

THE BUGLE

Issue 179 | December 2012



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COURAGE | COMMITMENT | COMRADESHIP | INTEGRITY

“THE BUGLE”

The Deployment Newsletter is produced for families and service personnel associated with current overseas deployments.

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Bugle contributions are welcome and should be sent to Carol Voyce.

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Disclaimer

Articles and opinions expressed in “The Bugle” are not necessarily those of the New Zealand Defence Force.

Cover Photo:

Kate and Charlie enjoy a visit with Santa at the Burnham Christmas Festival. Their Dad, Marc, is currently on deployment in Afghanistan.

THE MANNING TRUST



**Colonel Martin Dransfield, Chief
Military Liaison Officer, Timor-Leste**

We delivered the goods so generously donated by the GYRO 13 family and friends to four destinations on Wednesday. I was joined by Major John Humphries, who is acting as the New Zealand J1 advisor to the Timorese Military, and Lieutenant Colonel Graham Goodwin from the Australian Army.

First we visited Lalawa Suco and presented clothes and toys that will be gifted to the families over the Christmas period. This Suco has supported, and been supported, by the Kiwis since we set up a base there in 1999. The Suco Chief is called Edinho Moniz Do Rego (Eddie), and I consider him both as a friend and as one of the most impressive Suco Chiefs in Timor-Leste. His Suco is industrious in all it does and this is reflected in the manner in which the roads are maintained, the children consistently attend school and their care for the memorials to Tony Walser and Len Manning that are in their Suco. The highlight during this presentation of donated goods was the excitement of one little boy with his Spiderman mask.

Next we delivered the fantastic array of sewing materials to the Claretian Training Centre, where our Manning scholars are training and where we have set them up with a small business making school uniforms. They were incredibly excited by the wonderful array of sewing equipment

and materials. We also donated stationery, clothing and materials that they can use for cooking. The amusing moment being Father Silverius putting on a Jacket that had the logo Wrightson on it. He then declared that he looked like the Prime Minister. Not long after he was sweating in the mid day sun, but again it is a wonderful gift that will be much appreciated.

Next we visited the safe house for young mothers and their children and gifted an array of toys to kids who have had a tough start in life but are now in a safe place surrounded by love. We also gifted infants and young children's clothes to the appreciative young Mums.

Finally, we went to our old Headquarters that has now returned to being a hospital and gifted the Nuns some toys and children's clothes that will be distributed to needy families over the festive period.

Next week I am joined by John to visit the Don Bosco Technical College where my two daughters' school is sponsoring a number of young women/girls through their vocational training. Again the various gifts of clothing and toys will be distributed to families who otherwise would have very little for Christmas.

So in closing, I would like to thank you all for your generous donations and to also thank all those who worked so hard to get these gifts delivered to Timor-Leste. Again the true family spirit that underpins our Defence Force has come through to deliver joy and hope.

Reflections.....



**Doctor Anne Campbell,
Veterans Affairs NZ**

Dear deployed servicemen and women of NZDF, partners, Mums, Dads, extended families and not to forget children of serving members...

Whanau..... how I love that word. It means so much to a person who identifies as belonging to NZ but more to the belonging to the NZDF whanau, whether you are deployed or at home in NZ.

Many servicepersons are scattered across the planet. Many are at home, safe and protected from the disruption that occurs in many countries other than our own.

As a retired member of the Army, a wife of a serving infantry officer, a mother of two "grown up" kids, you have many stories from a life time of service within the NZDF. At this stage of life you become reflective.

Bob and I married in the 1980's. Initially he in Waiouru and I in Wanganui. Married, unaccompanied even back in those days. How to start a marriage! In my earlier days women were only just being integrated into the NZDF as "equals".

Pregnant.....oh no..... "Not in my Battalion" were the words from my sensitive Commanding Officer!..... Not! Childcare was not so freely available as it is today and centres wouldn't take them until they were six months old.

We became a family of four (plus a cat and a dog).

Childhood illnesses were something that were never planned. My good-old-mum would jump yet again onto the train bound for Waiouru to help out.

We had an unwritten "policy". One parent had to be home at any given time. Bob did most of the longer deployments. We haven't bothered to count the days apart. I tried to keep things "as normal as possible".

Camping was the usual holiday at Christmas. I wouldn't admit it then but can now, Bob can pack the car better than me with all the equipment. The Coromandel weather lived up to its best, it poured with rain... Bob phones in from Timor..... "How's it all going?"

Reply "now's not the b...y time to be ringing"... as two mums without husbands are tying tents to cars so they didn't take off in the wind and pulling pup-tents down so the kids didn't float away!

Bob went on Ex Long Look to the UK (oh how much I would have loved to do that). It was just post Gulf War One. His Marine unit was deployed to Turkey therefore he went on operational service with them. As a wife, I just accepted this but after two and a half months of no communication from Turkey patience wore thin. I got desperate. I had to talk to him, letters weren't enough. The number I eventually was given was answered "Bonjour....." oh no. I'd ended up in the French quarter so to speak. Through broken English and French I explained I was looking for a sole "Kiwi" on an enormous airbase in the British area. He advised me to phone back in one hour as he had to cycle to the other side of the airfield. Relief, it was worth the wait. I could hear Bobs voice.

Last year was the hardest...at the 'empty nest stage of life' (kids gone, cat and dog had died), Bob deployed to the Sinai. The Egyptian

Revolution started two weeks after he got there..... "now hold on here this was meant to be a safe deployment" I thought to myself. I got a lot of support from an ADF friend over Skype. Her husband was in Afghanistan!

With respect to our unwritten policy, one parent at home at any given time, we failed on two days over combined service of over 70 years!

I would love to write a book of all the things that happen whilst you are "on your own". The things that made me cry are now the things that I am able to laugh at and share with others.

May I offer these words of advice to others who are there "keeping the home fires burning:"

- Look after No 1, yourself as well as the kids.
- Ensure you have support from someone you are close to and can talk freely to.
- Cry if you want to, don't feel bad about it.
- If he/she doesn't call/email/skype don't panic, get on and enjoy your day.
- Eat takeaways, it takes the pressure off big time.
- Deployments are a test of courage, commitment and integrity at various levels of many partnerships.

YOU CAN DO IT!

My challenge is to those of us at home in NZ, there should be a new column in this publication

LOL (Laugh Out Loud) tell others, the good, the bad, and ugly days you have had while your loved one has been away but how you survived. Share your stories.....

Merry Christmas to all!





Christmas Message from Secretary of Defence Helene Quilter

At this time of the year, most New Zealanders thoughts turn to a few days off, and catching up with family and friends for Christmas. But I am very aware that our servicemen and women overseas will not be able to fully enjoy either of those things.

Active service is a huge responsibility. Only those who serve can really know just how tough and demanding it is. Your words and deeds are taken by all those you work with and meet as a window into the values and spirit of all New Zealanders. I want you to know that all of us here at the Ministry of Defence are proud of what you do and how you do it.

To all of you, on the front line for your country everywhere from the Antarctic cold to the desert heat, my team and I wish you the best Christmas for you and your family, and good fortune for the remainder of your time away. We look forward to you returning home safe and sound.





Christmas Message from Chief of Defence Force

LTGEN Rhys Jones

As Christmas approaches I'd like to acknowledge the staunch effort by everyone within the Defence Force – military, civilian, full time and part time – throughout 2012. And behind our people is the staunch support of so many families like you.

We should be proud of what we have achieved together, because we have achieved a lot. This year has not been without its ups and downs, but it has been a great year. Despite the tragic losses suffered in Afghanistan we have made good progress. We will shortly have completed our operational roles in Afghanistan, and the withdrawal process from Timor-Leste and the Solomon Islands, signalling the end of a decade of operational deployments, and we should be proud of what we've achieved in these theatres. Back in New Zealand we have made progress with the transformation within Defence.

Looking forward to next year, 2013 will be exciting with the return of our people from Afghanistan and the Solomon Islands; the re-orientation of our people back into training in the Pacific; the ramping up of joint exercises with other countries such as Australia, America and Canada; and improving our Joint Amphibious Taskforce capability.

Today though, our thoughts are particularly with all our people serving overseas at Christmas, and you their families. Whether this is their first Christmas away from you, or they have deployed over Christmas several times, being away from your family at this time never gets any easier.

So wherever your loved one is this festive season, whether they're having a white Christmas in Afghanistan or Antarctica, or a warm Christmas in Timor-Leste, the Solomon Islands, or just here in New Zealand, I wish you all the best for a merry Christmas and a happy New Year.



Christmas Message from Rear Admiral Tony Parr Chief of Navy

Kia ora tatou

I'll be recently retired as most of the Navy takes a break over the Christmas and New Year period. Nevertheless, there is much to reflect on as 2012 has taken its course.

The Navy has been engaged, busy and active around our coast, in the Southern Oceans, Australia and the South Pacific. We've notched up a few 'firsts for a long time' including participation in RIMPAC and deployments to Antarctica. We've also been particularly busy with Customs, Fisheries, Police and the Department of Conservation as we have increasingly taken a wider role in providing for New Zealand's maritime security.

It's true that there have been some challenges, but I have been impressed how we have worked together in understanding and meeting those challenges while continuing to deliver what's required of us. We can all be very proud of the Navy's achievements and performance - testament to an organisation which continuously strives to get things right in the business that we are in.

So now with Christmas and New Year all but upon us it's time to rest up for a while with *whanau* and friends, perhaps travel to visit different parts of the country and tackle some experiences of the rest and recreational variety.

You deserve it.

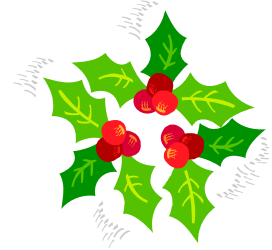
As we've kept our activity quite safe throughout the year, keep safe as you head off on your break. I look forward to following your progress.

Ka kite ano



Brigadier Peter Kelly
Acting Chief of Army

Acting Chief of Army Christmas Message



***Wishing you all the very best for an
enjoyable Christmas season!***

I would like to take this opportunity to commend you on your hard work over what has been a very challenging year. There have been some great successes on our operations to date, as well as some extremely sad incidents. These unfortunate events have caused much grief, both in New Zealand and on operations, but our professionalism, commitment and ability to pull together as one has helped us through these tough times.

To those of you who will be serving in operational theatres over the Christmas period, I acknowledge your own personal sacrifice at this time of year. This is normally a time where families join to celebrate Christmas and New Year. This year your seat will remain empty, but rest assured that we will have a beer to toast you.

To your families and friends, I wish them all the best over what will be a hard time, especially for the younger children. The Army demands much of our service personnel, which translates to an additional burden on families and whānau. The dedication and support shown by your families throughout 2012 is appreciated and valued.

So, as New Zealand moves into a period of festivities you will be representing our country and Army in places less pleasant. Stay alert, look after yourselves and your mates, continue the great work of 2012 through into 2013; and lastly, come home to your own family and our Army family safe and sound.



2012 Christmas Message from Air Vice-Marshal Peter Stockwell Chief of Air Force

“Per Ardua Ad Astra” - through adversity to the stars - the RNZAF motto, could not be more appropriate than it is today. This past year has been a very challenging one for us all in the NZDF, but it has been especially challenging for those who have been deployed overseas on operations. During the year we have seen great tragedy with the loss of several of our comrades while serving New Zealand and others suffering injury. Being away at Christmas time is always harder for those deployed overseas and away from their families, friends and loved ones, so the thoughts of all at home are with you at this special time of year.

While we have had tragedy and problems to overcome this past year, it has also been a memorable one. The RNZAF has celebrated its 75th anniversary in style, and continued to deliver strong support for the wide range of NZDF activities. Despite reduced fleets while we undertake aircraft upgrade and replacement programs, we have worked hard to ensure the necessary operational support has been provided to the other Services and to other Government departments. Highlights have included the carriage of 32 WW2 Bomber Command veterans to London for the opening of the Bomber Command memorial, and then another 22 Veterans to Egypt for the El Alamein 70th anniversary commemoration. We completed the year with support for the Royal visit by Their Royal Highnesses, The Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall.

Next year we look forward to continuing to re-build aircraft fleets back towards full strength while we also provide the necessary support to the full range of NZDF and Government tasks. Although the NZDF's operational activities will drawdown further during the year, I am sure that our rate of effort will remain high as we shift more towards an increased exercising regime. So there will continue to be plenty of challenges for everyone.

On behalf of the Air Force, to all personnel and their families, especially those deployed overseas over Christmas, I want to thank you for your hard work and dedication during the year. Keep safe and we look forward to providing strong air support again next year.

All the best for a great Christmas and an enjoyable and prosperous New Year!



COMJFNZ Xmas Message

Major General Dave Gawn

At any given time we have around 300 personnel deployed in 12 countries.

That means that we have 300 families who are doing the hard yards without their loved one, and at Christmas time that can be particularly tough.

As we get closer to the impending withdrawals for Afghanistan, Timor-Leste and the Solomon Islands, it's a time for reflection on the huge effort and sacrifices that you and your loved ones have made this year to help people in need. It might not feel like you've made a direct contribution, but you have. Without your support at home, our people could not do what they do around the world.

