



RNZCT ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

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Newsletter of The Royal New Zealand Corps of Transport Association Incorporated

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Happy New Year and best wishes for 2022.

Presidents Ramblings

It is great to welcome in 2022. Personally, I was pleased to see the back of 2021, a challenging year for most New Zealander's. COVID-19 certainly stamped its mark on our lives. On the positive note our country has remained reasonably safe and under control. It certainly would not matter which party was in Government they would still have had to make the hard decisions.

I again, would like to thank and acknowledge Howard Weddell for his hard work and support with this newsletter, without his efforts and commitment we would struggle to get a Newsletter publication like this out.

If anyone member feels they have a story to tell regarding postings or work within the Army which may make interesting reading in our newsletter, please feel free to contact Howard.

As mentioned in the previous newsletter, the Association can only work if we all play our part, no matter how small. 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 cannot help the member or their families if we do not know about our members, so please contact us and let us know.

Membership, We are trying to ensure that all those who have served and wish to be members of our Association, 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.

Updates:

RNZCT Association Scholarship Programme. To date, we have not received any nominations for the Scholarship Grant, so we have extended the nomination close off date (see information below).

RNZCT Association Reunion 2023:

Grant Child and some of his Bay of Plenty comrades are in the process of planning our next RNZCT Association reunion to be held in **Tauranga/Mt Maunganui 12-14 May 2023.** Mark these dates in your diary now. This will be a fantastic event as was our last reunion in Invercargill last year.

LAST POST

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

WO1 Maurice Vernon Kaiwhare SAVAGE

Died 21ST November 2021

“Rest In Peace Maurice”

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old.

Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.

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

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM.

We Will Remember Them

Nil Sine Labore

OBITUARIES

At present the association only notifies obituaries in our newsletter for those who are members of the association.

We feel it would be fitting to notify all those ex RNZASC / RNCZT and RNZALR who have served and passed away.

In the future we ask that if you know of any Corps personnel who pass away, please notify the secretary Graham Gosnell (Gos) by email so that they can be included in future newsletters. Graham's email is: gosannesmagic@xtra.co.nz

FINANCE: As at 20/12/2021 our financial situation is:

Business account - \$7389.50

Term deposit - \$48,285.87

Please note all transactions for the association are now done by online banking.

ABOUT OUR ASSOCIATION:

The RNZASC/RNZCT association was formed in 1994. From 1994 – 2021 the association has had 491 members. The current membership stands at 187. This is made up of the following:

Life members – 92

Financial members – 51

Non- financial – 41

Honorary members – 2

Civilian member – 1

Unfortunately, we now have no WWII members left and estimate since 1994 111 members have passed away.

New Members

Since May this year we have had four new members join, with a further 3 in the process of joining.

THE ASSOCIATION SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME.

Our Scholarship is open for nominations. A \$2,000 grant could be available to one of your family members to assist them “get on the ladder of life”.

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 and who the applicant is. Below is an illustrative listing showing a small selection of potential scholarship activities - there are many others:

- Costs for New Zealand Driver Licence training licensing for heavy motor vehicles (licence classes 2 to 5).
- Catering training at NZQA registered private training establishments not funded by the State.
- Tools of trade for an apprentice.
- Retrospective payment for training course costs (upon passing) at any NZQA registered training institution (i.e., a polytechnic or wānanga).
- 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 textbooks required for study.
- Provision of specialist personal medical equipment for a nursing trainee.

Please email your application letter to the Secretary/ Treasurer Graham Gosnell (Gos), email address: gosannesmagic@xtra.co.nz **Nominations close on Friday 25th February 2022 at 4.00pm. The Scholarship will be awarded in March 2022.**

Multi National Force and Observers in the Sinai

We continue in this newsletter with describing and documenting the Corps early association with the Multi National Force and Observers Sinai. This article by Peter Sheppard, builds on the article in the previous newsletter by David Campbell who described the formation of the MFO and its first year of operations, and describes the reasons for and the deployment of the first Driver Training Team to the MFO, a commitment that continues 38 years later!



