



# RNZCT ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

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Newsletter of The Royal New Zealand Corps of Transport Association Incorporated

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Greetings Everyone,

It is our privilege to introduce this new look Association newsletter. We would like to pass on our sincere thanks to Howard Weddell who took up the task of preparing this newsletter due to the sad passing of Stu Stubbs RIP.

Before you bypass the normal introductory remarks, can I take a little time to outline what this newsletter covers and what activities are occurring or are planned.

First, I have received numerous very positive comments relating to the very successful National Reunion held in Invercargill last May. Whilst we did thank "The Team" in Invercargill at the time, I would like them to know that the success of the reunion weekend was solely due to their work and has been greatly appreciated by those who, and some that unable, to attend. Thanks again guys – very much appreciated.

The Association can only work if we all play our part, no matter how small. In this vein I would like to appeal to you all to let me know if we have any members whose circumstances change. We as a group are not getting any younger, but we can, as we have done in the past, help each other. The Association can not help the member or their families if we do not know about our members, so, please let me know. Thanks.

This newsletter has a number of changes to its format. We intend to publish it only in electronic form, four times per year. In this edition we are launching and asking for applications for the Associations Youth Scholarship grant. It is worth \$2,000 to one of our young family members.

We are also commencing the recording of some of the Corps activities from the view point of those who served in various capacities. The next three editions will cover the MFO, whilst planning to look at our contribution to Operation Deepfreeze in the future. If you have a particular activity, exercise or operation that you believe is of interest in recording, please let us know – we need to record these now!

One last plea to you all. We are trying to ensure all those who wish to be members are made aware of the Association, the benefits and the opportunities for the comradeship of us all. If you know any ex-members of our Corps, or past and present members of the RNZALR, please let them know of the Association and encourage them to join. Bring them in. We would love to see them. I have attached the Association membership application form to this email. Wave it in front of their face and give them a pen! Thanks.

### **LAST POST**

Now for the sad part, in recording our comrades who have passed on:

#### **SSGT Apiha Whakahaweia Papuni (Api)**

Died 5<sup>th</sup> December 2021

#### **WO1 Edwin Te Reina Chadwick (Chaddie)**

Died 25<sup>th</sup> April 2022

#### **CPL David Alexander Stothers**

Died 14<sup>th</sup> July 2022

#### **MAJOR Stuart Gavin Stubbs (Stu)**

Died 16<sup>th</sup> September 2022

**“Rest In Peace Gentlemen”**

**Age shall not grow old as we that are left grow old**

**At the going down of the sun and in the morning**

**WE WILL REMEMBER THEM**

**We Will Remember Them**

**Nil Sine Labore**

## **The RNZASC/RNZCT Association Annual Youth Scholarship Programme**

**\$2,000 is on offer. Applications for this Scholarship are now open!**

At the biennial general meeting of the Association held in Invercargill in May 2021 the Association passed a motion that stated that the Association wished to create and fund an annual Scholarship Programme for the youth of family members of the Association.

The criteria for the scholarship are that applicants must be related by family ties to a financial member of the Association and should be aged between 17 and 24 years. They must be sponsored and proposed by a financial member of the Association, and seconded by a financial member who is not a related family member of the applicant.

### **Scholarship Purpose**

The scholarship is designed to assist our youth to prepare themselves for gainful employment and becoming a productive citizen of New Zealand. In this approach, we the Association demonstrate our wish to support and encourage our multi-generational families and whanau (grandchildren, greatgrandchildren, nieces and nephews etc) to develop and advance themselves as members of our whanau and New Zealand society.

### **Reason for the Scholarship**

It is accepted that some youth face a number of barriers in accessing a chosen trade or career path once they enter adulthood. Some have a number of false starts before their chosen path becomes clear.

Financial hurdles can restrict access to training, education or equipping them with tools of trade. Sources of funds from families and wider whanau are sometimes not available. Additional sources of financial support may also be unavailable, and consequently the young person recognising these hurdles, determines that advancement is unattainable.

These impediments can contribute to them not developing their full potential as citizens of New Zealand, with lifelong consequences for them and succeeding generations.

