

Hauraki News

"Whaka tangata kia kaha"

August 2019 Issue No 94

Official Newsletter of the 6th Battalion (Hauraki) Regimental Association Incorporated Compiled & Edited by Des Anderson Secretary: Mrs M Kareko, 91 Windsor Road, Tauranga Registered with the Charities Services # CC35879 Website: **6haurakiassoc.org.nz** <u>http://www.facebook.com/pages/6th-Hauraki-Association/230175227024470</u> **tauranga.kete**.net.nz/ **remembering War To review Hauraki News prior to 2008**

http://tauranga.kete.net.nz/remembering_war/topics/show/1287

President's Report

It appears that the use of Facebook has over taken our use of our Website? But I will continue instructing the editor to use the "Hauraki News". I maybe wrong but when I look on Facebook occasionally, the article I am looking for has disappeared. At the present time our Website is still active and the information has been stored by Tauranga Library? The hardest part I have is keeping email addresses up to date. Members change their email address but don't advise us. When I talk to them in person about receiving the latest Newsletter, the common answer is they forgot to advise me? But they still would like to receive the Newsletter as we as the latest updates. Even if those notifications are about a "Passed Hauraki."

You will see in this edition I have a number of "Passed Hauraki". I believe it is important to pay tribute to those whom have served and given a contribution to the Hauraki Regiment. I attend most funerals of Passed Hauraki, if I physically can. The Editor sometimes has problems writing the Obituaries as he does not have enough information about the life and achievements of the fallen soldier. A case in point is Dave Galvin. We all knew Dave, as witness by the largest gathering of Hauraki's I have seen in recent times, at his funeral. We all know Dave did not take credit for what he achieved. But we all know what he did. If you can send the Editor any written information about Dave's achievements it can be added to his Obituary. This can then be updated onto Website and Hauraki's both current and future can read about him.

I wish to thank Eric Kristensen for allowing the 6th Battalion (Hauraki) Regimental Association, 3/6 RNZIR & the DFMC Hauraki Patriots to share in his long overdue acknowledgment of his military achievements in Vietnam.

At a recent event where a large number of Hauraki gathered, an impromptu update was held with the 6 Hauraki 2020 ANZAC Reunion. All is going well with that Reunion, and we all look forward anticipation. For more information join on their Facebook 6 Hauraki 2020 ANZAC Reunion. The Association held their AGM on Sunday 14th July 2019. I just wish to note we have six active serving soldiers on the committee.

Kia Kaha Des Anderson

3/6 Battalion - Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment



The Hauraki Company, office in Rotorua

Notes: 1/. The Hauraki Badge was designed and produced by SSGT Ray Craft (Retired)

2/. The Hauraki badge presented to Hauraki UPF by the 6th Battalion (Hauraki) Regimental Association

- 3/. Painting of the Battle of Crete. (Hauraki UPF)
- 4/. See below for a summary of the Battle of Crete. (Hauraki history)



Here's one for throwback Thursday? 6 Hau Skill at Arms team 2007 (I think)

OBITUATIES





P34237, Captain (retired) Graham (Wally) Nash, MBE, 4th February 1932 - 12th June 2019

A previous Regimental Sergeant Major of 6th Battalion (Hauraki), Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment, 1970 – 1974; passed away on 12th June 2019. A Service was held at Papakura Military Camp on Saturday 15th June 2019.

Wally served over 33 years in the New Zealand Army regular force, (18 January 1950 - 16 December 1983) with time spent in the RNZAC, the RNZIR and the NZSAS. Wally retired 16 December 1983 at the rank of Captain.

He served his country in the following operational theatres:

Malaya – NZSAS Squadron, From: 12/11/1955 To: 9/12/1957 Borneo – 1 RNZIR, From: 23/11/1965 To: 15/02/1966 Vietnam – 1 NZ Army Training Team Vietnam, From: 8/08/1971 To: 28/05/1972

His medallic entitlement is as follows:

Member of the British Empire The New Zealand Operational Service Medal General Service Medal (1918 – 62) with clasp 'Malaya' General Service Medal (1962) with clasp 'Borneo' The Vietnam Medal. The New Zealand General Service Medal 1992 (Warlike) with clasp 'Vietnam' The Medal for Long Service and Good Conduct (Military) The New Zealand Defence Service Medal with clasp 'Regular' Pingat Jasa Malaysia Vietnamese Campaign Medal

His other achievements and occurrences were:

18 Jan 1950 – enlisted as a Regular Force Cadet (Allan Class) and Graduated into the Royal New Zealand Armoured Corps. He was the 240th Graduate of the RF Cadet School He was an original member of the NZSAS Squadron When the original NZSAS Squadron was disbanded in 1957, he changed corps to RNZIR He was qualified as a Parachute Jump Instructor. He was awarded the MBE in the 1978 New Years' Honours List

He also served with the following Units:

The 6th Battalion (Hauraki), RNZIR in Tauranga as their Regimental Sergeant Major (RSM); The Territorial Force Depot in Waiouru as their RSM; As the NZ Instructor, Officer Cadet School, Portsea, Australia

At the funeral held at Papakura Military Camp in the NZSAS Chapel: Honorary Colonel David Ogilvy, who served in "the Originals" NZSAS alongside Graham Nash; addressed the family. He said "The name **Wally** was given to Graham as a compliment, taken from the then New Zealand Prime Minister, Wally Nash." (Editors words).

Those of us who had the privilege of serving with Graham Nash only knew him as Wally Nash and addressed him as such. (Editor)

We all the Sgts and WO's called him Wally from 5pm until 5 am, 5am to 5pm he was Sir. Man did he call a lot of Compulsory Mess Parades

Wally's rule was NO one leaves the mess until he leaves and we had a lot of 5am finishes. His 2nd Rule was You Work Hard, You Play Hard.

He was a tough bugger, but fair. He was my fav RSM out of all those that I served with at 6 Hau. Wally was a great RSM, one who could be approached anywhere, anytime, he always had and made time to talk to you, whenever the occasion arose.