2012 has been a challenging year for the entire Defence family, not just because of the people we have lost in Afghanistan and here at home, but also because of our high operational tempo overall. In an increasingly turbulent world, it's never been more obvious that Kiwis don't back down and we will always be where we are needed, ready to get in and do what has to be done.

It's our profession, our passion, and at times it probably seems thankless, both for families at home and your loved ones deployed. But when a Search and Rescue operation has a successful outcome, when an Afghan girl can go to school, when a country's security is ready to be managed by its own security forces, that's when all that hard work pays off.

That's when you can feel justly proud of being an important member of the Defence family, achieving mission objectives alongside every person wearing a uniform.

I wish you all a very merry Christmas, and a safe and happy 2013.



Colonel Chris Parsons

Christmas Message from Commander 1 (NZ) Brigade, Linton



Christmas 2012 marks the first anniversary of 1 (NZ) Brigade. Over the course of this year, 1 Brigade members have served all over the world and in doing so, they and their families have made a difference to those less fortunate. Service is, by nature, a selfless endeavour which is why it is honoured by our nation. On behalf of all of us in 1 (NZ) Brigade, I would like to acknowledge the sacrifice you and your families are making, especially at this time of the year. I have served on operations over Christmas myself on a number of occasions and I know that you will miss your families but will celebrate the day as a team. As you do, I would ask that you spare a prayer for the seven Brigade families who have lost loved ones this year on operations and training.

Looking forward for those of you from 1 (NZ) Brigade, 2013 promises to build on the advances we have made in our first year. We will continue to conduct a string of excellent training with the Australians, Brits, US, Canadians, Malaysians, Singaporeans and many other partners. Having re-established QAMR as a Regiment, we are well positioned to build on strength. This year we have raised the Enhanced Infantry Company and practiced it with the SAS and in joint multi-national amphibious exercises both in NZ and abroad. In 2013, 1 RNZIR will continue to ready this skilled and dedicated company for contingency operations. This year we have embedded a new means of conducting C2 through the tremendous efforts of 1 (NZ) Signals Regiment and this is already transforming how we can exercise and how we prepare for operations; 2013 will allow us to further realise the potential of a new way of working.

Again, from all in 1 (NZ) Brigade, Merry Christmas and God speed.

Chris

C.J. Parsons, MNZM, DSD, Colonel | Commander 1st (New Zealand) Brigade



On behalf of the Officers, Soldiers and Civilian staff of 2nd Health Support Battalion (New Zealand), I would like to extend warm greetings and good wishes to all deployed personnel, and a special note to our Battalion personnel currently serving on operational deployments over this festive period.

This year has given us a lot to think about. Not only have we lost one of our own, LCPL Jacinda Baker continues to be sorely missed, but our personnel have been involved directly in the first line medical care of those personnel wounded in action and their ongoing rehabilitation; the scars are as yet untold.

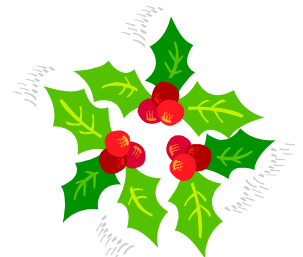
While ensuring the health and wellbeing of others we can sometimes forget to take care of ourselves, our family and friends. Take a moment this festive period to look after yourselves and each other.

Have a safe and enjoyable Christmas and New Year!

LT COL W.M. TWISS

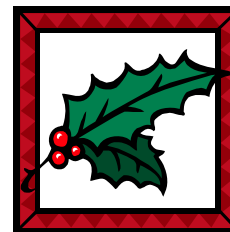
Commanding Officer

2nd Health Support Battalion (New Zealand)





Christmas Message from 2/1st Battalion, Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment

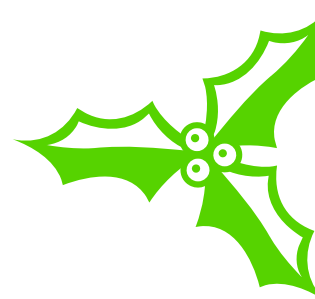
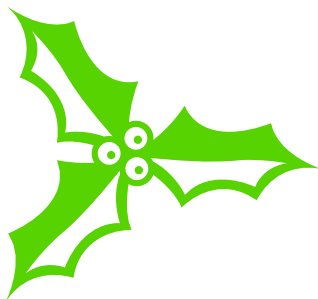


From the Commanding Officer
Lieutenant Colonel S.J. Michie

To all the boys and girls from 2/1 serving overseas - mainly on CRIB but also Fabs there in Timor - we hope you all have the best possible Christmas break you can. We are all very proud of you and the work you do for our country. It has been a tough year for everyone in the Battalion and I am sure it must have been extremely tough for your families to wave you off on ops after all that has happened - so what ever you do - stay in touch with you loved ones. Of course you have their support and ours too, so give it heaps and keep up the good work - stay sharp and stay safe. There is something small in the mail from us, so fingers crossed it arrives in time for Christmas. It also contains a wee final message from me. Onward!

From WO1 Craig Spinks
RSM 2/1 RNZIR

I have had occasion this year to be clearly reminded of what it means to be part of something quite special, a family that does not pay lip service to the phrase "tis the people". Our unit having shared some tragedy very publicly this year have shown to man our true spirit in how we have supported each other, our families and our wider community without losing focus on the many jobs at hand. I can say without reservation that I am extremely proud of each of you as you serve with professionalism, compassion and true understanding of comradeship. Be assured that you might be separated from the remainder of the unit by distance but not in our daily thoughts as you serve in the various missions. Keep busy and remain focused, gain the experiences that you can only get from doing what you are doing, bring them home so you can help train others. We will farewell another Commanding Officer, LT COL Michie, having had the benefit of his strong and selfless leadership for the last two years. I, along with the remainder of the Bn will ensure he is farewelled as a comrade and highly respected member of the Bn. Kura Takahe Puni.



Christmas Greetings cont'd...



On behalf on Officers and Soldiers of 16th Field Regiment, I extend our best wishes to all deployed personnel and their families over the Christmas period. We trust you stay safe and soldier on, the challenges of operations and being separated from your loved ones never seem to ease over the festive period.

2012 has been a challenging year but much has been achieved. 2013 will be no different with plenty of opportunities on the cards! For the Gunners deployed, we look forward to seeing you back home safe with plenty of tales to tell and experiences to share.

Best regards,

Ubique

CO Guns

P.S. for the Gunners on CRIB, by the time you read this Kamal should have joined you....finally!



3rd Combat Service Support Battalion

Xmas Message

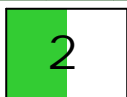
On behalf of all Military and Civilian members of 3 CSS Bn, I extend our warmest greetings and good wishes to all deployed personnel, and a special note to our own unit's men and women currently serving on operational deployments over this festive period.

I also extend our best wishes to your families, as we acknowledge that being separated from your loved ones at this time is never easy.

We understand the tremendous commitment that you have made and congratulate you on rising to the challenge. 3 CSS Bn is immensely proud of your contribution and always remember - *Ma Nga Hua Tu-Tangata* - By our actions we are known.

Please have an enjoyable Christmas and a safe New Year. Our thoughts are with you all and we look forward to your safe return.

LT COL Nathan Baker, CO 3 CSS Bn



Christmas Message from 2nd Combat Service Support Battalion



Here's wishing you all the best this Christmas holiday season!

As another year comes to a close I want to recognise all of our members who will be spending the festive season away from their home and their loved ones, our thoughts are with you. I would also like to acknowledge the sacrifices our families make in supporting us, without your support we could not achieve what we do.

As a Battalion we have had many achievements over the calendar year, from individual excellence through to group successes. We have had top students on courses (including All Arms Courses), continued the development of the Combat Service Support Team, had representation at the Army Shooting Competition, continued support to operations, had winners at civilian trade competitions, and had sports representatives up to and including world champions to name a few. A great base on which we can continue to build on in 2013.

For those who are able to, enjoy the break ahead, and for those of you abroad, be safe and we look forward to your return.

R.T. KING

LTCOL

Commanding Officer

2nd Combat Service Support Battalion



CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDING OFFICER

2nd/4th BATTALION, ROYAL NEW ZEALAND INFANTRY REGIMENT

LT COL Grant McMillan

On behalf of all the Officers, Soldiers and Civilian staff of 2/4 RNZIR, I would like to extend our best wishes to all the NZDF personnel who are deployed overseas during the Christmas and New Year period, in particular, CAPT P. Bowyer, SSGT A.Ward, CPL M.Britt-foy.

We extend warm wishes to your families and know that being separated from your loved ones at this time is never easy.

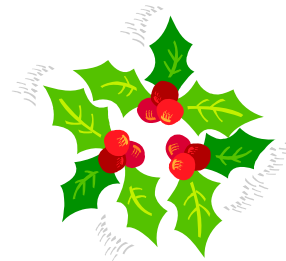
Have an enjoyable Christmas and a safe New Year. Our thoughts are with you and we look forward to your return to the unit.

Ake Ake Kia Kaha

Kia Mate Toa



Christmas Greetings cont'd...



1st Battalion Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment

2012 has been another very busy year for 1 RNZIR, and like a rollercoaster we have had our share of ups and downs. All 1 RNZIR personnel should be proud of their achievements this year. We completed our last large contributions to Operations in Afghanistan and Timor-Leste, although we still continue to provide individuals for these deployments. We re-rolled into a Light Infantry Battalion and stood up the Enhanced Infantry Company, based on A Company and many enablers from across the Brigade. Exercises like Alam Halfa, RIMPAC, Croix de Sud and Pae Tata provided excellent opportunities to operate alongside our US, FANC and ADF partners. We have had many members of our unit represent Army and NZDF in sports, and we have had many good individual performances on courses throughout the year. Sadly we have laid to rest three of our brothers, Corporal Doug Hughes, Private Michael Ross and Private Alex Rope. You will never be forgotten. Rest in Peace.

On behalf of the Commanding Officer, Officers, Soldiers, Civilian staff of 1 RNZIR, a Very Merry Christmas and all the best for the New Year to all our personnel currently deployed on operations and their families in New Zealand.



3rd Signal Squadron (Electronic Warfare)

For us back in Burnham, the end of the year is quickly approaching. Since you have been deployed, the tempo here has continued to race along at a quick pace. The troops have spent a fair amount of time in the North Island, firstly our Unit exercise, Dark Raven in and around West Auckland, namely Whenuapai, Orewa, Whangaparaoa and Waimauku. After a fortnight back in Burnham refurbishing our equipment, and letting the Enemy Party's bruises to heal, it was time to deploy back up to the Central Plateau on the 1 NZ Bde Exercise, Kiwi Koru for another 3 weeks of action.



After refurb and stand-down from Ex Kiwi Koru was complete, the majority of the JR's were off on a bus-adventure to Linton and Wellington, to take part in the ceremonial activities for the final closing down of the Maori Battalion. This was a significant occasion for the NZDF, made all the more enjoyable by the opportunity for a few quiet drinks in Wellington after the ceremony had finished, before busing home the next day.

Got to love being the 'Bde Duty Unit' in December. Luckily, the Tri-Service Guard of Honour for the President of Myanmar in Auckland on the last week of the working year was cancelled at the last minute ... call it an early Christmas present!

Most of the Unit have the opportunity to take an extended Christmas Leave break, before the Intermediate EW Course kicks off mid-Jan, followed by the new Senior EW Course ... everyone will be busy hitting the books, and looking forward to getting out into the field again.

Please know that our thoughts and prayers will be for our deployed personnel and their families back home. Whilst some of you will be looking forward to a white Christmas this year, with maybe a few sneaky stubbies of near-beer, we're sure you will have lots of opportunities to speak to your loved ones back home, or sing some Christmas carols over Skype.

Stay safe, keep your finger on the trigger, and mind on the job, and we look forward to seeing you all when you return, before you head off on a well deserved Post-Op stand-down break. *Nusquam Occulto.*



Christmas Message from The Naval Community Organisation Team Members

Meri Kirihimete – Merry Christmas!

During 2012, the NCO has continued to provide a communication link between those personnel serving overseas and their families. We have provided assistance through the NCO Headquarters, Motel bookings and Amenities and the Family Liaison Officer as well as encouraged new friendships and support networks for the families of land based deployed personnel with a partner's dinner and children's activities.

This Christmas we have 17 of our Naval personnel deployed overseas. As we celebrate our typical Christmas at the beach, camping or around the barbecue, we know that you will all have a unique memorable Christmas experience, be it spent in the snow, ice or the extreme heat. You may be away from your families this year but you will no doubt make the celebrations enjoyable and memorable to those around you, with Kiwi humour, positive attitudes and ingenuity. Although we cannot make the journey to you physically this Christmas, be assured that our thoughts and prayers are there with you.

From the NCO team - best wishes to Tenisha, John, Kathryn, Martin, Zylén, Lee and Kelly in Afghanistan, Adam and Kathryn in the Sinai, Eric in East Timor, Philip, Robin and Ralph in Israel, Duncan and Robin in Korea, and Barry and Chelsea in Antarctica.

