**RNZE Charitable Trust (RNZE CT or “Trust”) Annual Report for 2013**

We are pleased to provide this report based on the **activity of the Trust during the 2013** **calendar year**. The Trust has had a very challenging, but satisfying year in the progress it has made in a number of areas covering the objects of the Trust and these are explained further below. Although we are not obliged to provide an annual report for compliance purposes, we do this to recognise our sponsors and supporters, as well as ensuring that the activities of the Trust are published for members of **our parent bodies**, namely the **RNZE Corps** **Committee and the Sappers Association (NZ) Inc**.

The **rebuild of the ECMC collection** continues with 27 of the 35 displays in the museum area now completed. The remaining eight display cabinets are awaiting further contributions of artefacts and memorabilia, to cover areas and deployments including Afghanistan, Iraq and Timor-Leste, for example. Another major challenge is identifying many of the current contributions and photos for a wide range of RNZE deployments and operations, where the location, date, task and names of individuals are not provided. **Any further assistance both** **serving and retired members of the Corps can provide** in these areas would really be appreciated. Some of the **display cabinets have internal lighting** installed to improve their utility and it is hoped to continue with the remainder of the cabinets as funding permits. We are **experimenting with LED lighting** to increase the light levels and reduce heat generated by these appliances, during the next year or so.

We are very grateful for the generous sponsorship from Pub Charity, which has enabled us to **complete the first two stages of our “ICR&T” project** and we now have a range of new computing, copying, digitizing, scanning and electronic display equipment operating within the ECMC. This includes both hardware and software all provided at discounted costs by Advantage Computers Ltd of Palmerston North and Techsoup NZ. Also, a Broadband connection has been provided by Inspire Net, which enables internet access and a new email address <**ecmc@inspire.net.nz**>. We hope to have a website dedicated to the ECMC and the RNZE CT established during 2014.

Thanks to 2nd Engr Regt, the SME and DSS Property Group, the **adjacent double-garage is** **now operating as a workshop and store for the ECMC**, covered by both fire and security detection systems. This has enabled our collection of maps, plans, framed photos and pictures, old Sapper equipment, trophies and other important records and memorabilia to be properly housed, but yet to be fully inventoried. **Signage** designed and manufactured by Eyeright Signs of Levin, has been funded from our own resources and **installed about the** **ECMC buildings**, bringing a little more attention to the complex and what is housed there. In addition, similarly designed **street and ‘wayfinding’ signage has been produced and will be installed about Linton Camp in 2014.**

Our **ongoing building of relationships has expanded** with meetings and visits from representatives of Te Manawa Science Centre and Museum of Palmerston North, Massey University, the Wanganui Regional Museum, the “World War 100” office, Wanganui District Library, Museums Aotearoa, the HQ NZDF Heritage Advisor and many others during the year. We are now a full member of Museums Aotearoa and registered on their website, which will increase awareness of the ECMC and RNZE CT nationally. This might also bring more visitors to the complex, which creates another demand which will need to be considered and resourced in the future. During 2013 and with the ECMC only being open one day a week, the **ECMC was visited by over 550 members of the public**. We also received a visit from CDF, Lt Gen Rhys Jones, CNZM and his entourage in early December 2013, they were all most impressed with the ECMC and its amenity, collection and displays, etc.

One of our major challenges is the **cataloguing and inventory** **of the “Corps collection”** contained within the ECMC. At present, we have recorded over 2,600 individual items or in excess of 4,900 entries, with a total value of some $288,000. We believe that this is only about 10% of the items stored or on display within the ECMC complex and efforts are being made to continue this important work. Our specialised comprehensive insurance policy to cover the “collection” (as assets of the Trust), is currently valued at $250,000 and is reviewed regularly to ensure that we have appropriate protection for the “collection”.

Clas Chamberlain continues to arrange the **RNZE History Lecture series**, which has been operating successfully for three and a half years now. These events are held at the ECMC at midday, on the second Thursday of each month (February through November) and cover a wide range of military, engineering and historical topics, as well as overseas deployments both past and present. We have had many excellent and expert presenters from all around NZ deliver these lectures. It is unfortunate that the attendance at many of these presentations has not been the best and we hope that the 2014 lecture series will attract a better following and turnout.

