WINGS OVER WAIRARAPA
NEW YEAR’S HONOURS
TRIBUTE TO TOP MEDIC
AIR FORCE MARA E TO OPEN IN JUNE
Our mission
To carry out military air operations to advance New Zealand’s security interests with professionalism, integrity and teamwork.
Air Force News is the official magazine of the Royal New Zealand Air Force (RNZAF)—established to inform, educate and entertain its personnel and friends.

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- photos provided separate from the text – at least 300dpi.

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IROQUOIS HELICOPTER PERFORMING ONE OF ITS LAST AIR SHOW DISPLAYS AT WINGS OVER WAIRARAPA IN JANUARY.
Kia ora mai tātou katoa

In welcoming you back from the Christmas break and holiday season, I want to say a special thanks to all those who continued to work over the break or who were called in. There were many of you and I am grateful for your committed service.

The 3 SQN team who responded quickly and winched a tramper to safety in the days leading up to Christmas deserve special mention. Not only did you see the NH90 through its inaugural successful SAR mission, you were part of a cross-agency team that helped rescue someone in trouble. Well done.

We had personnel in Antarctica and the Middle East – again, doing great work without fanfare or expectation of recognition, but fully appreciated and important to our country and the international community.

A prime example of the sterling job many of you do is F/S Murray Thomson (profiled on page 8). F/S Thomson was added to the New Year’s Honours list for his work as the Senior Maintenance Rating on board HMNZS Te Mana last year.

For several months, he took responsibility for the operational availability of the ship’s Seasprite helicopter on counter-piracy operations in the Middle East. Remarkably, his team chalked up a near-perfect flight rate thanks to plenty of preparation and hard work. It was great to see those efforts recognised as we welcomed in 2015.

Looking ahead, we’re on track to have another busy, challenging and rewarding year.

For the Air Force, we have the C2 programme bedding down, with changes to the way RNZAF Bases are commanded and the re-focusing of air staff. Congratulations to all the newly appointed personnel. I know you will do a great job and build on the fine work of your predecessors. While reporting lines will alter for many Air Force personnel, you’ll find, in most cases, your duties will remain unchanged. Overall, the new structure is about bringing more unity to what we do, so we can deliver on both the RNZAF and the NZDF mission.

Coming up, we have the re-formation of 14 SQN, the delivery of new Seasprites and the installation of the T-6C Texan flight simulator. This year, we’ll also see a number of important milestones reached. We have the 50th anniversaries for the Parachute Training Support Unit and the C-130. We have the retirement of the Iroquois. And, shortly, we will open our own Air Force Marae at Ohakea.

Our ongoing deployments and exercises will further cement our ties with key partners. There are many this year and include support to regional maritime and anti-piracy operations in the Gulf region and participation in Exercises ROKKIWI and SOUTHERN KATIPO later in the year.

On a personal level, I’m looking forward to the part RNZAF personnel will play in the NZDF’s WW100 commemorations at home, in Europe and in Turkey. The ANZAC story is one that reminds us of our strong ties internationally and speaks of our interdependence with other governments and allies – something that is just as important today as it was back then.

As we go to press, the ever-impressive air show season is well under way. Thousands turned out for Wings Over Wairarapa in January and we have the Waitangi Day 175th anniversary and Classic Flyers at Omoka next. These annual events are great opportunities to marvel at the craft of flying and to see how techniques and machinery change over time.

Right now, the RNZAF is in Fiji to commemorate the 50th anniversary of 5 SQN’s withdrawal from Laucala Bay, an important heritage event. But we are also there to resume Defence cooperation between New Zealand and Fiji – a significant milestone for both nations.

I’ve touched on just some of the things worth acknowledging and looking forward to in the year ahead. There’s plenty more and, as always, I am grateful to you and the families and friends who support us.

Before the year fully picks up pace, I’d like to take the opportunity, now, to look up, take in the bigger picture and acknowledge the important part everyone within the Air Force plays in enabling us to accomplish our mission.
In late November, Base Ohakea hosted the two-day Warrant Officers’ Conference for more than 80 personnel. The theme was ‘Influence through Knowledge’, with a programme tailored to explore in detail CAF’s top priorities for the upcoming year.

By W/O Mark Harwood

It was more than two years since our last W/O Conference – so it was a great opportunity to get together, share ideas and focus on the road ahead.

Reflecting on our role

The conference also provided an opportunity to reflect on the W/O role.

Although our airmen and airwomen look to officers as the leaders of the organisation, they tend also to look at us as their leaders and their voice to whatever level of command we support and influence.

For me, the W/Os I respected and trusted most were those people who had not only mastered their trade, but who were also able to offer me advice and guidance in a broader sense.

They seemed to know what was going on right across the organisation and at times appeared to predict the future. I remember them as almost god-like, but I think they were really just naturally strong, knowledgeable leaders who made a conscious effort to keep abreast of developments and maintain relevance.

They had solid values and were consistent and fair. They influenced through being knowledgeable and they stayed in touch. And if they didn’t have the answer, they would disappear for 10 minutes and then miraculously have it. I’m pretty sure they were just ringing another W/O.

CAF’s top 5 priorities

At this year’s conference we looked at CAF’s top 5 priorities to understand how we, as W/O’s, can support and influence these.

1. Recruit, grow and sustain a professional air force

In this area, we heard from SQNLDR Becs Maynard who updated us on the Women’s Development Forum and the work towards a more diverse and balanced workforce.

Miss Griere Cox, one of the main architects of REM 14, or the conditions of service work, provided an insight into the rigour that goes into looking after our people fairly.

The Ohakea Base Support Team represented the welfare and state of our people across the whole Air Force and the areas we need to keep an eye on.

2. Operationalise our capabilities to the best effect

Under CAF’s second priority, WGCDR Shaun Sexton updated us on the C2 project and explained how it will work and clarified some of the detail in the new command structure.

3. Develop leader-managers

W/O Viti Flanagan and F/S Kerel Woodgyer reflected on our recent stunning achievement – becoming the first military in the world to be awarded gold accreditation for the RNZAF mentoring programme. GPCAPT Grant Crosland updated us on HRMIS wave two, including the competency
framework and performance reporting coming into effect this year.

W/O PJ Smith from the Institute of Leadership Development explained what’s happening in this important area of professional development and the opportunities the institute offers. He also outlined the expectations of leadership as a W/O in the RNZAF and NZDF.

4 STRENGTHEN RELATIONSHIPS AND PARTNERSHIPS

The conference provided an opportunity to reflect on the need for partnerships like those forged at last year’s successful Air Force Chiefs’ Conference.

W/O George Mana gave us an update on how our marae is progressing. And we also reflected on the need to take every opportunity to tell our story through the Defence Public Affairs, using the power of today’s media.

5 OPTIMISE RESOURCES

Commander Logistics BRIG Lott together with W/O Dave Dean provided an update on the NZDF consolidation strategy, while GPCAPT Peter Cowan gave an update on how and why the Joint Policing Unit is going to work even better than the old model and the implications for Air.

GPCAPT Colin Marshall finished up, explaining some of the potential changes happening in the world of food, clothing and shelter – those things dear to all of us.

MY FINAL REFLECTIONS

On reflection, what did I hope we’d achieve from the conference? I hoped we’d all leave the conference more knowledgeable, with a better appreciation of what’s going on outside our own busy areas.

We so often have our heads in the detail and it’s just as important to look up, take in the bigger picture and understand how we can take responsibility for driving our organisation forward.

I believe that’s what we achieved. We came away a little more confident and informed – and better able to relate CAF’s 5 priorities to our work and our own teams and to articulate CAF’s priorities in our own words more clearly. And just as importantly, we caught up with colleagues, reinvigorated those important existing networks and hopefully established some new ones.

A ceremony to mark the change of command of 3 SQN took place at RNZAF Base Ohakea on 18 December. The change of command parade also marked the integration of the Helicopter Transition Unit (HTU) into 3 SQN, bringing the entire rotary wing transport force together under the 3 SQN banner. The HTU is the unit responsible for introducing into service the RNZAF’s new NH90 and A109 helicopters.

Chief of Air Force AVM Mike Yardley says the integration comes as the new aircraft develop new capabilities.

“The NH90 will now become responsible for search and rescue missions, casualty evacuation in association with search and rescue, as well as transport for New Zealand Police and other government and military personnel for national security requirements,” AVM Yardley says.

“The Iroquois have performed these tasks well for many years, but it is now time for the NH90 to become the primary aircraft for search and rescue and national security requirements.

“While we still have some way to go, the NH90 and A109 capabilities are developing well, and are on track to be capable of undertaking all tasks currently performed by the Iroquois by the middle of this year.”