The scholarship would be up to \$2,000 paid to the applicant upon:

- presentation of receipts for training, tools or equipment; and
- providing proof of the passing of certain exams or qualifications or the prepayment of training costs.

- In some circumstances the Scholarship Committee may request a guarantee of completion and passing of some pre-paid course fees and a refund from the sponsor if the applicant should be unsuccessful

### **Indicative examples of where a Scholarship may apply**

The Scholarship Committee has absolute discretion in determining what activity constitutes and contributes to the intent and purpose of the scholarship. This is an illustrative listing showing a small selection of potential scholarship activities - **there are many others:**

- Costs for New Zealand Driver Licence training and one year's driver licensing for heavy motor vehicles (licence classes 2 to 5).
- Tools of trade for an apprentice.
- Retrospective payment for training course costs (upon passing) at any NZQA registered training institution (i.e., a polytechnic, university, or wānanga) not covered by Government subsidy.
- Course fees for study for some papers at a New Zealand University.
- Fees to pay towards attendance at Outward Bound courses.
- Payment for mental health and/or dependency rehabilitation in a clinic recognised by the Ministry of Health but not funded by the State.
- Payment to the purchase of specialist equipment required to study such as, but not limited to, a laptop computer, specialist graphic software etc.
- Payment for specified text book(s) required for study.

### **How to Apply for the Scholarship**

The Scholarship is now open for nominations. Please write a letter providing information on your nominee, the relationship to you as an Association member and for what purpose the Scholarship grant will be used for. Please email your application letter to the Secretary/ Treasurer Graham Gosnell (Gos), email address: [gosannesmagic@xtra.co.nz](mailto:gosannesmagic@xtra.co.nz) . Nominations close on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2022 at 4.00pm. The Scholarship will be awarded in February 2022.

## **Multinational Force and Observers (MFO)**

Since 1982 the Corps in its various configurations and names, and now the RNZALR, have been involved in New Zealand contribution to the peace efforts in the Sinai Desert. To date the recording of the NZDF's contribution has been "light" with little real research or in depths recording of activities and experiences.

Within the New Zealand Defence Force, perhaps no other Corps has had such a large and continuous contribution to the Multi National Force and Observers (MFO).

The Sinai as a Theatre of Operations is no stranger the New Zealanders as some of our great-grandfathers, grandfathers and fathers have traversed and fought in this area for over 100 years, since 1915.

The New Zealand Army was introduced to the area with the battle of the Suez Canal in February 1915 and at Romani and Magdhaba in 1916 when New Zealand troops were in action against the Ottoman Turks. The New Zealand Mounted Brigade in the desert were supported by the 4<sup>th</sup> Supply and Transport Company NZASC of the ANZAC Mounted Division.

Twenty-five years later the 2<sup>nd</sup> New Zealand Division became familiar with the area as they crossed the desert between Egypt, Palestine and Lebanon between 1940 and 1943. Since 1954 New Zealand Officers were seconded to the United Nations Truce Supervision Organisation (UNTSO) and a number served on the Suez Canal line and at Ismailia with UNEF II.

Fast forward to 1982, when New Zealand was again asked to contribute to the stabilisation of the region by supervising the implementation of the provisions of the Egyptian – Israeli Treaty of Peace signed in 1979. This treaty specifies certain withdrawal of forces and limitations of military forces on the peninsula.

In view of the significant commitment of the Corps to this region, the Association has invited a selection of individuals to record their service and observation of the Multi National Force and Observers over the past decades.

This first article is by David Campbell who was one of the four New Zealander Army Officers assigned to the MFO when it was formed.

### **In the Beginning 1982 .....**

The MFO presence in Sinai was brought about by two documents: the Treaty of Peace between Egypt and Israel and the Protocol signed in August 1981 between the parties and witnessed by the USA. These measures established military restrictions in the Sinai and the stationing of an international Peacekeeping Force and Observers.

Originally the Treaty called for a force to be provided by the United Nations. However, it became clear this would not occur due to Security Council veto rights and opposition from the USSR. To get around this the Protocol allowed the establishment of an international force to serve in place of the UN and was agreed by the parties. This set off a train of events that history now records have achieved long term peace between the parties and arguably is the most successful peace keeping mission in recent times.