The **RNZE Corps History project continues to progress**, albeit slowly as funding permits. During 2013, we managed to resume activity and have completed 8 (from Palmerston North and Wellington) more oral history interview recordings and transcriptions. There are a further 3 to follow early in 2014, as well as up to an additional 5-6 from the Auckland area. This means that we have now completed Stage 1A (18 selected interviews in 2012), partial completion of Stage 1B (8 further interviews, with some 8 to follow in 2014) and propose to jump to Stage 3 (interviews with 16-20 serving Sappers of all ranks) later in 2014. This will complete the oral history interview phase as we advance towards Stage 4 in the selection and engagement of a suitable author and commence the writing of an authorative Corps history proper. The writer continues to project manage this activity, which can be very challenging in the selection and securing of suitable interview candidates and then coordinating this with our external contractor. We continue to appreciate the advice and assistance of the Ministry of Culture and Heritage history group (Claire Hall), as well as the efforts of our new oral history contractor, David Young of Wellington. David has been working with us on the Stage 1B interviews in 2013, as well as all the post-production and sound engineering works undertaken by Anaru Dalziel of Valley Audio in Wellington. Thanks to ECCT for supporting us with sponsorship towards this important project, which does require more positive funding in the future, if we are to realise the completion of the history book for a release in 2016-17 !

I am pleased to report that we have seen **an increase in our regular donors and contributors** in recent months. Thanks to a concerted effort by the SME, we now have some 27 contributors, up from 16 at the end of 2012 and now providing some $7,000 annually in donations. The SME also held a fund raising event and passed on over $800 in cash in late 2013 as a donation towards the Trust. We must also record the generous contribution of Andrew Fisher (a retired Sapper officer) of “Ecostock”, Auckland, who has made a significant automatic weekly payment towards the Trust. These funds all go towards the maintenance and operation of the ECMC library and museum, as well as funding the RNZE Corps history project. Of the $105,406 (excl GST) applied for from other charitable trusts for funding supplementation, we only received a total of $18,535 (excl GST). The latter grants were directed towards the two stages of the ICR&T project, specialised restoration consumables, new promotional brochures for the ECMC library and museum, as well as St Martin’s RNZE and Garrison Chapel and the RNZE Corps History project. We will continue to work with a number of other charitable trusts to raise funds for the key projects in support of the objects of the Trust. We would appreciate the **contributions of more serving and retired Sappers**, to ensure that we continue to progress these projects and ensure that the ECMC and RNZE CT survive in the future.

The **Trust Board** continued to meet on a quarterly basis throughout 2013, overseeing its responsibilities in accordance with the Trust Deed. Trustees include George Butcher, Anthony Wilson, Ben Pitt, Don Jones, Darrin Waitere, Clas Chamberlain, Mike Owen and myself. We were extremely well served by WO2 John Flintoft as our Treasurer (who is now overseas and replaced by Lt Andy Blackburn of 25ESS) and appreciated his contribution and dedication, as well as Lt Ingrid Gillingham of 25ESS as our Secretary. We are still working on the **financial reports for 2013**, but can report at this early stage that there was a small surplus achieved. More will be reported later, as we file our audited financial report with the Charities Section of the Department of Internal Affairs. We really appreciate the time and effort that many of the Trustees devote towards the workings of the ECMC and Trust, in addition to our Secretary and Treasurer and HQ staff of both the 2nd Engr Regt and the SME.

Finally, we wish to **sincerely thank and recognise the contribution made by our sponsors and** **supporters** within the community. To Pub Charity (ICR&T Stages 1 and 2), ECCT (RNZE Corps History project), Infinity Foundation Ltd (specialised restoration consumables), The Page (Public) Trust (promotional brochures), Advantage Computers Ltd (specialist IC&T advice and equipment supply and installation), Inspire Net (specialist advice and discounted Broadband connection and internet services), Techsoup NZ (computer software), Eyeright Signs (signage design, manufacture and installation), our most sincere appreciation. To our donors and contributors, as well as 2nd Engr Regt, the SME and DSS Property Group, we also appreciated your contribution and support. Without all this, both the ECMC and Trust could not operate or provide and maintain a valued service to the public of NZ.

Joe Hollander

Trustee/Chair

RNZE Charitable Trust

Palmerston North

31 December 2013