Wherever you are at this time of year, have a Safe and Happy Christmas!

Mo te Tau Hou – Happy New Year.



The RNZAF Welfare Facilitators would like to thank everyone serving our country overseas, and their families, for making the sacrifice of being separated during this season.

May the "reason for the season" create a deep bond between you across the miles! Wishing you all a safe and Merry Christmas, and a good start into 2013!

Claudia Baker, RNZAF Woodbourne
Trevor Stone, Air Staff Wellington
Deana Lye, RNZAF Base Auckland



Carolyn Hyland, Community Services Officer, Waiouru

are held within the hearts and minds of those closest to you and your NZDF mates and colleagues at home and of course all us tree hugging types in welfare and community services. Be assured your loved ones and families have our support here at home too. Go well, Marie Lotz Family & Community Services Officer, Padres Peter Olds and Dave Lacy for the Trentham/Wellington Region.



Officer Commanding / Wellington Regional Support Centre

FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS

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NEWS FROM TASK UNIT CRIB 21, AFGHANISTAN

Sholto Stephens
Lieutenant Colonel
Commanding Officer
Task Unit CRIB 21

All of us in CRIB 21 were shocked when recently one of our soldiers was seriously injured during a live-fire training activity here in Bamyān. The circumstances surrounding the accident and background to what happened are yet to be clarified – what was quickly apparent was that everybody's training for such an injury kicked-in as almost second nature. From the Soldier's buddies and mates who were on the range, to the medic who was present, to the medical and operations staff at Kiwi Base where he was stabilised, to the personnel who were present in Bagram Airbase where he was evacuated to for initial surgery and treatment. The other stand-out for me was the bravery of the soldier concerned throughout the whole process; he was constantly talking with us all and showing incredible spirits leading up to and after his initial surgery. It reminded me that when the hard-times strike us the Kiwi attitude of looking for light-

hearted relief comes to the fore, often from the least expected corners.

The other key memory I have of the days events was the dedication of the United States military personnel who assisted the casualty from Bamyān onward. The Casualty Evacuation ('CASEVAC' in military speak) helicopter crew who were



professional through and through in their care of him, the staff at Craig Hospital in Bagram who despite having a considerable number of other patients on their hands took considerable time and effort to do everything possible to comfort and treat him to the highest level of care. From here the process of getting further treatment is almost exactly as I discussed with many of you at the welfare briefings before we left New Zealand; first priority is getting him the highest level of medical care and treatment, closely followed by getting him and some of his family reunited. All of us in Bamyān pass on our best wishes and prayers to his family back in New Zealand for as full a recovery as is possible.



A view of the Buddhas carved into the cliffs overlooking Bamiyan Town—the signs of winter lie covering the fields in the foreground

FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS CONT'D...

For those of us remaining in Bamyán we continue with our operations, in particular working alongside the Afghan National Police Forces in the Province. This has been a new experience for many of our soldiers, some of whom have been living and 'partnering' the Police as they go about their day-to-day duties.

Also over the last few weeks we have had a spate of high-level visitors, many from Kabul the capital city. A great number of them express how pleased they are with the overall security situation in the Province. There continues to be plenty of signs of people carrying out what we would consider to be normal patterns of life; working on their farms, sending their kids to school each day, choosing where they want to pray and putting a hot meal on the table for their family at the end of each day. All of these things many of us take for granted but for some parts of Afghanistan this 'normal life' is unachievable. Here in Bamyán it is great to see that this routine is almost being taken for granted.

Have a safe and enjoyable Holiday season back in New Zealand or wherever you find yourselves over the December and January break. Make sure you raise a glass (often) to those loved ones who will be spending their Christmas deployed on operations serving their country.

He tini mano ringa ka oti ai



The front entrance to Kiwi Base in Bamyán. The snow is just going to get deeper and deeper!

IN SUPPORT OF IRON MAORI AFGHANISTAN STYLE

**SSGT Kate McGregor/
MAJ Sue Carter, CRIB 21**

Promoting good health, nutrition and maintaining an active lifestyle amongst Maori were my motivating factors for encouraging other members of CRIB 21 NZPRT to get together and show support for the ½ Marathon "Iron Maori NZ" Triathlon.

This event began in Napier in 2009 with only 300 entrants, every year since the numbers have dramatically increased: all of the 1550 entries in 2011 were booked out in 11 minutes.

In 2011, I attended this event as part of a support team and was so overwhelmed and inspired by many of the competitors, I decided that come Saturday 1 December 2012, I too, would enter this event. Two weeks later Patrick and I purchased road bikes and I began my training in order to be the cyclist for the 90km stretch, Patrick was nominated as the swimmer and Darion Vince volunteered to be our 21.1km walk/run team member. In March 2012, I entered our team, however, by late April 12 my nomination for CRIB 21 was

submitted and then confirmed; late September I was off to Afghanistan.

By October 2012, I had settled in Afghanistan and felt I needed to support my team and Iron Maori in some way so I made the decision, with the support of CRIB 21 and Command, to continue my training so that, by proxy, I would somehow complete the 90km here in Kiwi Base Afghanistan. As it is impossible to ride 90km outside the wire I decided I would complete the 90km on an exercise bike; and if anyone thinks that this is "woossie" try doing this at 2500m above sea level on a very fat uncomfortable cycle seat.

Another contingent member, SSGT Kate McGregor, was encouraged to complete her initial individual entry which comprised the completion of the entire event. She handed her Individual Entry for the Iron Maori (2km Swim, 90km Bike and 21km Run) to Neilroy as she told him he was going to be a solo Dad for 8 months because she was deploying to Afghanistan.

We began our day relatively early on Saturday 1 December, Kate beginning her part of the event at 0200hrs, after her Sanger duty, and to coincide as closely as possible



FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS CONT'D...

with the NZ Iron Maori timings. I joined Kate a couple of hours later and we both eventually completed the event within 10 to 15 minutes of each other. Needless to say we were both delighted with our timings as we had both individually achieved our goals and timings.

The photo was sent to the organisers of the event along with words of encouragement from the NZPRT for the competitors. It has since been displayed on TV1 Good Morning television, as the opening page of Iron Maori Webpage and recently on the NZDF Veterans webpage with lots of positive support.

We are proud of what we collectively as the NZPRT have achieved; in being able to support all those amazing people who volunteer so much of their time in organizing and supporting Iron Maori NZ and all those individuals who have begun their journeys of change.

A big thanks to all our supporters here in Kiwi Base, to all those that who were able to come to the gate for the picture shoot, CPL Rayner who took the photo for us (herding NZ sheep can be difficult), Rose Andrew who rode alongside me for 30km, Prema who got out of her warm bed to come and sit on the sideline and to our work colleagues who carried on in our absence – THANK YOU!

THERE'S PROGRESS

Sergeant Jeremy Edwards
IC MCT Det BAF

During the first week of November a small team from the Mission Closure team departed Bamyan and relocated down to Bagram Air Force Base (BAF) and co-located with the NSE. Throughout the following weeks, all personnel settled into the BAF routine and

American way of life. BAF being one of the biggest coalition bases in Afghanistan and home to many different nationalities. The MCT personnel have, over time, established themselves and their working routines and have become part of the NSE environment. It has been proven over time that nothing is achieved easily and what may seem a simple 1-2 day job back in NZ, is quite easily a 1-2 week job in this environment and has the potential to even expand on that if things are out of the ordinary.

BAF has all the comforts of home from gyms that are better equipped than 95% of the gyms back in NZ to fast food places and cable TV. Personnel have found items purchased at the local Bazaar, etc have been up to twice the price of the bazaars located in other parts of the country as you seem to be paying the American price. We even had the Harlem Globetrotters on base performing to around 400 lucky people who managed to catch the show, their first and only performance at BAF

The MCT has moved down in anticipation of returning items loaned from other nations and has begun this process and preparing

gear to RTNZ as it arrives here. Slowly but surely things are starting to move. It has shown that as expected it is not what you know but normally who you know to achieve the required result. The first 3-4 weeks of trying to achieve a result when personnel were not known to outside agencies has started to swing back the other way and things are becoming easier every time agencies are approached. It is amazing how the currency of doughnuts acquired from Kandahar Air Field can quite easily achieve faster results than anything else tried. Overall, an interesting time down here that will no doubt become more challenging as the colder weather arrives.

AFGHANISTAN — MY KITCHEN RULES

Corporal Renee Allen
MCT SupTech

Currently CRIB 21 has a competition where every fortnight a functional group cooks dinner for the PRT, giving our catering staff/Judges a well deserved break.

As head chef of the Mission Closure Team (MCT), I had to co-



Yard 8 and preparation of HUMVEE for return to the US

FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS CONT'D...

ordinate and plan our instant restaurant. Our team decided to call our restaurant Multi Cultural Takeaways. We planned our menu based around foods from different cultures, from the New Zealand classic steak, eggs and chips and seafood chowder to chop-sui and tigene.

We transformed the mess into an instant restaurant, with table numbers, menus and all. Our chefs and stewards were ready to welcome all. PRT personnel were greeted, taken to their seats and offered cold non-alcoholic beverages and given their MCT menu.

The night went well with all the MCT staff working hard; we managed to serve everyone with their entrée, main, and dessert and also entertainment in-between. We had great feedback from the diners and judges. Bring on the final cook-offs!



Crayfish in preparation for the My Kitchen Rules competition



NEWS FROM OP RATA II (16), SOLOMON ISLANDS



TEARS OF PRIDE – I'M TOO OLD TO BE STAUNCH

Major Syd Dewes

It seemed as if our paths had all converged on what felt like the last bastion of kiwi-turf, an office affectionately known as the Green Room (yes, it is painted green). It's not flash, but it's ours and was where eight forlorn looking Kiwis' sought refuge. Sounds tragic doesn't it, well for us, it was just plain sad. It was a time when the 'eight musketeers' not only needed some quiet time, but needed to spend that in the company of others. Sounds like a contradiction I know, but it's times like that when you come to understand and appreciate the true value and meaning of comradeship. So what brought that on you may well ask.

That particular day was the culmination of a hectic week of equipment checks, debriefs, packing, filling in forms, parades and media interviews; it was the day our Kiwi Platoon finally departed Honiara, Solomon Islands.

The departure of New Zealand



The Platoon leaving the Solomon Islands for the last time

troops has happened countless times since July 2003 when NZ first deployed troops to support RAMSI, the Regional Assistance Mission to help Solomon Islands. What was so different and momentous this time is (pending final agreement by the Solomon Island, Australian and New Zealand governments) the departing Kiwi Platoon is not expected to be replaced or return.

As part of the New Zealand Platoon farewell programme, a RAMSI company comprised of troops from four nations – New Zealand, Australia, Papua New Guinea and Tonga – assembled on the CTF parade ground. They stood proud against a back drop of distant islands silhouetted by a cloudless tropical sky and a glistening sea lapping the shoreline a few metres away. Coconut palms providing shade, although not necessary at that early hour, capped a picture post card setting of beauty and calm. It was indicative of the day that lay ahead and also reflected for all gathered to view the parade, our collective hopes for the future of this Pacific island country.

The parade was addressed by Mr Nicholas Coppel, the Special Coordinator for RAMSI, and Brigadier Wheeler, the Land Component Commander, who came over especially to mark the occasion. Then came rousing haka's performed by the Tongan Platoon soldiers and another from a fired-up bare chested Kiwi Platoon. Swinging taiaha's accompanied by an array of flared eyes, protruding tongues, bulging cheeks, guttural sounds, and stomping feet; the Platoon launched into what was a truly awesome display of 'don't mess with me'. The parade

FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS CONT'D...



Brigadier Wheeler is confronted by a Platoon pleading to be allowed to stay

audience, the biggest seen in GBR in recent times, was treated to a fine display of military precision, ceremony, and cultural diversity. You could not help but be moved by it all. It was a moment that gave cause to reflect on what it is we have done and every reason to feel very proud of the role we New Zealanders have played in bringing stability, peace, and setting conditions for a promising future for the people of Solomon Islands. The company marched off, the Kiwi's

still bare-chested for they had left their shirts where they had been discarded before the haka, symbolic of our wish to maintain the warm relationship we have established with the people of the Solomon Islands and our readiness to return if ever requested to do so.

Friday morning in the early hours whilst still dark, the Platoon went about its final duties vacating barrack lines, entering the meal queue for the last time and making



Private Luds Ludvigson being farewelled by Lieutenant Colonel Gasteen, the Australian Task Force Commander

ready for the short bus journey to the airport. There was a mixture of excitement, sadness and a hint of envy wafting through the car park as the Platoon prepared to board the buses – not all the Kiwi's were going home. Eight NZDF personnel remain as part of New Zealand's on-going commitment to RAMSI.