We will remember him. Regards Barry Ngaheu



Tpr Graham Nash inspecting a poster showing a CT (Communist Terrorist) who their patrol had just killed in Malaya April 1957

HE TOHU MAUMAHARA



03.12.1956 - 30.06.2019

Order of Service

Ministers

Ruby Ann Wiremu & Archdeacon Joe Huta

Karakia Timatanga

Waiata

Tama ngakau marie

Prayer - Sermon

Waiata

Te Inoi o te Ariki

Guest speakers

NZ Army—Lieutenant Colonel
Warren Banks MNZM, ED
Dept of Corrections Mike Heays

Eulogy

Douglas Edwards

Karakia Whakamutunga

Waiata

Piko nei te matenga



Hauraki members at the honouring of Dave Galvin.

Celebrating the life of ...

Michael Joseph Purcell



12 June 1958 - 3 July 2019

"You fought a good fight, a silent battle. Hlove everlasting, memories eternal"

A message from the Chief of Army Major General John Boswell.

It's with sadness I let you know that Mike Purcell, a NZDF civilian and long serving member of the Reserve Force passed away late on Wednesday evening after a period of hospitalisation.

Mike spent the last three-years as the Ardmore Military Training Area 2IC, and was a highly valued and respected member of the small Battle Training Facility team.

Before his time in Ardmore and Papakura, Mike worked for Lockheed Martin in Waiouru as a WTS operator.

During Mike's 21-year military career, he served both with 6 (Hauraki) RNZIR and then 3/6 RNZIR, and has been awarded the New Zealand Defence Service Medal with clasp 'Territorial'.

Many of you will remember Mike as an innovative and creative worker who was always looking for ways to enhance the soldiers and training audience experience. He was mission-focused with a passion for research and development.

Mike is survived by his wife Kath and their children. My thoughts go to them, his friends and colleagues at this time.



Burial Service

Kauae Cemetery - Ngongotaha Karakia Waiata - Au e Ihu The Ode Maori Version LCPL Errol Nikora E kore ratou e koroheketia Penei i a tatou kua mahue nei E kore hoki ratou e ngoikore Ahakoa pehea i nga ahuatanga o tewa I te hekenga o te ra Tae noa ki te aranga mai i te ata Ka maumahara tonu tatou ki aratou. Ka maumahara tonu tatou ki aratou (ALL) **English Version** SGT Kevin Berry 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 (ALL) Flag Firing Volleys Last Post Minute Silence Rouse Karakia Whakamutunga Laying Poppies/Salutes



"Uncle Muncle"

aa mihi

We the family of Mike would like to extend our deepest regards and appreciation to our family and friends who have cared for and loved us deeply through the loss of our beloved husband, father, brother, grand-father, cousin, uncle, friend and so much more.

We wish you all a safe journey home & God bless you all.



SSgt Ray Hurle checking the weight of Bergan's prior to commencement of the "run" on a SAS Selection course.

Passing of Y203066 Raymond Stennett Hurle. RNZA, NZSAS, NZ Intelligence Corps. Active service Korea, Malaya. RNZIR and NZSAS and also a long term NZDF civilian as a security team member.

Ray Hurle was a member of the original NZSAS Sqn in 1955-57 in Malaya and was a very highly regarded member of that unit and others within his military career.

Ray Hurle served as Regimental Quartermaster Sergeant in **6th Battalion (Hauraki) Royal New Zealand**, based in Tauranga in 1970.

Additional Service Information:

Ray Hurle was born in Antofasasta, Chile

On his first enlistment, his civilian employment was as a Survey Draughtsman with the Lands and Survey Department in Auckland.

During this period, Ray served in the 1st Battalion, the Auckland Regiment (Countess of Ranfurly's Own).

In 1954 Ray enlisted into and served in the Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment and transferred to the Intelligence Corps on 27 October 1987.

Ray was employed as the Operations Room Non-Commissioned Officer whilst posted to, New Zealand Special Air Service in Malaya in 1955-57.

On 16 November 1957, he was awarded the gallantry award 'Pingat Pekerei Terpileh' by the Malaysian Government [Distinguished Conduct Medal (DCM) equivalent].

On 13 February 1961 he was awarded the 'Certificate for Good Service of Commander in Chief, Far East Land Forces (CinC, FARELF)'.

Ray served again with the New Zealand Special Air Service in July 1962 when he was employed as the Squadron Quartermaster Sergeant based in Papakura, New Zealand.

Ray progressed through the ranks and was promoted to Warrant Officer Class One on 20 July 1970.

Ray was appointed to a Special List commission as a Lieutenant on 18 April1980.

Ray was promoted to Captain on 1 October 1981 and Major on 6 July 1987.

Ray's Funeral was on Friday, 9th Aug 2019 at 11am at St John's Anglican Church, Trentham. Rev Kathy Orr-Nimmo and Rev Lance Kevey were jointly presiding the service. Loved husband and pal of Rene for 60 years. Treasured father of Michael, and David & Nicky and Grandpa of James and Joseph



LCpl Ray Hurle in Malaya 1956.

On 20th January 1957 in an ambush set up with Lance Corporal Ray Hurle in Command & four Troopers, killed one CT (Communist Terrorist) who was carrying valuable intelligence, maps and other documents. (the other CT who was wounded, was killed by the next SAS ambush)

Some times in your life you meet an inspirational person that helps changes the direction of your career. For me that person was **Ray Hurle**.

Of course, at the time I first met **Ray** I did not realise that. The time was 1962, were we both had completed the SAS Selection course and were now doing accelerated training as

reinforcements for the Squadron, now in Thailand. Unfortunately for us, the Squadron was brought home in October, as "Mission Completed". We were scheduled to leave in November.

The Officer Commanding had me transferred from the Troop to the Q Store to work with **Ray** even though my appointment was Squadron Air Supply NCO.