Last year the A109 was used in initial helicopter pilot and helicopter crewman training for the first time.

During the ceremony, the Commanding Officer of 3 SQN Acting WGCDR Marcel Scott handed over command to the Commanding Officer of the HTU WGCDR Scott McKenzie.

Becoming Commanding Officer of 3 SQN has special significance for WGCDR McKenzie, whose grandfather, FLTLT Robert Mills also flew with 3 SQN in the Second World War.

“My grandfather flew for 3 SQN in Guadalcanal in 1943, and I served with the same Squadron in Guadalcanal in 2004 while serving with the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands,” WGCDR McKenzie says.

“I’m proud to be commanding the Squadron we both flew with, albeit many years apart.”
Wings Over Wairarapa

A Harvard on display.

The Corsair and Kittyhawk fly by.

AIR FORCE ON DISPLAY AT WAIRARAPA AIR SHOW

This summer’s air show season kicked off in Masterton in mid-January with the annual three-day Wings over Wairarapa event attended by an estimated 24,000 people. Attendees were able to get up close and personal with aircraft spanning a century of aviation, including the RNZAF’s latest acquisition, the T-6C Texan II, as well as the Iroquois helicopter, C-130 Hercules and an A109 helicopter. There was a fighter flypast salute to war veterans and a display of rare WWI aircraft. Vintage aircraft on display included the former RNZAF de Havilland Vampire and Venom.

There was also a special salute and welcome back to 14 Sqn after it was formed in Masterton on April 25, 1942 and disbanded in 2001. 14 Sqn has been re-established to be the home unit for the new Beechcraft T-6C Texan trainers.

3 Sqn’s CPL Louise Nelson, with Kentaro Sangott, Otis Cloutman and Mac Ashton at the 2015 Wings over Wairarapa Airshow at Masterton.

An NH90 performs a winch and underslung load lift.

One of the RNZAF’s new Beechcraft T-6C Texans taking off.
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REFLECTIONS FROM WINGS OVER WAIRARAPA

SQNLDR Jim Rankin on the event: The RNZAF is always pleased to support Wings over Wairarapa – it’s one of the major biennial air shows we regularly attend. We get to engage with the general public and allow them to see first hand some of the aircraft, personnel and capabilities of the Defence Force. We bring our own unique aircraft types, not available in the civil sector, to add to the range of aircraft people see at Wings. At this year’s show, we debuted the Beechcraft T-6C Texan trainers and showed the Iroquois, NH90 and A109 helicopters and the recently refurbished and upgraded Hercules. The Texan debut was something extra special – it was a salute to 14 Sqn, our first fighter unit formed in Masterton back in 1942, which we reformed on 30 January. Another bonus, for us, was the chance to hone our operations skills by carrying out an exercise in deployment and operation away from our normal operation of Bases. 209 Sqn erected a small mock up deployment camp, which always proves popular with the public. It was also great to see some keen Army personnel bring along a pair of LAVs from Linton to join a scenario with the NH90 and Iroquois.

FGOFF Matt Comber on the static display of the A109: It was a great weekend and a good opportunity to let people know what’s happening with the A109. People don’t know so much about the A109 – it’s like it has snuck into service undetected, although most people agree it’s a very cool looking helicopter. For me, the highlights of the event were letting people know the A109 represents a huge leap forward in capability and seeing one of the last Huey displays.

FLTLT Shane Huisman on the static and flying display of the Iroquois: I was involved with the static and flying display of the Iroquois. We demonstrated the day-to-day capability of the aircraft and took part in a battlefield support scenario with the NH90. The scenario involved suppressing a fictional enemy position, securing a bulk fuel store and climbing into an over-watch pattern to allow the NH90 to winch in ground personnel who connected the bulk fuel store and extracted it out. After that, we landed the Huey and recovered the troops. The whole thing went really well. The public feedback, particularly, was extremely positive, with almost everyone saying it would be sad to see the Huey go. For me, personally, it was a real highlight to fly the Huey at one of its last-ever air shows.

FLTLT Dan Pezaro on the T-6C display: We took two Texans across to Masterton from Ohakea in formation. It took an easy 15 minutes, cruising at 11,000 feet and 200 knots. We parked one and flew the other. Each day we did two fly pasts, which, to be fair, was only a taster of the true capabilities of the aircraft. But the event was a good opportunity to introduce the public to the Beechcraft T-6C Texans – Wings over Wairarapa was its maiden appearance and people were very interested in the new aircraft.

SQNLDR Phillip Wilson on the static and flying display of the NH90: FLTLT Peter Hamilton, SGT Dave Bayfield, SGT Jennifer Hart and I were the crew of the NH90 during Wings. It was our job to provide a role demonstration each day in conjunction with the UH-1H Iroquois. For us, the display was limited to a high-speed pass, a winch and an external load. The event gave the public a chance to look through the frame of the aircraft and ask all kinds of questions, some technical and others about the outputs we provide to Government and the public.
F/S Murray Thomson says the counter-piracy operation that saw his name added to this year’s New Year’s Honours list was the highlight of his career.

The NATO and coalition-led operation saw F/S Thomson and a seven-person team of aircraft technicians from 6 SQN embark on HMNZS TE MANA for a total of seven months at sea. It was the ship’s role to work alongside NATO and coalition partners to monitor an allocated area off the coast of Somalia for pirates by helicopter.

“For three months straight, my team made sure our pilots never missed a single flight. We kept the Seasprite up in the air—able to fly—all day, every day,” says F/S Thomson. “To do my job and to do it so well has been a real career highlight. I just can’t top it off, to be honest. The role I played was very specific. It’s a role with total authority and limited support. It’s just you, your team and the equipment you’ve got with you—you have to deliver.”

F/S Thomson estimates the Seasprites were able to complete an estimated 120 flights during the operation, starting at 6am each morning and finishing at 4:30pm.

“If a helicopter has technical faults, it can’t fly. It’s that simple,” he says. “We did have faults. But we were able to fix them or manage the fault until time was available to do the repair.”

At one point, a Seasprite door cracked and needed replacing, so F/S Thomson’s team ordered another to be sent from New Zealand. While they waited, they made the aircraft safe enough to fly without it.

“My team and I knew we were having a dream run. It was unusual. In the end, we put it down to a little bit of luck, a whole lot of hard work and plenty of meticulous planning and support back in New Zealand.”

F/S Thomson says it was his job, as the Senior Maintenance Rating on board, to work with the ship’s Flight Commander...
First Fijian Patrol

On January 31, the RNZAF P-3K2 Orion flew the first maritime surveillance patrol in Fiji since defence ties were suspended in 2006.

The flight was part of a series of activities in Fiji to commemorate the 50th anniversary of No 5 SQN’s withdrawal from Laucala Bay in Fiji. During its time at Laucala Bay, No 5 SQN flew Catalina and Sunderland flying boats from 1941 to 1965 and carried out long-range maritime reconnaissance, transport and air-sea rescue missions. The Squadron was also particularly remembered for its assistance to local civilian communities.

The commemorations were an initiative from the Defence Minister’s visit to Fiji in December last year and form part of New Zealand’s initial defence engagement with Fiji.

Flying from Suva on patrol of Fiji’s Exclusive Economic Zone, the Orion flew west to coordinate with a Fijian Navy patrol vessel currently undertaking maritime surveillance. On the aircraft working with the Air Force crew were three Fijian Navy personnel and one offshore fisheries officer from the Fijian Ministry of Fisheries and Forests.

Chief of Air Force AVM Mike Yardley says the Air Force regularly patrols New Zealand’s Exclusive Economic Zone and those of our South Pacific neighbours.

“It is important we know what is happening in these zones so we can fulfil our security role to Government and to deter any unauthorised activity that may be taking place. The P-3K2 aircraft has a range of state-of-the-art airborne surveillance equipment on board, making it the perfect choice for this type of tasking. “The P-3K2 is flown by 5 SQN, and given the history, it is fitting that No 5 SQN conducted the flight,” says AVM Yardley.

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to deliver on the Captain’s objectives and to prepare as thoroughly as he could before departure from New Zealand.

His role involved developing flight plans, prepping the aircraft, organising all the equipment and replacement parts needed on operation and training his team to work at sea within the Navy context.

“I told my team they’d love working with Navy. I do. Being part of life on the ship is fantastic. I told them to immerse themselves in it and to enjoy it. There’s nothing quite like it. On operations like this you truly get to be a united force, with the Navy and Air Force working hand-in-glove. That’s what my team did. They were awesome. I couldn’t have wanted a better team. To me, we achieved this honour together.”

