 Fd Regt, 4 Med Bty, 16 Fd Regt, OC 11(A) Bty, CO 16 Fd Regt, and Dep Commander Land Force Command. He is Trustee of the RNZA Band Assn. Peter is self employed, he and Joan live in Central Auckland.

HOTERE, Matiu W. Matt joined the Army and the RNZA in 1956, serving the guns until he retired in 1970. He served with 161 Bty in Vietnam as the Gun Sgt on No 1 gun in 1966. Matt and Gay live in Whangarei.

JOHNSON, Craig J. Johnno served in the Army, RNZASC for 18 years, 1962 to 1980. His postings included Burnham, Waiouru, Fort Cautley and Hopu Hopu. Johnno did a tour of duty with 161 Bty to Vietnam in 1965 as one of the Cooks. On taking his discharge he has continued to work in the catering field. He and Rose live in Warkworth.

KELSEY, Dave P. Dave served the guns between 1964 and 1968. He did a tour of duty with 161 Bty to Vietnam in 1966 on No 1 gun. Dave had the misfortune to spend the night of his 21st in the 'Conex' at Vung Tau. He and Lea live in Napier.

McCORT, Daniel Mc. Danny served the guns between 1959 and 1979. His postings included NSTU, RF Cadet School, 4(G) Med Bty. In 1961 he did a tour to Malaya with 2 NZ Regt. Danny did two tours to Vietnam with 161 Bty, 1966 on No 1 gun and in 1967 on No 2 gun. Of late he has been a tour bus driver, driving his own bus. He and Bernie reside in Rotorua.

McKAY, Christopher F. Chris served the guns between 1974 and 1984 as a TF Officer with 4(G) Medium Bty, 32 Bty, 22(D) Bty and OC 1 Loc Tp. In civvie street he

has worked in the HR field in a number of large companies. Chris also spent two years in Spain and he resides in Hamilton.

MARTIN, Trevor I. Dino served the guns between 1967 and 1970, touring Vietnam with 161 Bty in 1968 as a Dvr Op. He and Mata live in South Auckland.

MIDDLETON, Raymond N. Raymond served the guns twice; between 1967 - 1969 and 1972 - 1989 touring Vietnam with 161 Bty in 1968 on No 2 gun. He and Tracy live in Whenuapai.

MILES, Pete. Milo served the guns between 1967 and 1975, touring Vietnam with 161 Bty in 1968 as a Dvr Op. He and Yvonne live on the North Shore.

MOORE, Philip B. Archie on graduation from RF Cadets (Andrews Class, 1966) served the guns for 20 years between 1967 and 1987. His postings included School of Artillery, 11 Bty Papakura and Ngaruawahia. Archie did two tours with 161 Bty to Vietnam in 1968 as a Dvr Op and in 1969 as a storeman. He and regularly participates in 'black powder' shoots and has his own web site: www.nzmfle.com. Archie lives in Christchurch.

MOORE, Tom T.F. Tom joined the Army in 1963 and on completing his basic served two years with ASC. In 1965 he undertook a TOD joining the guns, serving in South Vietnam with the original battery. He was initially Dvr T.T. Matekuare on No 1 gun (Arthur Simeon's gun), and then trained as a layer on No 2, (Trevor Pilcher's gun). On completion of his TOD Tame returned to ASC and was the Commander CMD's driver. He then moved to other ASC appointments, joining RNZAF (Supplu and Transport) in 1989 where he remained until his retirement in 2004. In his civilian life Tame has worked for NZ Railways and Public Works Department. He and Margaret live in West Auckland.

On one of Tame's operations with the gunners, the Bty was given a fire mission. They fired 70 rounds per gun. He thought it was a good idea and decided to make a cup of tea for the boys, this did not go down well with his gun Sgt (ungrateful Sgt!).

MORROW, Douglas T. A. Doug was in the Armoured Corp, TF, between 1959 - 1963 and the RF 1963 - 1986, serving with NZ Scots and QA Sqn. He was promoted from WO to Lt (QM) undertaking Recruiting work. Doug served the guns with 161 Bty, South Vietnam as a LBdr Radio Op, in the FO party with Capt Bruce Murphy and LBdr Keith Mansell. During action at the Iron Triangle in 1965, Doug was seriously wounded. In civvie street he worked in the HR field in a couple of Government Departments. Doug and Grace reside in Otaki.

NEWMAN, Max G T (The Claw). Max served the guns from 1969 to 1971. He served with 161 Bty in Vietnam on No 2 gun in 1970. On discharge he joined the Ministry of Transport and remained with them until 1980. Max then rejoined the Army, this time as a MP, but in 1981 he headed back to the MOT. In 1992 was part of the MOT and NZ Police merger and is now stationed

at Rangiora as a Sgt. He and Shona live at Kaiapoi.

PENNAL, Leslie T. Les served the guns from 1995 to 2001, with 163 Bty and the Waiouru Admin Centre. He worked in the Burnham Admin Centre as a civilian between 2001 and 2003. Les is currently in the freight business. He and Jan live in Christchurch.

PEPPER-EDWARDS, David Lesley. Stretch served the guns between 1965 and 1968, touring Vietnam with 161 Bty in 1966 on No 1 gun. He and Marilyn live in New South Wales, Australia.

PILCHER, Trevor. Trevor served the guns for 25 years between approx 1956 and 1981. He did a TOD with the Infantry to Malaya between 1961 and 1963 and served with 161 Bty in Vietnam in 1966 as the Gun Sgt on No 2 gun. He and Phyllis live in Papakura.

RATTRAY, Leslie W. Rats served the guns between 1966 and 1987. He did two tours to Vietnam with 161 Bty, 1968 on No 3 gun and 1970 as the Echo/Ammo NCO. Rats lives in the Hawkes Bay.

ROBSON, Wayne F. Robbie served the guns between 1961 and 1967 touring Vietnam with 161 Bty in 1965 as a Dvr Op. He and Caroline live in Masterton.

SCHOFIELD, Dennis F. Den joined the Army in the 13th intake, NSTU (1966) serving with RNZ Sigs. In 1987 he joined the guns serving with the RNZA Band. He has risen thru the ranks from Bandsman to his current position of Bandmaster (WO1). In his life outside of the band he has found time to work in the Project/Design Engineering field. He currently is an Employment Specialist for Disabled Persons. Den and Gail reside in Papakura.

SHEARS, Edward G. Ted served in the Army RNZAMC between 1966 and 1988, his postings included: Burnham, Papkura, Trentham and Singapore. Ted toured Vietnam with 161 Bty in 1967 as the Hygiene NCO. He lives in Christchurch.

SMITH, Robert H.A. Rob served the guns from 1963 to 1970, his postings included 163 Bty, HQ's Area 10, NSTU Waiouru and touing Vietnam with 161 Bty in 1965 where he worked in Tpt. He and Alice live in South Canterbury.

STONE, Kevin M. Stoney served the guns between 1967 and 1969, touring Vietnam with 161 Bty in 1968 as a Dvr Op. He and Margaret live just south of the Bombays.

WILSON. Graeme. Willie served the guns between 1969 and 1972, touring Vietnam with 161 Bty in 1970 on No 6 gun. He and Adell live in Morrinsville.

WILSON, Robert A. Bob served the guns for 10 years between 1959 and 1969, touring Vietnam with 161 Bty in 1966 on No 3 gun. He and Isabel live on the North Shore.

WADDELL, Rowan J. Woody joined the Army as a RF Cadet and served the guns between 1963 and 1977. He did two tours with 161 Bty to Vietnam, 1966 and 1969, both times as a Dvr Op. Woody and Marama reside in Whangarei.

⇒ **Remembering WAIOURU and Winter!!**



Wasn't it Wonderful - Yeah Right

3. RNZA ASSOCIATION Q STORE

All items have the Gunner monogram with 'The R.N.Z.A Assn' on the scroll.

To view our stock items, go to <http://picasaweb.google.com/RNZA.Association/QStore/>



Item	In stock	Value
<u>Jersey, red, V-neck,</u>	M – 3 L – 1 only XL – 5 4XL – 1 only 5XL – 1 only	\$45.00 each
<u>Cap, navy blue</u>	Unlimited	\$35.00 each
<u>Monogram, 'stitch-on</u> Postage included	Unlimited	\$20.00 each
<u>Monogram applied to</u>	Send it in	\$20.00 each

Postage: Within NZ - \$7.50 , Overseas – postage on request

⇒ **A Little Military Humour**

Having just moved into his new office, a pompous new colonel was sitting at his desk when an airman knocked on the door. Conscious of his new position, the colonel quickly picked up the phone, told the airman to enter, then said into the phone, “Yes General, I’ll be seeing him this afternoon and I’ll pass along your message. In the meantime, thank you for you good wishes, sir”.

Feeling as though he had sufficiently impressed the young enlisted man, he asked, “What do you want?”

“Nothing important, sir,” the airman replied, “I’m just here to hook up your telephone”.