Ray understood I did not want to be in the Store, but I was an efficient worker and performed well. **Ray** allowed me to train with the Troop when I had completed my tasks with him. **Ray** even allowed me to take time away to join the Auckland Flying School in Ardmore, and train to become a Private Pilot. Which became the basis of my new career when I took discharge from the SAS. It was during this period that **Ray** & I bonded. **Ray** opened up to me, about his past Military World, which I would never have known, had I remained in the Troop.

"Ray & Rene", a name that signified the best in a Christian Marriage. A couple I could aspire to. With morals like my own parents. I enjoyed being invited for a meal with **Ray & Rene's** at their home.

I left the Regular Army in 1964, but **Ray** and I kept in contact (by snail mail) as I conducted my adventures in Vietnam, Cambodia & Laos.

I returned to New Zealand in 1975, accompanied by my Vietnamese wife & family. In August 1975 I joined the Territorial Force, 6th Battalion (Hauraki) RNZIR, in Tauranga. A Unit, **Ray**, had previously served with in the Appointment as Regimental Quarter Master Sergeant. Kim (my wife) & I, met **Ray & Rene** at a number of NZSAS Association Reunions. From then on **Ray** and I were able to use internet and emails.

I always visited **Ray & Rene**, whenever I was in Wellington.

We were both on each other's Christmas Card List!

After completing my service in the 6 Hauraki, I helped form the 6th Battalion (Hauraki) Regimental Association. **Ray** became a member. **Ray** was passionate about the Colours and sent many emails supporting them staying in the Region.

Des Anderson



NOEL FRANK POPE J.P. C.N.Z.M

28 SEPTEMBER 1931 - 15 AUGUST 2019

Memories of former mayor Noel Pope

Time in Army strongly valued experience



Noel Pope, former mayor of Tauranga. Photo / File Bay of Plenty Times

Most people knew Noel Pope as a businessman and his 27 years in the Tauranga City Council with 12 of those years as mayor.

Warrant Officer Class Two Noel Pope also served with the Hauraki Regiment in the CMT era, with the appointment of Company Sergeant Major.

Noel Pope was a strong supporter of the 6th Battalion (Hauraki) Regimental Association Museum and the Tauranga Cadet Forces.

I wish to share one of his quotations held in the museum.

"Till the day I die I will value those six or seven years I had in the army. There's been nothing since that could replace it, both in terms of a formative experience or a wider perspective on the world and life."

"Whaka tangata kia kaha."

Des Anderson President 6th Battalion (Hauraki) Regimental Association



Noel Pope (1931-2019)

In 1988 the Tauranga District Museum Oral History Unit began capturing the voices of older residents, many of whom had made a significant contribution to the development of our city. One such prominent resident was former Mayor, Noel Pope. With Noel's passing on 15 August 2019 his recording, taped in October 1990, is all the more valuable.

Noel begins the interview by recalling his early years. "I did come from Hamilton in 1938 to Tauranga and then we had a population of something less than 3500. So, you could walk anywhere in the city and be well introduced to almost everyone. As a young fella, of course I got a lot of parental advice from nearly every resident here."

However, it is his 27 years as a Councillor and his time as Deputy Mayor and Mayor, which Noel recalls in greatest detail. "The next thing I'm a Councillor and so I had to readapt some of my thinking into those areas and I became quite involved in the Council. I thought I would take the same attitude into that as I did into my rugby and my athletics – if you're in there you do your best. If you're ever given the opportunity to put something back into a community you've enjoyed having been a part of then you've really got to get out there and do the best you can."

When asked for his most significant achievement as a local body politician Noel suggested it was his involvement in the development of the Harbour Bridge. "It really just took a bit of let's do it fellas instead of talking about it. And yet, believe it or not, even in this enlightened day and age I had a divided Council. There was not a unanimous Council. There were some very strong views on why we shouldn't do it and some equally strong views on why we should do it. Now of course people wonder why it wasn't built years ago. It just shows you how fickle and very susceptible local government is on issues everybody says are sensible. The bridge issue taught me you can't take anything for granted."

His greatest regret was the way things worked out during the 1989 local government reforms. "The bit that we didn't get right and the bit I wasn't able to achieve, which was my strong view at the

time I was Mayor, was the one District Council. So, if I've got a regret in the whole thing it is that we just couldn't get that last bit right. I'll certainly live to see it achieved but I won't be part of that now." Little did he know that he wasn't done with local government, again serving as Mayor from October 1995 until October 2001.

His advice to future Councils "… I think far stronger measures on cleaning up the harbour, we're now getting into some very serious environmental problems here. One of the great things about growth is all the excitement of doing all these things. But at the same time when you live in an environment like we do with the harbour, which is our biggest gem, that's been overlooked in the past by industry and even by the community, there's going to have to be a lot of money put into good sensible planning. On I think the foreshore and the way we dispose of our sewage. The way we organise the use of the harbour. That will take some strong politicians to make sure that it works, but they'd be thanked in 20 years from now … all due respects to the Council and I've been part of that planning process, they really only plan for the day, they're in there for whatever time and that's all they think about".

HAURAKI HISTORY

BATTLE OF CRETE

Notes of a lecture presented by Colonel Ray Seymour on NZ Battle of Crete Association 78th Commemoration Service Crete Veterans Day; held on the 19th May 2019 at the Mount Maunganui Returned Services Association

This is a short lecture on the battle of Crete and attempts to give you an overview of the battle but with an emphasis on the German attack on Maleme airfield; the New Zealand attack on Galatos and the inevitable withdrawal of our men from their defensive positions, across the White Mountains and finally their evacuation from Sphakia back to Egypt.

Why me, you may well ask, to have been invited to give this lecture. In 1981, the NZ Army was directed by the NZ Government to send an official contingent to Crete and Greece to take part in the 40th anniversary of the battles. As a consequence, the NZ Army looked at its premier infantry battalion, the 1st Battalion, Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment, then based in Singapore, to deploy a 10-man Guard of Honour, to accompany the distinguished veterans, and to take part in as may ceremonial activities as possible. I was appointed to command this small group. Why me? Well apart from the best looking major in the Battalion – and the best drilled, I had a family connection with the battles. My late father, 3436 Staff Sergeant Jim Seymour, was a proud Hauraki soldier right up to the time of his death in 2011, and he had been decorated by the King of Greece for the part he had taken in the King's safe extraction off Crete. It was actually that connection that I had been selected. I was then tasked with selecting the remainder of my Guard, but on the proviso that I had to include the Battalion RSM in the party. It is with much delight that I welcome Rex Harris, MBE to be with us today but any comments he may make on me from this point on are to be ignored.