Final boarding checks done, there was one last order of business to be completed. The media had gathered outside the Honiara International Airport eager to capture more of the first of the final RAMSI military rotations and also what makes us unique as a military force and indeed as a nation. Mr Nicholas Coppel again thanked the NZ Platoon for their contribution to RAMSI. Lieutenant Colonel Brenton Gasteen, the Commander of the RAMSI military component, said a heartfelt final farewell at which point he was accorded a passionate haka from the 2/1 RNZIR Platoon. Standing slightly to his rear, I looked upon that assembled highly energised unit of men as they worked their way into the full heart of the haka; I could feel a tear



One last look back from WO2 Grahame Bland and Chaplain Wayne Taleafoa

welling up. It (and a few of its friends) eventually broke free. A similar thing has happened once before and that too came after an overwhelming sense of pride in having served with a group of soldiers who have acquitted themselves well whilst on operations.

As the tear dribbled down my cheek I was also smiling; little wonder there were some puzzled looks from the soldiers seeing that as they reached the climax of the haka. And, just before sending them off to their waiting RNZAF aircraft, with a shaky voice, I let them know how grateful and proud I was of the way they had conducted themselves during the deployment and that the tears they saw were tears of pride. It was their response I will treasure, for I then saw some eyes glassing-over looking back at me and I knew at that very moment we had shared something intensely special. Phew, in my 36th year of military service feeling that deep sense of comradeship was powerful and yet humbling – it also leaves me ever grateful to my command chain for entrusting me the opportunity to once again lead soldiers on an overseas mission.

Back to the Green Room: Having waved off the Platoon we sat around for a time and chatted much like a mis-firing engine and we came to agree we were all jaded and emotionally and physically tired. Through sharing that common space, you sensed a reaffirming of commitment to each other and that was the second occasion in as many hours where I experienced the quality of comradeship that other professions could only guess upon, and wish for.

I have had the privilege of leading two rotations, Op RATA 15 and Op RATA 16, and as my tour which

started in May draws rapidly to a close, I am a buzz with pride and very grateful to supportive people whose company I will always recall with fond and warm memories.

I now sign-off wishing you all a Very Merry Christmas and a Safe, Healthy and Prosperous New Year!

Lukim iu back and best regards.



NEWS FROM OP FARAD, SINAI

OP FARAD – A CHALLENGING DEPLOYMENT

Sergeant Richard Ashby
Driving Instructor 3
NZTAT, MFO Sinai

In the past a deployment to Operation Farad with the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) Sinai has been considered to be less challenging than other operational deployments. If I had not been deployed to Sinai for a second time, I would have agreed with this statement. But this comment is seriously outdated and from my own perspective I can honestly say that times have changed.

I was deployed to Sinai as Driving Instructor Two in 2008, and this year as Driving Instructor Three, as part of the New Zealand Training Advisory Team (NZTAT). Even though my role is similar, the appointment comes with different responsibilities.

The deployment to the MFO has seen a significant change in tempo, and the Kiwi Drivers work hard each day as a direct result. The work routine of the New Zealand drivers is both challenging and rewarding. Our drivers wake up early, uplift the equipment they

require for the days patrol, and move down to prepare their vehicles. Upon completion of preparation for the patrol our drivers are on the road all day.

The driving missions have not changed too much over time; however, the work tempo has increased. This means our drivers spend long hours on the road, being subjected to more challenging environments than ever before. The days can be a true test of character, with searing heat outside, watching for potential hazards, adhering to strict driving and convoy discipline, and maintaining communications with convoy commanders. To their credit, our driver's complete missions with an average distance of 400km daily, and most have already driven over 15,000km within a three month period. When not driving, the team participate in weekly military all arms training, maintenance of equipment, and scenario based training to maintain the skills required.

The level of responsibility expected from each driver requires them to employ initiative daily. New Zealand Drivers are competent navigators, negotiators and communicators. They take a

FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS CONT'D...

practical and pragmatic approach to a diverse range of driving tasks within a multinational environment.

When working in the New Zealand Training Advisory Team (NZTAT) the work tempo can be very high. Our responsibilities are varied, from conducting driver licensing, managing vehicle courses, fifty and twenty five-seater bus courses, and unit driver training courses. We also have secondary responsibilities which assist in the daily running of the MFO. Our busiest time is usually when we are conducting handovers with newly arrived Kiwi Contingents. This handover period requires a new contingent to be trained in driving and licensed appropriately. All members arrive with different levels of driving experience, and training them presents a unique and rewarding challenge.

When we have time off we are able to enjoy ourselves with the company of all the other contingents that make up the MFO. The tours that are offered to MFO personnel are varied, including The Holyland, Masada, The Dead Sea, Jerusalem, Sea of Galilee, The Giza Pyramids and The Valley of the Kings.

The best memory I gained during this deployment was attending the 70th Anniversary of the battle of El Alamein. When we arrived at the cemetery in El Alamein it was very humbling to see the number of kiwis who had sacrificed their lives for New Zealand. Knowing that my father had passed through this area during WWII, on his way to Italy, made it even more of an honour. I feel very privileged to have had the chance to do this in my life time.

The most difficult aspect of this deployment is missing loved ones at home, and not being able to be with them in times of need. Whether it be a small scratch the kids receive when playing, or those



Some members of the OP FARAD Contingent

harder times in life that are unforeseen. It is great to know we have the support of our families and friends in New Zealand as we serve our country here in Sinai, Egypt.

Despite the challenge of being away from home, the New Zealand Contingent continues to maintain an operational focus. The NZTAT is proud to provide Combat Service Support to the MFO, and demonstrate the NZDF ethos and values at all times.

70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF EL ALAMEIN

POSA Kathryn Jury
Royal New Zealand Navy
MFO Sinai, NZ Contingent CQMS

2012 marked the 70th Anniversary of the historic second battle of El-Alamein, which took place on October 23 1942. This year, 18 members of the New Zealand Contingent, 11 Australians and 5 Canadians currently serving in MFO Sinai made the journey through Egypt to the El Alamein commemoration.

The Battle of El-Alamein involved

forces of the Axis, Germany and Italy, and the British 8th Army. The battle is seen a key turning point in the campaigns of the Second World War. The 8th Army consisted of British, Australian, Greek, Polish, Indian, South African and New Zealand troops. New Zealand forces played a key role in the second battle of El Alamein. New Zealand's task, in cooperation with South African, Australian and the British forces, was to break through enemy defences and prevent Axis control of the Suez Canal and beyond. On 23 October 1942 the battle began and the night skies around El-Alamein lit up as guns opened fire on the known enemy positions. The battle raged on into the night with both sides incurring heavy losses, and ended with the German and Italian forces in full retreat. The battle cost New Zealand seven thousand casualties, which included thirteen thousand fatalities. In the cemetery, where the commemoration took place, are the graves of 1,008 New Zealanders. This is the largest number of New Zealanders buried in one cemetery outside of New Zealand.

Today, El Alamein is littered with

FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS CONT'D...



Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery – El Alamein

resorts and private compounds. It is the place where Egyptians and Tourists spend their summers lounging on sandy, crystal blue beaches. This presents a rather different scene to the gunfire and fighter planes which flew through these skies seven decades ago. After our eleven hour bus ride from camp the Mediterranean beachfront accommodation was very well received. However, the three days spent in El Alamein were busy to say the least.

The commemoration began with a small and intimate New Zealand national service at the Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery. Amongst the guests were members of the MFO NZ Contingent, NZ dignitaries, VIPs, and most importantly 21 Kiwi Veterans, aged between 88 and 96, who made the journey from New Zealand to remember their fallen comrades. The dusk ceremony was a moving tribute to those Kiwis who have fallen, and to the veterans who were present. The NZDF cultural group represented New Zealand superbly, performing several waiata and the National Anthem. The NZ contingent and cultural group then came together

to perform the NZDF Haka, ending the ceremony and attracting crowds of all nationalities.

The following day began with an Australian ceremony, which was followed by the International Commemoration Service. It was overwhelming to see the number of people in attendance. What had seemed like a deserted grave site one day earlier was now packed



with hundreds of people who had travelled from around the world to pay their respects. The ceremony included a catafalque guard made up of four members of the NZ and Australian contingents, prayers, and speeches from dignitaries from various countries. However, the most moving part of the ceremony for myself was the wreath-laying. As the piper played his bagpipes, and the veterans slowly made their way to the wreath laying point, time seemed to stand still as they silently remembered their friends who were lost many years ago. It is impossible to visit these cemeteries and not feel extremely moved, especially watching the veterans after the ceremony, as they walked amongst the rows of white head stones in search of a name they



Left to Right: CPL Katrina Gardiner, PTE Hamera Toia, POSA Kathryn Jury

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POSA Jury

might recognize.

It was a humbling experience, being part of a commemoration for such a significant battle, in which New Zealand played a crucial role. Many lives were lost during this battle, which made this a timely opportunity for remembrance of those who fought and paid the ultimate price. In the words of Winston Churchill *"Before Alamein we never had a victory, after Alamein we never had a defeat"*.



MFO members act in the annual MFO Nativity Play at MFO North Camp, Sinai. This play is a vital part of maintaining the morale of all MFO Forces during the festive season.

Christmas Gift Suggestions:

To your enemy, forgiveness.
To an opponent, tolerance.
To a friend, your heart.
To a customer, service.
To all, charity.
To every child, a good example.
To yourself, respect."
(Oren Arnold)



Xmas Trivia

More diamonds are purchased at Christmas-time (31 percent) than during any other holiday or occasion during the year.

In Britain, eating mince pies at Christmas dates back to the 16th century. It is still believed that to eat a mince pie on each of the Twelve Days of Christmas will bring 12 happy months in the year to follow.

It is a British Christmas tradition that a wish made while mixing the Christmas pudding will come true only if the ingredients are stirred in a clockwise direction.

CHAPLAIN'S PEN — FROM ABROAD

Padre Stu Hight
CRIB 21

Movember 2012 at Kiwi Base ended up for most being erased. The CRIB 21 contingent contributed \$750 for the worthy cause of raising the awareness of prostate cancer and mental health among males.

Of course we had to judge the best, so we had three categories. The most growth, the most elegant and 'You have to be joking'. The judging took place during our fortnightly Friday night meal and entertainment which was held on the 30th November. 'The Training Team' treated everyone to a night at the Bamyas Sevens Rugby event with food provided. There was even an All Black VIP present to assist with the Movember judging – LT Jess Hansen.

So the winners of each category were, The most growth - CPL Matt Thorpe, The 'You must be joking' - LT Poriwira Kahura & The most elegant – LCPL Shane Olsen.



CPL Matt Thorpe



LT Poriwira Kahura



LCPL Shane Olsen

Prizes were donated by 'Hunting & Fishing' from Tauranga.

Suffice to say, some of the moustaches have now disappeared. 'We couldn't wear them home' was one of the responses!

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

On that first Christmas night, the angels appeared to shepherds on a hill near Bethlehem. The shepherds and the sheep near Bethlehem were no ordinary shepherds and sheep.

The sheep were those bound for the temple sacrifices. The shepherds were outcasts because of their necessary isolation from religious practices. And their life style tending to their sheep meant that they couldn't follow religious observances as everyone else did. God in his wisdom sent the angels to appear to them — the doomed and the outcast—that night.

It was a simple scene that first Christmas— a rough room, a young couple and nothing but a feeding trough to put the child in. It was probably quite cold and with family far away there was little help. Yet this rustic scene marked the greatest event in the history of mankind. God's Son became human and came to earth to save us. God had promised to send a Messiah, one who would save His people. He could have easily burst on the scene as a full grown man, a seven foot warrior with fiery eyes

and arms of steel. This was what many people were looking for, but it wasn't how God did it. The Messiah arrived in the arms of a young girl. He was, *"a very small package, wrapped in rags, given from the heart of God. The perfect gift."*

Today the Good Shepherd cares for all people and wants to give them peace. Christ came on that first Christmas for one great purpose—to die on the cross for our sins. Now God offers forgiveness, inner peace, and eternal life to all who believe in His Son. This is the Christmas message!

Jesus is the Reason

*In Bethlehem, God gave to us
The source of Christmas joy;
A star shown on a miracle:
The virgin birth of a boy.
He was born both God and man,
A Saviour for us all,
The way to get to our
heavenly home,
If we just heed His call.
So as we shop and
spend and wrap
And enjoy the Christmas season,
Let's keep in mind the sacred truth:
Jesus is the reason.*

By Joanna Fuchs

May I offer to you all my wishes of the joy of this season. May you experience that joy and may it accompany you throughout the New Year.

Even though we will be in Afghanistan celebrating what for many of us will be our first white Christmas, we will be thinking of you all back home.

Remember 'The Prince of Peace' has come, he has offered himself to each one of us, and he has promised to be with us all the days, to the end of time, to the end of the world (Matthew 28:20).



CHAPLAIN'S PEN FROM HOME



CHRISTMAS....HOW INCONVENIENT!

**Colin Mason, Chaplain
HMNZS Philomel**

I know exactly what you're thinking. "Christmas is here again; where has the year gone?"

I guess Christmas wouldn't be such an inconvenience if it weren't smack in the middle of postings, school holidays, end of year activities, in the heat of summer and when I'm short of cash.