4. AFGHANISTAN, continued

Finally, as heavy snow fell on New Years Day 1842, Akbar Khan and his tribal chiefs agreed for the British troops, their families, and the camp followers to leave with an armed escort to protect them from hostile tribes on the way. The force could only take six light artillery guns, and three light mountain guns. All other stores of ordnance and muskets to be left. After further heavy snowfalls Akbar let the column depart the cantonments on their journey of 80 miles on the 6 January 1842. Their journey through the mountain passes covered in snow were held by hostile tribesmen, including the Ghilzais whose subsidies had been cut by Macnaghten. The column consisted of the 44th Regiment, Royal Horse Artillery, and Sepoys totaling about 4,500 troops.

Thirty European women and their children, and about 12,000 camp followers. The camp followers were those who were employed as servants, animal hands, gardeners, cooks, their families, and those who make up the train of support for an army. Despite assurances of protection by Akbar Khan, by nightfall on the first day the column had only covered 6 miles. During this harrowing day, darting in like hungry wolves, the Ghilzais riders drove off the baggage animals and slaughtered the stragglers. The entire column was left with only four tents, virtually no food, fuel or shelter from the freezing temperatures. Many just simply died from the cold and the exposure during the night.

By the third day the column had only advanced a total of ten miles, when they reached the entrance to the five mile long pass of the Khurd-Kabul. Here the 44th Foot had to clear the entrance way at the point of the bayonet, and, supported by a cavalry charge, drove off most of the Ghilzais. But it was only a temporary respite. The Ghilzais returned with terrible slaughter, creating panic and fear in the narrow confines of the pass. Over 3,000 perished.

At the end of the third day, Akbar appeared, blaming the column for setting off before he was ready to give them protection through the pass. He then suggested taking under his personal protection the remaining families of the British officers, and promising to bring them down in safety one day’s march behind the column. Elphinstone agreed to this offer. The married officers, of whom virtually all were wounded, were ordered by Elphinstone to go with them. On the fifth day in the narrow gorge of Tunghi-Tariki, the Afghan tribesmen attacked again in force.

The column vanguard now greatly depleted, consisting of the 44th Regiment survivors and some India Company cavalry, plus the one remaining gun of the Horse Artillery, managed to break through-- but with heavy casualties. The remainder of the column along with any wounded left, were slaughtered by the pursuing tribesmen. Their throats were cut, and their bodies stripped naked and left where they died. A forced march towards safety was now imperative.

Only 450 troops and 3,000 camp followers were left of the original column of 16,500 souls. Elphinstone, along with his 2 i/c Shelton, sought a parley with Akbar who immediately took them as hostages, as he had the previous day, with the British women, their surviving children and the wounded British married officers. With the column, the now surviving senior British officer - Brigadier Anquetil, decided to continue the march under cover of darkness, as the soldiers and officers were being picked off ceaselessly in the daylight. Struggling to the top of the next pass they found it blocked with two barriers of prickly oak.

As they struggled to get through the Afghans attacked opening fire from the flanks, and then rushing in with swords and daggers. The slaughter was frightful. Only a total of 95 managed to get through the pass. Of this group, 14 on horses included Dr. BRYBON. The remaining 80 were on foot. This group only had twenty rifles and two cartridges per man. At a small village Gandamak, the hostile villagers attacked the exhausted survivors. Only six men of the 44th Regiment survived their heroic final stand. The mounted party, who had ridden ahead, were offered food and rest at the village of Futtehabad, just 15 miles from the safety of Jallalabad. When dismounted the villagers then attacked them, with only five escaping, including Dr Bryson who had remained mounted because of his wounds. The other four were quickly run down and butchered. Before Bryson reached Jallalabad he survived another three individual attacks in which he received a severe head wound from a sword and his horse was shot through the groin in towards its’ spine. Spotted by British sentries at Jallalabad who had witnessed the last attack, quickly dispatched a patrol to his assistance. Helped from the saddle he held onto the reins of his gallant horse which collapsed and died at the very entrance to the fort of Jallalabad.

Lady Butlers famous painting "The Remnant of an Army "graphically captures the emotion and the tragedy. The British force at Jallalabad under the Command of the capable Colonel Sir Robert Sale, were then besieged by Akbar Khan who had amongst his hostages from the column the Colonels wife Lady Sale and their 20 year old daughter. Lady

Sale had been shot through the wrist during the massacre at the Khurd-Kabul Pass. The Colonel stoutly resisted the siege and on one gallant occasion a foraging raid captured 500 sheep from the Afghans, which saved the garrison from starvation. Emboldened with this success and now fed, even though heavily outnumbered, Sale attacked "with great vigour", Akbar's forces, thus lifting the siege. From India General Pollock fought his way through the Khyber Pass joining Sale at Jallalabad.

He then marched on Kabul exacting a terrible retribution on the tribes on either sides of the passes through which the hapless column from Kabul had set out on their tragic journey of seven days of unspeakable horror, in which over 16,400 soldiers, men women and children perished. General Nott marched from Kandahar to Kabul- no mean distance, joining up with General Pollock. In September 1842,

The British flag flew again, but only temporarily over Kabul. Here they exacted further retribution, burning the bazaars, razing houses & buildings. They then left Kabul a smouldering ruin never attempting to occupy it again. Shah Shuja was installed as ruler again, but was assassinated shortly afterwards. Akbar Khan finally released the 93 hostages after nine months captivity. Twelve European women and 22 of their children had survived. Elphinstone died of illness during the incarceration.

After Shujas' assassination the British accepted the return of Dost Muhammad as ruler of Afghanistan, which he ruled for a further 20 years before his death. In 1863. With painful memories on both sides, British and Afghan relations were a "sullen acquiescence on either side-without goodwill or interchange". One hundred and sixty years later the agonies continue for the Afghans. Perhaps those who flee, realize their country has an uncertain future, for over the centuries they have had "inflicted" upon them, people they did not invite in, and now they are being strangled by a government they didn't even elect....the Taleban.

An interesting footnote: Lord Fitzroy Somerset of the Horse Guards who forced Elphinstone into Kabul, later gained undying infamy as Lord Raglan who ordered the tragic Charge of the Light Brigade at Balaclava. In a somewhat unique way he played a major role in two of the most disastrous events in British Military history!

References:

- "Playing the Great Game" by Michel Edwards
- "Every Rock & Hill - Afghanistan" by Victoria Schoefield
- "Military Blunders" by Saul David.

Compiled by D.A.Mannering. October 2001

⇒ **QUESTION?**

We have Brigadier General, Major General, Lieutenant General. The Queen is our Captain General. Is her rank a honorary rank or a true rank? If it is a true rank where does this rank fit in the order of ranks?

5. GUNNERS DAY, LADIES FORMAL DINING IN at the Papakura RSA, 26 May 2008.

In accordance will the old rules (be there 10 minutes before the appointed time of the parade) the early arrivals ensured they got the best car parks, thus there would be no drinking and driving for them tonight.



By 10.30am a group of willing workers began setting up the lounge in the Papakura RSA for the dinner that evening.

After about 2 hours the tables were all dressed and ready for the guests to arrive.



The evening began with Mr Vice announcing to the dining president that his guests were assembled and through out the dinner we were entertained by the band, our band, the Band of the Royal Regiment of New Zealand Artillery



The menu, and the food we were served, would do justice to the finest restaurant - pumpkin dill and orange soup, followed by cold salmon terrine, your choice of lamb shank or stuffed breast of chicken, with tiramisu for dessert. All washed down with either, water, orange juice, white or red wine.



We as usual were ably "waited on" by soldiers of the local Cadet Unit.

Our port glasses were filled and we raised them for the toasts:

Dining President: Mr Jeff Waters (R)

Our Captain General - The Queen: Mr Vice



The Royal Regiment: Greg O'Neill (V5) RNZIR, son of Ted O'Neil (RNZA).

Reply to the Royal Regiment: Major MR Nowill (RNZA)

Absent Friends: Major (Rtd) Rod Baldwin, RNZA

Our Ladies: Mr Bill Giles



Top Table Guests
Daphne Shaw, RNZNC (Rtd)
Major (Rtd) Rod Baldwin



Top Table Guests
Major Shay Bassett,
Pam Terry, RNZNC (Rtd)



The Secretary and his Niece



John & Ailwyn Niwa



Kevin and Jan Burnell



Barry and Maureen Cook



Trevor Pilcher



Fred Bigg-Wither / John Deazley



Centre Piece on the Top Table

Members of the band relaxing



⇒ The School of Artillery Gunners Day Ball, The Chateau, 1976



Gunners' Roberts, McIlroy, Niwa and Soper



Mr and Mrs Roberts

6. UPDATE FROM Lt Col Nick Gillard, CO 16th Field Regiment

Betty May Browne died in Palmerston North aged 78 on April 18. Betty May was not well known outside of those who served with 16 Fd Regt from 1965 until the present day. But to those who knew her she was a legend. A civilian who embodied the ethos and values that the New Zealand Army strives for. Betty May's funeral service was held at St Martin's Chapel, Linton Camp on 24 April 2008. In accordance with her wishes she was buried in the cemetery closest to Linton Camp. She now rests in Shannon Cemetery.

It was as a 35 year old that Betty May began her close 43 year association with the gunners in 1965. The year that 161 Battery deployed to South Vietnam. A newspaper article headed '161 Battery's Favourite Pin Up Girl' stated that she personally adopted the battery from the time it became New Zealand's first commitment to the Vietnam War. Mystery surrounds exactly why the original 161 Battery, Royal New Zealand Artillery, endeared itself to Betty May. Her interest and fondness for the soldiers and officers may have been sparked by the hostile attitude many New Zealanders held towards the war being played out in what were often atrocious conditions.