RNZCT DRIVER TRAINING TEAM – MULTINATIONAL FORCE AND OBSERVERS SINAI 1983 – 1984

The origins of the MFO lie in Annex 1 to the 1979 Treaty of Peace between Egypt and Israel, in which the Treaty Parties undertook to request the United Nations to provide a force and observers to supervise the implementation of the Treaty. When it did not prove possible to obtain Security Council approval for the stationing of a UN peace keeping force in the Sinai, the Treaty Parties negotiated a Protocol in 1981 establishing the MFO "as an alternative" to the envisioned UN force.

Thirteen States -- Australia, Canada, Colombia, the Czech Republic, Fiji, France, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Uruguay -- currently provide the MFO with military personnel that make up the Force and perform specific and specialized tasks.

During 1983, MFO Headquarters in Rome made a request to contributing nations to supply a driver training team to address the large number of vehicle crashes and subsequent injury, that had occurred in the relatively short time the force had been deployed in the Sinai. Logistical transport tasks involved heavy vehicles travelling long distances over varying terrain throughout the Sinai desert, replenishing the various MFO outposts with supplies, fuel, and water etc. Most of the vehicles used for these tasks were driven by US Army drivers.

Maj Tom Parsons RNZCT who was the Staff Officer Transport at HQ MFO, had a series of late-night phone calls to Maj Howard Weddell, who was the Deputy Director of the RNZCT in Wellington. They very quickly developed a very tailored response to the MFO's specific needs, had this approved by NZDF and offered to the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a response to the MFO's request.

The New Zealand response to the MFO request was quickly accepted and a five-person driver training team of four RNZCT Senior NCOs (Driving Instructors) was identified under the command of WO1 Peter Sheppard. The other team members being SSgt Derek Nees, Sgt Grant Child and WOII Roy Seaman. The fifth SNCO was RNZEME SSgt Dennis Madden who was to overview mechanical related training issues.



The Team – L o R rear: Grant Child, Derek Nees & Dennis Madden, L to R front: Peter Sheppard & Roy Seaman.

Selection of the RNZCT team members was largely influenced by the previous instructional experience team members had acquired with American Forces vehicles. WO1 Sheppard had recently spent five months on secondment with the US 25th Supply and Transport Battalion based in Hawaii, WOII Seaman, SSgt Nees and Sgt Child had previous Antarctica experience with US troops and vehicles. Additionally,

Sgt Child was an experienced School of Transport instructor particularly with delivering the USA developed Defensive Driving Course.

Because of the nature of this activity, the team was required to travel using official New Zealand Government passports. The team departed New Zealand late December 1983 by civilian airlines enroute to Israel. The route taken to Tel Aviv was through Singapore and Athens. During that time, a high level of security was required for travellers entering Israel due to ongoing conflicts. At Athens airport the team was individually taken away by Israel authorities for questioning as to why the team was travelling to Israel. Another example of the high security at the time, was on the flight from Athens to Tel Aviv, armed security guards constantly walked up and down the aircraft aisle observing passengers. On arrival at Tel Aviv airport Israel, the team was further subjected to individual questioning by Israel authorities regarding the purpose of the visit. The team was based at the El Gorah North Camp located close to the Israel border. (See map).





Aerial picture of El Gorah North Camp

Once the team had settled into their new surroundings and completed various situation briefings, preparation of the training programme commenced. A training needs analysis was undertaken which also included vehicle familiarisation, terrain reconnaissance and identifying driving styles of other contributing nations. A training programme was developed for the new intake of approximately 70 American drivers which also included the development of a new Driving Permit for authorised drivers of MFO vehicles. The MFO vehicle fleet was large and varied from heavy combination units to jeeps. Combination units included fuel and water tankers and heavy vehicles included coaches, heavy rigid, and smaller pickups.