We Southern Hemisphere dwellers have a rough deal. A Northern Hemisphere Christmas is well clear of holidays and all those school break-ups etc.

So, if we were to conduct a survey on when best to celebrate Christmas; what would the outcome be? Where would it sit comfortably on our calendar?

I think we would all struggle to find an "appropriate" date and time. Our lives are so pre-occupied throughout the year; whatever date we settled on would be deemed "inconvenient".

My reading the Bible indicates that even that very first Christmas caused inconvenience for many.

Mary and Joseph were inconvenienced. They were miles away from home, and the birth of their son Jesus, took place midst the stench of a stable.

The Three Wise Men had some considerable distance to travel on camels before they found Jesus. There must have been a few blisters in unmentionable places.

The Shepherds surely were inconvenienced. Bright lights, heavenly choirs must have alarmed the sheep scattering them in all directions.

And what about Herod. His kingship was threatened by the birth of this baby Jesus...he must have had a few sleepless nights.

You can read these accounts for yourself in Matthew or Luke's recordings.

I guess until we discover the true meaning of Christmas, then it will always be seen by many as an inconvenience.

Christmas is not really about spending all those hard earned dollars or keeping sane while untangling those lights or trying to keep the tree from continually toppling over or about a fat bearded man in red...Yes, these components are part of our Christmas and yes they do add colour and glamour and excitement; but Christmas is really about the coming into this world, our world, of the very presence of God, through the birth of His Son Jesus.

GOD INCARNATE...GOD IN THE FLESH

Recognising that God is willing and prepared to come into our world, to taste and see and feel as do we, to rub shoulders with the hurting and the lost and the lonely and the disoriented and the oppressed... and midst this...Offer hope and comfort and meaning and...

What about taking time midst this "silly season" to investigate for yourself the true significance of Christmas. Maybe you find it is a very convenient time and occasion after all.

Meanwhile, take it easy and have a Happy Christmas.

What about a Hopeful Christmas!

Never worry about the size
of your Christmas tree.
In the eyes of children,
they are all 30 feet tall.

Larry Wilde



Christmas Quote:

"Bless us Lord,
this Christmas, with
quietness of mind; teach
us to be patient
and always
to be kind."

(Helen Steiner Rice).

CHAPLAIN'S PEN FROM HOME



**Padre Paul Stanaway,
Burnham Military Camp**

**O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
who mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God draws near:**



These are the opening words of a 12th Century Christmas Carol originally written in Latin. The Carol sings of times of hurt, uncertainty and for a whole nation (Israel), emotional exhaustion. The carol finds its origins in The Bible and history of the people of God, who both mourned the pains and hurts suffered unto them from others as well as the pain of loss of their own.

It doesn't stop there though; the chorus speaks of something else...

***Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!***

This is a promise. It is a promise that no matter how dark the darkness, a light that is on the way will fill it. It is a cry of defiance against odds and the yearning for joy even whilst caught in sorrow.

Emmanuel literally means 'God with us' and is possibly the best word to use when thinking of Christmas. It is a season that exists in our calendar as a memory of when God's Son Jesus was literally born to live with us. The message of this Carol is that God is on the way and will reach us when we call for him.

There is no doubt that over the year gone by, this camp, this Defence Force and our loved ones have suffered loss. There is no set time frame on recovery, there are no simple answers and being human can sometimes be just plain hard.

Grief, by definition, is the price we pay for love. It is however that same love which is something worth rejoicing over which keeps memories to be treasured and people to be honoured, not just those we miss but also for each other who remain.

To everyone, whatever place you're in, us chaplains hope that you have a good Christmas, a time of being human, remembering the past and caring for each other. You will also and always have the prayers of your Padres.

Oku tau no'o taha pe 'I he'ofa 'a Kalaisi.



DSO'S CORNER



Carol Voyce

Deployment Services Officer
Southern Regional Support Centre
Editor "The Bugle"

Festive Greetings to you all!

I can't believe that 2012 is drawing to a close and there is still much to do. These last few weeks have been filled with many happenings and the diary is bulging with many more still to come. I am sure we will all be pleased to sit back and take a break once we have navigated our way through the next couple of weeks.

It has been an eventful year. So much has happened and the support we have received from near and far has been simply amazing!

As I write this, we are putting the finishing planning touches to our Deployment family Christmas dinner. I have just loaded my car with the Christmas crackers and a few treats and look forward to dining with our many local tri service families on Sunday. Some of us did get the opportunity to meet up at the Burnham Twilight Christmas Festival on Tuesday and a great time was had by all. It is great that those associated with all missions abroad can have the chance to come together for a little festive fare and companionship. I know that this time of year is one when we all feel the absence of



Sonny shares a special moment with Santa at the Burnham Christmas Festival. While sister Ruby did not look fondly on the man in red, Sonny passed special requests from them both to Santa, and received a promise from Santa that he would visit their Dad, Chris, in Afghanistan after he had been in New Zealand



Mark and Kay Blackhouse, parents of CPL Blake Whiting, currently deployed to Afghanistan, cut the Christmas cake at the Burnham Christmas dinner for families

loved ones even more keenly and if we can lighten the load a little or bring some smiles to the faces of young or old then we have achieved one of our goals. I am looking forward to meeting with



William in deep conversation with Santa with some special requests from himself and sister Elena. Dad, Richard is currently deployed to Afghanistan

everyone again and hopefully will have time to slot in some photos to this editorial.

Last night we enjoyed the traditional Burnham Carol Service in our gorgeous All Saints Chapel and it was great to see young children from Burnham School join in with the service by taking some of the readings. Even though they appeared a little nervous they all did a grand job bringing the story of Christmas to us again. Sometimes we are so busy with other activities that the true meaning of Christmas gets lost in the rush! We have much to be grateful for.

Thankfully my office is looking a bit more orderly since my last editorial and I have now tidied all four corners. We had fun packing up OPERATION CHRISTMAS CARD contributions and look forward to receiving some feedback from the lucky recipients. Some great work



DSO'S CORNER CONT'D...

was put into some gorgeous cards and letters and I know wherever you are worldwide you will enjoy any that may come your way. Belated thanks to some late contributors from Linton Primary School and a Nelson Rest home - your cards are now winging their way abroad. Those delicious gingerbread men were packaged with lots of bubble wrap and sent off to Afghanistan. The children of Burnham School and Ladbrooks School are fine cooks and their baking looked tempting and smelt absolutely delicious. I am only hoping that the bubble wrap holds, the mail and the courier handle them with care on their long journey and we do not have too many fractured limbs! All the Deployment calendars have been now distributed to Units and to all tri service personnel who have deployed in this past year. Again, special thanks to Hugh Douglas, Managing Director of Weft Knitting Co, for his generous and ongoing sponsorship in making this partnership move into its 8th year. Hugh - we truly value your generosity and support. You are very generous in both your support and philanthropy to others and we appreciate this relationship which has evolved over the years.

It was with great excitement that families and friends gathered at Christchurch International Airport to welcome home last week those from Op RATA Solomon Islands. There was good coverage from the media and some gorgeous photos of families reuniting appeared in newspapers across the country the following day. Service personnel were met by Brigadier Peter Kelly, Acting Chief of Army and thanked for a job well done. We still do have a small presence in the Solomon Islands and know for them it must have been hard to farewell their comrades especially at this time of year. Janine disembarked with the

contingent after a flying visit to the mission area. Sadly due to other commitments I was unable to take up the invitation to visit the team there but hope that another opportunity may come my way in the future.

This past year has been a busy one in which we have supported and been supported by many missions abroad and their families. It is always a pleasure to meet with our families up and down the country, especially at pre-deployment briefings, mid tour updates and homecomings. Every day we get to admire firsthand your strengths, commitment and support extended to loved ones and it is very much acknowledged and valued. This job is a privilege and I enjoy the opportunity to meet with many of you and to help you along the way. I receive the most amazing support for doing what I do from our many Units, our many deployed personnel and my special Linton counterpart, Janine. Thanks to you all.

The year was sadly interrupted with the loss of five of our own in Afghanistan. To lose a great servicewoman and four great servicemen was indeed a tragedy to us all and to our country. This tragedy did however bring many people together in their time of grief and the memories of those we lost at this time and in times gone by, remains very much with us all. The Burnham Community felt these recent losses particularly hard - five young people from our very midst, but with great courage and commitment we came together, supported each other and worked together to find a way forward. This would not have been possible without the work behind the scenes of a dedicated team from within our midst who made sure we were informed and supported. To thank those who helped us means that

we will always miss someone out but I take the risk and especially thank LT COL Peter Hall, LT COL Stefan Michie, WO1 Craig Spinks and CAPT Nina Reid for their compassion, understanding and continued commitment to the families of CRIB 20. This was a time that we all truly needed each other and your assistance to all will long be remembered.

On a happier note, one of the best new resources we developed and distributed this year just has to be the dog tags for kids! Thanks to the generosity of 'Twice is Nice' the Burnham Thrift shop, we were able to produce dog tags for all children of tri service personnel who deployed on overseas missions. The feedback on this simple project has been more than we could have ever dreamed of and the significance of these tags to children, home without that specially loved Mum or Dad, has truly been heart-warming. I have seen many local children wearing their dog tags with much pride, and their teachers have a timely reminder of the absence of a loved one.

And on a personal note, I have/am surviving life in a badly damaged earthquake property where when it rains, it rains inside too. I am looking at my future options as remaining there is not as viable as one wishes, but thanks to everyone who has enquired, sympathized and heard my story! Despite the fact that I wish things were better I always remind myself that things could be much worse, and they are not, so I am grateful for a roof albeit a leaky one and for my family and friends who rally as "handymen" from time to time. It makes one always realise that they are far more important than any chattel!

In closing, may I wish you all a very happy Christmas and New Year and the joys of peace for 2013.



Janine Burton

Deployment Services Officer
1 (NZ) Brigade

I know from personal experience that having a loved one away on deployment at this traditionally family time, is an additional challenge and no matter how many family and friends we surround ourselves with, there is always that space where they should be. Again, from my personal experience, I always felt a bit better once Christmas Day was over. And let's face it, the way the days, weeks and the year has flown by, we will very shortly be welcoming in 2013 when we can look forward to homecomings! From deployment locations, I'm sure that many of our service men and women will also be thinking of family and friends at home, but as they are all together celebrating Christmas, they will rely on each other and work towards making this a very special time for themselves and their colleagues also.

Since the last Bugle, I was very privileged to be able to make a very quick visit into the Solomon Islands and return home with the final RATA contingent (we still have a small team in theatre until next year). What an absolutely amazing experience. We felt the 'warm' as soon as we disembarked and were processing through the Airport – no air-conditioning there! A wonderful surprise was to meet up with Judy

Byers (former Welfare Facilitator who is currently living in the Solomon Islands with her husband who is part of the Police presence); she wasn't there to meet us, but some of the Police contingent who were on our flight. Great to have a quick catch-up with her though.

While we were only on the ground for one full day, we were able to familiarise ourselves with the compound shared with other country participants of RAMSI (Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands). Accommodation is not luxurious by any stretch of the imagination – there were eight of us sharing one room (air-conditioned), we slept on stretchers, the bathroom was a short walk away – the compound was very well kept with lovely big trees and gardens of tropical plants, and of course, it looked out over the sea; not that it was accessible to us as there is a large fence. Yes it was hot; even at 5 o'clock in the morning the air was very warm. The handover parade at 8 o'clock in the morning the day before we departed, was wonderful to see, with contingent handovers

from Tonga to Papua New Guinea, and from New Zealand to Australia. As our time was limited, in the afternoon we were taken on a quick trip through Honiara; thanks so much to SGT Sonia Muir, our 'tour guide'.

It is such a valuable experience for those of us who support deployments, to have the opportunity to visit locations and see for ourselves where our service people live and work while off-shore, and to be able to share that first-hand experience with families.

Our planning is under way for the CRIB tour update briefings; Carol and I are looking at the second weekend in February – 8 February in Auckland, 9 February in Linton and Trentham, finishing up in Burnham on 10 February. More information will be sent with the first Bugle in 2013.

My very best Christmas wishes go to you all, whether at home or away and to a safe and happy 2013. 'See' you in the New Year.



The handover parade—challenge

FOR YOUR INFO...

Christmas in Deployment Locations

Every possible effort has been made in deployment locations worldwide to ensure that those deployed will enjoy some Christmas cheer over this holiday season. Santa is scheduled to call and offer some Christmas gifts and festive goodwill.

Thanks to the Returned Services Association, deployed service personnel will receive a special gift of much loved 'Kiwiana'. Their generosity will bring a little extra Christmas cheer to the hearts of your loved ones and we thank them for their ongoing commitment to this special project.

Expecting a Christmas Phone Call?

Everyone worldwide wants to talk with family and friends over the festive season and deployed service personnel are no exception. Phone lines, worldwide, are often overloaded and making calls may be difficult over peak times. Please be assured that all deployed service personnel will endeavour to be in touch with loved ones this festive season. Please be patient and understanding if calls don't quite come when you expect (or hope) they do, or are shorter than usual, given long queues waiting to use the few available phones in deployment locations.