Every week, without fail, Betty May wrote to the battery until they came home in 1971. Extra letters were sent on ANZAC Day, Christmas and other special occasions. They were always signed off 'from the old lady'. Two Golden Kiwi tickets were also sent every week. On one occasion \$10 was won. Betty May advised the soldiers not to spend it all at once. The letters would go up onto the battery notice board and the soldiers would take turns in responding. Her photo, according to soldiers who served in Vietnam at the time, took pride of place in their messes. Even today, 37 years



after the battery came home Betty May's photograph still takes pride of place in the 161 Battery Lines.

Captain (Rtd) Ray Williamson (d), the Battery Administration Officer in 1969, wrote that on receiving a particularly long letter on ANZAC Day that included the names of every New Zealander killed in the Vietnam War, Betty May concluded by writing 'take extreme care of your vastly adored kiwi selves'. Captain Williamson said that 'there wasn't a man in the battery who didn't have a lump in his throat after reading that. It was the finest letter I have ever read'.

Betty May was also there in Auckland on 11 May 1971 to personally welcome her boys home. She could have ended her association then but instead she chose to continue. Consequently she was with the Gunners in Bosnia, East Timor and Afghanistan. She was known to every gunner. In fact she often presented the young gunners with the regimental black diamonds that go behind the RNZA cap badges on their berets.

Colonel (Rtd) Don Kenning who was the first battery commander of 161 in Vietnam said that 'when they deployed in 1965 no one cared or loved them apart from their own families, and of course Betty May.'

Brigadier (Rtd) Ray Andrews, another former Battery Commander of 161 said 'she was a special person. Some might describe her as mildly eccentric, but she had a heart of gold and an enormous capacity in sharing her thoughts with messages of support and sympathy to the wounded, sick and homesick. She would be in constant contact with 161 battery especially during those times when it wasn't fashionable to support soldiers.'

Colonel (Rtd) Mike Harvey wrote, 'her softness and gentility seemed incongruous in Vietnam but was welcomed with open arms; probably because of just those attributes. War and poetry has a powerful and enduring tradition but they were crafted in the main by soldier poets. Betty-May's poems were from home and from the heart and in a time when such support was not overly forthcoming.

When Betty-May visited us in Papakura, post-Vietnam soldiers were able to meet an icon of that era and I know Betty-May touched them.' Look no further than a frail old lady for the embodiment of ethos and values we strive for – loyalty, commitment, courage, comradeship and integrity. Unselfish and generous of spirit to her boys to the last.

Betty May wrote many poems that reflected her thoughts. Many are humorous. Others reflect sad times in the history of the battery in South Vietnam and beyond. Through these poems and her letters she shared the good times and the bad. That is the reason she was remembered so fondly on 24 April 2008.

I had the pleasure of presenting the original poems and a copy of the TV1 news item to Betty-May's sister, in Waipukurau last week. She was touched by the impact her sister had on the Regiment. She attended the funeral

with her daughter. It was wonderful to combine both of Betty May's families at her farewell.

'**A Soldiers Dreams**' by Betty May Browne. Written in remembrance after the deaths of Sgt A. Don and Bdr R. White on 15 September 1965.

Last night I dreamt the soul of me, took wing and flew afar.

Way up into the midnight sky, and landed on a star.

I knew that it was there to seek, a heart in which to bide.
And all at once, the gentle one, appeared at my soul's side.

He told my soul that his dear heart, had neither lock nor key.

And if it liked to slip inside, quite safe there it would be.

My soul gazed up into his eyes, with love it saw them shine

'Ah yes', it cried, 'with thee I'll dwell, until the end of time.'

Supplied by Lt Col Nick Gillard

7. ANZAC SCULPTURE DEDICATED IN SYDNEY

NZ Defence Force personnel and NZ NSW Veterans attended a special ceremony in April to dedicate a new bronze sculpture of a WW1 soldier on Sydney's ANZAC Bridge. Lt Gen Mateparae said, "The statues of two soldiers are a fitting reminder to all of the sacrifice of the ANZAC servicemen and women and the special bond between our two countries. The ANZAC tradition continues today wherever we serve today," he said.

The new statue complements the statue of the Australian soldier which has stood at the western end of the ANZAC Bridge since 2000. The ceremony is the culmination of a joint project between the NZ and NSW Governments. Dunedin born sculptor Alan Somerville was commissioned to sculpt and cast the NZ statue. The award winning sculptor also created the Australian digger on ANZAC Bridge, the Kiwi cobbler's mate.



The sand form Gallipoli: Sand from the beaches of Gallipoli was placed inside the Australian Digger when it was installed in 2000 and on the morning of Saturday 26th April 2008 sand from the beaches of Gallipoli was also placed inside the NZ Soldier before it was secured to the Plinth in preparation for the unveiling ceremony.

The Statue: The NZ soldier wears a hat that is called a lemon squeezer and the Australian soldier wears a slouch hat and there is a slight difference in the uniform. Our (NZ) soldier is also rumoured to be two inches (50mm) taller than the Aussie soldier because of his hat. "Another significance is that the Aussie soldier looks towards the

sunset and the NZ soldier will be watching the sunrise”.

8. DILI TOUR OF DUTY

By Jodeall Cadlacio

Monitoring and reporting activities that may impact on the security situation in Timor-Leste is all in a day's work for New Zealand army major Shay Bassett.

Major Bassett says what makes the job challenging is that as military observers, they go around unarmed and in small teams.

But four months since he left home, he is finding his tour of duty interesting and rewarding.

"When I was first offered this role, I was a little hesitant because I would be unarmed and I had not done this sort of work before," Major Bassett says.

"I am finding it really rewarding and I love the flexibility and autonomy this job gives me, and have absolutely no regrets about taking it."

The Devonport husband and father to three young children has been based in the capital Dili as part of New Zealand's contribution to the United Nation-led mission in this troubled nation. The country was in turmoil after an assassination attempt on President Jose Ramos-Horta, who is now recovering in Darwin Private Hospital from bullet wounds he sustained when rebels attacked his home in Dili.

Major Bassett has been with the army for 28 years. His first tour in Timor-Leste came in 2000 as part of New Zealand's third battalion rotation.

"At that time we were based on the other side of the island so it's great being in a different part of the country seeing different things and experiencing Timor-Leste from a different perspective," he says.

"The threat we faced in 2000 was different. We were armed and the threat was from militia groups across the broader. Now the focus is on internal threats to stability, so that dynamic has changed”.

Major Bassett finds it interesting to work with such a diverse range of nationalities, organisations and individuals, and to be part of a multinational effort to get things done. "At the end of the day, it's great that New Zealand is here. This country is still facing tough times and may be for some time to come."

New Zealand has contributed to various United Nations peacekeeping efforts in Timor-Leste since 1999.

The commitment is the largest one for the New Zealand Defence Force. It consists of more than 180 personnel and two helicopters serving with the Combined Joint Task Force in Timor-Leste and two advisers to the Timor-Leste defence force. Force, as well as two military liaison officers serving with the UN Integrated Mission.

North Shore Times, Saturday March 22 2008.

9. BODYGUARD AND MATE FOR KIWI SOLDIERS

Kiwi troops in Afghanistan have been bowled over in more ways than one by a handsome dog who has become mascot, guard and pet at one of their patrol bases.

Gunner has won the hearts of soldiers operating out of Nayak, about four hours' drive west of the main Kiwi base in Bamian. Major Syd Dewes who returned last week after six months in Afghanistan, said Gunner was big, tough, and not for pampering

He was nothing like the Afghan hounds that New Zealanders would recognise - there's no such thing as pedigree in Afghanistan, He is like a cross between a German shepherd and a husky. "This dog was born for the snow and the sheer joy on his face when snow arrived - it was a sight to see". If the snow was piled he would dive into burrows made for him but most of the time he would sleep on it regardless of the temperatures, which regularly got down to minus 30 degrees celsius, Major Dewes said. He would sue his kennel only when it rained.

Gunner was a great guard dog, who would kick up a fuss if any body came around the base, and would snap at the ankles of strangers. But he was also a real character, "He gets so excited to have you around that it makes going back to the base a pleasure. Whenever we had been away from the patrol base for a few days upon your return he would be like a child seeing his dad return home”.

Gunner was so big and heavy that the unwary would be knocked over by him. Major Dewes said Gunner was a pup when he was given by local businessman Mohammad Amin two years ago. Major Dewes is sending over some worm and flea tablets to make sure the new troops at the base continue to look after Gunner.

Dominion Post Tuesday 6 May 2008



10. VOICES FROM VIETNAM BY BILLY BARNZ

The book 'Voices from Vietnam' has been written by Billy Barnz and is the painted pen pictures of 34 NZ Vietnam War veterans, exposing their personalities, experiences and achievements. The stories cover vets from: front line infantry, 161 Bty, SAS, the RNZAF, the training team, cavalry, a paymaster, and a lifeguard who are from varying units, headquarters, attachments, military professions, and ranks.