I selected my Guard on the same basis as I was selected – that is, they must have had a family connection with the battles. On that basis, just about every soldier in the Battalion submitted an application. And so, eight soldiers and the RSM were duly selected. I then set to and trained them. I wanted them to know everything about the battle of Crete and divided the 11 days of the battle up amongst them so that each one could brief the remainder of the Guard on what had happened on a particular day; who took part; where the locations of the units were; and what the Germans were doing. As you would imagine, the RSM was too busy to get himself involved. On are final leg into Crete, Rex, who was curled up in his seat, let out an RSM's yell. He was on the final chapter of Dan Davin's official history on Crete, when he found his uncle Charlie Winter and his escape from Crete being detailed in one of the annexes. Rex was now well and truly part of the team.

In addition to my Guard of Honour we were accompanied by a group of veterans who had fought on Crete. These were:

Major General Sir William Gentry - on the Freyberg's Divisional staff;

Lieutenant Colonel Archie Blackburn who commanded 19 Battalion;

Brigadier Jim Burrows who commanded 20 Battalion

Brigadier Tom Campbell who commanded 22 Battalion;

Colonel Denver Fountaine who commanded a company of 20 Battalion, and

Captain Charles Upham who won his first VC on Crete.

In developing my short lecture, I have intentionally not focused on any one battalion although from time to time I will mention a specific battalion.

Having got you this far in my lecture, my intention to discuss those particular aspects that I alluded to and embellish what our fathers and close relatives did with what we were doing 40 years after them on their previous battlefields when I commanded the Guard of Honour to Crete in 1981.

So, we start off with **FRIDAY the 25th APRIL 1941.** Adolf Hitler issued Fuhrer Directive Number 28, calling for the invasion of the island of Crete through Operation Mercury and to be led by General Kurt Student. On that same day saw the arrival of troops having been evacuated from Greece.

5 Brigade under the command of Brigadier Hargest was the first New Zealand group to disembark and were positioned in the Maleme area between Platanias River and the Tavronitis River.

On **<u>SUNDAY 27th APRIL</u>** 5 Brigade moved across the Platanias River and the next day they were made responsible for developing the defences from Platanias to Maleme airfield.

On <u>MONDAY 28th APRIL</u> 4 Brigade disembarked at Suda and dispersed to areas within a 17kilometer radius of the port. They were detailed to act as a mobile reserve. And the next day, the <u>WEDNESDAY 30th APRIL</u> saw 4 Brigade concentrated in the olive groves just west of Canea. Brigadier Inglis (Whisky Bill or "28 days") assumed command of this Brigade.

On **MONDAY 12th MAY** a new Brigade – the 10th Infantry Brigade was formed and was under the command of Colonel Kippenberger. It was made up of the 20th Battalion; two Greek battalions and a composite battalion made up of various elements. This Brigade garrisoned the defences on the high ground in the Galatas area.

On <u>**TUESDAY 20th MAY**</u> Operation Mercury was officially launched. At 0610 hours there was a blitz of Maleme airfield as usual. But it was longer and heavier, directed especially against the anti-aircraft defences. Three flights of five medium bombers dropped 100 bombs around the perimeter.

- At 0700 the men had breakfast as usual. At 0750 hours the sirens and bells from Chania to Maleme sounded warnings again. From that moment there was no "all clear". Then came the paratroopers, landing near Maleme and Chania. They dropped quickly and they dropped from only 100 metres and they swung down, at the most, in half a minute. Within a few minutes the sky was clear of them and only an occasional white patch showed where one had been caught up in a tree or on a hillside.
- Since 0800 hours paratroops and glider troops had been landing in the prison-lake area. It was estimated that nearly 300 landed south of Pyrgos out of range of the defences and nearly 700 near the valley road from the prison to the Aghya reservoir. About 150 landed in the 19th Battalion's area and were dealt with. These forces were soon advancing up the road towards Galatas and patrols began to infiltrate 4th and 10th Infantry Brigade positions. These patrols and the paratroops which were dropped on the outskirts of Galatas were destroyed by fighting patrols of the New Zealand Army Service Corps drivers and the 19th Battalion.
- At Maleme the main spectacle came later. The blitz ceased at 0920 hours. Ten minutes later the first paratroops landed. Although there had been guns sited to deal with attacks coming in from the sea, the Germans came in at about 175 metres and the guns could not effectively engage them.
- The German attack on the airfield itself failed, but a dangerous situation arose to the west in the dried up Tavronitis riverbed where paratroops could find immediate cover, sort out their material, and get into formation. Into the area the Germans poured material. It was here that most of the gliders and troop carriers crash landed. By 0930 hours the enemy had enough troops on land to be able to bring heavy fire down on the positions around the airfield, so that fresh waves of air-borne troops had more chance of getting through and establishing themselves. Throughout the day they continued to make new landings and to reinforce success; it was noticed that they did not reinforce failure. The Luftwaffe continued to bomb positions and to give support to the German troops, but the bombing was not generally intense after a landing, for German planes dared not open up until the positions of

their own troops were clear.