F/S Thomson’s team were SGT Alaric Ngawaka, SGT Warren Reid, SGT Joshua Jellyman, CPL Matthew Beattie, CPL Murrel Seon, CPL Matthew Kay and CPL Cameron Hickley. (CPLs Kay and Hickley were replaced part way through the operation by CPLs Nick Sheehan and Simon Nelson).

FAST FACTS:
NEW ZEALAND DISTINGUISHED SERVICE DECORATION (NZDSD)

Q: What is the NZDSD?
A: It is an award given to military members of the NZDF by the Queen on the advice of the Prime Minister of New Zealand. The award is normally announced by Government House in the regular New Year and Queen’s Birthday Honours lists.

Q: How do people get it? Are they nominated?
A: To be awarded the NZDSD, a person must be nominated, with all nominations first reviewed by CDF before being sent to the Prime Minister and Cabinet Appointment and Honours Committee (through the Minister of Defence). It is a convention of the Honours System that the names of the people who nominate someone for an award are never revealed.

Q: What’s the official word on why F/S Thomson got this year’s honour?
A: A summary of the official statement says: “Flight Sergeant Thomson has served as an Aircraft Technician with the Naval Support Flight for the past 12 years. Since 2012, he has been the Senior Maintenance Rating on board HMNZS TE MANA with total responsibility for the operational availability of the ship’s Seasprite helicopter.

“Flight Sergeant Thomson’s service to naval aviation has been exceptional and goes beyond that which could reasonably be expected from a person of his rank.

“He is the epitome of the experienced, professional and proficient team leader, and without his dedication and professionalism, HMNZS TE MANA would not have been able to achieve the significant level of contribution to the Combined Task Force, and to NATO, that it did during its deployment.”
The latest annual report from the New Zealand Search and Rescue (NZSAR) Council highlights the contribution the RNZAF made to the country’s SAR efforts in 2013/14.

The RNZAF is a key member of the New Zealand search and rescue sector, a sector responsible for more than 30 million km² of land and sea.

The report shows we were a key player in the aviation segment of the SAR sector – alongside organisations such as Coastguard Air Patrol, Emergency Medical Service Helicopters, Wellington and Auckland Airports.

In 2013/14, we took part in a variety of SAR exercises and chalked up one NZSAR Certificate of Achievement for our contribution to the Ruapehu alpine rescue in October 2013.

The award went to 3 SQN and the Taranaki Alpine Cliff Rescue and Taranaki LandSAR for Operation Labour on Mount Taranaki between October 26 – 29.

The report says: “Rescuers spent almost 36 hours battling the most horrific weather conditions many of them had ever operated in, trying to reach a pair of climbers stuck on Mount Taranaki. They knew where the climbers were, but the conditions were such that they were unable to reach them in time to save them.”

In response to the report’s release WGCDR Rodger Pringle, based in HQ Joint Forces, says: “Well done to all Squadrons that conducted SAR in the 2013/14 year, whether you physically conducted a SAR duty, were on SAR standby or if you supported Squadrons to carry out SAR.”

In the 2013/14 year, we helped to:
• save 121 people
• rescue 738 people
• assist 905 people.

The RNZAF flew a total of 451 SAR hours in the 2013/14 year (up from an annual average of 155 hours)
• RNZAF’s Rotary Wing Transport Fleet (RWTF), comprising 3 SQN and UH-1H flew 49 hours last year
• RNZAF’s Airbourne Surveillance and Response Force (ASRF), comprising 5 SQN and P-3K2 flew 131 hours within the New Zealand SAR region
• RNZAF’s Airbourne Surveillance and Response Force (ASRF), comprising 5 SQN and P-3K2 flew 271 hours in search of MH370.

RNZAF winch LandSAR search dog to safety.
The NH90 and A109 aircraft are on track to be capable of undertaking all tasks currently performed by the Iroquois by mid 2015.

November last year marked one of the final SAR missions for the Iroquois helicopter.

An Iroquois, four aircrew, a Woodbourne Base Contingency Force team, a Unimog and a light four-wheel drive vehicle were dispatched to locate and recover the wreckage of a Robinson R44 helicopter involved in a fatal crash in Kahurangi National Park.

The RNZAF transported a police recovery team and two Transport Accident Investigation Commission (TAIC) investigators to the main crash site, which had been located after four days of searching by civilian search helicopters and LandSAR ground search teams.

Together, the RNZAF and a TAIC team member, searched steep terrain on the helicopter’s calculated flight path to successfully find, photograph and recover missing pieces of wreckage to help the TAIC work out the cause of the accident. RNZAF personnel also assisted police to recover the deceased pilot’s body.

In December, 3 SQN rescued a missing tramper in a debut mission for the NH90 helicopter.

The Austrian tramper went missing in the Otaki Forks area on December 16. The NH90 spotted him in a valley two days later and winched him to safety.

The mission took place on the first day the NH90s took over responsibility for RNZAF search and rescue tasks from the long-serving Iroquois helicopters.

Chief of Air Force AVM Mike Yardley says: “The NH90 is now the primary aircraft responsible for search and rescue missions, casualty evacuation in association with search and rescue, as well as transport for New Zealand Police and other military personnel for national security requirements,” he says.

“Assisting other government organisations in search and rescue operations is an important part of the RNZAF’s role and the NH90 is now sufficiently developed to respond to this type of operation.

“The NH90 is a modern, world-class aircraft, and it was good to see it in action in service to our country for the first time, helping our people in support of a wider operation.

“The aircraft performed well during its first search and rescue mission and demonstrated it is well-equipped to perform this type of task. The crew have also done a great job and performed well under pressure,” AVM Yardley says.
Two weeks later, W/O Michael Cocker sadly and unexpectedly passed away aged 56.

The RNZAF would like to acknowledge W/O Cocker’s passion, commitment and the significant contribution to the RNZAF Medical Trade and to express our deepest sympathies to his family and colleagues at this difficult time.

We would also like to extend the Air Force’s heartfelt condolences to W/O Cocker’s wife Cathy and daughters Grace and Hannah.

He deployed on several missions including Bougainville, East Timor, Kyrgyzstan and Indonesia in the wake of the Boxing Day tsunami.

At December’s award presentation W/O Cocker said he was honoured and privileged to be named as the inaugural award recipient.

“When I joined in 1977 my Warrant Officer was SGT Watt’s former boss and he instilled in us the values and ethos of those soldiers who fought in the Vietnam War. I’ve spent my whole career trying to live up to their standards, so to find out I was the award recipient was amazing.”

W/O Cocker said he was proud of the job the RNZAF medics did and regularly told younger medics coming through the ranks that being a medic was all about putting others first.

On 5 December, the inaugural Gordon Watt Memorial Award for top RNZAF medic was presented to W/O Michael Cocker, who clocked up 37 years in the RNZAF.

The Gordon Watt Memorial Award recognises the RNZAF Medic who displays professional excellence and the RNZAF core values of Courage, Commitment and Comradeship.

The award serves as a memorial to the outstanding medical orderly, SGT Gordon Watt, from whom the award takes its name. SGT Watt was a medical orderly who deployed to Vietnam with the No.1 New Zealand Medical Services Team and was killed by a Viet Cong landmine at Tam Quan.

He remains the last RNZAF person killed on active service since WWII. SGT Watt is survived by his widow Gael Keighley and their sons Ali and Darrel Watt, who gave their blessing to name the award in his honour.
The award is made from the cross section of the middle segment of an RNZAF Iroquois main rotor blade, with the Huey so strongly associated with the Vietnam War. The blade is mounted on a solid wooden base with an engraved plaque that uniquely displays SGT Watt’s New Zealand and foreign campaign and service medals.

ACNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to acknowledge the people who made a significant contribution to the inaugural Gordon Watt Memorial Award presentation.

- Gael Keighley, Alexander and Darrell Watt for giving their blessing in naming the award in Gordon’s honour and presenting the award.
- W/O Gordon Jenkinson for the mounting of SGT Watt’s medals and miniatures in his own time, free of charge.
- Chaplains Janie Mcphee and Murray Thompson for the touching service.
- SGT Murray Mansfield for playing the bag pipes.
- Therese Angelo and David Watmuff from the RNZAF Museum for their goodwill in releasing the plaque to be located at the Base Medical Flight.
- Elisha Cathcart for the photographic display of Gordon for the Base Medical Flight.
- F/S Martin Hair and the woodworkers for the plaque restoration.
- Gerald’s Gallery for the photographic images of Gordon’s ribbons that are mounted on the award.

A plaque was crafted in Vietnam dedicated to the memory of SGT Watt. It was returned from Vietnam and given to SGT Watts’ father who later donated it to the RNZAF Museum. On presentation day, W/O Cocker and the Watt family relocated the plaque to Base Medical Flight Ohakea where it is now permanently displayed.

