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Rotowaro  
RD1  
**HUNTLY 3771**

31 March 2022

**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 - 2019 TO 2024-UPDATE**

**Author Matters**

Matthew Wright's draft narrative for the period 1945-2022 which was submitted to the Chair for Trust checks and comments period on 20 Dec 21 will be returned with consolidated comments from the Trust later this day. Matthew provided an updated synopsis of the book, two completed draft chapters from the period 1945-2022 and a selected appendix from the Rolls of Honour section of the Draft Master Appendices document in support of a Trust application to a potential major donor on 16 February 2022. It was great to see our selected Main Title (from last year's competition) ***"Those Who Have The Courage"*** on these documents.

Transcription of interviews from the RNZAC Oral History Collection has continued to be progressed during this reporting period. Matthew is also planning to interview QAMR personnel and personnel from the wider RNZAC based on a comprehensive list that was very kindly drawn up by Colonel Hamish Gibbons (Regimental Colonel RNZAC) and Lieutenant Colonel Ed Crow (Commanding Officer QAMR). These interviews will be crucial in terms of the latter part of our history.

Matthew has also commenced work on his draft of the early era of our history period 1860-1945. Omicron is affecting physical access to some archives, but Matthew has sufficient existing reference material from his earlier publications regarding this era as well as accumulated online material to ensure that he can continue to move forward with his writing. A Dunedin based researcher, Lemuel Lyes has also provided valuable information from the Hocken Library and the Old Settlers Museum. Matthew is also planning to visit the Kippenberger Library at the National Army Museum later this coming quarter. He will also be looking at photographs, relevant to the History, that the Museum holds.

David Harrison, in consultation with our Deputy Chair, Ian Bolton, has very kindly agreed to research and compile a list of those Cavalry and Mounted Rifles personnel who were KIA or DOW during the New Zealand Land Wars period 1840-1898. David is endeavouring to access online monument photographs and resources, James Cowan's "The New Zealand



Wars and the pioneering period” Volume 1 and 2 covering that period and any other resource that he can locate. I am grateful for David’s and Ian’s assistance with this research task.

Geoff Kreegher is kindly assisting the Trust with compiling a list of RNZAC Directorate Warrant Officers 1 for the period up to when Directorates were disestablished. Geoff has been a supporter of the Trust’s work from its inception in 2019 and I am grateful to him for taking on yet another task for us. Simon Marriott (President of the Waikato Mounted Rifles Association) has been assisting the Trust with the verification of data concerning a short history of the Waikato Mounted Rifles extract from the Master Appendices document. Simon has also been a willing helper and advisor to the Trust in many areas; his support too is greatly appreciated.

The RNZAC Association and Ian Bolton are continuing to assist with obtaining information to enable us to complete the key personnel lists for the School of Armour and the Scottish Units to enable completion of Appendix 4 within the Draft Master Appendices document. Euan Galloway is also providing ongoing assistance with the Scottish units’ task and this week he also sent copies of very interesting Orders regarding the New Zealand Tank Battalion 1918 which he had discovered in Archives whilst researching New Zealand Gazettes. We extend our thanks to Euan for his ongoing assistance to the Trust.

Chris Cooper is assisting with a compilation of a list of School SMs and WSMs for Appendix 4 of the draft Master Appendices document. He has been assisted in this by previous staff members of the School. He has sent draft lists for the Gunnery, Communications, Driving and Maintenance and Tactical Wings to Combat School, Linton. WO2 Alex Fraser, WO1 Ox White, WO1 Shannon Brears, WO1 Mario Ropitini and WO1 Mark Thompson have also assisted in this area. I am grateful to you all.

Chris Cooper and Fred Milligan (Ex RNZEME) have very kindly offered to take over the compilation of a table listing Officers Commanding and Principal Workshop Foremen of the Light Aid Detachments that supported the armoured squadrons based in Waiouru. I had just not been able to progress this due to other demands on my time in the fund raising and narrative areas of the project. So, I greatly appreciate Fred and Chris’s assistance with this very important aspect of our history. The Light Aid Detachments were vital to keeping independent squadrons mobile in every respect and back then all members of the Detachments were able to wear the black beret with their Corps badge.