'Voices from Vietnam' presents Vietnam War veterans as a cohort of ordinary New Zealanders who did extraordinary things at that time of their lives when they went to serve in an unpopular war. The book demonstrates what fine people they were and what they were able to achieve in their lives despite the fact that many of their compatriots despised them for going to Vietnam.

The cohort includes some very impressive individuals. There are captains of New Zealand industry, highly ranked military and air force professionals, a Member of Parliament, a Harkness Fellow and Harvard Graduate, chief executive officers of commercial enterprises and welfare agencies, an expert horticulturalist, a polytechnic lecturer, a respected Maori elder, an All Black and a superintendent of a teaching hospital. New Zealand's trampers, potters, writers, gardeners, welfare workers, sports coaches, housewives, real estate agents, mechanics, rugby players and musicians are all represented. Above all, the subjects of this book represent the finest examples of New Zealand's youth of the 1960s; they represent not only the estimated 3,500 who served in Vietnam but also the 37 who died in their country's Service. This book costs \$50 and is available from Willsonscott Publishers, phone 03 351 1535 or www.willsonscott.biz

11. CHANGES TO WAR PENSIONS ADMINISTRATION – Q&A What is changing?

Changes are being made to improve services to veterans with Veterans Affairs New Zealand becoming the single agency responsible for all aspects of the War Disablement Pensions. From 1 July 2008 veterans will gain a single point of contact for all enquiries about entitlement and services - making access to assistance simpler and more efficient.

Responsibility for the administration of War Disablement and Surviving Spouse Pensions will rest with Veterans Affairs New Zealand (VANZ). In addition, VANZ will cease to be a semi-autonomous body, and become an operational unit of New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF), [ie. Under the command of a serving officer, as the director retires.]

Is anything changing in the way the Veteran's Pension is administrated?

No. The administration of Veterans' [not War] Pensions is staying with the Ministry of Social Development and a new number for contacting this group will be announced prior to 1 July. In the meantime, you can still contact the War Pension Services or Veterans' Affairs New Zealand about these services. [This is about *Veterans' Pensions*, not War Disablement Pensions.]

Why have these changes come about?

The change will improve the services and support delivered to veterans. The two agency model of delivering services to veterans was inefficient. The change will make *one agency responsible* for the delivery of all services.

How will things improve for veterans?

From 1 July 2008 veterans will have a *single point of contact* for all enquiries about entitlements and services – making access to assistance simpler and more efficient. Improved efficiency and clearer lines of responsibility will also enable improvements in the time taken to process War Disablement Pensions.

Will anything else be changing?

Yes, Veterans Affairs New Zealand will broaden its role in brokering services for veterans and case managing their claims for assistance.

Have these changes come out of the blue?

No. The Government signalled its intent to improve services for veterans when it ordered a review into the delivery of War Disablement Pensions. Throughout the review veterans' groups such as the Royal New Zealand Returned and Services' Association were fully consulted.

Why is VANZ becoming an operational unit of NZDF?

VANZ currently sits within the New Zealand Defence Force, the change here is that it will be completely under the command of NZDF. This will improve the lines of accountability and better recognises the lifetime responsibility of the Chief of Defence Force to veterans.

If veterans have any questions, who can they contact?

Veterans with questions or concerns about the process can contact War Pension Services or their Veterans' Affairs New Zealand Case Manager in the usual way.

War Pensions Services will remain in Hamilton as a processing centre. Policy and practice will be determined, applied and monitored by VANZ.

Whenever you can, deal with your case manager at VANZ – at least you will have a name to relate to. If you don't have a case manager yet, call VANZ (0800 483 8372) and ask for the Duty Case Manager.

12. A SELECTION OF PHOTOS FROM TRIBUTE 08



John Niwa / Kevin Burnell



Alisoun / John Masters



Brig (Rtd) Harry Honnor



Kevin Burnell



John Masters and others



Pat Duggan / Bevin Culhane



Bty members led by John Masters



Bty Members at Parliament



Teach Macown



Graeme Henderson



Graeme Black



Brig (Rtd) Graham Birch



Arthur Simeon



The NZ Army and Band



The NZ Army on parade

Events of the weekend included: Mayoral Welcome, Unit functions, march to parliament, apology by PM, Whakanoa (healing) ceremony, wreath laying ceremony, apology and entertainment by the NZ Army, (including the firing of a 37 gun salute).

**13. Part 3: Steve Weir New Zealand Master Gunner
By SSgt Tim Weir**

The plan was inherently risky in that it rested on the assumption that the German armoured formations would obligingly engage the British armour. 'Only after the enemy reacted to the moves of the British armour could the main objective of the plan be reached'. This meant (for XXX Corps at least) that the initiative lay with the Afrika Korps and any other response by Rommel's forces would ensure the plan's likely failure. There was also a 60-mile gap between the two British corps that meant they would effectively fight separate battles and there would be a dispersion of effort. It was evident too, from 8th Army planning conferences, that GHQ thought in terms of the brigade group (as opposed to the division) in the employment of their fighting formations. 'The battle reflected what [Major General] Willoughby Norrie [GOC XXX Corps] called the "cowpat" theory of war; where your troop dispositions are widely spread like cowpats in a paddock, one here, one there'.

The first few days of *Crusader* involved little action for the New Zealand Division. 6 Field Regiment lay up for the most of 18 November and repaired the damage resulting from the previous two nights travelling. The next move that evening was a vast improvement with the whole Brigade Group moving at a comfortable speed and like a machine. After reaching Bir el Tgeit on 21 November, Weir was informed that 6 Brigade was detaching itself from the Division and moving to Trig 213, to the left (west) of the other New Zealand brigades and would also pass under command of XXX Corps. On the move, the brigade column encountered two areas of treacherous mud with many vehicles having to be extricated. With darkness ebbing, the Regiment halted eight miles short of its destination. At some point, part of the Regiment's Light Aid Detachment was discovered missing but Weir wisely refused to risk any troops searching for it in hostile territory. 6 Field Regiment also picked up a handful of German prisoners during the move, from armour that had broken down and been abandoned.

The Brigade set off again the next morning (22 November) and crossed the fresh tracks of the German armoured divisions heading in a westerly direction. Trig 213 was occupied by 1000 hours. While personally reconnoitring the defensive perimeter of his anti-tank guns Weir and his driver personally captured two Germans driving a truck transporting tank ammunition to Fort Capuzzo. Weir later recalled:

'My driver and I were standing outside the perimeter surveying the country to the west when a lorry came

bundling along the Trigh Capuzzo [road] going East. Through my glasses I recognised this as a German so my driver got his rifle and we dropped under cover. It came on gaily though it could see our lager [sic] plainly. At the correct moment my driver stood with his levelled rifle and two very startled Huns hopped out with their hands up. I disarmed them both, asked them if they could speak English, one of them replying that he could... They had no idea we were about the place and though he stated he had seen us miles away he had no thoughts of anyone hostile up this way'.

About this time, Divisional Headquarters was becoming aware of the disaster that had befallen the XXX Corps armour against the Afrika Korps. Freyberg, under orders from XIII Corps, was forced to split the New Zealand Division. 5 Brigade was ordered to remain and mask off Fort Capuzzo while 4 and 6 Brigades moved westwards to secure the airfield at Gambut and relieve the Support Group of 7th Armoured Division, which was cut off at Sidi Resegh. At nightfall, 6 Brigade was halted about eight miles short of Sidi Resegh and orders were given for an advance at 0400 hours the next morning. Simultaneously the Tobruk garrison was to sortie to Sidi Resegh (a distance of 12 miles from the closest perimeter defences) and 5 South African Brigade was to attack from the south.

6 Brigade advanced westward along the Trigh Capuzzo and halted just before sunrise near Gambut. Many of the troops were beginning their normal morning routine activities when suddenly 'A' Troop of 48 Battery opened fire on some unidentified vehicles moving in column at close range in the still dim light. 6 Brigade had unknowingly halted in the vicinity of Headquarters Afrika Korps. Quickly realising this, the infantry of 25 Battalion seized the initiative and attacked immediately. Within minutes, the area had turned into a conflagration of burning German vehicles as the gunners of 6 Field Regiment destroyed many of them at almost point-blank range. Weir heard his guns firing and responded somewhat impetuously by jumping into a German field car (captured previously) with his batman and Intelligence Officer to ascertain what his men were firing at. 'We charged off in the dim dawn unarmed stupidly and soon found ourselves in the middle of a lager [sic] of German vehicles including armoured cars and anti-tank guns'. Coming under fire, Weir sent his batman back for weapons and reinforcements. He returned in a short time with about 20 men from Regimental Headquarters and they joined in engaging the enemy with small-arms fire. Weir armed himself with a rifle and his small group succeeded in killing 12 enemy soldiers, capturing about 20 vehicles and some 80 prisoners (by Weir's own estimate). Headquarters Afrika Korps was not destroyed, however, and enough of it survived to continue functioning for the remainder of *Crusader*. The New Zealanders narrowly missed capturing Lieutenant General Ludwig Cruewell, the German corps commander.