The parties appointed a Director General (DG) who would be a USA citizen and a Force Commander (FC) who would be Non-USA and of General rank. The DG was named as Leamon Ray Hunt (later assassinated by the Red Brigade terrorist group), to be based in Rome and the Force Commander Lt Gen Fredrick V. Bull-Hansen, to be based in Sinai. The Force Commanders Operational Concept, which dates from December 1981, called for the Force to concentrate in Sinai by March 1982. The

force called for three infantry battalions of up to 2000 troops, a Civilian Observer Unit (COU) and Coastal Patrol Unit (CPU) and supporting Aviation, Logistics. and Communications capability. Additional support personnel would be provided by a civilian support contractor.

The Treaty/ Protocol divided the Sinai into four regions. Zone A allowed one Egyptian Mechanised Division, Zone B Four Egyptian Border Battalions, Zone C MFO only and approved Egyptian Police and Zone D Four Israeli Infantry Battalions. The MFO occupied and was to operate in Zone C which had been occupied by Israel during and had established both a civil and military presence. The MFO was to occupy the Israeli based called Eitam, at the time one of the most advanced air bases in the world, with much of the infrastructure underground and surrounded by extensive Israeli created agriculture and horticulture.

A number of civilian settlements had been created, one of the largest was Yamit, which was to become the focus of considerable domestic Israeli debate and conflict when it was destroyed by Israel. The Treaty was not fully accepted by many Israelis who believed it was a serious mistake to give back the Sinai to “the enemy”. For the incoming MFO this meant serious diplomatic, operational and logistical issues.

In the south, to be occupied by the US Battalion and Italian CPU, what infrastructure was in place was destroyed by the Israelis, badly damaged or did not exist. In the north at Eitam, the base was reduced to a level that ensured no military capability was left, including the destruction of the underground facilities, and support services were limited and largely non-functional. Into this environment the Force was to deploy and consolidated by March 1982.

Meanwhile back in New Zealand I was happily carrying out my duties as Officer Commanding (OC) 4 Composite Squadron in Waiouru having a great time with a team of professionals including then WO11 Bill Williams as CSM. I noted with passing interest that the Government had agreed to participate in this new peacekeeping force in Sinai by providing an element of rotary wing capability to be part of a group to be known as the Rotary Wing Aviation Unit and was to be an ANZAC grouping.

Several days later and much to my surprise I was summoned to the office of the Commander Army Training Group (ATG), then Colonel “Scotty” Gordon. I cannot recall the detail of the conversation but soon found myself going home to tell my wife and family I was heading to Sinai for year leaving in a few weeks. Not a happy household.

In the day there was little debate about your postings either with your boss or your wife, thankfully much has changed. At the time preparation was a blur and I found myself one of four Army who would deploy as part of the Force Headquarters based at the North camp.



1982. NZ Force HQ Staff. L/R. Flt Lt Murray Barron, Flt LT Terry Greening, Capt Ron Mark, Wng Cdr Noel Rodger (Contingent Comd) Capt Colin Hauge, Maj David Campbell, Maj Peter Leigh

This was the start of a long-term commitment by the RNZCT and latterly the Logistics Corps with MFO and training support. Something that has been hugely successful and which many in the Corp have made a successful contribution to.

The 1982 NZDF team to deploy to Sinai initially consolidated at RNZAF Base Auckland where we received what little briefing was available including a roughly put together "Serviceman's Handbook" which I still have and I found that despite the short time frame the information as presented was generally accurate. A quick C130 trip across the Tasman and a further concentration at RAAF Base Amberly where we joined up with the much larger Australian contingent, mainly rotary wing personnel. I don't recall any farewell activity on departure except a phone call to Waiouru. At this stage I recall we still suffered a lack of detailed information which hampered us keeping family informed and we had little arranged by way of welfare support to families.

The Amberly concentration was about one week and we eventually flew out on a RAAF B 707 for the adventure which was still largely undisclosed, nothing like flying into the unknown. We flew via Singapore for a refuel and then on to Bahrain where we experienced the first arrival reception when the aircraft was surrounded by military vehicles and we were not allowed to disembark. It seems not all the Arab world was overjoyed to see us. After a lengthy delay for diplomatic clearance and fuel we left for the final destination, we thought, only to be advised that we would now land at Cairo as there was a problem with air space clearance.