A selection of the vehicles

The driver training programme developed by the team included the routine syllabus of interventions applicable for the safe use of vehicle types used by the Force and included training of selected American soldiers to provide ongoing driver tuition once the team returned to New Zealand. Of note, the training programme included the latest edition of the USA Defensive Driving Course which at the time, had not been released in USA. New Zealand Government had received an advanced copy of the new course and a copy was provided to Army. In addition, the training included a range of driver behaviour factors such as decision making and fatigue. An example of driver fatigue occurred two days prior to the arrival of the New Zealand Team, where a MFO vehicle was ambushed in retaliation of a previous incident a few days prior, when a tired MFO driver failed to act and reduce speed and crashed into a herd of goats belonging to the local Bedouin tribe. For the next few weeks, this incident required vehicle movement from the base to take extensive re-routing and any vehicles travelling near the ambush site were required to have overhead cover by MFO helicopters.

In addition to the training, a driving permit system was developed to ensure all MFO drivers (from the various contributing nations) achieved a standardised level of safe and competent driving for the local conditions.

Training of the MFO drivers went well and once the American drivers became used to the New Zealand accent, all training objectives were met. Some minor difficulties with language were experienced with a few drivers of other non-English speaking nations such as Columbia and European nations. These instances were relatively minor.



A group of US and Colombian troops that were instructed.

Life at El Gorah Base Camp was focused on the training schedule; however, various driver training tasks allowed the team to view some of the local Egyptian coastal areas and a few trips were made into the Sinai desert as part of the driver training. On base, the team quickly became friendly with the Fijian Battalion and many a morning tea was spent at the Fijian mess where scones and a cup of tea were a reminder of home.

Maintaining fitness was a priority and time was spent jogging around the inside of the base perimeter. Early in the tour when enquiries were made with the British Contingent as to where it was permissible to exercise, the British suggested one of the team to accompany them on their regular run around the perimeter. They mentioned that the distance was quite long and that they ran at a quick pace, so hopefully the Kiwi would be able to stay with them. Dennis Madden was tasked to identify the route with the British runners. Within a short space of time, Dennis returned and was asked how the run went and did he manage to stay with the British runners, to which he replied, "They are still coming". Unknown to the British, Denis was a New Zealand provincial representative athlete.

After a few weeks into the training cycle the team were able to take some recreation and leave which enabled the team to have a quick visit historical sites at both Cairo and Jerusalem as well as other areas of the Sinai Peninsula.

On completion of the training the team returned to New Zealand. Following their return, exemplary reports of the team's performance were received from the MFO Director General in Rome and the Chief Logistics Officer at MFO Sinai. After the team returned to New Zealand in 1984, the following year, New Zealand Army was again requested to provide a driver training team and drivers to the MFO in the Sinai, which remains to this time.

Peter Sheppard

On behalf of the team members:

Roy Seaman

Derek Nees

Dennis Madden

Grant Child

The History of the 1 Transport Regiment Mule Statue



The concept of having a formal centre piece for formal functions depicting the Corps function and service was initiated in 1980. It was the brain child of Major Rod McGill who was the Commanding Officer of 1st Transport Regiment based in Papakura Camp. He had observed that many other Corps had handsome centrepieces that were highly treasured by the respective Corps and believed that the RNZCT deserved both the status and recognition that such a centrepiece could give.

The Regiment consisted of the Regimental Headquarters, 1 Transport Squadron, a territorial general transport squadron based at Papakura, 5 Movement Squadron, a regular and territorial Squadron consisting of both movement, terminal as well as aerial delivery functions based at Hobsonville and 6 Composite Squadron, a catering and static transport squadron to support the units within Papakura, Ngaruawahia and Narrow Neck Camps.

Selecting the subject for the centrepiece initially was problematic as the diverse functions of the Regiment could not be satisfactorily reflected by the symbols such as a wagon, truck, or a field kitchen. Finally, the concept of a mule loaded with supplies was suggested.

This concept was symbolic. In 1944 the NZASC was faced with preparing to support the 2nd New Zealand Division as they advanced through Libya and into Tunisia. In Tunisia the terrain moved from the flat semi desert that the 2nd New Zealand Division was used to, into high and rough mountain ranges. This meant that the traditional means of vehicle mobile resupply would not be practical and alternative resupply means would be needed. To meet this need, the Army Service Corps created the 1st Mule Pack Company consisting of 161 men and 200 animals. Whilst the Mule Company was not used in Tunisia, it did show that despite difficulties, the Corps could and would adapt, thus ensuring the Division would be supplied.

