

RNZAC ASSOCIATION CANTERBURY BRANCH NEWSLETTER #180 August 2019

Meetings

Happy Hour: Thursday 5 September 2019 at 1700 hrs at the Papanui RSA with a committee meeting at 1815 hrs.

Next Happy Hour: Thursday 3 October 2019 at 1700 hrs, Papanui RSA.

Whose is it?



Events Past and Future



SITREP from SGT Johnny Duncan, NZGD
QAMR, QUEEN ALEXANDRA'S MOUNTED RIFLES, RNZAC
DAVID.DUNCAN@NZDF.mil.nz



The unit is now back on the ground after Ex Hamel 19 and has entered a period of reconstitution and block leave. The next three weeks are going to be busy with the Cordite Cup over 26 – 30 August, followed by the 1(NZ) Brigade Winter Sports competitions.

QAMR's focus after the sports will be on Ex Sari Bair 19. This will see the majority of the unit up in Waiouru along with the Infantry and elements from the US Army and the USMC. I hoped to have a story to add from Ex Hamel but the personnel who were on the Ex have only been back on the ground as of yesterday, I hope to have one for the next update.

Kind regards, Johnny

THE RNZAC HISTORY PROJECT – REGIONAL BRIEFINGS - SEPTEMBER 2019

Please note the letter from Chris Wotton at the bottom of this newsletter.



For ex RNZAC members located in the Christchurch area it is proposed that a meeting will be held on either 9, 10, or 11 September at 1900 hrs at the Papanui RSA.

You will be advised ASAP of the date. **Your input into this project is essential.**

Radio Check.

From Kenneth Johnson. *Continued.* (Connell, I think? do not remember his name for sure). I went up before him a couple of times for AWOL, however I was bored and at the LAD helping the mechanics, so Sgt. Johnson (no relation) vouched for me on a couple of occasions and on the last one the LAD Lt. had to come in front of the Colonel and also vouch that I was actually working over there with them. The Colonel was a really cool guy.

Then there was Rangi and White, who I was on driver training with when the guy in the driver seat, tried to drive off the edge into a ravine and as we were sitting on top of the rear hatch in a 113, White grabbed me and Rangi grabbed him and we were all good, just a few bruises. I started smoking that day. Ha ha ha... Sgt. Hoffman was less than happy and after we came to a stop he had "words" with the trainee driver after he had helped him out of the seat and about 10' done the gravel road... Sgt. Hoffman was also a super cool cat.

Papanui you say? That is north of Christchurch? If and when I come back home, I will definitely make the effort to come to the RSA... I hope to meet you one day.
Cheers, Ken

From Jim Coubrough. Hello to you all from Borisland (England) where it is all happening and apparently we are now in "Boris Bounce". The weather is very changeable but still lots to see and do before we come home in early October.

I was interested to read your comment in the last edition about the late Wally Nash as "*much feared and looked up to by us lowly soldiers*". I think the same applied to some officers.



I first met Wally Nash in November 1974 when he was RSM at TF Depot. I had only been commissioned less than a year and having completed a troop leader's course in Puckapunyal, I was posted to TF Depot as a platoon commander along with 7 other newly commissioned officers. Not long after marching in we were told to report at the parade ground opposite Cambrai barracks.

There we met Mr Nash who introduced himself by saying "my name is Mr Nash and I am the man with the big stick around here". He told us our standard of drill was abysmal and said we should move inside the old building so we could not be embarrassed by the TF recruits seeing us receive drill instruction from the RSM! I think we all benefited from his assertive tuition. He was very proud to tell me he was originally in the RNZAC and wished me all the best in the Corps. RIP Mr Nash.

Cheers, Jim

From Tony Connell.

Received 27 Jul 19

Yes I am now in Colombia, based in Bogota. My outfit is providing technical advice to the Govt of Colombia through their National Mine Action Authority "Descontamina Colombia". We have two Advisors (myself & a ex French Special Forces EOD specialist) plus a Country Director & a small admin staff. Spanish is the language & I am slowly getting my way past the standard - gracias, por favour & Buenos Dias. I am advising on the use of Mine Detection Dogs & mechanical clearance machines. My experience with dogs is based on the fact I owned a labrador for 12 years.



Yesterday we went out to a demining clearance site to investigate a missed mine incident. The place where the incident occurred was up in the mountains on the Pacific coast at a height of 2,800 m above sea level. The access track reminded me of the ridgeline tracks in Malaysia - about 2 m wide, at an angle of 45 deg with a very high jungle canopy with steady rain.