From the prisoners it was discovered that the enemy held Point 175, which lay just east (and in the path) of

Sidi Resegh. As Point 175 was not an easily identifiable physical feature on the ground, Weir went forward with Brigadier Harold Barrowclough, (Commander 6 Brigade) to 'have a look and make a plan'. Neither could see any signs of the enemy on Point 175 but Barrowclough decided to use 25 Battalion to advance on foot Barrowclough decided to use 25 Battalion to advance on foot and occupy it. Weir provided 29 and 48 Batteries in support.

Forgoing reconnaissance patrols in order to save time and with no obvious sign of the enemy, Barrowclough ordered an attack by 25 Battalion supported by Valentine tanks (of 8 RTR). Near the stone cairn that marked the trig point, German infantry in shallow entrenchments were quickly located and engaged. The result was the capture of Point 175 and the taking of about 200 prisoners. The attack then began to encounter serious resistance. Beyond Point 175 itself, the terrain offered better defensive cover for the enemy and an area occupied by an old Bedouin blockhouse contained well-concealed anti-tank guns of 361 Afrika Regiment. The New Zealanders succeeded in holding on to Point 175 against counter attacks (though losing the cairn) but casualties were heavy. It was a difficult day for 6 Field Regiment with observation poor and the targets hard to locate. By nightfall, 'the 6 Brigade group appeared to be isolated with all flanks open'. At 0500 hours the next morning (24 November), Weir re-deployed his batteries, along with the anti-tank and Bofors AA guns, in anticipation of an armoured attack that seemed highly likely. Two German tanks that appeared at daybreak were allowed by the gunners to approach to close range before being shot up in flames, along with an accompanying ammunition truck a short while later.

The rest of the day passed uneventfully with the armoured attack on 6 Brigade failing to occur due to Rommel's decision to use his armour in the famous 'dash to the wire' into Egypt. The infantry succeeded in regaining the cairn of Point 175 in the afternoon but with minimal artillery support due to dwindling ammunition stocks. Freyberg had ordered the rest of the Division (mainly 4 Brigade Group) to move to relieve Tobruk the previous morning and at nightfall, 6 Brigade was joined by 21 Battalion Group. This included 47 Battery, which was transferred to Weir's command. Sidi Resegh was finally captured in the early hours of 26 November, but 6 Brigade was seriously weakened and occupied an exposed position overlooked by the enemy. The Brigade came under fire at first light and it was clear 'the position was untenable unless the high ground overlooking the Mosque of Sidi Resegh could be taken'.

A further attack that night by 6 Brigade was successful in capturing the mosque despite heavy opposition. 6 Field Regiment could offer little support in the darkness but Weir ensured the guns were positioned and ready by dawn after being moved over very difficult terrain. The morning of 27 November finally saw 6 Brigade in possession of Sidi Resegh and within sight of Tobruk. The day was 'devoted to consolidation and

reorganisation'. Parties of 6 Field Regiment gunners were sent out to salvage ammunition from wrecked vehicles and 500 rounds were spared for 4 Field Regiment, whose ammunition stocks were even lower. Weir used the time available to personally examine many of the captured German weapons and positions. The next day was spent mopping up German positions. Weir directed fire from inside a derelict tank onto a well-concealed platoon-sized position. Infantry from 26 Battalion over-ran the position and to Weir's astonishment, they took 80 German prisoners and freed 14 men from 24 Battalion, who had been held captive for four days. 4 Brigade also successfully attacked enemy positions between Belhammed and Sidi Resegh, capturing about 1000 prisoners. At Miles' request, both field regiments were personally controlled by Weir who fired two timed concentrations ahead of the advancing troops from an observation position that held a commanding view of the battlefield. This occasion, in Weir's opinion, 'was the first impromptu centralisation [of the New Zealand Artillery] on the battlefield during the war'. Weir was then recalled to headquarters and directed an artillery concentration on an attacking force to the south.

Supplies were received from Tobruk on 29 November and 6 Field Regiment fired throughout the day as German units returned from their foray into Egypt. Point 175 was lost in the afternoon along with most of 21 Battalion. The next morning a large formation of vehicles appeared and halted to the south. These were thought to be the long-awaited South Africans. Weir was suspicious and ordered the guns aimed on the vehicles and asked Barrowclough to send out a patrol. This was done but it failed to confirm their identity and Weir decided to dispatch a patrol from his own officers. The formation was identified as German and at 0840 hours, the Regiment's guns opened fire at 3000 yards, destroying numerous vehicles and routing the survivors. A German attack at 1600 hours, however, saw the destruction of two battalions of 6 Brigade. The gunners were now at their most vulnerable with very little infantry protection. Weir favoured withdrawing into Tobruk but Divisional Headquarters ordered the position held. Weir recalled that he 'felt very bitter about this decision as it threw me into a helpless position and appeared to me to expose my Regiment to certain destruction'. Early the following morning, Weir rose, toured his guns and allocated all spare men to local defence. Many gunners expected the Regiment to move to Tobruk though and were somewhat oblivious to the danger with some guns left limbered up in preparation for a move.

These illusions were quickly dispelled when sunrise of 1 December revealed enemy tanks advancing from the south-west, accompanied by lorry-mounted infantry. At the same time 6 Field Regiment began to receive counter-battery fire from two enemy batteries with an effect 'just sufficient to raise the dust'. Weir's batteries held their fire until the tanks were close and then fired with devastating effect. Three or four tanks were immediately destroyed and the battle was on. Dust and

smoke rapidly obscured visibility down to 150 yards and Weir had to personally direct one of his batteries by radio as it was blinded for a time. When the lull came after two hours of fighting, Weir hurried to 30 Battery in the forward-most position only to see that there was little left of it. Many of the crews lay dead around their guns, most of its vehicles were burning and some survivors were making their way over the escarpment to the north. Despite Weir's determination to hold the position, the situation was far worse than he had realised. Up until then he thought the New Zealanders had been winning. Gunner Nicholson observed Weir in the midst of the battle and described it in his diary:

'The enemy fire was murderous. It's hard to believe that anyone came out alive. Steve Weir watched it all and would not come out. Some of the boys offered him a lift but he refused it. He stood watching his gunners get mowed down. It must have been a terrible sight for him. He was as cool as a cucumber and was stroking his chin with his hand'.

Weir finally withdrew to his headquarters and directed the Regiment's surviving spare vehicles to move into cover. By this time, 47 Battery had also been over-run and Weir gave the order for 29 and 48 Batteries to pull out when their positions became untenable. 29 Battery was under the heaviest pressure and was fighting off infantry that were penetrating its lines. Weir then made his way to 48 Battery in the rear to see the vehicles off and turned back alone to his headquarters. Upon returning towards its location, he saw it had gone and German infantry now occupied the area. Weir hastily retired about 300 metres, twisted his knee on the way and hid on the side of an escarpment. After an hour, he made his way towards some British tanks in the distance near 4 Brigade's area at Belhammed. Here he found an abandoned vehicle that he was able to start and use to escape. Weir reached 4 Field Regiment's lines at mid-day and was back with 6 Field Regiment about an hour later. After beating off a further attack at 1600 hours, the remnants of 6 Brigade retreated east and then south to finally depart Crusader.

Weir's 6 Field Regiment suffered severely in Crusader with 275 casualties (including the attached 47 Battery), the heaviest losses of any New Zealand Artillery unit in the Second World War. Sidi Resegh was one of the fiercest battles for the gunners in North Africa with Weir describing it as 'a hammer and tongs go'. The two New Zealand field regiments inflicted heavy damage and were finally forced to withdraw only after their defending infantry had been beaten. Brigadier Harry Latham (BRA XIII Corps) visited the battlefield shortly after and was moved by the carnage. 'The first thing one noticed was that the Gunners had obviously put up the hell of a fight...the dead were lying around each gun, each man nearly in his place and burnt out tractors and trailers were just in view. Here undoubtedly there had been no thought of surrender or withdrawal and all had died in the service of the guns'. Weir's gunners fought well against overwhelming odds and Weir had remained until it was obvious that the battle was irretrievably lost. His conduct

during Crusader was recognised by the award of a Distinguished Service Order (DSO), 'for great skill and gallantry in the operations in Libya during the period from 18 November to 2 December 1941'.

The losses from Sidi Resegh also included Brigadier Miles, who had been taken prisoner in the vicinity of 29 Battery when he had rushed forward with a rifle to join the fighting. With the CRA's capture, the choice of replacement fell between Weir and Lieutenant Colonel C. Duff (CO 4 Field Regiment) who were the only remaining COs of the pre-war regular New Zealand Artillery left in the Division. 'Weir was one rung higher on the graduation list' and was therefore promoted to Colonel on 7 December 1941. He had mixed feelings about his promotion at first as he regretted leaving his regiment, describing it as 'a very happy family and though I say it myself, a splendid fighting machine'.

⇒ **THE QUAD OR FIELD ARTILLERY TRACTOR (FAT)**

Designed to tow the 25 pounder gun, the Quad, or Field Artillery Tractor (FAT) was one of the most distinctive vehicles in WW2. The Quad was also used by NZ in the Korean War. Many different variants were produced by a number of manufactures including Ford, Morris and General Motors (GM). The 25 pounder's six-man crew could all be carried in the Quad with their equipment and personal weapons in the rear compartments. Ammunition for the gun was carried in the trailer, or limber, towed behind the Quad with the gun attached behind the trailer.

