



THE RNZE CHARITABLE TRUST Incorporated

C/o DSS Registry
Linton Military Camp
Palmerston North 4820
NEW ZEALAND



“Preserving RNZE Heritage”

www.sappers.org.nz

RNZE Charitable Trust (RNZE CT or “Trust”) Annual Report for 2016

I am pleased to submit our fifth annual report, which is provided to recognise our sponsors and supporters as well as an awareness of the activities of the Trust. It also informs our parent bodies (namely the **RNZE Corps Committee** and **Sappers Association (NZ) Inc**) and wider Corps membership of the progress the Trust has made on key projects during the 2016 calendar year. Once again, we have had a busy and successful year, now that we are well established since our formation in mid-2011. The adopted “strap/tagline” of **“Preserving RNZE Heritage”**, certainly reflects the principle objects of the Trust and what it has achieved since its formation.

Our priority project is the **RNZE Corps History project**, which has progressed well throughout the year with the completion of research and writing of eight part-chapter (first) drafts. These have been reviewed by Corps History Project Advisory Group members and feedback passed to the author. Our project author and historian, Peter Cooke, has made several research visits to the ECMC, RNZE units and to the RSME, RE units, UK archival sites and Archives UK during the year. He has submitted regular quarterly project reports, which have been circulated widely. The current plan is to finish first draft chapters by March 2017, followed by completion of second draft revisions by August 2017. The plan is to select a suitable publisher about June and take the manuscript to the publisher in September 2017. We can then work to release and launch the publication in early 2018. So far, we have expended \$152,387 of the \$170,117 funds raised for this project, including the significant Lottery Grants Board contribution. As, NZDF/Army was unable to provide any further funding support for this project, further Trust contributions and fund raising will be necessary to cover remaining costs for this project through to completion and book release.

Progress on **rebuilding the museum displays** has slowed, as we have had to focus on other tasks, without much additional person power. However, all our 35 display cabinets have had LED strip lighting installed, access doors hinged and then properly secured. This has made a huge improvement to the lighting and access to display cabinets so that we can continue the refurbishment programme. Considerable progress has been made in the scanning, digitising and post-processing mainly of our photographic collection, where nearly 3,000 of our collection of 20,000 photos, slides, negatives, plates, etc have been scanned and stored digitally. We are still awaiting further artefacts, memorabilia and photos to fill up the displays covering Afghanistan and Timor L'este deployments, as further items from Iraq have now been provided from the Op Taji team. It is still our intention to establish a WW1 trench emplacement in the grounds adjacent to the main building, as well as a tiled area for outdoor presentations. The plan remains to locate and place older RNZE equipment on the concrete plinths at the entrance to the ECMC, plus more Bailey panels around the entrance pathway and periphery. During the year, HVAC appliances were installed above the library and museum area in order to provide a more conducive and stable environment for the collections.

We have had nearly **3,500 visitors through the ECMC** since commencing record taking in mid-2013, with 1,008 in 2016 (968 in 2015 and 915 in 2014). These have included a wide range of local and international, serving and retired members of the NZDF and RNZE, general public, children, schools and clubs, etc. All Basic Combat Engineer course participants and personnel from other courses run by the SME have also made visits to the ECMC complex as part of their programmes. We remain members of Museums Aotearoa and are shown in their annual directory and website, as a museum worthy of a visit. We also appear on “Trip Advisor” and with a page in “Wikipedia”, as well as on the Sappers website and Facebook. The ECMC is becoming better known within the Manawatu and wider community and that in turn enables us to publicise the Corps and meet our object of “Preserving RNZE Heritage”.

Our **information, communications, research and technology (ICR&T) development** has also slowed, following the installation of four electronic displays covering WW1, WW2 and more contemporary Sapper activities. In addition to having our portable multi-media presentation equipment package, we want to introduce more interactive and electronic displays into the museum. Also, an updated electronic library system, so that we can keep track of the extensive collection of reference material housed in both the library and “technical information section” for RNZE activities and deployments. Funds have also been provided for the further development and upgrade of the “Sappers” website, which serves the Sappers Association, ECMC, RNZE Trust, 2nd Engineer Regiment, SME and the Corps as a whole. This is linked to other social media sites, as well as being enabled for all related organisations to communicate with serving and retired members of the Corps, through this medium. It is also proposed to build a replacement website in 2017, to cover the current 2002 vintage site. All this activity has been funded from external sources and is much appreciated by the Trust (our sponsors are recognised below, for their generous and valuable contributions).

We continue with the challenging task of **cataloguing all the “assets of the Trust”**, now with some 9,900 items of the ECMC/RNZE CT “collection” (5,034 screens) inventoried (out of an estimated 60,000 items, including some 3,000 photographic items and with an estimated recorded value of \$332,856. Our comprehensive insurance cover is reviewed annually and was increased in value to \$310,000 (plus Trustee liability indemnity insurance), when the policies are reviewed in April each year. We continue to relocate much of our stored items into an external expandable (old field medical operating theatre) container (with heat pump environment) adjacent to the main building and garage. This has enabled us to further review items of equipment, clothing and photographic and document records, to inventory, sort and store them again in more suitable facilities.

