

Origin of the Royal New Zealand Engineers Corps Memorial Centre

The origins and basic material for the RNZE Corps Museum were from the training rooms at the School of Military Engineering. The Bailey Model Room at SME was the source of the model equipment bridges and the mines and demolition room contained a very good selection of WW2 British, German, and Italian mines. These provided the basis for this part of our collection. The Corps was fortunate that WO1 Peter Nolan had an interest and a sense of history and was able to keep much of this material away from those who would have liked to have disposed of it or passed it to



the embryo Army Museum or even into the hands of military collectors.

The Corps of Royal New Zealand Engineers Museum and Library



The Royal New Zealand Engineers Corps Memorial was a long term goal of a number of World War 1 and World War 2 Sappers. In January 1964, The RNZE Corps Committee commenced proposals for a Corps Memorial Centre within Linton Camp, which at that time RNZE was the main Corps in residence, though smaller units of other Corps were also in the camp.

The Colonel Commandant at the time, Col Andrew Murray, together with Major George Bunce (Auckland Sappers Assn) and Major H.I. (Fritz) Dowrick (Wellington Sappers Assn) discussed a proposal in early 1964 with the RNZE Corps Committee for a Corps Memorial Centre to be established in Linton Camp. Lt Col Gordon Lindell reported on the establishment to the Engineer Corps Memorial Association and by 1967, 40 members of the Sappers Assn were making regular contributions to the funds. Majors Eddie Farnell and Charles Kibblewhite surveyed the site and by May 1968 Dudley Roy had preliminary plans drawn up, and Lt Col Laurie Rudd had solved problems related to the lease of the site. Lt Col Russ Currie, the Chief Engineer, at the time was drawn in to the Committee.

The original concept was a complex comprising a Museum, Library, Chapel and Social Room. Several options were considered for the museum including converting an old army cookhouse and mess hall from the wartime establishment facilities within Linton Camp.

Fund raising started in earnest with a national car raffle, golf competitions in three areas, and sale of bricks at a dollar each. It was some time before the Museum and Library was built but it was eventually opened on 30 January 1982 by the Chief of General Staff, Maj. Gen. R.G. Williams and the Colonel Commandant of RNZE Lt Col. Ken Christie.

The Principles for the establishment of the RNZE Museum

The principles behind the establishment of the RNZE Corps Memorial Museum and Library are two-fold.

1. To enrich the cultural life in RNZE by collecting, sorting, displaying, fostering and promoting the military history of the Corps of RNZE, and
2. To work within the NZ Defence Force, the Corps of RNZE, and serving and former RNZE personnel to provide a suitable venue where historical artifacts, equipment, dress, medals, weapons, and documents may be brought together as a research and developmental resource for all ranks, past and present, to grow their interests and to encourage and support younger soldiers in their understanding of the history of the Corps of RNZE.

The ECMC Library and Museum

The building was constructed by the RNZE, being officially opened in January 1982 and extended (additional library space) in 1987-88. This facility contains over 5,000 items of reference material, covering general engineering, technical engineering, combat engineering, general history, heritage items, training manuals from Australia, NZ, UK and the USA, School of Military Engineering (SME) references, The Professional Papers of the Corps of Royal Engineers (1850-1911), biographies, auto-biographies, photo albums, pictorial records, reports of deployments and projects in NZ and overseas, Unit History Sheet records, records of the Sappers Association NZ Inc (1960-), records of the ECMA (1966-89) and Corps histories for the Corps of Royal Engineers, Royal Australian Engineers, Royal Canadian Engineers and the RNZE. In other words, the library component houses the "Technical Information Centre (or TIC)" for the RNZE.

Museum Displays



The displays in the museum try to portray military engineering in its various guises of badges, medals, currencies, equipment, maps, memorabilia, presentations, references, reports, uniforms, war art, etc. Based on a chronology of the Corps, display cabinets house all of these items covering the Maori as military engineers, NZ Wars (1860-), Corps of Royal Engineers, Engineer Volunteers (1865-1910), in Canterbury, Auckland, Wellington, and Dunedin), Submarine and Mining Corps. A small amount of info on the Boer War is held. WW1 covers Samoan Advance, Field Companies, Signallers, Tunnellers & Miners, in Gallipoli and Mesopotamia,

Belgium and France. WW2 displays cover Egypt, Greece, Crete, North Africa, SW Pacific and Italy. The Korean War, Malaya, Vietnam, Thailand (Feeder Road Project and Op Crown).

Pacific Islands including Fiji the Rural Development Unit (RDU), Cook Islands, Kiribati, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga and Western Samoa. Antarctic – Scott Base Rebuild, Army Fire Fighters and Brigades, Falklands War, Demining and Peace-keeping operations in Afghanistan, Angola, Bosnia, Cambodia,



Iraq, Mozambique, Namibia, Pakistan and Timor L'este. Signals Communications and Calculations, Design, Measurement and Survey, Bridging, Boating and Watermanship, and roles of the engineers / RNZE, including demolitions, pioneering and field machines, field defences, obstacles, booby traps and mine warfare, plant, roads and airfields, chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear defence, water supply and many more.



The Kitchener Room

within the museum building, houses the Kitchener Silver collection presented to the RNZE by the Kitchener family (Estate of Field Marshall Lord Kitchener), along with a range of other cups, plates, silverware, trophies, medal collections and other priceless artefacts and memorabilia.

RNZE

Military History Resources

Medal Rolls

Official Histories

Unit and Regimental Histories

Deployment and Project Records

Campaign Histories

Embarkation Rolls

RNZE Corps Heritage and History

Who's Who

Photographs, Maps and Plans

Construction Design Drawings

Library and Reference Material

Information Updates

at the

RNZE Corps Memorial Centre

Cnr Powells Ave and Puttick Rd

Linton Military Camp

Provided by

The RNZE Charitable Trust

C/- DSS Registry

Linton Military Camp

Palmerston North 4820

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Brochures Funded by the Page Trust

The Engineer Corps Memorial Centre

Linton Military Camp, Palmerston North NEWZEALAND



**Comprising the RNZE
Library and Museum, and St
Martin's RNZE and Garrison
Chapel**

Ubique - I Nga Wahi Katoa

CC46770

January 2016