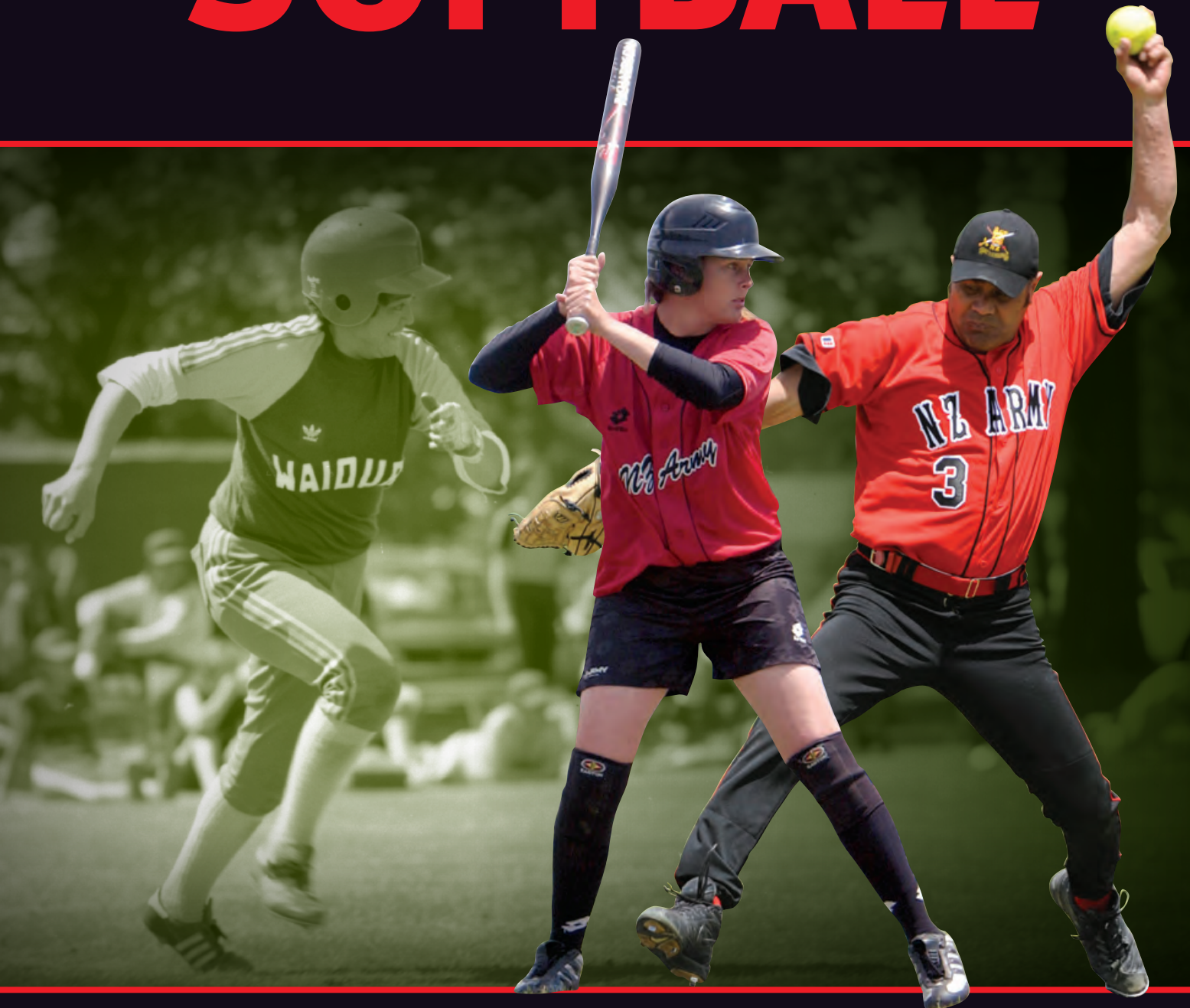


NZ ARMY SOFTBALL



60TH ANNIVERSARY 1949 - 2009

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FOREWORD

As the current Code Chairman Army Softball, it is my pleasure to welcome you all to “Sunny Trentham” for the 60th Anniversary celebrations of Army Softball. In 1949 Sergeant Maurice Bull became the driving force behind Softball into the Army. 60 years on we are gathered to recognise and celebrate those achievements.