2015 SUMMER SEASON UNDER WAY

On 24 January, the RNZAF Band played to a crowd of more than 4,500 gathered in the Soundshell of the Wellington Botanic Gardens for a free outdoor concert. The Band’s 90-minute set was the first performance of their 2015 summer concert tour. Later this month, the Band heads to the South Island for a series of gigs with well-known Kiwi performer Mark Hadlow. Starting on February 24, the Band plays in Christchurch, followed by performances in Timaru, Oamaru and Invercargill.

W/O Michael Cocker’s wife, Cathryn Cocker, and his family would like to convey the following message to the NZDF: “Words cannot express our gratitude for the love and compassion that was shown to us at Mike’s sudden passing. We would like to acknowledge all the Service personnel and friends who went above and beyond to bring Mike home, who helped us lay him to rest and who have supported us in the weeks following.”
Two years ago, the Air Force began building its first-ever marae at Ohakea. In this article, Mr Doug Wallace, the project coordinator, gives readers a progress update on the marae project.

AIR FORCE MARAE TO OPEN IN JUNE

A NEW SPIRITUAL AND SOCIAL GATHERING PLACE FOR TE TAUAAARANGI O AOTEAROA, THE RNZAF

By Mr Doug (Wal) Wallace, Cultural Coordinator RNZAF Marae Project

For those following the building progress across from the Cadet Force’s parade ground at Ohakea, you will know that we are well on the way towards having our very own RNZAF marae.

THREE MAIN BLOCKS ON THE MARAE

The complex is to comprise of three main blocks being the wharenui (meeting house), wharehoroi (ablutions) and wharekai (dining hall).

The building work is being carried out by No 2 Engineering Regiment Linton, so the project doubles as a training opportunity for them and free labour for us! That’s a win-win for all.

The wharenui is all but completed. Only the completion and installation of the traditional decorations remains, ie, the carvings, weaved panels and painted rafters.

The carvings have been contracted out and are well under way, as are the painted rafters (thanks to S&S Paintshop Ohakea). The wharekai is coming together very well and is also close to completion. Likewise with the wharehoroi, which has already been framed and is about to have the roof installed. >>
This will join everything together to create a ‘U’ shaped interconnected complex.

Don’t get too excited though, because once the building part is completed, we will still have a lot of work to go. We still need to do the landscaping, fencing and fitting the traditional decorations. That said, that is the easy bit.

We also still have to define our kawa or protocols and name the key elements of the marae complex – so, watch this space.

**OPENING CEREMONY IN JUNE**

When can we expect the opening ceremony? That’s easy – Saturday 27 June to coincide with Matariki (Māori New Year).

The marae will be a great asset to the RNZAF and has been a very long time coming so spread the word about the opening ceremony. It will be a great occasion.

**THE JOURNEY**

The journey has had its ups and downs. We have had setbacks, plan changes, personnel changes and redesigns.

Yet we have endured and are now approaching the final corner. To have been allowed to take this journey has been an honour.

It has been humbling to see it begin as an old, second hand building saved from demolition and evolve into a fantastic marae. I can’t wait for you all to step inside and see it for the first time.

**THE VISION**

When operational, it will cater for more than 100 people. It will be a place where we honour our past, celebrate or lament the present and look to the future.

For those who have never had a ‘place to stand’, this will be your turangawaewae, where unity is strengthened through a sense of belonging.

It will be a meeting place, a rallying point, a learning area, a place of rest and spiritual reflection.

It will be a place where we celebrate, grieve, welcome and farewell. It will be a memorial to our forebears and a beacon for those yet to come. It will be the physical heart of our small tribe – the spiritual and social gathering place of Te Tauaarangi o Aotearoa, the Royal New Zealand Air Force.

Tihei mauri ora! Behold!
Every year, the RNZAF carries cargo and passengers to Antarctica as part of the United States Antarctic Program. NZDF has provided air logistics support since 1965, operating up to 12 flights a year (depending on the requirements of Antarctica New Zealand).
DEPLOYMENT TO THE DEEP, DEEP SOUTH

By SGT Bruce Nolan, LOGSPEH Cargo Handler

It’s that time of the year again for the annual article on the Scott Base Support Team who are deployed as part of Operation Antarctica.

If you didn’t know already, then briefly, we are a crew of eight tri-service (yes, that includes Army and Navy with the Air Force), deployed for five months to the southern-most military deployment available to NZDF personnel.

WE ARE FILLING THE ROLES OF:

- Operations Scheduler and Senior National Officer (1 Army)
- Cargo Handler (1 Air Force)
- Communications Operators (2 Air Force, 2 Navy)
- Plant Operators (2 Army)

This season, I have returned in the role as Cargo Handler, having been the storeperson here in the 2005-2006 Season. All freight (including fresh food), people and mail that travels to and from Scott Base is my responsibility to handle. When the planes are flying regularly, I am rather busy, but when they aren’t, I get to enjoy the amazing views and atmosphere that is only available down here.

Yes, it’s cold outside, but Antarctic New Zealand issues us some really awesome kit to wear. And how many people do you know who have been and worked for a season at Scott Base or McMurdo?

Working in a tri-service deployed environment always brings the usual challenges. However, being the minority group working in a harsh environment with a wide range of civilian employees working in support of some extraordinary scientists makes life all the more exciting.

How often do you sit down to dinner with people who are world leaders in their field of science and get to talk about anything and everything (and occasionally even understand what they are saying)?

As a re-timer, I can only say you have to see it to believe it, and I am seeing it again and still don’t believe it. Every year DCM struggle with the lack of numbers of applicants, so pass the word around, and if you are a Commander, then start approving your team to get on this deployment – they will come back to you a much better person for it.

By LAC David Tubb, Communications Operator

Prior to stepping off the aircraft, and onto ‘the harsh’ continent of Antarctica, I think I could be forgiven for thinking that these low temperatures were something you could ‘man up’ through, or at least make it mind over matter.

How wrong I was.

At these temperatures you can do all the manning up in the world, but things freeze down here, and your mindset about the cold makes no difference.

The learning curve was a steep one but thanks to some top grade survival training, and the best equipment money can buy, the risk is well mitigated.

This is Antarctica and my job down here is Communications Operator. I’m a jack of all trades when it comes to the radio, phones and administration of Scott Base.

Highlights of my time down here have been the five minute sweet spot when it comes to back country camp meals (that’s the beautiful five minutes of cool enough to eat before the whole meal freezes), conquering the Americans at McMurdo station in a United States versus New Zealand tug-of-war contest and beating them to the punch in a man haul sled race.

I’ve found out that adding boiling water to a back country camp meal, while camping on the sea ice gives you an interesting result. The meal goes from too hot and not ready, to ready and an appropriate temperature for eating, to frozen again in 10 minutes. The trick is to attack it hard and fast keeping that five minute sweet spot in mind...Oh, by the way, you’re wearing extreme cold weather mittens and have no dexterity.

This year an annual tug-of-war contest against the Americans at McMurdo was reinstated after a nearly 20-year hiatus. With the rules adjusted to reflect the heavier modern day person and a team selected, spirits were high. Choosing to go one man down (seven versus eight) and being 20 kilograms lighter proved to have little effect on a well-oiled team of Kiwis, with the Kiwis destroying the American effort 2 to 0.

Another Ross Island challenge was the man haul sled pull. Huskies have not been used in Antarctica since 1987, but the sleds remained. Now, using a team of four haulers and one lucky coach/passenger, a challenge was made to McMurdo. On the day, three American teams and four New Zealand teams contested the approximate five kilometre ‘Armitage loop’ track, resulting in another white wash for New Zealand, with our teams coming in first, third and fourth. In fact the winning New Zealand team dominated soundly, with not another team in sight when they crossed the finish line.

Antarctica, Ross Island and Scott Base are places where you have to make the absolute most out of the spare time you have down here. Make sure you put your hand up.
The New Zealand and Australian Defence Forces share a special interoperable relationship.

This is partly due to our similar culture and beliefs but also borne out of friendship and understanding. This relationship is present on operations, in training exercises, in conference rooms and in our attitudes to work together to achieve the best outcomes.

Recently the relationship between NZDF and ADF logisticians stepped up another level with the first ever Combined NZDF and ADF Logistics Conference in Canberra.

This was the brainchild of the respective Commanders of Logistics Brigadier Lott and Rear Admiral Clint Thomas, who wanted to bring the logistics fraternity closer together since both Defence Forces face similar challenges, albeit on a different scale.

Brigadier Lott says the conference provided an opportunity to listen, learn and engage but also to continue building enhanced working relationships between NZDF and ADF, so when we have a problem we feel comfortable picking up the phone and talking to our counterpart across the ditch to find a solution.