Everyone will do their best to keep in touch and you will very much be in each others thoughts.

Holiday Coverage

All deployment and welfare support personnel for the New Zealand Defence Force will be available to assist you over the holiday season if the need arises.

We understand that this is a particularly difficult time of the year to be separated from those you

love, so if you need a listening ear, please be assured that we are all here for you.

Deployment Services Officers cell phones provide a 24-hour coverage, seven days a week (contact details on the inside cover). Please refer to our 'Holiday Contacts at a Glance' for more comprehensive coverage across the three services.

Last Bugle for 2012

This is the last issue of "The Bugle" for 2012. We hope you enjoy our Christmas edition and the many articles, messages and

contributions from abroad. Sincere thanks to all those who have helped make it yet another good read. It has been a huge task to compile and I hope not too many sleepless nights ahead in the hope that we didn't miss anything out!

The deadline for the next issue is Monday 7th January 2013. "The Bugle" team look forward to your continued support and contributions in the New Year. It is your contributions that make the Newsletter what it is—so be sure to send in just as many great articles and messages as this issue carries.

A very special Bouquet



The absolute best response ever to the Kiwi Forces Radio 2012 project; many families took part resulting in over 4½ hours of recordings for loved ones overseas. Thank you so much to all our families for making this such a successful project. The recordings have been loaded onto CDs and sent off to the various deployment locations. We know that our deployed personnel will really enjoy their special requests.

Putting this project together is the work of just one person – Kate Lukins; and it is all done in her own time. Kate, you are an amazing and talented individual and we are very grateful that you have chosen to utilise your very special talents in this very wonderful way. On behalf of our service personnel and their families a special bouquet to you in recognition of the KFR project and a very genuine and sincere thank you from us.

Family and friends can listen to the broadcast via the NZDF website:

<http://www.nzdf.mil.nz/news/service-publications/kiwi-forces-radio/default.htm>



Hot Tips for Christmas



Separation from our loved ones can be particularly difficult during special occasions like Christmas and the New Year, and it is not unusual for those of us at home to feel a little “out of sorts” at this time. Even when loved ones are at home, it can be a busy and stressful time – shopping to be done, pressure on the finances, kids on holidays, relatives coming to stay – some of us may find all of this a little overwhelming. If you are trying to cope without your partner, it can be more difficult.

There are some things that you can do to get by. If you do find yourself feeling stressed about separation this Christmas, there are some simple and common sense strategies that you can use to help yourself through.

Acknowledge emotions. Allow yourself to be upset at times. Christmas can be a lonely time if your loved one is away. Being lonely doesn't just mean being alone. You might feel upset even though you're with family and friends. It's OK to feel this way, and it is healthy to admit to and work through your emotions. But don't allow the separation to dominate your life.

Share the load. Try to talk about how you're going to those that matter the most, your family and friends. Also remember that the Deployment Services Officer, Unit Point of Contact, Padres and members of the Defence Community are available to assist you. They can also put you in touch with civilian organisations if needed.



Watch out for the “shoulds”. Sometimes we tell ourselves that families “should” be together at Christmas, the festive season “should” be a time of happiness and sharing. Trying to live up to the “shoulds” can create frustration, anger or sadness. Try to accept your circumstances, and work to make them as positive as you can.

Think about yourself. It's easy at this time of year to forget your own needs for pleasure, space and time to yourself. Try to reward yourself with little things that make you feel good, and take some “time out” from your normal routine.

Manage your time. If you feel like there are too many things to do, try making a ‘to do’ list, and set priorities in your daily tasks. Try to avoid over-committing yourself – occasionally you may need to say “No” to others to look after yourself.

Relax. There are many techniques for relaxation, from simple breathing exercises to meditation. Simply concentrating on and slowing your breathing for a minute or two can work wonders. Give it a go.

Stay Healthy. Sure it's Christmas but remember to eat healthy food and watch your intake of alcohol, caffeine and nicotine. If you can, get out and about and be active. Take up a sport, go jogging, walking, cycling or swimming. Allow yourself to have fun.

Share your time with others. If you are going to be on your own, you will not be the only one. Think about getting together with others who might be in the same boat, or volunteer your time to help those who may be less fortunate.

REMEMBER: *It's not unusual to feel the absence of a loved one more keenly at Christmas when everyone else is concentrating on family and friends. Try to follow these simple strategies and hopefully, you'll enjoy your well-deserved Christmas holiday even more.*



A Special Christmas Message



T'was the night before Christmas

He lived all alone, in a one bedroom house, made of plaster and stone.

I had come down the chimney, with presents to give,

And to see just who, in this home, did live.

I looked all about, a strange sight I did see, no tinsel, no presents, not even a tree.

No stocking by mantle, just boots filled with sand, on the wall hung pictures of far distant lands.

With medals and badges, awards of all kinds, a sober thought, came through my mind.

For this house was different, it was dark and dreary, I found the home of a soldier, once I could see clearly.

The soldier lay sleeping, silent, alone, curled up on the floor, in this one bedroom home.

The face was so gentle, the room in disorder, not how I pictured, a deployed soldier.

Was this the hero of whom I'd just read? Curled up on a poncho, the floor for a bed?

I realised the families, that I saw this night, owed their lives to these soldiers, who were willing to fight.

Soon round the world, the children would play, and grownups would celebrate, a bright Christmas day.

They all enjoyed freedom, each month of the year, because of the soldiers, like the one lying here.

I couldn't help wonder, how many lay alone, on a cold Christmas Eve, in a land far from home.

The very thought brought a tear to my eye, I dropped to my knees, and started to cry.

The soldier awakened, and I heard a rough voice, "Santa don't cry, this life is my choice;

I fight for freedom, I don't ask for more, my life is my God, my country, my Corps."

The soldier rolled over, and drifted to sleep, I couldn't control it, I continued to weep.

I kept watch for hours, so silent and still, and we both shivered, from the cold night's chill.

I did not want to leave, on that cold, dark, night. This guardian of honour, so willing to fight.

Then the soldier rolled over, with a voice soft and pure,

Whispered, "Carry on Santa,

it's Christmas day, all is secure."

One look at my watch, and I knew he was right.

"Merry Christmas My Friend,

And to all a Good Night."



HOLIDAY CONTACTS AT A GLANCE



Burnham:

Deployment Services Officer

Carol Voyce (03) 363 0421
027 497 565 or
0800 337 569
(toll free) 0800 deploy

Burnham Duty Complex (03) 363 0099

Chaplaincy Service:

09-20 December—
Chap C14 Tavake Manu 027 2749 8967

21-29 December
Chap C14 Paul Stanaway 021 246 6749

30 December-06 January
Officiating Chaplain Rev Paul Cossey
027 288 5005

07-13 January
Officiating Chaplain Rev Hausia Taufui
021 0272 1651

Linton:

Deployment Services Officer

Janine Burton (06) 351 9399 or
0800 6837 7327
021 649 903
(toll free) 0800 overseas

DSO Phone Coverage

Janine and Carol will both be available over the holiday period. Please don't hesitate to call us if we can assist in anyway. Should our phones go to answer-phone, it usually means we are on them—but will check our messages regularly.

Deployment Support Services are here to lighten the load for you where we can. No problem too big or too small so be sure to ring us if you need to.

Linton Duty Complex (06) 351 9099

Chaplaincy Service: Duty Phone (06) 351 9634

Waiouru:

Duty Complex (06) 387 5599

Devonport Naval Base:

First point of contact for service families:
0800 NAVYHELP

Emergencies only:

Out of Hours Social Worker:

Jason Hallie (until 30 Dec) 021 908 655

Yvonne Boyd (31 Dec-20 Jan) 027 490 2781

Chaplaincy Services:

Chaplain Leon O'Flynn 027 520 0744

Reserve Duty Chaplain, Officiating Chaplain
Bruce Thompson 021 648 467

Royal New Zealand Air Force:

Auckland Orderly Officer: 027 450 0464
DNCO: 027 450 0465

Ohakea Orderly Officer: 027 472 3495
DNCO: 021 378 003

Woodbourne Orderly Officer: 027 622 2480
DNCO: 027 496 5924



PERSONAL MESSAGES



The deadline for contributions and personal messages for the next edition of "The Bugle" is **Monday 7 January 2013**. Please note: All "Bugle" messages are to be sent to Carol Voyce, DSO Burnham (email: dso.burnham@xtra.co.nz)

From In-Theatre

Dilly Mac

Happy Birthday for the 21st son! Hope you have a great day and LAN party. Make your bed (ha ha). Love from a proud dad.

To my Family and Friends

Wishing you all a very Merry Xmas and a Happy New Year! Love you all lots and thank you so much for all the goodies I have received so far. Love Monsta.

Te, Danja's and Mink-up

Missing you all heaps and wish I could be with you for this Xmas. I know you will both love the Xmas presents we bought for you before I left for Afghanistan; give them a gentle rattle to see if you can guess what they are! Say giddyay to your cousins from me, see you all in April. With all my love, CM/Daddy, xxxo.

Mouse, Dyl, Bear and Nanna Mac

Love you all heaps. The support you give me over here is beyond words. As the songs goes, "Have yourself a Merry little Christmas", I'll be home for Christmas - even if it is in my dreams". Love Dad (#1 son).

To my Darling Wife and Kids

Miss you heaps, love you to the moon and beyond. Have a good Christmas! With all my heart, that is all, Bubbles. P.S: Look after naughty Bee and noisy pig.

To my Fabulous Family

A very merry Christmas and a safe, happy and relaxing New Year! I wish I could be there to share a glass of bubbles, and to enjoy the kid's excitement and sense of anticipation. Love to everyone... from the tropics. Xxox.

Mrs Bumble

Love you with all my heart, Merry Xmas and Happy New Year! Hope you have a great time at your folks. I can't wait to see you again and give you some giant hugs and kisses. Love Mr Bumble xoxo.

MONKEY

Thank you for your last message! I take it the vacuum hasn't been used since I left! I hope you have a good Christmas babe and enjoy all the presents Miss Clause sent you! Can't wait to be in your arms again! Love you always! MWAH. Love Scrumptious Crumpet.

IZAKCHE

SON, mummy misses you every second of-every minute of-every hour of-every day! Can't wait to go shopping for your motorbike and see your tricks! Enjoy your presents my son! Love you Always! MUMMY.

HoneyCakes

Miss you like crazy. Yes Christmas Reht. Love Chops.

Hi and Merry Christmas to my Family Back Home

Theresa, Jean, Jesse, My Namesake, Ruby and Gene.... and Stance — Hope you all have a very Merry Christmas and festive season. Thinking of you all over this time, miss you all heaps. Luv you all.

Hi Babe (Foxy Lady)

Miss you! Wish I could be with you on Christmas Day. Can't wait to see you next year! I am looking forward to our time away together. Love you always, Me.

Hey Freda and Andrea

Hope you guys have an AMAZING Christmas, and Santa is good to

yas! Party hardy over the silly season! Miss you guys xx Nasha.

Dear Sam, Ollie, Annabelle and Alexander

I am looking forward to coming home to see you for Christmas. I can't wait to see you and have fish n' chips on the beach and go in the boat. Santa tells me you have all been very good for Mummy. See you soon. All my love, Daddy.

Maddie and Jackson

Merry Christmas guys! I love you very much and hope you both get awesome goodies from Santa. I miss you like crazy and wish I could be there with you. Looking forward to being back at home spending time with you both! I love you two. Mwah xoxoxox. Dad.

Mrs Framey

Hey hunny, Merry Christmas! I know that it will be difficult, but know that you and our two kids will be constantly on my mind. I love you so so much and cannot wait for our honeymoon once I come home. I miss you dearly and you are amazingly amazing. I love you. Mwah xoxoxoxoxox.

Merry Xmas to Family and Friends

Hope you all have a great time. Renelle, you cannot lock the kids in the cupboard either!!! Love you baby, give those kids of ours a hugest cuddle! Marty.

Merry Christmas Smirkle.

Pippen, Pirate and Thomas!

Hopefully there a lot of tasty treats and a present or two! I wish I could be there but I know you will be having FFTs with the extended family. I will see you in a few days now Smirkle. Love from the Cheese to your Crackers.

PERSONAL MESSAGES CONT'D...



Merry Xmas Lorri-anne!

I hope all is well and you have a great summer in New Zealand. GET DOWN! STOP IT! Love from Tommy.

To my Wonderful Wife and Boys Cameron and Fraser

Missing you all so much and can't wait to see you next year. Hope Santa is good to you all and that you have a brilliant holiday season. Much love always xxx.

Hello my Darling Little Monkey Kayla

I miss you so so so much and I hope you're having lots of fun. Not long til you are on school holidays... yay. I hope you have a special Christmas. I can't wait to skype you and watch you open your presents at nanas house. I love you more than all the stars there are in the sky, love mummy xx.