Engine: 6 cylinder Overhead Valve Petrol 85BHP at 3400 rpm, full time four wheel drive.

Weight: 5690 kg (loaded)

14. THE LAST ROUND FIRED BY 161 Battery IN SOUTH VIETNAM: 1 May 1971

Provenance

I had discussed what I wanted to do with the GPO, Section Commanders, BSM, Battery Guide and Gun Sergeants so every-one knew what my plan was for our final fire mission in country. We had cleaned everything, our major equipment which was to be handed back to Australian Ordnance, had all been checked and accepted. This was not without some heartache as we went from war-time conditions to the apparently mindless intricacies of peacetime accounting. At our home Gun Position at 1 ATF Base at Nui Dat, the six M2A2 105 mm guns, glistening and lightly oiled, were set in their traditional centre of arc. We had retained enough Smoke rounds to do the job we planned. Smoke rounds were the only ones left with brass cartridge cases, all other cases were drawn steel. I went on to the Gun Position with those of the Battery not involved in the fire mission and prepared to give the fire orders, previously calculated, directly to the guns.

At that stage an Australian Land Rover quietly halted by

the Connex and the BSM alerted me. I called a "Stand Fast" and went over to where the Regimental CO, Lt Col Bryan Forward, RAA was standing. I came to attention and saluted him for probably the first time in many months. Our relationship was close and he did not demand formality, just accuracy of fire. Bryan Forward was an internationally respected Gunner and very highly thought of by Kiwis. He was a strong advocate of 161 Bty and staunchly defended us, even at risk of his own career, when Australian media and politicians would belittle our contribution. He was one of the two best Commanders I served under during my 27 year career.

I immediately offered him the honour of giving the Fire Orders for our last mission, and his reply, with a grin, was typical. "No thank you, John. I only came down to make sure you got it right." I got on with it.

I turned and called "Fire Mission Battery", and gave the set of orders for a smoke mission over the Long Hais. It was a clear and cloudless morning and the selected target meant that we would all see the red smoke flares from the shells. For the record, the Fire Orders were;

FM Bty, GR 3595 6448, Farewell Mission, Converge, At My Command, Bty Right, 60 seconds.

When I received "Ready", I ordered "Fire". This had the effect of giving each gun crew their moment in history, plenty of time for photographs discretely taken, and a brass cartridge case for each Number 1 (so, around NZ, there are at least five shell cases that are genuinely the last rounds fired by that gun detachment). When the last of six red clouds had drifted over the Long Hais, I turned to Tiny Manuera's detachment. Tiny was a second tour Gun Sergeant and had used his wide experience always for the good of all on the gun position. He was an old and wise head, and I had valued his presence in our closing months. I always had a feeling that, while I was a Larkhill-trained Instructor in Gunnery, if I tested that against his practical skill and experience, I would come off second best. I never took the risk.

I ordered:

Nos 1, 3, 4, Echo, 6 Rest, No 2 I RFFE.

As the case ejected, Tiny had Bombardier Mike Lenihan, handed it, as pre-arranged, to Sergeant Crewe of the LAD who had prepared a hard metal die. The die had only three letters, L R F, and Don Crewe, in front of us all, stamped those letters onto the softer brass base of the still hot cartridge case. He then very publicly destroyed the die with a mallet, ensuring that there was only one Last Round Fired.

Upon receiving "Shot", I ordered "Cancel Rest, Empty Guns."

With the response "Guns Empty" Tiny then took the case and, after photos were taken to record the event (I have the set of photos), passed the case to me. I turned to

the CO and immediately offered him the cartridge case. He, just as immediately, refused to accept it and indicated, in his plain Aussie manner, that I hadn't finished the job. With more than a flicker of emotion between us, I turned to the gunners, waiting by their colours, and gave the order,



Record as Tgt ZR 3999, End of Mission. Then, 161 Bty, Royal New Zealand Artillery, Cease Fire. Return to Base Papakura.

From the corner of my eye I saw the CO bring himself to a salute, make some gruff remark to his driver and drive off. The Number Ones were already busy with their detachments and pulling their barrels through for the last time. We left South Vietnam seven days later.

In these days, when so little is taken at its face value and indeed any singular piece of history is cynically challenged, provenance of any item is suspiciously treated. While target record reports are produced to imply that this shell was number 231,769 fired in theatre, I would not guarantee that. We did fire nearly a quarter of a million shells and some 665 fire missions in direct support of Australian and New Zealand infantry in close contact with the enemy. While we are still alive, it is important to those involved that this cartridge case, the last fired by 161 Battery, RNZA, in South Vietnam, with my personal pledge as to its authenticity, is placed with the Regiment for safe-keeping.

Note 1: For my numbers of shells fired and fire missions completed stated in the final para above, I am indebted to Pat Duggan who, in typical gunner fashion (we weren't known as 161 Hydraulic Bty – we lift anything – for nothing) has access to the Fire Orders Logs of the day.

Note 2: It had always been my intention that the shell case from the Last Round Fired would be presented to the current Bty at the reunion by Tiny Manuera but, as those of us who were there remember, although he had clear instructions from me, Tiny didn't make it by only a few weeks. I asked that my words above be spoken at his funeral, and that was a poor second best.

Note 3: When we travelled together to the 161 Bty reunion in 2005 (where I presented the shell case of The last round fired to the then 161 Bty Commander, Major I. C. (Ian) Garnett Max Hunter told me that I had ordered, as recorded above, **Return to Base Papakura**. I told Max, who was a member of my BC's Party on that great day that I did not believe him and I would never say anything so emotional and "out of character". He then told me that he had recorded the whole final mission on a tape recorder at the time and had more recently converted the recording to disc – so I had to accept that I must have got carried away by the moment.

Max then told me a story, also recorded on disc, which is pure kiwiana and which I treasure as an example of the essential humanity of us all at such times.

Towards the end of our tour, Cam McIver, demonstrating that ingenuity and foresight he is still famous for, had organised part of the new 'phone home' system into our Bty lines. By making a booking and waiting hours or days, it was possible to get through to home in NZ via Saigon, Hawaii, Sydney, Auckland and all points in between.

Well, there we were on the gun lines as described above and I had given the fire orders in a clear and resonating tone as befitted this historic and emotional occasion. We settled down to wait for the interminable ground and air clearances, which by then were pure bureaucracy, but still took time as they went through so many HQs. Bruce Duggan (now long passed away) was handling the calls and we can hear on the disc the muttering in the CP as everyone waited, and waited. Suddenly the disc records a loud clear ringing tone, there is a mutter as it is dealt with and then, in the middle of this great recorded moment in history comes the real moment which makes us all human. Someone turns to Bdr Duggan and says, "Hey Bruce, your missus is on the line" Isn't that just beautiful? He could have been in the 'Jolly Farmer' and late home - again.

**Article Supplied by John Masters, ONZM, MC, JP
Battery Commander,
1970/71. 161 Bty, RNZA**

15. REMINISCING GUNNER THINGS

⇒ Fact or Fiction - An Update

In issue 137 of The New Zealand Gunner, it was asked (page 10) if the reputed firing of a 25-pdr after a formal dinner was fact or fiction. One of the culprits comes clean.

"I believe it was around 1955 that Maj Norm Mitchell (BC CD Trg Bty) 'suggested' to Lts Murray Connor and Morrie Stanley that they fire a 25pdr blank after the 'Charge' which would follow the Toast during the dinner. At an appropriate time, we excused ourselves from the dining table and went to collect the gun, which we had conveniently positioned, already hooked up to a land rover.

Murray drove and we parked the gun directly outside the window which was behind the PMC/VIP area in the dining room. I fired the gun at the correct time and we took off towards the sports field. In negotiating a sharp left turn, we nearly rolled but the vehicle and gun were eventually secreted for the night. Any questions about this incident were referred to Maj Mitchell, a very respected man who wasn't easy to challenge."

Reply Supplied by Morrie Stanley

And an independent witness, Bob Kerlake, writes — I was in Waiouru at the time and a blank was fired.

⇒ **More Waiouru Shenani-guns (About 1956/57)**

Does anyone know where the two 3.7 pack howitzers that were outside CD Trg Bty, Waiouru went to?

Also does anyone remember the time when the Bty Staff, CD Trg Bty were in Linton marching in the new intake. One gun (3.7 pack howitzer) was put inside the instructors smoko room. The door wasn't wide enough to wheel the gun out and it had to be stripped down to be taken out. *It's a wonder they had time to train the CMT soldiers.*

⇒ **Two Tales from Dave Lackey in Canada**

A. Mike Thornton and Col Kim Morrison

The late Mike Thornton and I did National Service OCTU together and then signed up for short service commissions in the regular force. We then served, more or less concurrently, in the Battery in SVN.

Mike, the elder of General Thornton's two serving sons, having inherited both his father's height and cast of countenance, had a hard time sloughing off the notion (imagined or real) that he was the boss's son. He often, consequently, copped a lot of (mostly lighthearted) 'stick' from senior NCOs and his fellow officers. I'd have to say that, by and large, Mike stood his ground in fine fashion, but he was fair game!

Two incidents come to mind. The first was in 1966, when we were relaxing (after exercise *Tropic Dawn #1*) on the verandah of the Queen Elizabeth Barracks officers' mess in Suva. Mike had found an extremely comfortable chair into which he settled himself in languid fashion and put his feet up on the balcony.