- Two danger spots developed in the Galatas fortress area in the vicinity of the 7th General Hospital and in the Canea valley in the Lake Aghya area. Paratroops dropping in front of and west of the 4th New Zealand Infantry Brigade captured the hospital and advanced on Galatas under the cover of hospital patients whom they had captured. By midday the hospital was recaptured but not before some tents had been set alight. A more serious situation was developing around Galatas and towards Lake Aghya.
- The situation west of the Maleme airfield grew worse during the afternoon. A party attempted to re-establish some of the posts to the west, but in the face of heavy fire it was forced back. Because of attacks from the south west and heavy fire right along the ridge from enemy machine guns and mortars west of the Tavronitis, many forward posts became untenable. Under orders from Lieutenant Colonel Andrew, a second attempt was made to re-establish the position on the west of the airfield. About 40 men followed up two infantry tanks in this attack. Ill fortune intervened. The guns of one tank jammed and the motor of the other failed. One withdrew and the second, which had reached the line of the river, was abandoned by the crew, who were then taken prisoner. For unsupported infantry the task was impossible and of those who managed to withdraw only three were not wounded.
- Paratroops landed to the West and South of the airfield. Gliders were crash-landed along the Tavronitis River and West of the airfield, while approximately 20 troop-carrying planes crash-landed along the beach and around the airfield. The troops crouching in their slit trenches looked up to see the sky above them filled with paratroops and material swaying down. They raised their rifles and Bren guns and fired straight up. Very few of those who dropped around the airfield survived. Those that did land were soon killed.
- Throughout the long, sunny day the battle raged around Galatas with attack from the prison area and counter-attack. By dusk, battalion commanders could report "situation in hand". In the intermediate areas between Galatas and Maleme the patrols sent out by the engineer detachments and the Maori Battalion had done extremely well.
- By dusk on Tuesday the 20th, the 22nd Battalion's hold on the western side of the Maleme airfield had become precarious and it was arranged that a company of Maoris and a company from the 23rd Battalion should counter-attack and clear the entire area. The two companies made considerable progress and mopped up several German parties which had penetrated, but they did not reach the airfield proper until nearly midnight. By this time the enemy had infiltrated the 22nd Battalion's position on and around the airfield, particularly west and south-west. There was a danger of the Battalion being cut off from the rest of the Brigade, so Lieutenant Colonel Andrew ordered a withdrawal from the western and south-western sectors to the high ground occupied by the 21st and 23rd Battalions. A foothold was still maintained on the airfield and the whole area remained effectively covered by artillery and machine-gun fire.
- Terrifying as this attack from above seemed, once the paratroops were on the ground, they were just normal men as easily killed by a bullet or a bayonet as anyone else. For the first few minutes they were even more easily killed. Many had their parachutes caught up in trees or tangled in vines long enough to hold them back as a sitting shot. Others sprained their ankles; others were severely shaken. Scores of paratroops died before they had slipped their harness, a great many in fact before their feet had touched the ground. Olive trees were littered with dead Germans and battered supply containers. Others lay sprawled

on the ground alongside gliders crash landed in river beds among the hills. It was only those paratroops who fell out of range of the waiting force who had any real chance.

- Then the silence broke. It broke with a sound that was ugly and comforting the dry rattle of Bren guns firing in the olive groves. Behind Galatas the first New Zealand patrols were closing in on the paratroops dropped there.
- The first day of the German invasion of Crete saw little progress as many strategic positions were still not under German control.
- Steadily the picture filled out. The main waves of paratroops and gliders had been landed, one around Maleme airfield 17 kilometres west of Canea, another at two points around Canea town, the olive groves to the south-west and the hospital promontory on the coast road between Maleme and Canea.
- The main objective of the enemy in the New Zealand sector had been the airfield and the town of Canea itself. Landings were made all around Canea, but they failed completely. The Germans had clearly underestimated the number of troops in the area and had no accurate idea of their dispositions. Landing as they did in small groups of 100 men, they found themselves isolated and confronted by superior forces. Rapid action gave them no chance to organize and they were quickly mopped up.

Now to the Battle for Galatas on SUNDAY 25th MAY.

- Discuss.
- During the night the enemy resumed heavy attacks and the New Zealanders were forced to withdraw.
- My Guard re-enacted, to a certain degree, the actions our forebears had so bravely done on this day, Discuss.

Now to the final part – the evacuation off Crete. On the night of **MONDAY 26th MAY**, orders were given for all New Zealand units to withdraw to the south coast of Crete and all subsequent fighting took place on positions covering that retreat.

On <u>WEDNESDAY 28th MAY</u> Heraklion in the North and Sphakia in the South of Crete were advised as the major evacuation beaches for the Allies. The evacuation order was given by Major General Freyberg for the commencement of a gradual withdrawal of Allied troops from the island of Crete.

- Some of the difficulties attending the evacuation from Sphakia soon became apparent. The road over the mountains from Suda to Sphakia finished up with a series of hairpin bends and ended abruptly at the edge of a 175-metre-high escarpment. From this point a precipitous goat track led down to Sphakia and the shingle beach which was less than 200 metres wide. The troops had to be dispersed but at the same time they had to be within easy reach of the beach. They assembled on the plateau and remained hidden from air observation until they were actually called to embark. From the beach to the plateau was a two-hour climb for an active man. The organisation of the beach was at first considerably hampered by bands of stragglers, but several guards of fifty men each posted around the village as an inner cordon rigidly controlled the approach to the beach.
- The first lift from Sphakia took place on the night of the 28th May.

On **SATURDAY 31st MAY** Crete was firmly entrenched under German rule. Until the last organized evacuation on the night of the <u>31st May</u>, our men lay with their backs to the sea, ready

to fight. By the time the last official evacuation was completed by the Royal Navy - 16,500 CommonHealth troops on Crete had been evacuated. On the 1st June the exhausted remnants of Creforce, about 6,500 men, formerly surrendered. Hundreds took to the hills rather than enter captivity. Many of these men later escaped by submarine or fishing boats. Some hid on the island for years and took part in partisan fighting, but most were eventually captured.

THE COST

The cost of the battle for Crete was very high for all parties involved. Total losses for the Allies numbered 15,743, of who 1,751 had been killed or died of wounds. New Zealand had lost 671 killed and 967 wounded, while another 2,180 had become prisoners of war.