A special welcome to the wives, husbands and partners of the players and officials assembled. Trust me I do have an appreciation and understanding of the sacrifices you have made in order to enable your husband, wife or partner to pursue their career and at the same time follow their Army Softball dreams and aspirations.

A special thanks to WO2 Doon Groves, Capt (Rtd) Phil Packer, WO1 (Rtd) Winnie Shanley and Mr Trevor Gilbert for their time, effort and commitment they have put in to ensure the Anniversary would happen. All those who are participating appreciate your efforts.

I trust you will enjoy the facilities, activities and weather we have organised for you. I know the Anniversary will be a tremendous success, as there is something we all have in common and that is an Army career and the love and passion for a great sport. I look forward to the weekend’s festivities and meeting those of you I have heard so much about, but not had the opportunity to meet previously.

Yours in Softball,

Grant McCarroll

Captain and Code Chairman

“In 1949 Sergeant Maurice Bull became the driving force behind softball in the Army. 60 years on we are gathered to recognise and celebrate those achievements.”



EDITORIAL

Written by Dean Groves

Softballer and part time Editor

Well, as you can see the journal is finally a reality (oh ye of little faith)! The production of this journal was a follow on from the Army softball history preservation project, which gathered and permanently recorded Army softball’s history (detailed in the “Army Softball Hit’s Cyber Space” article) on the internet. It was also considered an ideal time to have the information available for the 60th Anniversary of Army Softball celebration.

The history preservation project identified that there were no records of Army softball filed prior to 1999 to refer to, due in part to Army’s surprising lack of attention to actively recording its sporting history. So, in 2005, softball stepped up to the plate and did something about it.

The Army Softball web page displays softball information and numerous photographs, but for some of you (and I must count myself), reading a computer screen can have its challenges. Also, a large number of our ex members do not have access to a computer.

For those reasons, it was a no brainer – Army softball needed a hard copy document (a journal).

Having put a great deal of time and effort into the web page, we had a starting point and a wealth of information and photographs available to make the job a little easier.

Tracking down a large number of ex-members for the Anniversary, also provided an opportunity to let people know about the journal, and to seek information and more photographs.

I must say that the flow of information was very slow throughout until, you guessed it, the last minute. Late August and September were manic as a series of emails containing stories and historical information basically swamped me. Yes, it was great to finally get this information, but the timing really put the acid on the submission deadline.

To those of you who took the time (had the inclination) and put up with me hounding you to contribute something, my sincere thanks. Without your efforts the end result could never have been achieved.

I am sure that there are many events, incidents, and results detailed within that you will be able to relate to your own experiences. Before I go, I would like to take the opportunity to wish all members of Army Softball, the very best and every success in your future endeavours.

Yours in Army Softball

“Now let’s Play ball”



CODE CHAIRMAN

ARMY SOFTBALL



Above: Code Chairman Captain Grant McCarroll.

It gives me great pleasure to write the Code Chairman's article for the inaugural NZ Army Softball journal. All successful sports have a Pioneer and a proud history,

Army Softball is no exception.

Sergeant Maurice Bull, Royal Army Ordnance Corps (RNZAOC) was the pioneer of Army Softball. A soldier and softball enthusiast, Maurie Bull introduced softball to the Army Regular Force Cadets in November 1949 at Trentham Camp, Upper Hutt.

With the support of the head-shed in the form of Major Alfie Hamilton, (later Lieutenant Colonel) Maurie Bull fostered the game in the Army throughout the 1950s and 60s as a coach and selector. Throughout his career, Maurice was often referred to as "the big white father."

Following the introduction of Softball to the cadets in 1949, softball continued to grow. After several years it became part of the Inter-District Summer Sports Tournament and in 1953 took its place in the Command Trophy. The Inter-Regional Tournament, the tournament format that is still competed for today, replaced the Inter-Districts Tournament in 1972.

Over an extended period, Army Softball has widely been regarded as one of the most successful sports codes in the NZ Army. The men's and women's teams have both achieved regular success by winning the Inter-Service Tournaments, competing at national club tournaments and more recently has completed two successful tours to Australia in 2004 and 2007 dominating the Australian Defence Force sides.