There was no point in wearing a jacket as the sweating & the rain would ensure everything was wet. We had a vertical climb of 600 m over a distance of about 2 km to reach the site. I was puffing like a steam train when we reached the site. Because we were in ex rebel territory we had Colombian Army escorts who looked good but their patrolling drills left a lot to be desired.

Bogota is a pretty good place to live. Good food, good beer & a very temperate climate. Although it is a "non family" post, Adi will come up to visit later this year for a month or so. Please pass on my regards to all. Kind regards Tony.

From Geoff Kreegher, Secretary MTA

RNZAC ex Vietnam members at the Memorial Day Sunday 18 Sep 19:



Vietnam Veterans' Day pays respect to fallen soldiers in the Vietnam War. The 2019 event was organised by veteran, Ken Ford and held at Manukau Memorial Gardens in South Auckland.

Chris Cooper, Ron Mark, Michael Gullery. Dave Lester, Mike Gullery, Graeme Ready, Gloria Ready, Todd Balance, Geoff Morris, Penny Cooper and Don Roa, Pictures courtesy of Sue Gullery Kind regards, Geoff Kreegher [So good to see them. Haven't seen Don Roa for ages. Editor.]

RNZAC History. By Harold Harris

Each Anzac Day a group of us attend the service at the 19th Battalion and Armoured Regiment Memorial in Victoria Park, Cashmere. One curious branch member, who had thought that the 19th was a North Island unit, wondered, why does it have a memorial in the South Island? And why does the 20th, which he thought was a South Island unit, not have a memorial here?

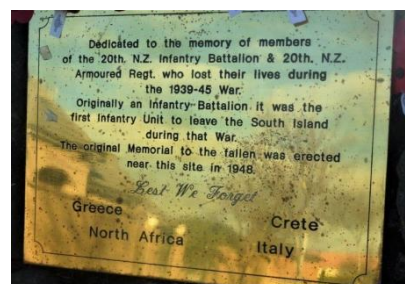
When the units were formed at the beginning of World War 2, in late 1939, they were based on the existing TF units and enlarged with new recruits as follows:

18th Battalion the upper part of the North Island, the 19th the lower part and the 20th marched into Burnham on 5 October 1939 from all parts of the South Island. During the war in North Africa the NZ Division suffered from the lack of armoured support and it was decided to convert these three infantry battalions to armour and they became 18th, 19th and 20th Armoured Regiments. They continued as such into Italy up until the end of the war.



During this time reinforcements arrived from NZ to make up for losses and in 1945 an extract from the 19th Armoured diary states "No longer could the 19th claim, as it had done for several years, to be a North Island unit. The provinces it first drew on—Wellington, Hawke's Bay and Taranaki—were still represented, but so was the rest of New Zealand. In fact, the statement was now frequently made, not without some justification, that there were more 'mainlanders' in the regiment than North Islanders".

Following the war, returned 19th members formed a national association and it had a South Island Branch. It was this group that established the Victoria Park Memorial. The Association itself had a memorial set up in a reserve in Hataitai, Wellington.



But why does the 20th not have a memorial? The answer is it does: in Jane Deans Close, Riccarton, Christchurch, and at 9am every Anzac Day (except for 2019 at police request) up to one hundred people gather there, lay poppies and flowers and remember. Among those are descendants of members of the 20th.

Last Post. Members of the Association and of the RNZAC will be saddened to hear of the death of Ronald (Ron) Charles Lee RNZAC, on 11 August 2019.



Alan Day says "I only met Ron at National Service Training Unit in Waiouru 64-65 when he was an instructor in B Sqn: a real nice guy, good at his job, who was really well liked by all. Ron was in the British Army 1946 to about 1951, served with a Tank Regt in Berlin at some stage during that time. He joined the NZ Army from UK about 1951 as a Cpl and posted to RNZAC in Waiouru. He eventually spent quite some time mid 70's to early 80's as Area WO in Napier and finally commissioned and posted QM at QA in Waiouru and retired to Napier".



Other comments received talked about his posting to the Scottish Regiment as a Cadre NCO, where he said he would never wear a kilt and apparently he never did. Ron was also a gunnery instructor at the School of Armour and was well respected by all.

The first photo shows Ron as a young crew commander of a Centurion. The second is of Ron when he was with the Scottish Regt and is probably a truer likeness of how we knew him. Ron's funeral had good turnout and send-off for a great soldier and mentor and a person who was a pleasure to be with.