“We've supported each other logistically in Vietnam, Bougainville, Timor Lesté, Solomon Islands, Afghanistan and in countless exercises and events.

“The NZDF logisticians regularly work with ADF on shared commodities like ammunition, fuel, software, ANZAC ship spares, LAV barrels, aircraft spares and training to name just a few.

“We talk to our Australian counterparts all the time and our thinking is very much aligned in spaces such as fuel management, health and safety, movements and amphibious operations,” says Brigadier Lott.

Forty personnel from Defence Logistics Command and one hundred ADF logisticians gathered in Canberra for the two day conference. Topics discussed included ICT as a logistics enabler, amphibious capabilities, international engagement and global challenges.

The NZDF and ADF relationship has paid dividends on a wide variety of military issues. For instance NZDF has grown its Health Intelligence capability with ADF help and in the last three years there has been a lot of development in this area, making us better prepared to provide health support to operations.

NZDF is also utilising ADF expertise for our Light Gun Rebuild project, which is progressing on time and under budget – a great result. In addition we regularly support each other with loaning ammunition and other equipment.

The close relationship between the two defence forces has continued to grow and mature and there are many similarities between NZDF and ADF. We both use the same doctrine and very similar policy documents and we often use jointly developed mission plans, which include, tasks, command structure and rules of engagement.

The relationship isn't just about talking the talk either. More trades and roles are learning first hand how the other defence force operates, so they can step into the other person's shoes.

Examples include our loadmasters who can work as part of an ADF team if needed, ADF personnel currently working in HQ JFNC and NZDF personnel working in Joint Operations Command in Australia.

“The great thing about the two groups working together is everyone wants to find ways to improve how we do things. We have lots of action items over the next 18 months including developing a joint working group to look at land, sea and air fuels, working on managing our critical inventory better and reviewing where we can cross share the products and services we each use.

“In the future I expect we'll collaborate closer on the purchase and disposal of major equipment, and hopefully develop mutual arrangements that see us streamlining how we do things. This will go a long way to enhancing our operational capability,” says Brigadier Lott.

Another conference presenter.
COMMON STANDARDS
A BASE TO ENHANCE AIRWORTHINESS

By WGCDDR John McWilliam, NZDF Operating Airworthiness Regulator

This is a significant achievement and goes a long way towards putting us on the same footing as our civil aviation counterparts.

Benefits of the new standards

Having a common set of recommended standards shared by our military partners establishes a base to enhance interoperability and results in less effort and duplication across many shared airworthiness activities.

It will also mean the personnel of military partners using the standards are able to fly on one another’s aircraft without the need to conduct further checks, as was done prior to exercise SOUTHERN KATIPO 13.

Other benefits include:

• a common understanding and confidence in the airworthiness system
• safer interaction and an assured level of safety.

It is hoped a common set of standards and a greater understanding and confidence in one another’s airworthiness systems will lead to:

• rectification on one another’s aircraft
• accepting design activities
• data sharing
• exchange or use of common spares and role equipment
• sharing aircraft accident and incident reporting and investigation.

Next steps

The intention now is to roll out recognition activities beyond the Air and Space Interoperability Council member countries (New Zealand, Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom and United States) and to widen the benefits of recognition beyond initial duty of care activities.

Background

The standards were initiated by the Airworthiness Project Group formed within the Air and Space Interoperability Council. NZDF personnel on the Airworthiness Project Group include Chief Engineer and Technical Airworthiness Authority GPCAPT Peter Griffin (who replaced GPCAPT Ian Mower) and WGCDDR John McWilliam, the NZDF Operating Airworthiness Regulator.
When I learnt that I’d be involved in ferrying one of our shiny new T-6C’s to New Zealand, I couldn’t have been more excited.

It was one of those once in a lifetime opportunities and a great example of one of the many amazing adventures that can only be had in the RNZAF.

Justice cannot be done to the trip in the space available so I’ll keep it focussed on a few of the highlights.

Our T-6C aircraft were manufactured in Wichita, Kansas by Beechcraft Defense Company. To get them home required roughly 65 flying hours, 25,000 pounds of jet-fuel (more than four times the aircraft’s own weight!) and 21 separate flights covering 17,000 nautical miles through 15 countries.

Two RNZAF pilots, SQNLDR Paul Stockley and I, joined four Beechcraft company pilots for the three-week trip ferrying three aircraft to New Zealand. We departed on 10 Nov 14... heading the wrong way! North East to Canada, Greenland and the Atlantic.

Some of the highlights...

GREENLAND

Conditions for transit through Narsarsuaq permitted a visual arrival and departure. Narsarsuaq lies nested approximately 50 nautical miles inland from the southwest Greenland coast. Ten minutes tracking at low level through spectacular fiords was fantastic and not dissimilar to some of the flying to be had around Fiordland or the Marlborough Sounds – albeit with a few remnants of last winter’s icebergs.

The departure was equally impressive, with a shallow climb up endless glaciers and over Greenland’s expansive ice plateau. Endless powdery whiteness stretching from...
horizon to horizon was only broken occasionally by the piercing granite peaks of vast hidden landscapes hidden kilometres beneath the ice.

There’s no better way to see the world than from our climate-controlled bubble cockpit!

LONDON

A day in London awaiting visa paperwork for our onwards travels afforded us the time for a walk around some significant Air Force landmarks including the Sir Keith Park Memorial, New Zealand War Memorial, Bomber Command Memorial, Battle of Britain Memorial as well as some of the regular sights.

Utilising London’s public transport system during rush-hour was an experience in itself – trains, tubes, taxis and hordes of pedestrian traffic on determined and pre-programmed missions to their destination.

AHMEDABAD

The contrast in India could not have been more distinct! The organised masses of London gave way to general pandemonium on the roads in Ahmedabad.

It all appeared to be controlled by occasional whistle and baton equipped traffic wardens who acted more as referees to the chaos.

It was fantastic to watch and despite the madness, there appeared little stress and road rage – use of a vehicle’s horn was more an unconscious twitch than an act of anger.

Despite our amazing adventure, the best part of the trip was arriving home to family and New Zealand. The clear air, amazing visibility, green rolling hills and snow-capped mountains rival any of those around the globe. It is a great place to live! ✈️
Three years ago, the NZDF kicked off a project to develop the connectivity required to give forces improved information exchange while on deployment.

**NEW SATELLITE CAPABILITY**

The project has resulted in the recent introduction of five new satellite terminals, called FA-240s, which replace the older and larger C-band satellite terminal.

The terminals give the NZDF improved land mobile strategic satellite communication capability – and have been certified by the United States Army Strategic Command to connect with their Wideband Global Satellites.

A Memorandum of Understanding signed with the US DoD provides the NZDF with a bandwidth allocation managed by the CIS Branch Satellite Network Operations Centre (SATNOC) under the Strategic J6 and alleviates the need to lease commercial circuits.

The introduction of the FA-240s represents a significant increase in communications capability that will ensure a reliable network with excellent capacity (i.e., a much smoother, quicker satellite connection, and voice and video conversations).

Over the past year, 1 NZ Signal Regiment, the School of Signals, RNZAF 209 SQN, the Directorate of Land Equipment Management (DLEM), JFNZ J6 Branch and the SATNOC have supported the project through trialling terminals under a range of conditions.

This has seen various terminals trialled throughout New Zealand, Samoa, Australia, Papua New Guinea and the Middle East.

**NEW ANCHOR STATION**

In addition, a new Wideband Global Satellite anchor station has been commissioned in the Manawatu, managed by the SATNOC.

The anchor station’s two 6.3 metre antennas allow multiple deployed networks to connect back into the NZDF information environment through the Wideband Global Satellite.

**FURTHER CAPABILITIES**

The introduction of the FA-240 terminals and the anchor station are just the first stage of the project with further capability to follow.

Further work includes:
- a smaller strategic land mobile terminal
- maritime terminals
- high frequency radio network upgrade.

**TECH SPECS**

- Access to the Wideband Global Satellites allows a more efficient and stable communications link to be established.
- FA-240 terminals can be set up and access the satellite in less than one hour by a team of two people.
- FA-240 terminals are currently working well on overseas deployments.
- Allocation of the terminals will be coordinated by HQ JFNZ J6 Branch.
The Maritime Helicopter Capability Project (MHCP) resident project team has been on site at the Kaman Aerospace Bloomfield facility in Connecticut, USA for 17 months and progress has been positive with the SH-2G(I) Seasprite helicopter deliveries to New Zealand commencing in January this year.

The NZDF team, led by CDR Owen Rodger and SQNLDR Andy Gallagher, and assisted by LTCDR Sam Greenhalgh, FLTLT Ivan Irving, F/S Nikki Brown and F/S Todd Hewlett, have completed major tasks including a verification of the helicopter specification, a review of 105 publications and a review of training packages.