Hey Ma, Andrew, Ash, Tay, Ky and my new Nephew Lyric

I hope you all have a great Christmas, wish I could be there with you guys. Missing yas heaps and love yas loads. Love me xxx

Hey my Dearest Pippy and Manaia

I hope you guys have the best Christmas ever! Can't wait to get back and visit yas. Miss yas and loves yas to the moon and back, Love me xx.

Hey Babe

Miss you heaps hope you have a Merry Christmas and awesome New Year. Not long now, can't wait to see you. Batman Texas Ranger.

Hi Family

Merry Christmas hope the weather is well and Santa is nice to you all. Have a great New Year and I'll see you soon. Lots of love Conor.

To my wife Danielle, friends in NZ and family in Scotland

A Merry Christmas and a fantastic New Year! Andy.

Flitten Family

Wish you all a very **MERRY CHRISTMAS**. Be good for mummy, and ensure you wake her up before the sun on Christmas morning. Have fun with all of your presents. Wish I could be there with you. Will hopefully watch you open some of your presents on skype. LOVE AND MISS YOU ALL SO MUCH. From Daddy and Husband

To My PR

Miss you heaps, enjoy your Christmas and the New Year. It'll be halfway on Boxing Day so not long 'til I'm home. Love you just as much as I miss you, BSXXX.

To my Darling Sons

Merry Christmas and best wishes to you both for 2013. Well done on all the study effort for your exams! Happy 16th birthday Josh for 30 Dec 12. Love you both very much!!! Love Mum xxx.

To my Beautiful Grandmother

Merry Christmas to you and my family. I will be thinking of you all as you all gather in sunny Gisborne on Christmas day. Uncle Murray don't eat too many lamingtons, you can have an extra pink one for me. Will try and ring. Love you all. A huge Happy 97th Birthday for you Nanna for Jan 13. You're amazing, I hope I am in as good a shape, as you are, when I get to 97! Love and big hug from your grand-daughter xxx.

To Kristal and Koia

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Love always Mum xxx.

Surfin Family

Hey you all...hope you all have a great xmas and holiday up north. Wish I was there to enjoy the summer festivities surfin,

swimming, surfin, BBQ's and some surfin. Miss you all. Wish I was there. Surfer Daddy.

Salut ma cher famille que j'aime a la folie. C'est presque Noel et vous me manque beaucoup, mais je sais que je vais être bientôt dans vos bras. Amusez vous bien pendant la vacance et je veux que pendant cette Noel vous goutiez tous les bons choses, faisiez le fête souvent et sur tous de passez les moments super en famille. Je pense de vous tous le temps et je sais que malgré la distance entre nous, on reste toujours proche dans nos esprits. Merci d'être les miennes. Gros gros bisous, je vous aime pour toujours. Moi.

Hey Guys

Have a good Christmas and New Year. Say hi to the rest of the fam for me. JR .

Mum, Dad, Whit, Jonts, Ols and the rest of family

Merry Christmas! Hope you guys have a great day and enjoy the holidays. Could do with a version of Ponyo if you want to send it? Ha ha Love you guys, say hi to everyone else for me! X.

Merry Christmas all

Take care. You all have to do a shot of Tequila for me. From the Golden Boy.

Hey famz dog

Merry Christmas! Can't wait for the Christmas you will throw me when I get home. Hope you enjoy the xmas gifts I have sent (just wait by the mailbox, they will come). Love you all. Fatamadoinx sunshinepants.

Hey Family

Hope you guys have a great Christmas and New Year. Have a drink for me and say hi to the rest

PERSONAL MESSAGES CONT'D...



of the family. Make sure there's a bottle of rum for me when I get home, Gary the Snail.

Frances, Fluff & the Jonsta

Wish I could be sharing with you what I know will be a wonderful Christmas Day. You will all be at the forefront of my thoughts, and my heart all day long. So looking forward to hugging you all again in just a few weeks, now. Love John/Dad.

From Home

To Richard

Happy Birthday for 6 Jan. Have a good one. Love from Auntie Kath and co.

Daddy

We miss you soo much! Christmas will be stink without your cheekiness! Don't be stingy on the Christmas prezzies either we know what you're like. Come home soon, mums driving us crazy! Love you and miss you a mil!!! From your little darkies, Zaedyn and Indianna Xxx.

Dear Ryan

Maybe a white Xmas for you. Will be in Matamata for the day having a cold one or two for you! Time is going quite fast. Almost half way. Love you heaps. Mum. Dad, Ryka, Lucy, Nala and Oliver.

Hi Sean

Merry Christmas! We are all thinking of you. Good to hear that you are doing well over there. I am looking forward to seeing you soon. Love Mumma.

Hey S

Merry Christmas from me and Grey Bunny! Have a good one and enjoy all of the tricks that I sent. I hope that you are not too freezing over there, and if you are, you'll need to

chop those onions faster! I can't wait until April rocks around so I can see your smile again. Be safe. Love J xx.

Our darling Zy

*Have a Wonderful & Blessed Christmas and a Great New Year 2013! You are always in our thoughts and hearts. We love you lots and can't wait for you to come home! God Bless You! Love, Kisses n Hugs - Rev T & Vee. *Love you and miss you -wish you could be here – Zee.

Hi Richard

Many happy returns for the 6th, we will be giving you special thoughts and wishing you a great day to remember. Will get the Evan Williams out if any left from Xmas and celebrate the day. Love and very best wishes! Take care, Dad and Anne.

Dear Daddy

Sending Christmas wishes to you, we miss you so much but at times like these we miss you even more. Always thinking of you, Merry Christmas! Love Jasper, Baby Girl and Mummy xox.

Giddy You

Thanks for all your emails, postcards and parcels, we always love hearing from you. We hope you have a good Christmas and New Year and remember to watch out for ghost chillies on the loose in the mess! Skip says hi and she doesn't know anything about those holes in the garden? We miss you heaps and are looking forward to seeing you again soon. Luv Me xxx and the rest of the Napier crew.

Hi my Honeychops!

I love you baby, I can't wait to spend some good leave with you!! The baby's are doing fine, Mangus getting fatter, Littleman still qwacks like a duck and Turtle continues to find interesting places to sleep.

Time is getting better and healthier. Anyhow love of my life, I love you so so so much. Hope this made you day!! Your Honeyhead xx.

Happy Birthday

Happy Birthday for the 6th January. Thinking of you! Take Care. Lots of love Judy, Seton, Lisa, Jason, Adam, Paula, Emma, Aimee and Jack.

Hey my Hunk'a'Spunk

How are you doing? I'm good. Merry Christmas! I hope you like ya presents hee hee. Everything is ticking along nicely at home and all the whanau are well. Thinking of you, loads of love from us all. P.S: It's nearly 1/2 way now, wahooo!!! Take care babe, kia kaha. Arohanui, Your Princess xoxo.

Darling/Daddy



MERRY MERRY Xmas we put up the tree; well layla mainly helped it was a bit of a laugh. We're thinking of u always, pity I can't put some Xmas dinner in a container and send to u, ha ha, but o well guess the chefs will no doubt rustle something awesome up. At least you're not hungover this yr; there will b a 6 pack of stellas in the fridge waiting for u at home. We've been swapping stories about different b'days and Xmas more or less about you, only good I promise. Love u always layla and kt your girls! MERRY XMAS 2/1 and EVERYONE OVER THERE!

PERSONAL MESSAGES CONT'D...



JonnyJohnJohn

Well my love this is an extraordinary journey for both of us.... can't put into words alone how proud I am of you and express the awe you inspire in me. The more I read about the work New Zealand has and is doing in Afghanistan the more I love the Kiwis.... the world and all its glorious treasures is worthless unless we are helping the less fortunate to improve their lives and help raise them up from abject poverty and suppression by empowering them with education. So so very proud! I love you from before and will love you for ever more... keeping being all you can be. Give my love to all those wonderful women and men in CRIB 21.... knowing that the Universe will bless each and everyone of them for they are loved eternally....with a grateful heart for all that CRIB 21 is doing... love us, Fluffy and Jonsta truly can't wait to get their dad back... nor I, my man in my arms...but for now, for ever in my heart Fx.

Number 1 Son

Hey Hun, how's it going? Hey are those skinny tyres on your XR6 expensive? I keep smelling burning rubber as I go round the corners.... Love you heaps and heaps.... Sorry can't be with you for Christmas.... you know I would if I was allowed! Love (one very proud) Mother G.

Sup G!!

Hope you're having fun over there! Miss you heaps and hope they give you guys an awesome Xmas! Don't work too hard and we'll see you when you get home! Xoxo. Your big sis.

Merry Chrismousse E2

From all of your family, Mum, Dad, Cam, Dan, Fluffy and Sandy. You surely might be having your first White Christmas!!! Hugs.

Hi Honey (Gandalf)

The boys and I just wanted to let you know we are so proud of you. Christmas and the New Year won't be the same. But you are always in our hearts and thoughts. Love you lots, Mouse, Dyl, Bear, Milo.

Hi Dad (Woof Woof)

I never did get to tell about the trip home after being at Nana and Granddads so no need to bother you with those details now! I did hear Mum talking about us going over to theirs the weekend of the 14 Dec - well you can't believe how I felt about that. I ran up and down the hall till Mum yelled at me so then I flew outside and chased my tail! Can't wait to catch up with all my mates (hopefully THE CAT has had some lessons on how to play with dogs!) and Duke is ready for some more fun at the beach. I should say have a happy Xmas so I will HAPPY XMAS Dad miss you, Oh! And HAPPY BIRTHDAY TOO .. Nana said she would send you a prezzie, look out for that she does send nice presents! Yours forever, Monty.

Hi there Dada

Merry Christmas! Hope you enjoy your Afghanistan Christmas this year. We can't wait until you're on the plane heading home. We miss you like crazy! Love you heaps, Mads.

Hey Sexy Fr***y

Christmas isn't going to be the same without you but you already knew that. Hope you enjoy yours anyway, and make the most of the chance to have a white Christmas. Merry Christmas babe xoxox We'll have a lot to make up for when you get home. Still miss ya, still love ya. Love The Grinch herself,

Karl

You always said "me mummy made it for me". I only wish your mummy could make your Christmas the

Christmas you deserve. I hope you still have a good one. I'll have a Speights for ya and Nat (Nathan) will have a whiskey for you. Cheers, Love mum.

Hi Dad and Kalim

Have a merry Christmas. We miss annoying you heaps. Can't wait for you to come home, take care and lots of love, Abby, Jarred, Nevaeh and Bailey xxxx.

Hey Kalim

Good to get your phone calls, have a great Christmas. Everyone here says hi. Thinking of you. Take care. Lots of love mum, Selwyn and all the rest xxx.

Hi Daddy

Kate and I miss you heaps and heaps. We hope you're not too cold over in Afghanistan. Santa is coming soon, and I want a helicopter and a train! Kate wants some dress-ups. I was really good at putting the Xmas tree up. Kate annoyed me! It's got fairy lights on it. We will be thinking of you on Xmas day. Jeddy and Frank are going to be there too. I'm really good at swimming, I kick with my legs. Kate's a bit unco! She stubbed her toes at the swimming pool and they bled. We're going to get the waterslide out this afternoon. That's about all we've been doing. Lots and lots of hugs and kisses. Charlie and Kate, Xx.

To Dad and Maka Paka

Merry Christmas! Hope u have a great day. We will miss you heaps but I will eat lots of mums baking and lollies for you! I hope maka paka is wearing his Xmas hat! Get lots of pics please! We had so much fun in Australia with nana and pop and everyone says a big HELLO and MERRY CHRISTMAS! Lots of love from your little tiger.

PERSONAL MESSAGES CONT'D...



To our Baby Girl

Happy b'day for da 13th old girl and a very merry Xmas bro wishing u was here with us, can't wait to celebrate with u wen u cm hm!! Hope all is well we all think of u every single day and u no ur babez does too!! He's such a gud boy darling just like his mama, and u no we be making him eat his veges Lolz then he's allowed a yoghurt and chips, ha ha. We all love and miss u so so so much and just rememba time flys by so fast so we will c u real soon..... Tino aroha nui Kia koe!!!! Popata Whanau 4 Life xox.

Hey Babe!

Merry Christmas....

This comes especially for you from me.....

I really want to tell you just how precious you are to me
My every thought of you
Is as loving as can be
My heart is totally filled with things
That words alone can't say,

Even if the sun refused to shine
Even if romance ran out of rhyme
You would still have my heart
Till the end of time

Hope Santa finds you this year "hee hee". Enjoy the cake and pressies. Hope you have lovely Christmas and New Year! I'm missing you heaps and I love you to the moon and back. Your girl forever, Trace xxxx.

Dear Daddy

Happy Christmas or should I say Merry Christmas! I miss you lots and lots and I love you lots and lots. Love from Sophie Lophie Little Lady Bug, xxxx

Dear Daddy

Merry Christmas! Waaaaah, it's not fair you get to see the Hobbit before meeeee! I love you lots and lots and I miss you loads. Love from Jessiegoose, xxxx.