Vietnam was a major conflict in the history of our Corps and many of our Ex-Members of the Corps served there on attachment to a variety of units. In addition, before returning to New Zealand, many Blackhatters were attached to United States and Australian armoured units for wider armoured experience in a combat zone before returning to New Zealand. These attachments, in particular, had an impact on RNZAC organisational, training and equipment decisions in the 1970s and 1980s. I have therefore been compiling a table of our Vietnam Veterans for insertion in the narrative period 1945-2022. I am grateful to our Vietnam Veterans and to Major Mike Duncan, MNZM (Army General Staff) for helping me with this. I also want to acknowledge the assistance of Jack Hayes (who has already provided much advice and assistance to me in other areas of this project) for sending a master list to me of



RNZAC Vietnam Veterans against which I can check our table. Jack had also offered to provide an additional check of our draft Honours and Awards Table for RNZAC members period 1947-2022 and yesterday I sent that to him for an independent assessment.

Finally, I want to acknowledge the assistance and advice regarding all aspects of this History that is so willingly provided by our Colonel Commandant RNZAC, Colonel (Retired) Trevor McComish. His previous experience in a variety of RNZAC appointments during his service and his present knowledge of Corps matters and links with key personnel inside the RNZAC and the wider Army have been crucial to the Trust's work and to my responsibilities, in particular.

It will therefore be appreciated from the preceding paragraphs under this "Author Matters" section of this update, that there is a very close working relationship between the Author and the Trust with much parallel work going on to ensure that the wide scope of material relevant to the History is, to the best of our ability, gathered in. This, in turn, continues to be enhanced by the help that we get from and Members and Ex-members of the Corps, and others. My thanks to you all.

## **Publishing**

### ***General***

We are grateful to Peter Dowling of Oratia Medi Limited for allowing us to include key extracts from the Memorandum of Agreement between Oratia Media Limited and the Trust that was signed off on 15 April 2021 and the Variation to that Memorandum of Agreement that was signed off on 30 September 2021, to be included as supporting material in our application to a potential major donor on 16 February 2021.

Peter has been a valued advisor regarding many aspects of this History, and I am looking forward to working closely with him once the publication phase proper commences from 1 Jul 23.

### ***Book Launch***

As advised in my Update on 30 Nov 21, discussions between Colonel (Retired) Trevor McComish (Colonel Commandant RNZAC) and Colonel Hamish Gibbons (Regimental Colonel RNZAC) and Lieutenant Colonel Edward Crow (Commanding Officer QAMR) during the week 15-19 Nov 21 have resulted in approval in principle for support of the launch being given.

A proposal will be prepared by Ian Bolton and Chris Cooper closer to April 2024 to establish what specific support can be given by the RNZAC and QAMR at that time. Ian and Chris have also very kindly agreed to manage the launch once the location and programme is known and has been agreed by all participating agencies.

### ***Photographs***



The Trust has received many images from Members and Ex-Members of the RNZAC for consideration for inclusion. These, together with additional images that might be necessary for us to source from those organisations that were very kindly identified by Stephen Ladanyi last year as well as those images selected by the Author when he visits The National Army Museum should provide a good pool from which to illustrate the History.

Subject to any Omicron restrictions at the time, the Trust plans to meet prior to 15 Jul 22 to select the 250-300 required for the History. These will comprise a mix of colour and black and white images.

### ***Maps***

The Trust has, in consultation with Matthew Wright, selected Andrew Tyrell of South Arrow Maps to produce the maps for the History. Sean Trengrove has very kindly agreed to work (on behalf of the Trust) with Andrew Tyrell on this task later in this first half of 2022. The Trust thanks Sean for helping us out in this way.

### ***Final Manuscript***

The extensive parallel work that the Author and the Trust continue to do on aspects of the narrative and the Master Appendices document is positioning us well to have the final complete manuscript (including maps, sketches, and photographs) to the Publisher on 30 June 2023. However, as predicted in my last update on 30 Nov 21, the pace has moved up a gear already in these past few months and will continue now for the rest of 2022 and into 2023 to ensure that we have everything together in time.