The SH-2G(I) Seasprite Design Acceptance Review was held in October 2014, a significant milestone that has led to the commencement of acceptance activities for the helicopters.

Training activities for the new SH-2G(I) Seasprite helicopter type were conducted at Kaman’s Bloomfield facility in September/October.

The two resident project team aircrew, CDR Owen Rodger and LTCDR Sam Greenhalgh, and 24 RNZAF and RNZN trainees, led by CDR Jason Haggitt, arrived at the end of August for up to two months of training.

Preparation for training was coordinated in New Zealand by SQNLDR Ceilidh Martin and in Connecticut by LT Jodi Greenhalgh and Ms Faith Ruggiero. SH-2G(I) training was provided under a joint venture between Kaman Aerospace and Scientific Management Associates (SMA) from Australia led by Mr Phil Payne.

SMA developed the original training and publication packages for this helicopter variant and updated both packages to reflect NZDF requirements.

More recently, resident project team activities have focused on acceptance of major project deliverables, including each aircraft, the flight simulator and spares and support equipment.

The first three Seasprites accepted by the NZDF arrived in Auckland last month. The remaining seven aircraft will be shipped to New Zealand later this year.
The three Supply Officers were handpicked by the NZDF to enrol in post-graduate business studies at Auckland University. SQNLDR Cox was the first student to complete the year-long diploma course in 2012, with FLTLTs Bunting and Cotter completing their studies in 2014.

The diploma covers accounting, management, quantitative analysis, marketing, supply chain management, economics, finance and strategy.

Starting in 2012 the NZDF began putting logisticians through the diploma programme – as an investment in its future workforce. The diploma takes a year to complete (with two typical years of study crammed into one) and can lead to a further year of study and an MBA.

SQNLDR Cox, who went on to do Auckland’s Executive MBA, says business studies is the perfect option for an Air Force logistician keen on the strategic or high end of things.
“It’s been great for me. I’ve got a lot out of the last two years. It’s the kind of programme where you’re driven to perform at your highest level, think critically and deliver results.”

>>

“Within NZDF we breed great leaders and managers. But we also need people proficient in great business practice. The papers we’ve done through Auckland uni mean we’ve come away with a more business savvy approach to delivering logistics, while continuing to hone our leadership skills.

“After a programme like this, you’re much better able to match what you do to the strategic goals and direction of the NZDF. You’re much better equipped to use commercial acumen to solve logistics problems,” he says.

SQNLDR Cox says he enrolled in the diploma after coming home from Afghanistan ready to take the next big step within the NZDF.

“It’s been great for me. I’ve got a lot out of the last two years. It’s the kind of programme where you’re driven to perform at your highest level, think critically and deliver results.

“But it’s not easy. You (and the people in your life) have to sacrifice a lot. It’s competitive. It’s demanding – and you have to work really hard and fit it around fulltime work.

“But I’ve met some amazing people, learned a lot about myself and have worked out ways to solve some pretty curly problems within the Air Force supply chain context.”

In 2013, SQNLDR Cox was posted to the NZDF Capability Branch to work on logistics strategy for 12 months, drawing on research completed as part of his diploma studies. The Logistics Branch has plans to return him to Base in coming years.

Find out more
To find out more about the RNZAF post-graduate programme at the University of Auckland, contact GPCAPT Wally Butt on walter.butt@nzdf.mil.nz

THIS YEAR’S POST-GRADUATE STUDENTS ARE ...

Congratulations to FLTTLTs Gabby Knight and Daniel Hook selected to do the Post-graduate Diploma in Business this year. We wish them all the best.

Q&A WITH FLTLT REBECCA BUNTING

Q: A big congrats on finishing your post-graduate business studies in December. But take us back to the start. What was the process for enrolling in the programme?
A: Thanks very much. The Supply Officer Development Course is advertised as a Vacancy through DCM, so I applied through an RNZAF400 and was advised I was successful when I was on parental leave just after I had my first baby in August 2013. So, after a short stint of parental leave I returned to work and fulltime study.

Q: Tell us a bit more about the diploma and how it works.
A: It’s an eight-paper course, normally run over two years with one paper per quarter. However, like Jason and Jill, I was on the fast-track programme, which means two papers per quarter. I started in early January 2014, had my last exam on Saturday 6 December and was back at work in uniform on Monday 8 December. I graduate in May this year. It’s a full-on 11 month commitment.

Q: How did the NZDF support your studies?
A: LC(A) covered all the programme fees. It was a programme of fulltime study, which meant no work responsibilities for that period (though I did pop into work about once a week to stay in touch and keep on top of admin).

Q: What have been the big benefits of the post-graduate programme for you?
A: I’ve built on my Bachelor of Business, which I studied at the University of New South Wales at the Australian Defence Force Academy. All eight papers are relevant in some way to my role as a Supply Officer, especially to my new role in Business Support Unit, Logistics Command (Air). And I met some really interesting people in a variety of careers – the programme is full of networking opportunities.

Q: Are you putting your studies to good use?
A: Already on day one of my new role, I’m applying my new skills and knowledge in the way I think about strategic issues and process improvement. Post graduate study, by nature, changes the way you think. You look at problems and situations from a different perspective. My key areas of work are the stand-up of the Fleet Support Teams in Auckland, reviewing the NZAP6083.001-1 Manual of Supply and trade development.

Q: Would you encourage others within Air to follow in your footsteps?
A: I would. There are very few opportunities like this – by that I mean 11 months of support (both financial and in time) to attend a world-renowned university for tertiary education. It’s a really worthwhile course of study for our people.

Congratulations to FLTLTs Gabby Knight and Daniel Hook selected to do the Post-graduate Diploma in Business this year. We wish them all the best.
OPERATION GREENLEAF PROTECTS REMNANT BUSH AT BASE OHAKEA

A small team from Base Ohakea has become guardians of a native forest bush block and is calling for others to join them.

The five-person team (called the Ohakea Sustainability Committee) is looking after five acres of remnant bush at the western end of RNZAF Base Ohakea known as Gate Pa Bush.

“The block is the last one of its kind standing in the area, after decades of land clearing and deforestation for farming.”

The bush block features nearly 50 types of native tree species, including some rare and endangered species.

W/O Robert Martelletti, a Gate Pa Bush guardian, says: “The block is the last one of its kind standing in the area, after decades of land clearing and deforestation for farming.

“It’s also home to many unwanted weed species, including Germany Ivy, Old Man’s Beard and Banana-Passionfruit.”

Last year, W/O Martelletti and others from Base Ohakea got together with representatives from Massey University, Horizons Regional Council and Spotless Services to clear...
the bush block of weeds in an operation they called Operation GREENLEAF.

“Professor Jill Rapson, a plant ecologist from Massey, was able to help us identify the various plant species and work out which plants most need protection from people and noxious weeds.

“We were also able to clear most of the rubbish and divide the bush into manageable sections that can be owned and managed by the guardians. In the future, we’d like to collect and plant seedlings in the area,” says W/O Martelletti.

Track building, windfall placement, signage, ongoing litter collection and picnic tables are also in the pipeline.

“All we need now,” says W/O Martelletti, “is a few more Gate Pa Bush guardians to make our plans a reality and to bring this precious block back to life.”

Operation GREENLEAF crew find a Nikau palm seedling – the nearest known Nikau palm to the Gate Pa Bush is approximately 10 kilometres away at Kakariki.

GUARDIANS OF GATE PA BUSH

- Professor Jill Rapson, Plant Ecologist, Massey University
- Mr Aaron Madden, Biodiversity Coordinator, Horizons Regional Council
- Mr Neil Micklesen, Environmental Projects, Horizons Regional Council
- Mr Cameron Burton, Environment and Sustainability Manager, Spotless Facility Services (NZ) Limited
- Mr Graeme Nicholls, Regional Grounds Manager, Spotless Facility Services (NZ) Limited
- Mrs Kate Jack, Defence Property Group Environmental Services
- W/O Richard Madden, Compliance Assurance Unit
- SGT Brad Patrick, 3 SQN
- Ms Jill Hardy, Operational Support Wing
- W/O Robert Martelletti, Avionics Ohakea

JOIN THE GUARDIANS
WE NEED YOU!

The guardians of Gate Pa Bush are looking for volunteers to help us protect the historic, regionally-significant native bush remnant at the western end of RNZAF Base Ohakea.

We need your help with:
- weed clearance
- track building
- litter collection
- signage design
- building signage and picnic tables
- signage installation
- native plant identification and care.