CONCLUSION

To conclude my brief lecture, Crete holds a special place in New Zealand. There a scratch force made up largely of New Zealanders and Australians came tantalizing close to inflicting Germany's first land defeat of the Second World War. It was a tragedy and serious defeat for the Allies but by only the narrowest of margins.



Photos from the archivers



Ben Morunga & Rick Keno, before they became "Hauraki's"



Hauraki Regiment 121st Birthday 9th July 2019

On Saturday at the Partners dinner, SSGT **Eric Kristensen** (Rtd) has given us an opportunity to celebrate a unique occasion.

The Australian Army giving their Unit Citation to selected NZ Army Soldiers who served in Vietnam at the Battle of FSB Coral & FSB Balmoral in 1968.

To hear about this Citation please come to the dinner.



A little about Eric.

Arrived into New Zealand from Denmark 1950. Naturalized New Zealander on 14th June 1956.

Volunteered CMT (Compulsory Military Training) serving in 16th Fd Regiment 1957. Discharged after completing required service 1959.

Joined RF (Regular Force) into RNZEME 1964. Posted to 16 Fd Regt, Vietnam July 1967 as Armourer. Returned to New Zealand 1968 Posted back to RNZEME, Papakura Military Camp. Discharged at own request 1972

Decorations: Vietnam Medal. Vietnamese Campaign Medal

Joined 6th Battalion (Hauraki) RNZIR 1973. Rank as a Sgt, TFV (Territorial Force Volunteer). Appointment - Battalion Armourer. Discharged as a SSgt, 1984.

Joined the 6th Battalion (Hauraki) Regimental Association 1996.



Reading of the Citation by Pte Renee Douglas

Australian Unit Citation for 161 Battery, Royal New Zealand Artillery, Gallantry in Vietnam

The Government has agreed that Royal New Zealand Artillery personnel who served in the Vietnam War will be awarded the Australian Unit Citation for Gallantry.

The award affects around 120 members of 161 Battery, Royal New Zealand Artillery, who participated in the Battles of Coral and Balmoral in Vietnam between 12 May and 6 June 1968, as well as other New Zealand Armed Forces personnel directly involved in one or both battles.

"The Battles of Coral and Balmoral were among the largest and most protracted fought by the Australian Task Force in the Vietnam War. The 161 Battery gunners received high praise for the accuracy and volume of fire support they provided at critical stages of attacks on the Australian battalion positions."

"The Australian Government last year awarded the Australian Unit Citation for Gallantry in recognition of the 'extraordinary gallantry' the Australian units provided during the battles at Fire Support Bases Coral and Balmoral between 12 May and 6 June 1968. The award was also offered by the Australian Government to 161 Battery Royal New Zealand Artillery.

When 161 Bty RNZA was first deployed to Vietnam in June 1965 a special unit was attached in order to undertake certain servicing and logistical tasks for the Battery. This unit was known as the Logistic Support Element (LSE). In 1966, when the Australians expanded their force and the ANZAC's moved to Phuoc Tuy Province, the LSE was detached from the battery and established within the 1st Australian Logistic Support Group (1 ALSG) at Vung Tau.

The Royal New Zealand Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (RNZEME) personnel who had been in the LSE were taken for the most part into the Light Aid Detachment (LAD) of the Australian Artillery Field Regiment (of which 161 Bty was a part).

"The Australian Unit Citation for Gallantry is awarded to a unit for 'extraordinary gallantry' as a team in warlike operations. It is not awarded for acts of gallantry performed by an individual or by small groups of personnel."

History

Members of 161 Battery, Royal New Zealand Artillery initially deployed to Vietnam near Bien Hoa in July 1965. They moved to Nui Dat in the neighbouring Phuoc Tuy province as part of the newly formed 1st Australian Task Force on 23 May 1966, and provided continuous fire support to successive Australian and New Zealand battalions from that date until withdrawn in May 1971.

One of the first major operations for the 1st Australian Task Force was to deploy 120 kilometres from their Nui Dat base to an area in Bien Hoa Province designated "Area of Operation Surfers". This was an area important to the North Vietnamese Army offensive operations being conducted against Saigon in 1968. The Task Force established Fire Support Bases named Coral and Balmoral.

The battles that followed were among the largest and most protracted fought by the Australian Task Force in the Vietnam War. The gunners of 161 Battery received high praise for the accuracy and volume of fire support they provided at critical stages of attacks on the Australian battalion positions.

This is the first Australian Unit Citation for Gallantry offered to a New Zealand military unit.

Eligibility			
Surname: Ki	ristensen	First name(s): Knud-Erik Langelund (Erik)	
Rank: Cpl		Corps: RNZEME	
Service number: 346809		Unit : 161 Bty (Att)	

Honours & Awards: Unit Citation for Gallantry (Australia)

Authority to wear the insignia associated with this unit citation is only for those veterans who participated in the battles, none of whom are serving New Zealand Defence Force military personnel. Current personnel of 161 Battery will not wear the insignia as a dress embellishment.

I had asked Tenby if he would present the award to Eric as he is a Hauraki / Honorary Colonel, 3/6 Battalion RNZIR / DFMC Patriot.

Eric receiving his award from the Honorary Colonel Tenby Powell.





Eric Kristensen with Honorary Colonel Tenby Powell pose in front of the Hauraki Colours. I later was advised the Hauraki Widows were in tears. Was it the handsome young men in uniform or the Hauraki Colours? I won't admit to having tears, but if I did, it would be because of seeing the Hauraki Colours in its home location. Thanks to the Commanding Officer Lt Colonel Grant Arrowsmith and his team for arranging the Hauraki Colours to be back in the Hauraki region.

"I would do it all again"

It was an unpopular war - widely opposed on moral grounds.

And Corporal Erik Kristensen from Pyes Pa felt it personally.

When he was repatriated from Vietnam, he experienced the snub from civilians and Government first hand.

"When I stepped off the plane an officer advised me to get out of my uniform as soon as I could and not to tell anyone where I had been." Why, Erik wondered.

"Because we weren't very popular apparently. They were calling us baby-killers and the like."

Such was the political climate of the time. And it cut deep.