On landing we had to be parked off from the main terminal area and again surrounded by military vehicles, this time an upgrade to AFV's. No disembarkation but informed that we would land at Ben Gurion airport in due course and the Force Commander would review the arrival with a parade. This happened in due course but was less than satisfactory as most of the contingent only had parts of the MFO uniform and been travelling for a very long time. Next step was on a bus and a long first drive to Eitam. An eye-opening experience as most had never been to the Middle East before and this was to be home for the next 6 or 12 months depending what role you had.

With benefit of hindsight, I am amazed how little we knew and how poor the intelligence was and some of the decisions taken at the time. We were deploying into an area of significant conflict over a long period. We would sit between two nations that had had numerous wars over previous decades. The area was covered in unknown minefields from several wars, and the infrastructure was being destroyed as we arrived. While this was in pre-ISIS days the threats were just as real and we in hindsight were unprepared.

The arrival at Eitam was an unexpected experience. The IDF were removing or destroying any military capability, as we arrived the infrastructure was being destroyed or damaged. At the north camp much of the surrounding areas had been rich in Israeli orchards with extensive irrigation. On departure Israeli bulldozers went through these reducing them to useless rubble. Over the next month locals recovered the wood for fires and within a short time the surrounding areas were barren. The barrack blocks left on site at Eitam had most of the essential service removed or destroyed which meant housing the arriving battalions was a challenge. In the South Camp there was no infrastructure and civilian contractors were up against a significant time barrier to build accommodation and support facilities such as dining facilities.

While the Force could not have been described as complete it was in a position to meet the handover date, 25 April 1982. For the Force Commander this gave him an interesting challenge as the ANZAC contingent was intent on recognising ANZAC Day. There was a clear conflict which was ultimately resolved with a Dawn Service, at a temporary flagstaff in an obscure area of the base and other ANAZC day celebration was kept well away from the Force HQ and the formal handover ceremony. All parties happy.

The handover ceremony did proceed as planned with Israeli flag being lowered for the last time and the Egyptian Flag being raised by the senior Egyptian, Admiral Moshan Hamdy, and the base now renamed El Gorah. This was not without some challenge as the flag failed to unfurl and had to be lowered and adjusted. I remember being dismayed at the time that the US Colonel MFO Chief of Staff thought this was amusing and smiled at the obvious discomfort while the Israelis remained professional.





25 April 1982. Admiral Hamdy raising the Egyptian flag.

My role starting, March 1982 was “Senior Staff Officer Transportation” reporting to the Chief Logistics Officer, a US Colonel, who turned out to be a delight to work for. However, this was blank sheet planning, there were no plans, no procedures and no planning documents. While we had a lot of experience, we had temporary facilities, limited office equipment, poor comms and every contingent had their own way of operating. On top of this the logistics infrastructure in poor repair.

Of immediate concern was the condition of the MSR as this was critical to the MFO operations and support. While sections in the south were in generally good condition, having been constructed by Israel and were mainly sealed, they traversed mountainous terrain. The MSR running south from North Camp was in very poor condition being underdeveloped and in the main a series of dirt tracks. Movement off formed tracks was dangerous due to unknown mine fields from previous conflicts.



Early MSR recce in Northern Sector.

Some amazing work from the US Army Corp of Engineers (COE) and a significant contribution from the NZ staff officers including Capt. Colin Hauge RNZE on the MSR engineering tasks and Capt. Ron Mark RNZEME on repair and maintenance and vehicle suitability reviews saw some improvement that allowed the supply chain to function. (Yes, you are correct, the same Ron Mark).

The ongoing conditions proved dangerous driving conditions and was one of the reasons NZ deployed a driver training team



Early COL Batt Northern Sector HQ.

At this time all the support services at both camps were substandard. Much of North Camp infrastructure had been destroyed so the Egyptian military could not use it. This was partially due to a deep suspicion within the wider Israeli communities about the possible success of the MFO mission peace. The ANZAC team lived in accommodation described as substandard, the dining facilities were under repair or construction and contracted catering services poor. This ultimately saw the deployment of an RNZCT Catering Advisor to the Force, WO11 Paul Robinson arrived early 1983.