Become a guardian by contacting Cameron Burton, Environment and Sustainability Manager from Spotless Facility Services (NZ) Limited at: cameron.burton@spotless.co.nz


RNZAF REPRESENT IN RIFLE SHOOTING

By SGT Shaun (Joey) Meldrum, Air Force Museum of New Zealand

In early January each year, the sound of gunfire echoes around the hills of Upper Hutt in Wellington. No, it’s not the New Zealand Army training for a deployment. It is the National Rifle Association of New Zealand full-bore shooters from New Zealand and from the world, converging on the Trentham rifle range to compete in the national champs and a rival match between New Zealand and Australia.

NATIONAL RIFLE SHOOTING RESULTS
RNZAF HIGHLIGHTS

Long range rifle shooters CPL Amy Hatcher and AC Charlotte Flanagan represented the RNZAF in this year’s National Rifle Shooting Championships, with great results.

CPL Hatcher was awarded a trophy Top Service Shooter for the Ballinger Belt and a gold medal for Top Service Shooter in the Grand Aggregate (Masefield and Ballinger Belt Championships combined). She was also awarded the A-grade ADI Challenge Trophy for the Top Shooter in the first 1,000 yard match of the Ballinger Belt, ending up sixteenth place overall and just missing out on shooting the Ballinger Belt final by one place.

AC Flanagan was awarded the Tattersfield Cup for Top Service Shooter in the Masefield Champs and was presented with her Under 25 pocket.

The women will go on to represent New Zealand as part of the national rifle team heading to the United States for the 2015 World Long Range Championships, an event taking place over three weeks in August.

CPL Hatcher of 209 SQN Wellington and AC Flanagan of 3 SQN FSS in Ohakea will travel to Camp Perry in Ohio to compete as members of the 26-shooter open team.

AC Flanagan has also been selected for both the open and under 25 teams and is one of the youngest members to be selected for both teams.

The pair, who have been shooting together in regional and international teams for the past four years, believes their previous experience at international level has them well equipped to handle the pressure and mental and physical stamina required during the international competition.

AUSSIE VERSUS NZ: A RIVAL SHOOTING MATCH

This year, the current world F-class champions, Australia, competed against the Kiwis in a friendly competition held as part of the New Zealand National Championships.

F-class was started in Canada, by the late George ‘Farky’ Farquharson, after whom the sport is named. It is a precision long distance target shooting sport, in which competitors shoot at targets between 300 and 1,000 yards (or 275 and 915 metres), with the object to place shots as close to the centre as possible.

At 1,000 yards, the inner most ring or ‘Super V’ is only five inches (or 12.7cm) across. The ability to read wind and other conditions determines success. Competitions are won or lost by a single point and often the winner is decided on the last shot fired.

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Captain in charge of the New Zealand F-Open team, SGT Shaun (Joey) Meldrum, who has competed successfully in F-Class competitions all around New Zealand for the past 20 years – also competed on the day. SGT Meldrum took the Canterbury Spring meeting F-Open title for the fifth time, following on from Otago and Southland Championship wins earlier in the season. The F-Open class is limited to a 10 kilogram rifle in a calibre no larger than eight millimetres. “I used a .284 Win calibre rifle made up of parts from all over the world, including some I made myself,” he says.
This year’s competition was broken down into two separate matches for each of the F-Open and F-Class and Target Rifle (FTR) teams.

For both the F-Open and FTR teams, match one consisted of 15 counting shots fired by each of the five team members over 800, 900 and 1,000 yards, while match two consisted of an additional 15 counting shots at 1,000 yards.

**F-Open team results**

Match one in the F-Open class was won by Australia on 1,261.62 points over New Zealand on 1,239.55 points. However, the New Zealand team fought back, in match two, with a win by the F-Open team with a score of 410.12 points over Australia’s 405.13 points.

**FTR team results**

In match one, the New Zealand team suffered a major equipment malfunction. The result of which meant New Zealand was unable to recover from the points lost. The result was Australia 1,226.42 points over New Zealand’s 1,173.37 points.

Match two was a very close competition coming down to the last shot fired by the New Zealand team. Unfortunately, a surprise wind gust blew the shot off course with the Australian team winning by a single point.

The final result was a win to Australia with New Zealand taking out the FTR Top Individual Shooter Trophy.

**Competition in 2016**

Regardless of the outcome of the competition, friendships between both countries were formed and the New Zealand team looks forward to travelling to Australia in 2016 to compete again.

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**OHAKEA SPORTS PERSON OF THE YEAR**

The annual Ohakea Sports Person of the Year Awards will be held on February 19 this year, with nominations now closed. The following awards are up for grabs.

- Sports Person of the Year
- Sports Team of the Year
- Rangitikei Cup for Male Contribution to Sport at Ohakea
- WAAF Cup for Female Contribution to Sport at Ohakea
- 141 FLT Trophy Nominee for Outstanding Sporting Achievement
- Flag Trophy Nominee for Administrator of the Year
- Nikki Carr Trophy for U23 Sports Person of the Year
- Merit Awards.

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**INVICTUS GAMES: ARE YOU ELIGIBLE TO COMPETE?**

Last year’s successful Invictus Games means there is broader awareness of the games and that now’s a good time to tell people about the eligibility criteria.

Invictus Games athletes will have been wounded, injured or suffered a serious illness (including mental health), while enlisted with the Defence Force (note, the incident that caused eligibility may have occurred on or off duty).

Athletes may still be serving, retired (veteran) or have joined the civilian sector of the Defence Force.

At last year’s games (the inaugural games) we had amputees, paraplegics, cancer sufferers, burn victims, people with hip replacements and people who had been severely injured in vehicle accidents or had shoulder reconstruction, chronic arthritic conditions, Parkinson’s disease, post-traumatic stress disorder and many other conditions. There were paralypians and high performance athletes too.

If you’re interested in competing in an upcoming games (likely to occur in 2016, but yet to be confirmed) and you think you are eligible for selection, then it would be a good idea to consult with your medical officer, who can put you in contact with a rehab personal training instructor to get your category assessed.

They would then assist you in training for individual sports and give you advice and guidance on joining a team sport like wheelchair basketball or rugby at your local Parafed Association.

Go and learn what adaptive sports are all about and show your command chain you have a commitment. Then, importantly, keep your eye out for advertising for volunteers for the next Invictus Games.

For more information, contact:
- CAPT Rebecca Maddaford 021 2438318
- SSGT Phil Stanbridge 337 7382
- W/O Gary Clark 345 6026.
Our Heritage

WW100: YOUR GUIDE TO MILITARY HISTORY

Former Defence historian Dr Ian McGibbon, ONZM, has written two military history/travel guides for Kiwis keen to visit the battlefields and memorials of Gallipoli and the Western Front.

_Gallipoli, A Guide to New Zealand Battlefields and Memorials_ and _The Western Front, A Guide to New Zealand Battlefields and Memorials_ both provide readers with a brief overview of each campaign, exploring New Zealand’s role in them. The books go on to describe how to reach the various sites of most interest to Kiwis.

Thanks to Penguin Books, we’re giving away a copy of _The Western Front, A Guide to New Zealand Battlefields and Memorials_. Email airforcenews@nzdf.mil.nz before 1 March to go in the draw. Put ‘Air Force News GIVEAWAY’ in the title.

OBJECT OF THE MONTH

By Emma Meyer, Collections Technician

2011/2000 – Luger P.08 Pistol

German Luger P.08 9mm Pistol, donated by ex Flight Lieutenant Andrew ‘Ralph’ Evans DFC. Flight Lieutenant Evans served in Europe with No. 486 (NZ) Squadron RAF flying the Hawker Tempest. Lugers were favoured souvenirs for allied servicemen and, according to Evans, this one was recovered from the German garrison at Copenhagen, Denmark.

Evans chiselled his name into the grip with a razor blade while admitted to RAF Hospital Halton, England, with suspected tuberculosis. Evans in fact had a ruptured lung, a result of a high-speed dive whilst attacking a German Arado 234 Jet on 20 April 1945, several weeks before.

This Luger is in the Air Force Museum Collection as a result of the closure of the former New Zealand Fighter Pilots Museum in Wanaka, where Evans originally donated it. Other items relating to Ralph Evans’ service, including a souvenir Luftwaffe jacket, are currently on display in the Museum’s Caldwell Gallery.
The New Zealand Cadet Forces have appointed WGCDR Bruce Sinclair as the organisation’s new National Support Officer responsible for the voluntary side of the organisation. The NZDF will provide the organisation’s support function. WGCDR Sinclair is a current serving police officer who previously served with the RNZAF. He has been voluntarily involved with cadet forces for more than 20 years. The New Zealand Cadet Forces is a youth development organisation with community units in 99 locations around the country.

In January, more than 150 Air Training Corps (ATC) cadets from across New Zealand learned to fly solo, navigate and survive in the bush during the New Zealand Cadet Forces annual courses in Marlborough.