Our young Fijian officer hosts informed me (in hushed, but shocked, tones) that this was Brigadier Kim Morrison's chair and that no one, but no one, was permitted to sit in it other than the man himself. We managed to persuade them to conceal this vital information from Mike, who promptly fell into a well earned slumber.

Kim, then Commandant FMF, was a legend in his own lifetime and, at roughly 5 feet 3 inches, had a commanding presence and a bark somewhat worse than his bite.

Mike's reverie was rudely interrupted, and his 6 foot 4 inch frame levitated to wide-eyed attention, as father bear Kim materialised at the door, and balled out "who is sleeping in my chair".

Kim, of course, an old colleague of the elder Thornton, knew exactly who Mike was, and it was a wonderful little piece of theatre at the latter's expense.

B. Maj Gen Sir Steve Weir

The second occasion was when Major General Sir Steve Weir, NZ Ambassador to SVN, was paying a visit to 161 Battery at Nui Dat. We were about to fire a couple of rounds, battery fire, onto Wolverton Mountain.

Mike, as Section Commander, was accompanying the General on the gun position.

Their conversation went something like this:-

M.T.: *Sir, would you care to use these ear muffs - these little Howitzers (L5s) have a nasty crack?*

SW. *Certainly not young man. I don't need ear muffs. Don't you know that I've fired more rounds than you've had hot dinners.*

MT: *Yes Sir! Of course Sir.*

(6 guns fire)

SW. *Michael, give me a look at those ear muffs again (he puts them on)*

(several more rounds fired).

⇒ **In search of Army Ancestry - Old Time Recruiting**

The Gunners (for so Artillery-men are styled) wear a **SPLENDID UNIFORM** and are well and are well mounted on taking the field. They are lodged in the finest Barracks in the World. They have Light Work and Good Pay, the best Beef that Kent can afford and a comfortable place in the Barracks called 'The Canteen' set apart for them to see their Friends in and take a cheerful glass; also a splendid Library and Reading Room; a Park and Pleasure Grounds, with a select number of horses for their Instruction and Amusement. After their 'Education' is complete they will have an opportunity afforded them to Travel to Foreign Countries, where they may drink their Wine at Two-pence per Bottle by the new Tariff. If well conducted they will be promoted to **NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS**, from whom the Quartermasters are selected, who are the best paid in the Army, and return to see their Friends with money, manners and experience.

Then followed some details of the enticing rates of pay, showing that the coveted rank of quarter-master got 7s 10d a day, sergeant-majors 4s 2½d, bombardiers 2s 3d to 2s 9d, and the mere gunner 1s 4½d to 1s 10½d.

The notice concluded with details of how to obtain these beneficial opportunities:

Young men wishing to avail themselves of the advantages here offered (with the consent of their Friends and good References) may apply to the Recruiting Sergeant of the Royal Artillery, at the Rendezvous AT THE OLD ANGEL INN, TAUNTON 5 March, 1845.

**Article Contributed by Frank Hopkinson,
March 2008**

16. NEVER TRUST AN ANZAC

The Yankee Officer gazed in awe
As we told him "Listen Sport,
The best damn Gunners in the world
Are the Kiwis we have in support"

He agreed with us on their accuracy
But one thing he couldn't quite ken;
Was how, in the time other gunners "Fire One"
The Kiwis are pumping out TEN!

Now the Dig's never stuck for answer –
And mishandles the truth, so tis said;
So we answered his question on the rate-of-fire
By saying "Their guns are BELT-FED"

"Belt fed 25-Pounders!!
Hell, man, I just can't agree.
Why, it's never been known in our Army;
This is something I just gotta see".

When he left we forgot all about it,
It was just part of a digger's day.
And nothing more was said in reference
'Til a Yank Major turned up one day.

He enquired of our Loot, "Where's these Kiwis
They're pretty good Gunners, tis said.
And one thing I must do is meet them
For I've heard their guns are belt-fed"

The Loot then tried to convince him
That it was just a joke; but I guess
You just can't disprove to a Major
What he's heard in the Officer's Mess.

On the map he was shown where to find them
And he trotted away like a kid.
While our Loot gave up all hope for Diggers
And cursed all the 'lying' they did.

The end of the story came later
And was laughed at for months by the Div,
For the Major was further 'exploited'
When he reached 'Where the Kiwis live'

He'd gone down to see those 'New Weapons'
And nearly dropped dead on his feet
When informed by a typical Gunner
That these Wonders were now OBSOLETE

"OBSOLETE Belt-fed 25-Pounders!!
It's a shock I will never forget
We consider OUR Army the most up-to-date
But we've never had that weapon yet"

Said the Kiwi, "It's been out for months now
We now use a gun twice as good.
You stack four shells on top – like a Bofors
One HE and three made of wood"

Now the Major just couldn't believe it
And, knowing the Kiwis, who could?

But he humbly asked of the Gunner
"Tell me guy, why are three made of wood?"

Said the Kiwi "You know how the Chinese
Have great wooden doors on their pits
As thick as the hide of a Provost
And nothing can blow them to bits?

Well, we aim this new gun at the bunker
And fire the four shots you see.
The three bits of wood go KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK
And he opens the door and cops the HE"

Now the yarn did the rounds of Korea
Was enjoyed for a while then died out.
But, back in the States, there's a Major
Whom everyone's worried about

For although he is known to be harmless
It is to his wife quite a shock;
That all they can get him to utter
As he stares into space, is KNOCK, KNOCK.

Signed: Banjo
Pete Paterson ('Banjo')
Ex 1st Bn, RAR
Korea `52 - `53, `54 - `55
Now c/o Radio 4KQ, Brisbane.

The original handwritten poem was found in an old locker at Papakura Military Camp, (New Zealand) in 1964 by (then Gunner) Kerry Huston. Kept as a memento, it has travelled the world. Found again in 2008, it is reproduced above on 31 May, 2008. It is fitting that this day saw "Tribute `08", an official "welcome home" to the NZ troops, (including 161 Battery, 16 Field Regiment, Royal New Zealand Artillery) from Viet Nam.

⇒ **Overdue subs - it's not good enough Chaps!**

Mike has the Treasurer's hat on

- Our Association has about 340 members.
- 55 of these are Life* or Honorary Members and pay no subs.
- That leaves 285 subscribing members. *94 of these have not paid this year's sub. Five others have not paid for two or three years.*
- It means that 186 members are carrying the financial load.
- Our sub income for this year should be around \$5700, so you might share my concern when I say that, at the end of the financial year, we still have \$2200 of that outstanding, with only \$3500 in subs reaching the bank.
- Subs and bank interest are our main sources of income, so we need everyone to contribute payment of subs to keep the Association solvent.

My thanks to all of you who have paid this year's sub, or brought your arrears up-to-date.

Does anyone else want to clear their account?

If you have a problem remembering to make a small payment each year, do as others do - pay for several years ahead, and you'll also stop these annoying reminders.

- Under the new rules, no Life members are appointed on an 'age' basis, so these 55 will reduce over the years.

Mike Dakin, Secretary/Treasurer

17. ANZAC DAY 2008 AROUND THE COUNTRY AND OVERSEAS

⇒ **Pat Duggan reports in from South Vietnam**

I had the honour of attending the Anzac service at Long Tan this year and I must say the Aussies put on a really good show. The crowd was, I am told, a record with around 400 turning up. It's kind of becoming the place for Aussies to visit (after Gallipoli) for Anzac Day. Lots of kids, lots of civilians and lots of hangers-on. The Aust Cav Sqns and 9 RAR were all well represented and there were a couple of Long Tan vets there but I lost them in the crowd. The service was very dignified and I laid NZ



Poppies on the memorial.

This photo is of the memorial as it is now. The bronze plaque is taken away after each service to stop people lifting it and the Australian Embassy looks after the plaque.

The Officer conducting the service was the Aust Defence Attaché, Colonel Stuart Dodds. Now am I getting old or are the full Colonels of the world now all looking like teenagers? The Aust Ambassador gave the address and he did a bloody good job of it too. The aftermatch function was held in a Kiwi owned Bar in Vung Tau called Ballies Bar. It's on the waterfront and I can recommend it to anyone passing through, great atmosphere and great location.

The 4 days I spent in Vietnam were hectic to say the least. I managed to get to Vung Tau and stayed in The Grand Hotel, spent a couple of nights in The Rex hotel in Saigon and while I was in Saigon I was told by a VN Army sentry to stop taking photos of him and the building he was guarding. I agreed to, after all he was

the one carrying the AK47.

You honestly wouldn't recognise Baria now and as for Hoa Long? It's now all landscaped highway and flash houses. Some will of course recall the Hoa Long Dance?

I did manage to spend the best part of a day at Nui Dat visiting what was the 161 Battery lines. It's still recognisable because of some of the concrete structures that have survived the years. One of them I helped build in 1966, it was the 161 Battery telephone exchange. Bloody good concrete that, some of it missing but in the main still intact. The area that was the gun line is now a bloody great hole in the ground but where the tent lines and the echelon areas were has been replanted in rubber.