The initiative, adaption and focus on service symbolised by the creation of the Mule Company was the present-day ethos of the Regiment.

A sculptor, Ken Kendall who lived in Titirangi, Auckland, was selected to create a bronze figurine. He proposed that the sculpture be done via the lost wax process, which meant that the wax sculpture would be destroyed in the casting process and there could never be another. The cost would be \$3,200 (equal to \$14,500 in 2021). The money was raised by a voluntary donation from the members of the Regiment and a significant donation from the Royal New Zealand Army Service Corps Association (a Corps Association mainly of WWII veterans).

Once the 10-kilogram sculpture was complete in 1981 it was evident that a wooden base would be required. This was manufactured and donated by WOI SW Worster, BEM, EM, the senior territorial soldier in the Regiment who resided in Hamilton.

As an aside, the sculptor Ken Kendall was recognised within New Zealand equine fraternity as one of the premier sculptors of horses and was commissioned to sculpt a small number of horses related figurines for individuals and racing clubs. He continued with his lost wax technique and later moved to the United States where he developed a strong following for his work.



PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM

RNZCT

CATERING SUPPORT to the 1985 SOUTH PACIFIC FORUM

In 1984 the New Zealand Department of Foreign Affairs requested the support of the Royal New Zealand Corps of Transport to assist with the provision of catering and associated services for the 1985 South Pacific Forum in Tuvalu. Tuvalu formerly known as the Ellice Islands is an Island country in the Polynesian subregion of Oceania in the Pacific Ocean. Its islands are situated about midway between Hawaii

and Australia. Tuvalu has a population of 10,507. The total land area of the islands of Tuvalu is 26 square kilometres.



The South Pacific Forum was attended by Heads of Government from New Zealand, Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Western Samoa, and the Solomon Islands.

At the time of the deployment there was very little infrastructure in Tuvalu to support the forum, and as such the exercise required detailed planning and logistics. Tuvalu had little in the way of food apart from coconuts and some tropical fruits and relied on the sea as its main source of protein. The people of Tuvalu were also dependant to large degree on imported food delivered to the island by intercoastal shipping.

Toward the end of 1984 planning had commenced in earnest and a small detachment including Captain Johnathan Morgan, a British Officer of the Army Catering Corps on a 2-year exchange to New Zealand, Staff Sergeant Murray Ross (RNZCT) and others were sent to Tuvalu to assess the resources available. I can vividly recall a certain NCO, being part of this contingent, who just prior to landing in Fiji, advised the team that he did not have a passport. As you can imagine this caused great delight to the team once they found out, however the RNZAF pilots were not overly amused, having to negotiate special clearances with the New Zealand High Commission on arrival in Fiji.

Sergeant John Weeds (RNZAOC and ex RNZASC) was also part of this detachment. John was primarily interested in local procurement opportunities, however once on the island he realised that the only way to provide food in support of the exercise was to procure the goods in Fiji and have them flown by the RNZAF to Tuvalu on a two-day resupply cycle.

On arrival at Funafuti the main island of Tuvalu, the extent of the undertaking was soon realised. There was little existing infrastructure that could be used. We were fortunate however, that there was an old disused hangar left over from WWII on the airstrip that had good hard standing, cover from elements, and a good water source. However, as expected, there was no food, cooking equipment or refrigeration.

On return to New Zealand the team set about finalising the planning, and it was decided that in the main the detachment needed to be entirely self-sufficient. Due to the heavy equipment that required to be deployed, such as walk in chillers, freezers and a forklift, the support of the RNZAF in the form of a C130 Hercules was deemed necessary. Other staff included 12 Chefs and Stewards (RNZCT), Air Controller (RNZAF) Movement Operator (RNZCT) and Supply Manager (RNZAOC).