On the welfare side, after some months of negotiation, team members were approved to have one funded 15-minute family call per month. (pre mobile phones and the internet) Problem was the phone system was routed through either Egypt or Israel and could take 10 minutes to get through to an operator. The Aussies had it nailed early on when their ship HMAS *Tobruk* arrived with a hold full of donated 4XXX beer. I can assure you that after multiple times of being heated in the Sinai sun and then chilled beer does go off!



Early housing at North Camp, El Gorah.

In reflection, the Corps has made a fantastic contribution to what is truly a success story of a peacekeeping mission that has lasted nearly 40 years. There have been many New Zealand service personnel who have made a contribution over the years and many had the opportunity to experience new and different cultures. The first year was a challenge and not an easy living experience but from a professional perspective this was a significant period and helped me develop and understand my profession. I had an opportunity to work with some amazing people some of which remain friends after 40 years. I think as a profession we have matured and improved not the least in the areas of welfare and family support. It was poor in 1982 and welfare relied on the good nature of individuals.

Recognising the role of the wider family within the context of the broader Army has been a major and important development. It has been a long time since I deployed into the unknown and it is fantastic that the Corps has provided such significant support and contributed to this outstanding peacekeeping effort.

Nil Sine Labore

David Campbell

Col (Rtd)

## Book Review

In these Newsletters the intention is to highlight some first-rate books that may be of interest to members. This Newsletter contains a review of the book "Great Guns – The Artillery Heritage of New Zealand" by Peter Cooke and Ian Maxwell.

Peter Cooke is a well-known military historian, author of numerous books and Regimental histories such as the Royal New Zealand Artillery and Royal New Zealand Engineers. He is also a battlefield tour organiser and leader. This book covers all the known and reordered artillery pieces or cannons in New Zealand. Of interest are the pre-European cannons used in inter Iwi conflicts and the Land War, the artillery in the fortification during the 1880s Russian scare, the war trophies of WWI, through to today's ordnances. It has over 1,000 photos and illustrations

**Great Guns – The Artillery Heritage of New Zealand.** Reviewed by Herb Farrant.

By Peter Cooke and Ian Maxwell. 452 pages in Softcover. Over 1,000 illustrations and photographs. Published by The Defence of NZ Study Group – Wellington. \$40

Anyone who has any knowledge of the authors and their areas of interest will appreciate the scope of this book and the story it tells of the heritage of artillery related specifically to New Zealand. Further in its subject matter being Artillery on Public Display it covers a range of specific ordnance as inanimate objects which have fascinated generations for decades due to their ongoing presence found and still known across the length and breadth of the country.

Crammed into some at times packed pages is a fascinating story on an overlooked subject which serves not only as a comprehensive record of the development history of artillery, but is a history and guide as to individual pieces and their location then and now. The greatest feature in the presentation of this book was the decision to represent each piece at its current location, grouped by provincial district. Such a grouping aids awareness, makes historical sense and allows the enthusiast the ability to plan viewing visitations.

So, the book is essentially a work of reference containing a timely compendium of well researched information nicely presented with pertinent annotated text and a lavish array of photographs where practical in colour.

Whilst obviously a book well suited to any military historians or libraries, the authors have broadened its appeal by setting out to inform and educate any reader whose interest covers our early history and development as a nation during periods of armed conflict.

Amongst the wide range of ordnance topics covered is the listing and commentary on the return to this country of War Trophies commencing with the Boer War and significantly increased as a result of our participation in WWI. It was this activity post WWI which put on public display huge numbers of captured ordnance in our regional parks, gardens and outside our town halls in the inter war period. These as landscape adornments maintained ongoing awareness of the price we had paid for our nationhood.

Finally, what we have in many respects is a monumental work in data capture which in turn relied on major input from a wide range of community identities. The acknowledgement page is significant as to its size and length, given that this work was researched, assembled and printed inside three years. It must have been a huge commitment as well as a convivial delight to the authors to have achieved such a worthwhile end product. For Military heritage buffs at the stated purchase price this book is the must have volume of the decade.