I managed to get down to Luscombe field which is now a small village. Houses along either side of what could only be described as a bloody wide road, that of course being the actual airstrip which has survived remarkably well. The Aussies vets are supporting a school there, providing them with things like stationery etc.

One of the high points of the trip was actually meeting up with the Peoples Army of Vietnam Commander for the Vung Tau/Baria province. (they combined the two provinces into one now). It turned out the now still serving Colonel was a young NVA Regular serving in Phuoc Tuy province way back in 1970. He is still serving and is the Provincial Commander, we met in his Headquarters in Vung Tau and all conversation was done through our compulsory government 'minder' (a charming young lady named Heng). The Vietnamese get a tad wary when journalists and film crews turn up on their door. Specially in Vung Tau where the support for the Communist regime is very strong. As a young soldier he recalls checking out the 161 Battery perimeter defences of FSB Cook in 1970. Some of us will recall that Op? He didn't seem to have much time for 'Uc Dai Loi' (Australians) but we Kiwis got some very good feedback and he made a point of telling me that they won and I was, as usual, the diplomat.

I met one of the Kiwi residents in Vung Tau who works for a company teaching OSH things for heavy industry and oil rigs. He married a local VN girl and he has just bought himself a plot of land in Vung Tau, he has just finished building a house on it and on top of that bought himself a new car and all for a grand total of US\$80,000. He tells me he enjoys the life-style and has no plans on coming home in the near future.

Pat as other photos of his trip, please contact him direct if you wish to see any of them. **patrick.duggan@paradise.net.nz**

⇒ **It went wrong then it went right**

Friday was my first 'good' Anzac Day since Vietnam. It didn't start well, missing the Dawn Service, but went to the War Memorial Museum for the 11am parade and that was very good - uplifting. Went home, put my feet up, then the phone rang, I was reminded that I was supposed to be at a gathering on the other side of the city (bugger).

Rushed off down the m'way, stopping briefly to accept a speeding ticket (\$120) from a delightful policeman. Had a good gathering, then relaxed with the guys and their partners, had dinner too, went home well pleased with the rather expensive but rewarding day.

From an Anonymous Gunner

⇒ ANZAC Day at Queenstown



Unloading the 25 pounder



25 pounder gun crew firing the salute

Photos Supplied by Lyall McGregor

⇒ NO COMPUTER? NO INTERNET?

Visit your local public library and ask one of the staff to show you how to access your Artillery sites:

General Information, used to get info out there widely and quickly, normally updated daily : www.kiwigunners.blogspot.com

Historical Gunner Info: www.riv.co.nz/RNZA

Our Photo Album: <http://picasaweb.google.com/RNZA.Association>

⇒ WAIOURU 1965



Darcey Pollard, Allan Boyd, David (Spike) Hughes, Mike Dakin, Tommy Tocker.

From the Roger Wyld Collection

18. UPDATES AND NOTICES

⇒ Battle of Coral Poem Competition—An update, (Page 11 Newsletter No 137.

Clarence Ormsby advises that it is not too late to put an

entry in for this competition. It has been decided to extend the closing date until **18 August 2008** so get the thoughts working and put pen to paper.

⇒ Memorabilia and Compliments

From 55146 Cpl BP (Lofty) Wilson To: Adjutant - BSM
PO Box 3192 161 Fd Battery
RNZA
Midland
West Australia 6056

Firstly let me say how privileged and honoured I was to have served alongside such a proud and professional unit as 161 Bty which was assigned to 3 RAR during our tours in South Vietnam 1967/68 and 1971. We also at various times operated alongside Whisky and Victor rifle companies - so the spirit of the ANZAC was never far away.

I was a mortar section commander and we were often positioned - as a platoon or section in close proximity to the guns thus requiring less troops for protection. I can recall being at one FSB when we were attacked by a large force of enemy and were unable to use the guns because of the direction and closeness off the attack - after leaving enough men to man the guns if required the BD or BK (I was never got them right) sent the remainder of his men over to the mortar line to assist in the preparation of ammo so we could keep up a good rate of fire which along with the rifle companies forced the enemy to break contact and withdraw. This type of co-operation forged a lot of close friendships and camaraderie amongst the two units. After the cessation and withdrawal from Vietnam I stayed in the Army and completed 20 years. I then wandered aimlessly till I met and married a lovely woman who set out to find out about my problems. I am now on a TPI pension. We have two lovely children - our son has a disability - Agent Orange? But he is doing very well.

This brings us to memorabilia. My daughter asked me to make up a board relative to my service. I've gone further and built a rather large cabinet which includes all my medals etc and supporting units except 161 Bty. I would appreciate if you could forward any items you would consider relevant to the unit in that period. Maybe unit badge - colour patch - replica medals if different to ours - plaque - pewter mug or anything useful for display. I am willing to pay for the items and postage.

Again I can only say it was a privilege to have served with the fine young men who have helped keep the spirit of ANZAC alive. I wish you well in any future deployments.

Yours, BP Wilson

⇒ Editors Note

Each time I produce The NZ Gunner I am very conscious of not printing anything incorrect, (technically or factually). However it has been brought to my attention

that the Rudyard Kipling passage in the last issue (page 7) was in fact incorrect.

The passage quoted is from "The Young British Soldier" and should read:

*When you're wounded and left on Afghanistan's plains,
and the women come out to cut up what remains,
jest roll to your rife and blow out your brains,
an' go to your Gawd like a soldier.
Go, go, go like a soldier
Go, go, go like a soldier
Go, go, go like a soldier
So-oldier of the Queen.*

⇒ **2008 Reunion**

It is proposed holding this years reunion at Taupo on the weekend of 7/8 November 2008. The Spa will again be the main area of activity and accommodation, with the Saturday night dinner held at the Bowling Club. Further details are included as a flier in this issue of The NZ Gunner.

⇒ **Postal Codes**

With effect 1 July 2008 Postal Codes will be mandatory, according to New Zealand Post. If your current address label does not show your postal code after your town/city would you please advise the Secretary, Mike Dakin what it is. Thanks.

⇒ **Thanks**

Mike wishes to express his thanks to Margaret Dwane and Marama Waddell for the help they give him on the Association's desk at Tribute 08.

⇒ **The Royal NZ Artillery Association Lapel Pins.**

New lapel pins expect to be available from the Secretary as from the end of August. Cost \$7.50.

⇒ **The Gunner Perpetual Calendar - It's a first**

1 Jul 1942 (Tuesday): First Battle of El Alamein, begins North Africa

18 Aug 1966 (Monday): Battle of Long Tan

24 Oct 1942 (Friday): Second Battle of El Alamein begins, North Africa

7 Nov 2008 (Friday): RNZA Assn Annual Reunion gathering, Taupo

8 Nov 2008 (Saturday): RNZA Assn Annual Reunion, AGM and Dinner, Taupo

9 Nov 2008 (Sunday): RNZA Assn Annual Reunion (Church Service), Taupo

11 Nov 2008 (Tuesday): Armistice/Remembrance Day.

4 Dec 2008 (Thursday : St Barbara's Day - Our Patron Saint.

Mike is preparing to set up an on-line perpetual calendar to remind us of significant, recurring gunner dates and events.

Mike needs to know the dates of relevant battles, anniversaries, significant events and any other gunner items. Don't hesitate because you think someone else will contribute - they already think you will, so don't let him down. He is relying on our collective memory and knowledge here, he will sort out any duplications where necessary.

⇒ **Items of Interest from Last Committee Meeting**

1. IRD has renewed our tax-exempt status, indefinitely.
2. By changing our accounts to Kiwibank, we have gained \$48 extra interest in the first month alone, potentially \$600 for the year.
3. We are awaiting on confirmation of charitable trust status, which means donors will be able to claim tax deductions.
4. Our application to affiliate with RNZRSA is in the pipeline, hopefully being successful in September.
5. Mike Dakin, our Secretary, will be away 4 Jul - 14 Aug. The Q Store will be closed for that time, but e-mail and Muzzle Flashes will be 'service as usual'.
6. Next committee meeting 28 August 2008.

⇒ **Question**

is the container of port not allowed to touch the table top until it has reached its destination when being passed around at formal dinners?



Editors Page - Who's Who and What's What

<i>Patron</i>	Col (Rtd) Donal R KENNING MBE	06 3582849
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<i>Website</i>	<i>http://riv.co.nz/rnza/</i>	
<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. Kiwi 38-9007-0694501-00.** ('RNZA Association is acceptable').
- INTERNET AND POSTAL ADDRESSES:** A number of messages sent out by email have come back as not been able to be delivered. In addition two members have gone, address unknown. If you change your internet or postal address please let Mike know. As from 1 July 2008 Postal Codes will be compulsory. If your **postal code** is not showing on your address label please let Mike what it is.
- SUBSCRIPTIONS:** Annual subscriptions of \$20 (Full and Associate members) are due on 1 January each year. Please keep your membership up-to-date.
- 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":** Stories and relevant "gunner" pieces are desperately needed, (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 thing 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.
- 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 sent to the Printer	The NZ Gunner Posted Out
July—Sept 08	20 Sept	25 Sept	6 Oct
Oct—Dec	3 Dec	5 Dec	16 Dec
Jan—Mar09	15 Mar	18 Mar	31 Mar
Apr—June	14 Jun	19 Jun	30 June