Now 87, Erik Kristensen would have no qualms doing it again.



"The communists had gone through Korea, Malaya, Borneo and so forth. As a citizen and soldier of this country it was my duty to stop them before they got here."

This spry old vet's unshakeable sense of patriotism remains intact.

"I am a very proud New Zealander. I would fight and die for this country any day. Still."

Now half a century later Erik has been rewarded his dues – he and 119 colleagues who served in Vietnam with 161 Battery, Royal Artillery, have received an unprecedented honour from the Australian Government.

"I am very, very proud." He pauses, ponders and smiles. "Thank you. I am happy to have served."

It's the Australian Unit Citation for Gallantry – the first ever offered to a New Zealand military unit. It's awarded for "extraordinary gallantry" as a team in warlike operations – not for acts of gallantry by an individual or small group of personnel. And Erik was right in the thick of it.

"I couldn't stop my hands shaking. Adrenalin maybe. But I was scared as all hell."

They were in the way of the North Vietnamese 7th Division and Viet Cong units advancing around Ho Chi Minh City or Saigon and were under severe mortar and rocket fire.

"Boom-boom-boom, boom-boom." Erik is reliving his terror. "Endless flashes of these things going off.

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"Boom-boom-boom, boom-boom." Erik is reliving his terror. "Endless flashes of these things going off.

"If 161 battery hadn't been there the Australians would have been killed. They were fighting a whole battalion of North Vietnamese and the Aussies were only a couple of hundred strong. They were fighting 25 to one. But the four New Zealand artillery officers directed fire onto the enemy and it saved them." In the citation, the 161 Battery gunners received high praise for the accuracy and volume of fire provided at critical stages of the attacks on the Australian battalion positions. Twenty-six Australians died and 100 were wounded. It's estimated at least 300 North Vietnamese soldiers were killed.

He recalls an Australian stretcher party returning to the unit with a body covered by a ground sheet.

"You could just see where a human shoulder should have been. It was like a joint of meat."

Bullets and bombs are ruthless on human bodies.

"I thought: 'oh my God! This is the sharp end. That could be you tomorrow'."

Many soldiers take their wartime exploits to the grave. But Corporal Erik Kristensen is an open book and he tells his yarns selflessly.

"I can remember shaking so much I couldn't aim my rifle."

His Aussie mate in the dugout was the same – he had nervously smoked a whole pack of cigarettes in 20 minutes.

In another engagement near Van Don, Erik Kristensen and the Australian Task Force came under fire.

"These orange flowers were screaming overhead and I suddenly needed to go to the toilet. My Australian sergeant said: 'stay there you stupid Kiwi bastard, you will get killed out there'."

But the call of nature was too strong.

"I put my rifle down, grabbed an empty sand bag, went out and squatted down. The bullets were coming in so low that had I stood up they would have cut me in half. They were twanging into the bamboo behind me."

Corporal Erik Kristensen finished his business, returned to the dugout and resumed his war.

"The Aussie looked at me and said: 'you stupid Kiwi – you won't live long here'."

Knud-Erik Langelund Kristensen – Erik to one and all – emigrated to New Zealand from Denmark with his family in 1950. Seventeen years later he put his life on the line for his adopted country.

"This is my country now, my first country now. Denmark, my homeland, comes second. I am a Kiwi of Danish ancestry."

And there's enduring hint of a Scandinavian accent to remind us. The Australian Unit Citation award was presented to Corporal - Erik to one and all - at the 6th Hauraki Battalion's 121st birthday in Tauranga this week.

Thank you for your service Erik.

Tauranga soldier receives gallantry citation

Cpl Erik Kristensen received his pin to the 161 Battery Unit Gallantry Award from Colonel Tenby Powell.

An 88-year-old Tauranga Corporal has received an Australian unit citation for gallantry in Vietnam.

The award was presented to Corporal Erik Kristensen from Colonel Tenby at the 6th Hauraki Battalion's 121st birthday in Tauranga.

Erik was a solder with the Royal New Zealand Electrical and Mechanical Engineers and was attached to 161 Battery during the period of their deployment to Vietnam.

The award is a fitting tribute to a Unit with a long history of operational performance, says Tenby.

"It was a huge honour to present Corporal Kristensen with a pin to the Unit Citation awarded to the soldiers of 161 Battery, Royal NZ Artillery, for their gallantry in Vietnam.

"It was made even more special because we are both Tauranga locals who have served our country on military operations offshore."

The Unit Citation affects 120 members of 161 Battery who participated in the Battles of Coral and Balmoral in Vietnam between May 12 and June 6 1968, together with other New Zealand Armed Forces personnel directly involved in one or both battles.

This is the first time an Australian Unit Citation for gallantry has ever been awarded to a New Zealand military Unit.

The Battles of Coral and Balmoral were among the largest and most protracted fought by the Australian Task Force in the Vietnam War.

"The 161 Battery Gunners received high praise for their rate of fire and rounds-on-target accuracy provided at critical stages of attacks on the Australian battalion positions," says Tenby.

"On behalf of us all, thank you for your service, Erik. Kia Kaha and Ubique."



Hauraki Company, 3/6 RNZIR accompany Eric Kristensen, Hon Colonel Temby Powell & Lt Col Warren Banks at end of dinner



Comfit break at the dinner. Looking towards the top table & the Colours.



Outside the Holy Trinity Church, Tauranga. Sunday 14th July 2019.

WBOPCU Officers & cadets, Hauraki Company members & 6th Battalion (Hauraki) Association Members

LTCOL Olly Te Ua (not present in photo) gave an inspiring speech to the congregation about the landing of the beaches at Gallipoli 1915. The Hauraki Colours are laid up at Holy Trinity Church.

Kia ora Des

Whetu and I will join you for the church service Sunday 14 July.