**Great Guns 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition is available from the Defence of NZ Study Group, PO Box 9724, Wellington, (04)934 6817. [petercooke\\_donz@icloud.com](mailto:petercooke_donz@icloud.com) for the price of \$40.**

### The History Corner - The Quested Cup



In July this year the Patron of the Association Brigadier Jon Broadley, arranged for a stocktake of the Regimental property of the old RNZASC / RNZCT that had been passed to the RNZALR in 1996. One of the objectives of this review is to record the significance of each item so that the lineage of who and why the items were presented can be known to future generations of the Regiment and our history is not lost. It is gratifying to note that all the trophies and memorabilia has been well looked after and accurately accounted for.

This review of the Corps heritage did however turn up a few “head scratchers” as the reviewing team was unaware of, and did not know of this cup. The cup is of a significance size, solid silver with Walker & Hall 1952 hallmarks. It is inscribed as follows:

Royal New Zealand Army Service Corps  
Quested Memorial  
Presented by the 1<sup>st</sup> Ammunition Platoon RNZASC  
In Memory of  
458628 Dvr Quested M.A. – Accidentally Killed  
27 January 1953  
Nil Sine Labore

The Ammunition Platoon was raised as part of the establishment of a peacetime Division within New Zealand (which required the implementation of Compulsory Military Training, CMT) in 1949. The lesson of very heavy expenditure of artillery ammunition in WWII, especially the Italian campaign some four years earlier, had not been lost on the Army. Its task was to be the immediate resupply of Artillery ammunition to the Divisional Field Regiments. It is interesting to note that when New Zealand committed to sending 16 Field Regiment to Korea in 1950, an RNZASC Transport Ammunition Platoon was also included within the Regiment.

As far as we can ascertain, the 1<sup>st</sup> Ammunition Platoon was conducting their Annual Camp in January 1953. Maurice Alexander Quested a 20 years old carpenter from Hamilton, was a passenger in a vehicle that was involved in an accident at midday 27 January 1953 in Taumarunui, when he was killed. He was buried with full military honours on 30 January 1953 in Hamilton.

But the above does not tell us a lot. Why and what was the purpose of the presentation of this expensive and handsome cup? What was it competed for? Where has it been for the past 70 odd years?

**YOU CAN HELP** – In order that we can record and pass on our collective knowledge to the next generations of the RNZALR, and honour the intent of past members of the Corps when they purchased and presented this cup; please let us know if you have any further information regarding this cup, where it has been located and the circumstances around its presentation or use. Please email Howard Weddell at [hs.weddell@outlook.com](mailto:hs.weddell@outlook.com) Thank you.

### **A Blog site that you should know about**

The admonition "Those who fail to learn the lessons of history are condemned to repeat it" (many variations) is often ignored in the traditional telling of New Zealand's military history where the traditional focus has been the Combatant with the role of the Logistician and their connections to the present often overlooked. However, hidden away in the 175 years of New Zealand's military history, there are many examples of inspired logistical management, planning, and execution, which, although often considered peripheral to the "brand name" events of the kiwi military experience, provide many analogies to the contemporary conflicts faced by the modern New Zealand Army.

Rob McKie is one of the few historians exploring New Zealand's military logistics history, his principal focus is on the RNZAOC. However, New Zealand's military

logistics history is not limited to the RNZAOC, but it is an interconnected history that includes the New Zealand Defence Stores Department, RNZASC/CT, RNZEME and RNZALR. This shared history is progressively being unpacked on the RNZAOC webpage "[To the Warrior his Arms](#)", which contains 179 articles related to the history of NZ military logistics from 1840 to the contemporary era, including several articles related to the RNZASC, RNZEME and RNZALR.

You can subscribe free to Rob's Blog site by visiting the site "To the Warrior his Arms" above.

## **We have all worn them – But did you know? Stable Belts of the Royal New Zealand Army Service Corps**

This article has been written for the newsletter by Rob McKie, the RNZAOC historian and is one of the articles on his Blog site.

