

RNZAC ASSOCIATION CANTERBURY BRANCH NEWSLETTER #174 February 2019.

Meetings **Happy Hour: Thursday 7 March 2019 at 1700 hrs at the Papanui RSA**
Next Happy Hour: Thursday 3 April 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**



QAMR is now back at work doing the normal new year induction and compliance training. The focus for the first half of this year will be the build-up for Ex Hamel in Australia, an exercise where QAMR lead a combined arms task group (CATG). This will see most of the unit personnel and vehicles deploy but with a lot of vehicle/equipment cleaning before they go. Attached is the Ex Steel Knight article as promised, it was written by LT Siebert who was the troop leader on the Ex. I hope this update finds you and all of the association's members well after the holiday break.

Kind regards, Johnny

Over the period 6 November to 17 December a troop from NZ Scots Squadron, QAMR, deployed on Exercise Steel Knight. The troop consisted of four vehicle crews with two five person recon dets and maintenance support team. We were attached to 1 Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion (1 LAR Bn), otherwise known as The Highlanders. The primary role of The Highlanders is to be the

eyes and ears of 1st Marine Division, locating the enemy, and in some cases fixing them in place before handing the battle over to heavy armour.

The initial part of the exercise was focused on two main things – vehicle familiarisation and unit integration. Vehicle familiarisation was quite a learning curve for our soldiers with the Marine LAVs being



over 15 years older than NZLAV: every first parade was opening the Pandora's Box of faults. But with the awesome support from QAMR tradesmen, a little bit of kiwi ingenuity and the odd five finger discount we had the vehicles up and running in no time. Unit integration was interesting to say the least. Every Monday the CO will hold a parade, they'll get some grappling mats and a bunch of Marines will jump in the arena and brawl. This showed the extent of their Warrior Culture - the ability to drop tools, flick the mental switch, and fight until you win.



After the initial training period 1 LAR deployed to National Training Centre Fort Irwin. Being an Army base meant it was a new area even for the Marines. The tactical plan saw 1 LAR as the tip of the Divisional spear, and in front of 1 LAR was QAMR's "Kiwi Troop". The first three days was the non-live advance, most of the tasks were observation posts and re-trans, culminating in a Company attack onto an objective. The live phase was a three-up company advance, urban clearance and delay along a wide valley over two days.

Overall we learnt a lot, made new mates and gained a greater appreciation for our own equipment. We appreciate our hosts looking after us, and look forward to returning or hosting them in New Zealand one day.

Ake Ake Kia Kaha

Barbecue: The association is holding a barbecue on **Sunday 10 March** at 1230 hours and invites all black hatters, wives, husbands and friends. It is to be held at Neville and Pauline Reilly's home, 22 Rochdale St, Fendalton, Christchurch. This is a chance to catch up with members and friends.



Meat, plates, KFS, glasses, seats and tables will all be provided. Please bring your own drinks. Cost per head is \$5.

Please also bring a salad or dessert: to determine which, please contact Pauline, 03 348 6868. If Pauline is not at home please leave a message.

RSVP to Andy Blaikie no later than Sunday 3 March.

Email: andyandshirlee@gmail.com or Ph 03-389 0841.

Condolences: From all members of the RNZAC Association condolences go to Christine and Stewart Couchman on the death of their son Major Aaron Couchman in Canberra, and to Aaron's family and friends. The funeral was held at the Linton Camp Cultural Centre on Monday 18 Feb at 1100 hours.

Radio Check:

From Geoff Kreegher, MTA: A luncheon was held at the Wayward Pigeon Hamilton to catch up with KJ and Linda Murray on Friday 19 January. They were on a cruise that stopped in Tauranga, Chris and Penny Cooper brought them over to Hamilton, a central location. The atmosphere was convivial much reminiscing and a few lies were exchanged. After lunch everyone repaired outside for liquid refreshment and more exaggeration. Good to catch up with KJ & Linda; a pleasant afternoon with old comrades and wives. Among the participants were Chris & Penney Cooper, KJ & Linda Murray, Graeme & Gloria Ready, Geoff & Val Kreegher and Colin Campbell.



[Thanks Geoff. It is always great to see good friends getting together and obviously really enjoying themselves. Editor.]

Humour

You know you're over 50 when you get up from the sofa to get your reading glasses, do six other things, forget your glasses and sit down on the sofa again.

Today: A 9 year old is happy when offered the latest iPhone.



Then: Me, at 9 years old, I was happy to have this pen.

Answer: 1 Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion (1 LAR Bn), otherwise known as **The Highlanders**. The primary role of The Highlanders is to be the eyes and ears of 1st Marine Division.

History. 1st Light Armored Vehicle Battalion was activated in May 1985 and began receiving the first of its LAV-25 light armoured vehicles that year. In October 1988, it changed its name to 1st Light Armored Infantry Battalion. In June 12, 1992, 1st Light Armored Infantry Battalion was renamed as First Reconnaissance Battalion (Light Armored).



Two years later, on 1 March, 1994, 1st Reconnaissance Battalion (Light Armored) underwent another name change and was renamed First Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion.

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**