Dear Hussyband

Another Christmas not together! It won't be the same without you but I guess you will have the next 70 odd to make it up to me. Missing you heaps! Mostest and more than that, so there! Your Wiffey.

Geseende Kersfees my Liefle

Merry Christmas baby! Wish I was with you on this day, but I am thinking of you. May your White Christmas be an experience you will never forget! Stay safe and keep warm! Hope you enjoy all the gifts Santa sent you, just remember, your real Christmas gift will be waiting for you, when you come home. Love you. xxx Jan.

Rose

Missing you mate. Can't wait to have a long chat and a coffee with you. You take care of yourself and hope everything is ok with you. Christine.

To my Daughter Natia

Wishing you a super happy Xmas. Look forward to next years when we can all have Xmas together. Love you loads, Ma and Andrew.xx.

Hi Corey

This is your Gran...Often think of you and hope the cold isn't getting to you too much. Our weather has thankfully improved and we are now in mid 20's. Love you, Gran.xx.

Hey Blake

Will miss your smiley face at the dinner table. What'll we do with the leftovers? No beater licker either! God Bless mate, we love you, Mum, Mark, Nanny and Grandad. Xx.

Hey Dominic

Thinking of you all the time. This Christmas just won't be the same, at least you will have heard Snoopy's Christmas. Sending you all our love, Ben, Anna, Napoleon and not mali. Xo.

Kia ora Hemi

Thinking of you while we are enjoying the delicious kai—compliments of the Army base in Burnham, you of course and Sarah. Meri Kirihimete ki a koe me nga mihi nui o te tau hou kei te hake mai. Sending all our love from the whanau... Arohanui, Auntie Wai, Uncle Phil and Whanau from Kaikoura. Xox.

Merry Christmas Uncle Hemi

Keep safe, we miss you. Love from Alysha/Mum and Shayvaria, Auntie Amika and babies.

Hey Hunny Bun

Merry Christmas! I hope you are enjoying yourself. I miss you lots and I'm really looking forward to seeing you and we are halfway there. The time will go fast from now on with Christmas and New Years but may be hard for you and I wish you were here with me. I miss you and love you lots, Blossom. Xoxo.

Kia ora Babe

How are you doing? We think of you often. We hope you're making the most of your time over there and enjoying it if you can. We love you lots and can't wait for you to get home! We're so proud of you and the job you're doing. Love from Mum, Dad, Missy, Ethan and Desinda.

Dear Mike

Sending all our love. Looking forward to our January Christmas together. Love Mum and Dad, aka Rose and Peter.

Dear Daddy

We are enjoying the sunshine and looking forward to lots of swimming at Awakino. I have been practising at swimming lessons. Hope you have a good Christmas and like all the presents we sent. The movies

PERSONAL MESSAGES CONT'D...



you sent home were awesome. We are enjoying watching them. We miss you lots and send hugs. Lots of love, Elena, William and Mummy.

Hi Ben

Hope you have a great Xmas and New Year and manage to keep warm, as we here swan around in our shorts and jandals. We are looking forward to body boarding at Waikuku Beach soon. Thanks for all your phone calls, we really look forward to them.

Hi Ben

I'm sure you are enjoying yourself. We hope you have a fantastic Christmas with your Army friends. Thinking of you here, and we always appreciate your phone calls. Take care Maree and Jan.

Merry Christmas Surfer-daddy 1969

Daddysgirl 1512.

Dear Dad

Have a happy Christmas and New Year. Keep safe and I love you, from DD xoxo.

Dear Dad

I hope you have a lovely Christmas and a Happy New Year and also keep safe, from Reese. Xoxox.

Dear Dad

I hope you have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Be safe. Love you. Xxoo. Love from Tyra.

Dear Dad

I hope you're well and safe over there and hope you have a good Christmas. Love Kale. Xoxo.

Hey my Huni

There's nothing I want more for Christmas but you. Have a safe and warm Christmas, be merry and always take the time to think often of me, as I do of you. Know that I

love you and I miss you like mad. Xxx.

To Mike

Thinking of you on the 25th but really looking forward to our second Christmas on the 3rd. Take care and see you soon. Me.

To Mike

Can't wait for our Christmas from Payton.

Hi Corey

We are all at Burnham Military Camp Xmas dinner for whanau of Deployed Personnel:

Mary Cullen (Mum)

Regan Stills

Chris Twamley (Brother)

Jason Twamley (Brother)

Steven Twamley (Brother)

Kambell Stills (Brother)

Saiyan Twamley (Niece) plus

Marg Twamley (Gran)

Grant Twamley

MiKayla Twamley (Sister)

Merry Xmas Kia Kaha, Arohanui, Mum xx.

Hope you're enjoying your -17° weather over there. We're all shorts and singlets over here in our tropical conditions. Shot for all of the supplies too bro, peace, Steve T.

To Richard

Hope you have a lovely Christmas and we look forward to having a wine with you to celebrate the New Year. Best wishes, Lynette and Warren. Xxx.

To Richard

I wish you a wonderful Christmas with lots of snow! We will think of you on Christmas Day and Happy New Year and the kids will learn new German words. Everything is a bit different for both of us. See ya soon and take care of yourself, Sabine.

Merry

Christmas Jeff

Probably a white one for you? We hope that you get to have some R&R and enjoy some real Christmas treats. No swimming in the river for you on Xmas Day this year! Will be very quiet here, our first Christmas in 23 years without you but we are so proud of you all and the difference you are making over there – and looking forward to having you home again. Merry Christmas from us and all your Soper & Dean family - Mum, Dad & Pip xxx.

Dear Scott

Merry Christmas! Enjoy your first white Christmas. We will do the merry bit here for you. Love, Mum, Dad and family.

Dear Uncle Scott

Happy Birthday! We need some more lollies please! Don't forget Kaitlyn, she will need some too. Love Karl and Bella.

Dear Scott

Happy 33rd Birthday! We will have a toast to your milestone. Remember the birthday parcel is not to be opened till after 8pm your time, NOT NZ time. Love Mum, Dad and Brothers.

Jim

Wishing you a very Merry Christmas. Enjoy your time with the family over the holidays. Christine.

Hi Rose

Thinking of you in Afghanistan. Have a great Christmas and peaceful New Year. All at SRSC.

Merry Christmas Peter, Dave, Sonia, Rose and Jim

Thinking of you all in distant lands. Thanks for all your hard work and support. Always appreciated. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Carol.

BOUQUETS



We, as Deployment Services Officers, could never achieve even half of what we do, without the support of so many people across the three services, which make up the New Zealand Defence Force. With the risk of missing someone special we are attempting to acknowledge and extend our bouquets of thanks and Festive Greetings to all those dedicated and committed personnel who have helped us along the way in 2012.

Christine: The Bugle has become a much loved and sought after publication for families with loved ones deployed and for our deployed personnel. We very much appreciate your first class desk top publishing skills, in ensuring that our informal, in-house newsletter looks the very best! We know at times that we are "bossy and fussy" but truly appreciate your expertise, guidance, support and patience. While we may source the content, it is your dedication that has seen "The Bugle" go from strength to strength. It is our main way of keeping in touch with everyone and your work ensures that everyone can have a great read! Thank you so much.

Sharyn and Mere: Thank you so much for the many hours you have spent printing off copies of "The Bugle" over this past year. We know our deadlines are tight but appreciate you getting our publication out on time. Take a well earned break - we will be printing again early in the New Year!

Desk Officers, Watchkeepers and DPSC: Your advice and support in keeping that link with various mission areas is much appreciated. You have played a vital role in assisting us, and families in need, and have given us all much peace of mind when needed. Thank you too, to those who check the Foreign Correspondence and at lightening speed!! We look forward to working with you all again in 2013.

Briefing Teams: Pre deployment briefs and mid tour Briefs are a big part of our job. We have relied on the expertise of so many to give country briefs, updates and reunion information. To all our presenters - a huge thank you. You have surely made a difference. To the Psych team, our venue "bookers", caterers and travel administrators we thank you. Your input into the success of these various Briefs has been reflected in the valuable and good feedback from families. Take a well earned break - we will do it all again next year!

Service Personnel Abroad: To all of you who have submitted articles for "The Bugle", we thank you. We know sometimes we beg and beg again, then occasionally bribe (and reward), but your news to those at home is more valuable than you can ever imagine! Writing articles is not easy when you have other commitments, but you help us all to understand your day to day lives away from us all and we are truly grateful. Just keep them rolling in! Deadline for the first edition of 2013 is January 6th so we will be looking out for lots of articles and photos from your festive season in a far away land. Merry Christmas and New Years Greetings to you all.

To our expert teams of Trainers, Administrators, Mov Ops, Medical and Dental personnel, Chaplains, Catering personnel and all those often behind the scenes. We very much value your support in so many ways and extend a bouquet of thanks for your vital and valued work.



Lynne: Thank you so much for keeping things up to date, for looking at ways we can work faster and smarter and for your support extended North and South! Best wishes for the Festive Season.

Auckland North Regiment: A very special thanks to you all for the many times we arrive on your doorstep and take over the first floor, for our many briefings. Your facilities are first class and you all, always go out of your way, to help us cater for our many visitors. We are so lucky to be able to use your Conference Room and appreciate the way you always make us feel welcome. Best wishes to you all for the holiday season and we look forward to our many visits again in 2013.

BOUQUETS



Tri Service Welfare Facilitators, Community Services Officers and other Support personnel: Thank you all so much for your contributions to "The Bugle" and for the assistance you provide in your areas to those associated with deployments. You provide another vital link in the deployment support chain and we thank you for your hard work in 2012. Have a great Christmas and New Year break and we look forward to working with you in the coming year.

Various Units, CO's, Unit Welfare Officers, RSM's: Thanks to you all for the support and wise words of wisdom! We appreciate knowing you are there to support us in our role and assisting with issues that may arise. Some of you will be posted next year and we wish you well. You go with our sincere thanks for all you have done.

Ian Moray-Smith: Thank you for the support you provide to us when we brief in Trentham. Arriving at the Conference Centre, we always know that everything is set up and ready to go; we are truly grateful.

To the Families of Deployed Service Personnel: We acknowledge and appreciate your dedication, commitment and support to your loved ones abroad. We know first hand of the huge sacrifices that you all make during the separation from loved ones and admire the strengths you display at difficult times. You too, by letting loved ones deploy, are contributing to helping others so much less fortunate than ourselves, to achieve the chance of a better life and ultimately one that may be lived in peace. A sincere thanks to you all and best wishes for Christmas and the New Year. - Another step closer to homecomings!!!

We would like to wish you all a wonderful Christmas and a Happy and safe New Year. I'm sure we will see many of you soon at tour updates and homecomings in 2013. Keep safe.

Best wishes for a safe and peaceful Christmas and New Year!

Carol and Janine, Deployment Services Officers, Burnham and Linton



Candy Canes:

Candy canes began as straight white sticks of sugar candy used to decorated the Christmas trees. A choirmaster at Cologne Cathedral decided have the ends bent to depict a shepherd's crook and he would pass them out to the children to keep them quiet during the services. It wasn't until about the 20th century that candy canes acquired their red stripes.



The Night Before Christmas — Kiwi Style

T'was the night before Christmas, and all round the bach
Not a possum was stirring; not one could we catch.



We'd left on the table a meat pie and beer,
In hopes that Santa Claus soon would be here.
We children were snuggled up in our bunk beds,
While dreams of pavlova danced in our heads;
And Mum in her nightie, and Dad in his shorts,
Had just settled down to watch TV sports
When outside the bach such a hoo-ha arose,
I woke up at once from my wonderful doze.



I ran straight to the sliding door, looking about,
Jumped out on the deck, and let out a shout!
The fairy lights Dad had strung up around the door
Let me see everything down to the shore.

And what did I see, when I took a peep?
But a miniature tractor and eight tiny sheep.
With a little old driver, his dog on his knee.

I knew at once who this joker might be.
He patted his dog, and in a voice not unkind,
Cried "Good on ya, boy! Now, GIT IN BEHIND!
"Now, Flossy! now, Fluffy! now Shaun and Shane!
On, Bossy! on, Buffy! on, Jason and Wayne!
Up that red tree, to the top of the bach!
But mind you don't trample the vegetable patch."

So up on the roof those sheep quickly flew,
With the tractor of toys, Santa and his dog too.



As my sister awoke and I turned around,
In through the window he came with a bound.
He wore a black singlet and little white shorts,
And stuck on his feet were gumboots of course;
A sackful of toys he had flung on his back,
And he looked like a postie just opening his pack.
His eyes-bright as paua shell -oh, how they twinkled!
Like an old tuatara, his skin was all wrinkled!



He had a wide face and a round, fat tummy,
That looked like he'd eaten lots that was yummy.
He spoke not a word, but got down on one knee,
And placed a cricket set under the tree,
A present for Sis, one for Dad, one for Mum,
Then he turned and he winked and held up his thumb.
He jumped on his tractor, to his dog gave a whistle,
And away they all flew, as fast as a missile.
I called out "Thanks," as he flew past the gate.

He called back:

"Kia ora to all, and good on ya, mate"