The original Royal New Zealand Army Service Corps (RNZASC) stable belt is now a largely forgotten Corps accoutrement overshadowed by the much more well-known Royal New Zealand Corps of Transport (RNZCT) stable belt has become a much sought-after item by RNZASC/CT veterans and collectors. Although only adopted in the 1970s, the colours of the RNZASC and RNZCT stable belts represent the shared history between the Service Corps of the British and New Zealand's Armies which dates to the New Zealand Wars and the service of the Commissariat Department, Commissariat Staff Corps and Military Train of the British Army in New Zealand. Established a Corps in 1910, in peace and war, the NZASC, RNZASC and RNZCT would serve with distinction until disestablishment in 1996.

As a visible representation of the history of the Corps, the stable belt not only provided the wearer with a sense of elan but also fostered the esprit de corps across units of the Corps.

Stable belts (also known as Corps or Regimental Belts in the New Zealand Army) have their origins in the British Army. Cavalrymen (and ASC and AOC personnel from trades associated with horses) found that by modifying a Cavalry "Surcingle," they would have a belt that was very useful in providing lower back support when cleaning stables and tending horses. As British military uniforms became more utilitarian, lacking the colour and flair of earlier patterns, the wearing of coloured "stable belts" in regimental colours evolved, adding a splash of colour and individuality to the drab khaki working uniforms of the period.

The use of coloured stable belts in regimental colours spread to all branches of the British Army, becoming established as a uniform item following World War Two. Most commonwealth countries would follow the example of the British Army and adopt the coloured stable belt of the Corps or Regiments to which they had links or alliances. The adoption of stable belts by the NZ Army was far from enthusiastic, and it was not until the mid-1960s that stable belts started to make their appearance. It would not be until 1973 that the Army Dress Committee officially approved the universal wearing of stable belts for all Regiments and Corps of the NZ Army. The Royal New Zealand Army Ordnance Corps (RNZAOC) and Royal New Zealand Electrical and Mechanical (RNZEME) would adopt the locket style stable belts of the Royal Army Ordnance Corps (RAOC) and Royal Electrical and Mechanical (REME)



with the colours of these belts reflecting the shared history of these Corps with their British counterparts. However, for the Royal New Zealand Army Service Corps (RNZASC), the choice of the stable belt would not be so simple.

Following the Macleod report that recommended the streamlining of logistic support for the British Army, the RASC merged in 1965 with the Royal Engineers Transportation and Movement Control Service to form the Royal Corps of Transport (RCT). RASC Supply functions transferred to the RAOC. Up to 1965, the RASC had worn a stable belt with a blue base with two central white stripes and two yellow stripes on the borders. The RASC stable belt was worn with two leather buckles worn on the right hip. The same pattern stable belt was worn by the Canadian ASC up to 1968 and by the Malaysian ASC and continues to be worn by the Malaysian Kor Perkhidmatan Diraja (Royal Logistics Corps).



RASC Stable Belt

On its formation, the RCT adopted a locket style belt, changing the yellow stripes of the ASC belt for red stripes. The New RCT belt had a chrome buckle similar to the RAOC and REME belts, with the ASC eight-pointed star and Crown in the centre instead of the leather side buckles.



RCT Stable Belt

There is little evidence indicating if the Australian Army Service Corps (RAASC) ever adopted the RASC stable belt. However, in 1973, the Australians also reformed the RAASC into the Royal Australian Army Corps of Transport (RAACT) and adopted the British pattern RCT stable belt. The Australians would continue to use stable belts until 1995 when discontinued until reinstated in 2017.

The first RNZEME stable belts, based on the REME stable belt with the RNZEME badge in the centre of the chromed buckle, were introduced in 1967. There is much photographic evidence of RNZAOC officers and soldiers in Singapore unofficially wearing British and Malaysian Ordnance Corps stable Belts during the 1970-72 period. Malaysian belts had leather buckles on the side, while British belts had a

Chrome buckle. The RNZAOC would initially discuss introducing stable Belts in 1969, with approval for the RNZAOC stable belt granted in 1972. The RNZAOC Belt would be the same pattern as the RAOC belt but would have a unique buckle consisting of a chrome plate mounted with RNZAOC Badge.