During the navigation course, 18 cadets learned to plot flight plans (legs) over the Kaikoura coast, inland Marlborough and down to Hanmer and the Sounds/Tasman areas. While plotting the legs, they also accounted for the weight of fuel, wind speed and direction and other meteorological factors. The course counts toward the Private Pilot’s Licence.

The power flying course, open to 35 cadets, targeted young people keen to learn to fly solo. The bushcraft course, held at Dip Flat camp near the Rainbow ski field, attracted more than 100 cadets. They learned field first aid, campsite selection, group leadership, trip planning, water safety (river crossing techniques), risk management, interpreting weather patterns and navigation.

150 ATC CADETS TURN OUT FOR SUMMER COURSES

NEW NATIONAL SUPPORT OFFICER FOR NEW ZEALAND CADET FORCES

The New Zealand Cadet Forces have appointed WGCDR Bruce Sinclair as the organisation’s new National Support Officer responsible for the voluntary side of the organisation. The NZDF will provide the organisation’s support function. WGCDR Sinclair is a current serving police officer who previously served with the RNZAF. He has been voluntarily involved with cadet forces for more than 20 years. The New Zealand Cadet Forces is a youth development organisation with community units in 99 locations around the country.
GRADUATION FOR NEW DOG HANDLER AND YOUNGEST MILITARY DOG IN AUCKLAND

AC Gareth Havill and his Military Working Dog (MWD) Khan graduated Basic MWD Handler training in December, with a ceremony presided over by Commanding Officer 209 SQN, Wing Commander Darryl Cockroft.

AC Havill and MWD Khan, a Dutch Shepherd/German Shepherd cross, were paired on day one of the 12-week MWD Handler course. The graduation marked both the success of AC Havill as a new dog handler and MWD Khan who is now the youngest MWD at Base Auckland.

At the graduation, the duo demonstrated several of the techniques they have learned during the course including obedience, agility and an apprehension demonstration.

For the partnership to be successful the handler and their dog need to have a great relationship. This is why they are paired up at the start of the course and will remain as a working team throughout AC Havill’s posting at the MWD Unit.

AC Havill says he and MWD Khan will join other MWD teams at Base Auckland whose primary role is to provide security for the aircraft and facilities, both on Base and whilst they are deployed.

"Over Christmas Khan and I started continuation training to improve our skills. We started doing activities like building searches and tracking, which involved training Khan to locate personnel in buildings and to follow the ground scent of someone evading capture on foot," says AC Havill.
If you work for NZDF and you’re thinking about buying a home, you need to know about the First Home Buyers’ Scheme available to members of the Defence Force Superannuation Scheme (DFSS).

The DFSS is a voluntary, work-based savings initiative to help members of the NZDF save for retirement.

Since its introduction in October 2012, about 575 DFSS members have used $36 million from this scheme to buy their first home.

The First Home Buyers’ Scheme allows you to put some of your DFSS savings towards your deposit, once you have contributed to the scheme for at least three years.

As a DFSS Category B member, you may also qualify for a government subsidy of up to $5,000 if you buy a house by yourself or $10,000 if you’re a couple and you both qualify.

A key condition of these arrangements is that the member applying for the First Home Buyers’ Scheme will need to live in the property purchased.

This DFSS initiative ties in with Chief of Defence Force’s priority to better support our military families.

To find out more about the First Home Buyers’ Scheme, visit the intranet (look for the DPE HR Toolkit). Alternatively, phone Mercer on 0800 333 787 or check out the Mercer Superfacts website, at: www.mercerkiwisaversscheme.co.nz

NZDF KiwiSaver members (who meet the eligibility criteria) may also have access to the:
- KiwiSaver first-home deposit subsidy (up to $5,000) per member
- KiwiSaver first-home withdrawal

Members wanting more information on these KiwiSaver first-home options should contact your KiwiSaver provider or visit the Housing New Zealand website, at: www.hnzc.co.nz

For more information about February’s OverWatch events, email OverWatch, at: overwatchevents@nzdf.mil.nz

OverWatch has three big events coming up this month – everyone is welcome to attend and celebrate the diverse NZDF workforce.

OverWatch is a group that provides peer support and guidance to NZDF’s Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Questioning (GLBTIQ) community – as well as to their commanders and managers, families, friends and colleagues.

OVERWATCH FEBRUARY EVENTS ARE:
- **Big Gay Out** (Coyle Park, Auckland) – Sunday 8 February. Family event. OverWatch will have a stall with public information on equity and diversity within the NZDF.
- **Auckland Pride Parade** (Auckland) – Saturday 21 February. Final event of the Auckland Pride Festival. OverWatch will take part in the event and march in Service dress (and invites others to join them).

For more information about OverWatch’s events, contact OverWatch events, at: overwatchevents@nzdf.mil.nz

RNZAF OverWatch at the Auckland Pride Parade, February 2014.
Notes

AIR DISPLAY SEASON UNDER WAY
The 2015 Air Display Season is well under way, with the following events, supported by the RNZAF, planned for the next couple of months.
6 February 2015
Waitangi Day 175th Anniversary
3 – 5 April 2015
Classic Fighters Omaka
25 April 2015
ANZAC Day 100th Anniversary.

FEBRUARY AIRSHOW TO HONOUR ANZACS
The Australian International Airshow 2015 will pay tribute to Anzacs and the heroes of military aviation.

The Airshow consists of four trade days and three public sessions. It will be staged at Avalon Airport (Vic) between 24 February and 1 March with the final three days, 27 February to 1 March, open to the public.

To find out more, visit the event website, at: www.airshow.com.au

Reunions

PTSU 50TH ANNIVERSARY:
Celebrating 50 years of Parachute Training and Support

When: 27 – 29 March, 2015
Who: For personnel who have been posted to, worked with or have carried out training at PTSU.
Where: RNZAF Base Auckland
Contact: Paul Lennox, at: paul.lennox@nzdf.mil.nz (to register your attendance)
More info: www.facebook.com/PTSU.50

LAUCALABA BAY REUNION, BLENHEIM

When: February 27 – 28 and March 1, 2015
Who: Personnel stationed at Laucala Bay, Suva, Fiji
Contact: Terry Pullman, at stamper1@clear.net.nz

EMAIL: 1NZMICOY@nzdf.mil.nz
1. **What is our ‘collective purpose’?**
   
   Our collective purpose, being A Force for New Zealand, is a new way of talking about who we are and what we do in a way that everyone in the Defence Force – Regular Force, Reservist and Civilian – can connect to. It’s about telling our story, reinforcing our passion and strength as a military organisation, and providing a common ground that reflects the hard work of all sailors, soldiers, airmen and women, and civilians.

2. **Where does our purpose sit in relation to our mission and values?**
   
   Our mission – to secure New Zealand against external threat and to protect our sovereign interests – has not changed. Our purpose is being A Force for New Zealand by being an armed Force; a Force for good; a professional Force; a Force equipped to succeed; and a Force pursuing excellence. In everything we do, we demonstrate our values of courage, commitment and comradeship.

3. **Where did the idea come from?**
   
   A Force for New Zealand is the result of a process that began several months ago when our Chief of Defence Force tasked a small group of senior military and civilian staff with developing a way of talking about our purpose and our value to New Zealand. Ideas were discussed and tested with service people and civilians at different stages of the project. This feedback was taken into account and helped shape the words, story and visual representation that together make up our statement of collective purpose.

4. **We already understand the role of our own service. Why do we need a Force for New Zealand?**
   
   It’s important that each Service has a strong culture and understands its unique identity, and this isn’t a challenge to that. But everyday we work with colleagues from across the whole Defence Force, other civilian organisations, and international forces. A Force for New Zealand reflects that our work as a Defence Force is a collective effort that is far greater than the sum of our individual parts. With nearly 2900 civilians in the Defence Force, as well as many uniformed roles in joint and headquarters teams, it is important that we develop a collective purpose that tells the story of our whole Force.

5. **What’s the connection to the white kiwi on black roundel?**
   
   The white kiwi is an enduring symbol that has been associated with New Zealand Forces since before World War I. It is currently worn by service people on deployment overseas. We aren’t changing the patches our people wear when deploying. The look of A Force for New Zealand borrows from the kiwi roundel, but does not change the patch itself. We think it captures the best of our collective efforts, so we’ve sought to borrow from its mana to help reinforce our collective purpose. It is an expression of being both of, and for New Zealand.

**To find out more:**

You can find out more about A Force for New Zealand on the NZDF intranet, simply by clicking on the A Force for New Zealand icon at the top of the home page. This includes copies of material we’ve produced, guides and toolkits, questions and answers, as well as some useful templates and screensavers.