Finally, the day before deployment arrived, the Team assembled in Papakura for a 4.30am departure the following day to Whenuapai. As with most soldiers, the night before deployment was a raucous one with the team enjoying an extremely late night at the Jolly Farmer Pub in Papakura. Coincidentally, they had a mechanical bull at the pub which was a source of amusement, and I have vague recollection of stopping at the 3 Bees Takeaway at around midnight for a hamburger and trying to explain to the camp guards why one of the team was semi-conscious in the back of the Ute we were driving. The next morning, the team was very subdued as we boarded the C-130 for Fiji and then on to Tuvalu.

After dropping of John Weeds in Nandi to arrange the resupply from Fiji, we travelled on to Tuvalu. For most of the team this was the first time they had been to Tuvalu, so they were incredibly surprised to see how small the island was on arrival. The main island is only the length of the runway.

After setting up camp on the runway our first mistake was soon realised. Tuvalu is only 4.6m metres above sea level at its highest point, and in some location is below sea level at high tide. Not surprising therefore on the first night, that our sleeping arrangements were soon covered in water with hundreds of small sea crabs emerging through the floor as the sea level rose. Not to worry though, we were then offered fixed accommodation by the Tuvaluan Government which proved to be far preferable. Each house came with two young ladies to assist with washing and cleaning which was far preferable than living out of a tent.

For the next two weeks we set about delivering daily VIP meals in support of the Forum. These included breakfasts for all dignitaries and their support staff, morning teas, lunches, dinners, and functions hosted by the Tuvaluan Government. This entailed food and beverage service at extremely high level.

The delivery of the service was complicated by some degree by the availability of supply out of Fiji, during the time there, we were hit by a tropical storm which stopped all resupply flights into the island for two days. Daily life was much the same day after day, interspersed with some events. Part of the team participated in a Hash House Harrier run sponsored by the New Zealand Navy with the same NCO of “passport fame” ending up a mile offshore, being well hosted to post hash lubrication on HMNZS *Monowai*. I can recall a very sheepish call from ship to shore with him

advising that he wouldn't be back for the evening service and could the team cover for him. He arrived back on shore the next day!

After two weeks the commitment concluded, and we set about preparing the equipment for return to New Zealand by C-130. The department of Foreign Affairs gifted all to the crockery, cutlery and glassware to the local people which was a genuinely nice gesture. On the day of departure, the locals lined the path to the Hercules, and I remember the pilots looking out of the aircraft with some curiosity, as the locals placed flower lei's around all our contingent's necks.

Murray Ross

Editor's Note: With the endorsement of the New Zealand Foreign Affairs, SSgt Murray Ross efforts in supporting this prestigious international conference was recognised by the award of the British Empire Medal (BEM) on 20 June 1988.

However: In accordance with rugby trip protocols the name of the NCO who starred with both the Airforce and the Navy on this deployment is missing and stayed on the Island. However, time has passed, and the first person who emails the Association President (andy-stewart1@xtra.co.nz) the correct name of the "missing man" will win a copy of the book "Wrights Hill – New Zealand's 9.2-inch Coast Defence Batteries" which has been donated by the author Peter Cooke. Was it you? Do you know who it is? Be in to win!

Solved.

Many thanks to the people who came forward and advised us of the history of the Quested Cup that featured in the last newsletter. Great. It is apparent that Maurice Alexander Quested, a CMT soldier, who was a 20-year-old carpenter from Hamilton, and was a passenger in a vehicle that was involved in an accident at midday 27 January 1953 in Taumarunui, when he was killed. At the time of his death Dvr Quested was at Annual Camp with his unit which were transporting 5.5-inch shells for the 4th Medium Regiment RNZA.

After his death his Platoon raised the funds for the memorial cup. At a later function the Unit presented the cup to Maurice Quested's mother who in turn presented it to the Supply and Transport Column, as memorial to her son.

The cup now has a pride of place in the Royal New Zealand Army Logistic Regiments trophy cabinet at the trade Training School at Trentham Camp and we have been able to record the story behind this trophy for future generations of soldiers.

CONTACT DETAILS FOR THE ASSOCIATION OFFICERS ARE BELOW:

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