Rest in Peace.

Our condolences go to Ron's family, friends and comrades.

[Please note that because I will be away all of September, the next newsletter will be sent out early October. Editor]

Humour



Answer: VT4 MBT - Thailand and Pakistan. The VT4 (formerly MBT-3000) main battle tank (MBT) is a third-generation MBT designed and developed by China for export markets. Gross vehicle weight of the tank is 52 tonne and it is manned by three crewmen. The MBT has air-conditioning, fire extinguisher and explosion suppression systems.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U0c32qaTUmE>

The VT4 tank is armed with a 125mm smoothbore cannon and fires APFSDS, HEAT, HE and guided missiles out to a maximum range of 5km. It has stabilised thermal imaging sights and the fire control unit has roof-mounted panoramic sights, laser warning devices, and a digital gun control system. It also has an active protection system (APS), which has a detection range out to 100m and offers a high level of protection against MBTs, anti-tank guided missiles and weapons.

The VT4 main battle tank is powered by a 1,200hp turbocharged diesel engine coupled to an automatic hydro-mechanical drive system. It has a maximum road speed of 70km/h, 50km/h cross country and a maximum range of 500km. It can climb 30% gradients and 1.2m vertical obstacles.

Reminders; RNZAC Association Web site: www.rnzac.co.nz Contributions to this newsletter are gratefully accepted. Email: jandavid@snap.net.nz Phone 03 359 6861. **David Harrison, Editor**



C/- 30 Regent Drive
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24 August 2019

To all Serving Members and Members who have Served in the Royal New Zealand Armoured Corps (RNZAC) and its Predecessor Organisations

Greetings,

THE RNZAC HISTORY PROJECT – REGIONAL BRIEFINGS-SEPTEMBER 2019

The RNZAC History Project Charitable Trust (RNZAC HPCT) is committed to ensuring everyone is kept advised of progress and has the opportunity to provide input into the history for the Trust's consideration in consultation with the author. .

Seven presentation sessions are to be held during September 2019 in Auckland, Hamilton, Napier, Foxton, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin. This email sets out the arrangements for these briefings and a personal invitation is extended to you to attend the session nearest you.

The purpose of each session is to:

- Provide an update on the RNZAC History Project
- Summarise the key responses received to Graeme Ready's survey letter dated 31 May 19
- Outline the initial outline structure of the book and outline content (separate Handout at the briefing)
- Obtain written feedback in answer to our question "What have we Missed? on the last page of the Outline Content Handout
- Answer any questions that you may wish to raise

The feedback that we receive will be evaluated and decided upon by the Trust for inclusion in an updated brief for the selected author.

Details of the sessions are:

Auckland

Date: Saturday 14 September 2019
Venue: Papakura RSA
Address: 40 Elliot Street, Papakura
Timing: 11.00 am - 1.00pm

Hamilton

Date: Saturday 7 September 2019
Venue: Hamilton Combined Returned Services Club
Address: Rostrevor Street
Timing: 10.00 am - 12.00pm

Napier

Date: Sunday 22 September 2019
Venue: Napier RSA
Address: 34 Vautier St, Napier
Timing: 10.00 am - 12.00pm

Foxton

Date: Saturday 21 September 2019
Venue: Foxton RSA
Address: 1 Easton St
Timing: 10.00 am - 12.00pm



Wellington

Date: Tuesday 10 September 2019
Venue: Thorndon Room, National Library
Address: Molesworth St
Timing: 11.00 am - 1.00pm

Christchurch

Local ex members are very kindly assisting us with arrangements. Date/Times TBA separately

Dunedin

Local ex members are very kindly assisting us with arrangements.
Date/Times TBA separately

Restaurants will be available at each of the RSA locations. However, all drinks, meals and snacks will be at individual expense.

This will be a great opportunity for you to hear all about the publication and preservation of your history. Please encourage any of those who served with you to join us, especially those who may not currently belong to the MTA, WMR Association, WECMR Association or the RNZAC Association.

We look forward to seeing you there.

FINALLY, PLEASE ADVISE THE COORDINATOR THAT FORWARDED THIS EMAIL TO YOU, WHICH BRIEFING THAT YOU WILL BE ATTENDING SO THAT WE CAN LET PRESENTERS KNOW NUMBERS ATTENDING. THANK YOU.

Kind regards

Chris Wotton

Chris Wotton
Deputy Chair
RNZAC HPCT