Nga mihi Olly Te Ua. **LTCOL Oliver Te Ua** TF Military Secretary - AGS, Army General Staff New Zealand Army

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Copied from the Facebook 6 Hauraki 2020 ANZAC Reunion

Ok. Here is the updated Itinerary for our Reunion 2020. For those going on the Waiouru leg of the Reunion...Phase 1:

Wed 22 April 2020 1000hrs:

RV at Tauranga Army Hall Garrison Club.

Prep for journey to Waiouru leaving approx. 1200hrs.

Arrive at Waiouru Marae approx. 1630hrs.

Powhiri at 1700hrs then prep for Dinner/Supper.

Will set timings for next day activities. Free time in evening TBC.

Thurs 23 April:

Revelle TBC

Breakfast at Marae.

0900hrs: Waiouru Army Museum visit, Move to Waiouru Camp conducting Barrack Tours, Ranges Tours and WETS activities.

Approx. 1500hrs:

Move back to Marae prep for Dinner.

Freshen up for Tour Group Function...2 cans per man...yeah right.

Back to Marae accommodation in your own time for crash out.

Fri 24 April 2020:

Revelle TBC

Breakfast at Marae.

Approx. 1000hrs: Leave Waiouru Marae.

Approx. 1100hrs: Stopover in Taupo for free time.

Approx. 1230hrs: Call in to Onward Bar Taupo.

1400hrs: Move to Tauranga Army Hall Garrison Club.

Approx. 1700hrs: Arrive back to Tauranga Army Hall, meet and greet in Garrison Club with those who have arrived for the main Anzac Day activity and join in the Hauraki Fellowship.

BBQ Dinner at Tauranga Army Hall TBC.

NB: You will need to sort your own accommodation on the Friday and Sat night, those that are staying in Tauranga.

Sat 25 April 2020:

0430hrs: Move to Anzac Dawn Service TBC.

1000hrs: Attend Tauranga Anzac Day Civic Service (taking up our places as 6th Hauraki Reunion Group) at Memorial Park, opposite Tauranga Army Hall.

At end of Civic Service move back to Tauranga Army Hall Garrison Club.

ENDEX.

The timings will be more accurate once we get final numbers for those attending the Waiouru leg. As we know we do have a cut-off date of early Feb 2020 so we can make confirmed arrangements for rations, accommodation, vehicles, petrol, koha and any other associated costs that may occur in Phase 1.

Just make sure that if you are attending this leg that you confirm by that date so don't be THAT GUY that misses the cut off to avoid potential embarrassment.

Note that the visit to the Onward Bar has been confirmed by Gary "Slash" Brandon. He has said that the Bar is a BYO bar. He is conducting his own Reunion on the Anzac Day 2020 but is welcoming us to the bar on the Friday. This is definitely worth a visit.

On Anzac Day there is an option for those who wish to attend your own Anzac Dawn Services in your locs but we want the Reunion Group to be in full numbers attending the Tauranga Civic Service...which is our main purpose of attending this Reunion 2020. Timings also to be confirmed

closer to the date.

Some of us staying in Tauranga will touch base with those attending Tauranga Dawn Services and may attend the Mount Maunganui Service TBC.

A heads up that Des Anderson has informed us that the vehicles will need to be parked at Tauranga Boys College as the streets around the Civic Parade will be closed to the public. That also means us who may think we can park at the Tauranga Army Hall but that is not going to happen...on that day.

Matt Nuku is heading back to Waiouru in the coming days to finalize some loose ends and confirmations at the camp with our Hauraki comrades down those ways.

Well there you have its Hauraki.

A novel and a half but let's get it out there.

Any other things I may have missed here I will update the page in due course.

Hope where ever you are, be safe with your whanau and friends.

ONWARD.

See Updated Version on the Facebook Page. Unable to download as it is on Excel & it would not fit onto this publication. (Editor)

Waikato Mounted Rifles 150th Birthday on 24th July 2019

Waikato Mounted Rifles will be turning 150 on 24 July 2019. The Sqn will be celebrating this on Saturday 27th July with a parade and reception at Cambridge during the day and a dinner in Hamilton in the evening. The Association will be unveiling a commissioned painting during the reception. More details to follow. Please spread the word.

UPDATE: If you wish to attend the 150th Dinner, please email wmr150th@gmail.com and an invite will be sent out to you.

If you are a member of the WMR Assn, then this will automatically be emailed out to you.

Please note this event is for past and present serving members of the unit and their partners only. Unfortunately, we do not have enough space at the venue to accommodate other associates to the Unit and as such our past and present members must be given priority.

4th (Waikato) Mounted Rifles; 4th Light Armoured Fighting Vehicles Regiment; 1st Armoured Regiment RNZAC; 1st Armoured Regiment (Waikato) RNZAC; The Waikato Regiment RNZAC; 2nd Armoured Squadron (Waikato), 1st Armoured Regiment RNZAC; Queen Alexandra's (Waikato/Wellington East Coast) Squadron RNZAC; Waikato/Wellington East Coast Squadron RNZAC; Waikato Mounted Rifles RNZAC.



WMR parade in Cambridge to celebrate its 150th birthday

COMMITTEE 2019- 2020

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Tauranga:	See Committee	
Whakatane	Bazz Porter	
Rotorua:	Te Kei Merito	
Hamilton:	Stu Foster	
Hamilton:	Barry Ngaheu	
Gisborne	Dave Greaves	
Linton:	Charlie Harrison	
Waiouru:	Mike Halliday	
	-	

Museum Curator: David Cross

This newsletter is compiled by Des Anderson, President, of the 6th Battalion (Hauraki) Regimental Association Incorporated. It contains many personal views and comments which the views of the Association or Committee may not always be.

If for any reason you would like to be removed from the mailing list, please send an email to <u>des.anderson@actrix.co.nz</u> with the word 'remove' in the subject line or body.

Application Form

New Membership Full

Regimental Number

Full Name

Partners name (if applicable)

Full Postal Address

Telephone Number (home) Mobile

Brief resume of service with 6 Hauraki (Include dates & appointments

Highest Rank Held

Service in other Units

(If Associate member - your association to 6 Hauraki Assoc.)

OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Joined

Receipt Number

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