Our **financial situation** remains in a reasonable state, as most of the major projects and procurements in 2016 were covered by external funding sponsors. We sincerely acknowledge and appreciate the support from our sponsors and regular contributors, as well as other donors. Our **regular contributors** have increased back up to 22 over the year or approx \$271 per month (we used to have over 130 regular contributors a couple of decades ago), although the donations total contributed for the year was in the order of \$6,200. The latter also included a generous contribution from the Nepia family (in recognition of the passing of WO1 (Retd) Oma Nepia, and redirected towards the RNZE Corps History Project), Auckland Sapper Officers’ Mess, ECMC donations (visitors and history presentations) box and other miscellaneous donors. Our six-monthly GST rebates also assist in keeping the funds for ECMC operational purposes in balance. Three applications were submitted this year for **external funding supplementation** to a total value of \$12,398 (excl GST). One for our insurance cover was declined, we received \$3,500 (excl GST) from Mainland Foundation for the website development and currently awaiting the outcome of an application for an initial stage of scanning, digitising and post-processing of heritage material (\$5,000) from ECCT. Our **generous sponsors and supporters** for 2016 included, Mainland Foundation, Advantage Computers Ltd (PN), Inspire Net (PN) and Trophy Specialists (PN) and all other regular donors and contributors to the Trust.

The **monthly military history presentation series** organised by Clas Chamberlain, was provided from February to November and included a wide range of excellent and informative presentations delivered by the writer (“Military heritage and history of PN”), Dr Chris Pugsley (“NZ Division on the Somme in 1916”), Prof Glyn Harper (“WW1 Literature”), Lt Col (Rtd) Keith Mitchell (“Hutt Road Bailey Bridging”), Col (Rtd) Terry McBeth (“NZ Poppy Places Trust”), Evan Greensides of PNCL (“PN military street signs”), Maj Tim Woodman (“Falklands Campaign”), Selwyn Ponga-Davis (“Family Connections at Gallipoli”), Maj (Rtd) Bob Norman (“100 years on the Ice - Antarctica”) and Lesley Courtenay from PNCL (“Charlotte Warburton, a WW2 supporter”), to name a few examples. These presentations have been held in the Linton Camp (LRSC) Conference Room and new Elliott VC Centre, only for an hour during the midday period each month and serve as a useful means of keeping these important topics alive and at the forefront of our attention. Attendees come from all around, including the PNCC, City Library and heritage team, PNRSA, Manawatu History Teachers Network, Manawatu Officers Club, plus serving military and civilian staff from Linton Camp and other NZDF elements in Palmerston North. As the “uniform” (military) attendance and support has waned in recent times, it has been decided to run these sessions in the PN City Library from Feb 17 onwards, where the majority of support comes from.

The **Trust Board** held quarterly meetings throughout the year, performing the requirements of our objects in accordance with the Trust Deed. All relevant compliance has been met and reports have been prepared, approved and submitted to Charities Services and are shown on their website. Trustee attendance has been exemplary throughout the year, along with the administration provided by Treasurer, Greg Findon, as well as the Secretary, Lt Bryce Scholtens, latterly of the SME. My sincere thanks go to our trustees including Clas Chamberlain, Don Jones, Greg Findon, Cliff Parker, along with CO 2ER and Regt Col RNZE, Lt Col Paul Hayward, RSM 2ER, WO1 Lyall Mooney and Lt Bryce Scholtens, your assistance and support throughout the year has been much appreciated.

Over 50 personnel from RNZE units have provided valuable **assistance to the ECMC** for a few hours each Thursday, as part of the RNZE monthly duty unit assistance scheme. This was instituted by the RSM 2ER in mid-2014 and managed by the SSMs of each of the units of 2nd Engr Regt and the SME, based on a monthly roster and task list. This has enabled a wide range of tasks to be undertaken to assist us in the ongoing maintenance of the ECMC library and museum and other RNZE CT administrative requirements. Local volunteers including Mike Earley, who has been a regular assist throughout the past year, also Noel Woodley, who has joined us recently, have provided much needed assistance in the areas of scanning, digitising and post-processing of heritage material, recording names of older photographic records and other archival and inventory tasks.

Once again, several **minor projects were carried out by the SME**, including installing the LED strip lighting conversion to and securing all 35 display cabinets. This assistance is vital for the ongoing operation of the ECMC and we are very grateful to the CI, SSM and WO TTW, SME for their support in 2016. Likewise, we have had excellent **support and assistance from the 2ER**, in particular from the CO, XO, Adjt, RSM and Wks WO, as well as unit commanders and Administrator Tania Jones and a number of other RHQ staff. Our sincere thanks to you all for this much needed and appreciated contribution and support. We have also appreciated support from OC LRSC (Maj Mike Pettersen), DSS Property Group (WO2 Tom Donald and Shannon Quirke) and Spotless in the operation and maintenance of the ECMC. Given that there is only a few of us trying to keep the ECMC open and running on a weekly basis, as well as managing the RNZE CT and various key projects, we do need assistance from you all. We wish that more retired members of the Corps currently living in the Manawatu would take on a more active interest in the ECMC.

Finally and to foreshadow our planned activities, objectives and focal points for 2017, including:

1. Continue to progress the RNZE Corps History project through to completion;
2. Keep the ECMC open every Thursday and operating satisfactorily;
3. Continue to rebuild, refurbish and refresh the ECMC museum display cabinets;
4. Explore other means and modes to display RNZE activities and functions about the ECMC;
5. Introduce an electronic system to support inventory and library collection work;
6. Continue to scan, digitise, post-process and store heritage material for future safekeeping;
7. Explore and introduce interactive electronic displays within the ECMC museum area;
8. Continue developing the website and relevant sub-pages on www.sappers.org.nz;
9. Continue to seek external funding supplementation as required; and
10. Manage the RNZE CT in accordance with the Trust Deed and to meet all related compliance requirements.

Joe Hollander
Trustee/Trust Board Chair
RNZE Charitable Trust

Palmerston North
31 December 2016