Photographic evidence suggests that the RNZASC adopted the RASC stable belt sometime around 1970. However, the exact year is unknown. A photograph of 18 Transport Squadron taken in 1974 illustrates the RASC stable belt used by that unit.



18 Transport Squadron, 1974

However, a photo of the same unit from October 1975 shows the unit members wearing the RCT pattern Belt. As this photo indicates, the RCT stable belt must have replaced the ASC stable belt in late 1974 early 1975. This is several years before the establishment of the RNZCT in 1979.



18 Tpt Sqn October 1975

Was the adoption of the RCT stable Belt in 1974/75 acknowledgement by the RNZASC leadership that based on the British and Australian experience, the days of the ASC were numbered, and the formation of the RNZCT was inevitable? So, therefore, better to transition to the new stable belt early to lessen the blow of the upcoming transition? Or was it a simple case of economics as without the large purchases by the British Army, the cost of the RASC stable belt to satisfy the small numbers of the RNZASC had become prohibitive?

On 12 May 1979, the RNZASC ceased to exist, and its Supply functions were transferred to the RNZAOC, while the Transport, Movements and Catering functions were reformed into the RNZCT. The RCT pattern stable belt would continue to serve as the stable belt of the RNZCT throughout the RNZCT's existence within the NZ Army. The only change to the belt would be some subtle changes to the design of the buckle.



Early Pattern Buckle



Late Pattern Buckle

In 1993, in the most significant reorganisation of its Logistic Support since 1965, the British Army formed the Royal Logistic Regiment (RLC) by combining the RCT, RAOC, Catering and Pioneer Corps into the new Regiment. Eager to retain the values and traditions of its foundation Corps and Regiments, the RLC retained many elements of its founding corps Regimental colours and the history they represented in the design of the RLC stable belt. The REME would remain a separate Corps outside of the RLC.



RLC Stable Belt

In a similar initiative to the British Army's formation of the RLC, the NZ Army would also combine its logistic functions into a single Logistic Regiment. The significant difference between the British and New Zealand logistical changes was that the

RNZEME would also be disestablished and included in the new NZ Logistic Regiment.

On 9 December 1996, the Officers and Soldiers of the RNZCT, RNZAOC and RNZEME marched onto parade grounds on each camp and base. Corps flags were lowered, headwear and stable belts exchanged, and the Officers and Soldiers marched off as members of the Royal New Zealand Army Logistic Regiment (RNZALR).

With the colourful stable belts of three RNZALR foundation corps and the collective history of service to New Zealand since 1840 that they represented retired, the RNZALR would take a different approach to the RLC in selecting a new stable belt. While the RLC had embraced its foundation Corps' values and traditions, the RNZALR would divorce itself from the past and adopt an uninspiring stable belt for the RNZALR and from 1996 seek to establish its history and traditions. Based on a plain navy-blue stable belt, the only distinctive feature of the RNZALR's stable belt is locket style Chrome buckle, which includes the following features

- The RNZALR Corps badge on the male side of the buckle
- The RNZALR motto "Ma Nga Hua Tu Tangata", on the female side of the buckle.



RNZALR Stable Belt

In the Twenty-five years since the formation of the RNZALR, the wearing of stable belts by the NZ Army has waxed and waned, and with the introduction of a new combat uniform, the wearing of stable belts is slowly making a resurgence in Garrison environments. Compared to the stable belts of other Corps and Regiments, which reflect their heritage and provide a sense of unit pride and personal elan for the Officers and Soldiers wearing them. The stable belt of the RNZALR is uninspiring and mediocre and does not adequately represent the twenty-five years' service the RNZALR has so far provided or the rich heritage of the foundation Corps that contributed to the success of the RNZALR. Although only in service for less than twenty years, the stable belts of the RNZASC and RNZCT were a cherished and now missed part of the uniform.

Twenty-Five Years on, maybe it is time for the RNZALR to have a conversation about its current stable belt with a view of introducing a stable belt that better

represents the achievements of the RNZALR and the contribution of the foundation Corps. The goal should be to provide RNZALR Officers and Soldiers with a sense of elan and esprit de Corps, which the current belt does not currently inspire in the same manner that the RNZASC and RNZCT belt did.

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