### **Reference Material**

Please post hard or digital copies (on a USB) of maps, illustrations, good short amusing interesting stories and photographs that you would like to be considered for inclusion in the History to the RNZAC HPCT INC C/- the address at the top right of this letter. Please clearly mark each item with your name and serially number each item 1 of 3, 2 of 3, 3 of 3 etc. This will enable me to properly document your items and issue a receipt to you. Alternatively, if you have a relatively small electronic folder of material that can be sent electronically, please email it to the person that forwarded this letter to you, and they will get it to me; again, you will receive a formal receipt from me for all items sent.

Please be aware that as we are now just 15 months away from manuscript submission date, it is important that you get your articles and anecdotes to me as quickly as you can please. Thank you.

### **Funding**

This is the Trust's fourth year of operation. We anticipate that the present rapid spread of the latest Omicron variant and its sub-variant Ba2 will continue to have a disruptive effect on our fund raising. Consequently, we are continuing to lift the scope and pace of our fundraising efforts. 10 new letters of application for funding assistance were released to potential donors over the period 16 February-10 March 2022.



The above challenges notwithstanding, I am very pleased to advise that since my last Update we have received generous donations from two families in the wider community. Such support from that source is especially appreciated by the Trust.

In addition, another significant donation has been received from the RNZAC Association; the Association's ongoing support during the project has been greatly appreciated.

I also thank those Serving Members of the RNZAC and those who have served in the RNZAC in the past who have donated funds to this Project since my last Update. I also want to again acknowledge those who continue to donate funds more than once to this project. The Trust greatly appreciates such extraordinary generosity. We therefore presently have sufficient funds to see our project through until and including 1 Nov 22.

We have found that timely follow-ups help to obtain positive funding results. I therefore extend the Trust's thanks to Ian Bolton, Bob Storey, Bruce Tweedy, and Neville Reilly who have been assisting with personal follow-ups to potential donors that we have written to.

Our thanks also go to Paul Bevin who is continuing to work on a fundraising initiative with the help of Hastings District Council. Paul is working on another presentation to a Council organisation scheduled for the next quarter. We greatly appreciate his help.

I want to also acknowledge Sue Gullery, David Harrison, Chris Cooper, and Geoff Kreegher who are putting together a fundraising initiative to assist the Trust with its funding. Chris Cooper is also pursuing an additional means of fundraising for the Trust. My thanks to you all for your support.

As a result of our recent analysis of our fund raising over the past two years, we have concluded that we generally achieve success with applications to corporates and to individuals when we can identify a "link" when we write to them. This link might be a clearly identifiable direct one or an indirect one (e.g., a person may have had a descendent who served in the military), or it may well be that there is a parallel around facing some adversity/challenge that required similar skill sets to that of the military to overcome and therefore is "relatable." So, I ask all of you to have a think about whether you know someone with such "link" that we could approach for a grant or a donation and let me know please.

As outlined in the first paragraph of this "Funding" section, we are constantly being challenged in the fundraising area. We will therefore continue to need all the help that we can get to ensure that we are financially able to complete this very important history.

However, I am confident, as I have always been, that we will get there. However, if you have not yet donated to this very worthy project, please consider doing so now. Every donation, no matter the amount, helps us to maintain confidence in keeping this project moving forward towards publication.

Our Account details are:



**Bank-Westpac**

**Account-RNZAC HPCT**

**Account number-03-0631-0030863-000**

Official Trust Receipts will be issued by Alan Day, our Treasurer for all funds received by the Trust. All our receipts are sent electronically so, please email Alan ([alansday@extra.co.nz](mailto:alansday@extra.co.nz)), once you have placed a donation into the Trust Account, so that he knows where to email the receipt to. Thank you.

### **COVID-19**

As I write this Update, the Omicron Variant of COVID-19 is still spreading throughout our communities. Whilst our MIQ system is set to eventually wind down we are not yet aware of when the Defence commitment to that system will reduce or cease. So, our Serving Members of the Corps and their families continue to have a special place in our thoughts.

### **Next Update**

My next update will be sent out to you on 31 July 2022.

Take care now and all the very best for Easter.

**Sincerely,**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Graeme Ready', written over a faint blue rectangular stamp.

**Graeme Ready**

**Chair**

**RNZAC HPCT Inc**

**Registered Charity Number CC56897**

**Certificate of Incorporation RNZAC HPCT 50027200**

**NZBN: 9429047957329**