The success of Army Softball has been built upon the enthusiasm and passion for the sport of those who have gone before and those of us still involved today. The likes of Maurie Bull and Alfie Hamilton in the 1950s, Charlie Strauss, Kina Lawrence, John Eagar, Tommy Keong, Alan Shirley, Gerry Slack and Len Robinson in the 1960s and 70s, Des Hammond, Chaddy Chadwick and Roy Seaman in the 1970s and 80s, well backed up by Fiona Cassidy, Phil

Packer, Winnie Shanley, Chris Waterhouse and Alex Whittaker throughout the late 1980s and nineties. And lets not forget the efforts of the current committee in ensuring the fine tradition, enthusiasm and passion for the sport is continued and no one else demonstrates this more than WO2 Doon Groves.

Army Softball is one big family that was founded in 1949. Our Kaumatua and Patron is John Eagar who was appointed in 2004, an appointment he still holds today.

There have been many characters in our sport over the years and many stories told of different fun and antics that have occurred at various Inter-Regional and Inter-Service Tournaments. The one thing we all have in common is the desire to succeed, the will to continue when the chips are down, the pride to uphold the customs and traditions of our sport, but most importantly the natural affinity we all have to enjoy ourselves playing softball, enjoy each others company and support the guy or girl beside us when they need it most.

In closing I would like to make special mention of the Anniversary committee of Doon Groves, Phil Packer and Winnie Shanley. I would like to thank all of those who have taken the time to write articles for the journal and finally I would like to thank you all for the contribution over the years you have made to Army Softball and for taking time out of your busy schedules to celebrate this special occasion with us.

"Army Softball is one big family that was founded in 1949."

The players and officials of today's game are fortunate to be part of a successful Army code thanks to the pioneers of the game within Army who have gone before us. For that we are grateful and will always endeavour to ensure the running of the sport is kept in good hands.

ARMY SOFTBALL CODE CHAIRPERSONS

Honour Roll

1954 - 1966	Maurice Bull
1967 - 1970	Alfred Hamilton
1971 - 1973	John Eagar
1973 - 1975	Gerry Slack
1976 - 1977	Phil Hollingsworth
1977 - 1979	Len Robinson
1979 - 1982	Eddie Chadwick
1983 - 1985	Roy Seaman
1985 - 1987	Des Hammond
1987 - 1989	Fiona Cassidy
1989 - 1990	Phil Packer
1990 - 1995	Winnie Shanley
1995 - 2000	Chris Waterhouse
2000 - 2005	Alex Whittaker
2005 - 2009	Grant McCarroll



A MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF OF ARMY



Above: The Chief of Army Major General Ryce Jones.

The playing of team sports has a long history in our Army. The objective is to enhance morale and physical fitness by spirited competition and a willingness to support soldiers in activities other than those of a precisely military nature.

By providing an opportunity for individuals to achieve and maintain the highest possible standards of physical fitness, it also promotes the development of Unit morale and esprit de corps in the Army; the development of teamwork, skills, and dexterity relating directly or indirectly to Army tasks; comradeship and understanding among Army personnel; the development of desirable personal qualities

and character; and the enhancement of the image of the Army in the community.

The playing of spirited competition displays a practical application of our Army's Ethos and Values and as well as being a mechanism for the development of desirable traits that we seek from our leaders at all levels under our Army Leadership Framework.

Softball in the New Zealand Army has had many notable achievements during the 60 years of your existence. Collectively, you have performed extremely well at not only NZ Combined Services (now NZDF) level but also on the national stage over many years. There are individuals amongst you who, through their personal commitment, have gone on to wear the Silver Fern and achieve world class recognition as part of a NZ team.

To all of you attending this 60th Anniversary of the New Zealand Army Softball Code I offer my congratulations. I offer a hearty 'welcome back' to all those past members of the Army Softball fraternity who are attending this anniversary weekend and a warm welcome to those who are still serving. I hope that you will enjoy the activities that have been planned and will take the time to reminisce of past glories.

Well done Army Softball.

R.R. JONES
Major General
Chief of Army

PATRON OF ARMY SOFTBALL



Above: Patron of Army Softball, John Eagar.

An interview with John Eagar

Written by Dean Groves

Hector Joseph Eagar hails from the capital, Wellington. Following his schooling, he worked in the city up a small alley in Tory Street where during his lunch breaks, he would frequently walk down to a nearby milk bar for a milk shake. It was there that he was given his nickname "Johnny" by the girls who worked there because he wouldn't tell them his real name Hector. He didn't like using Hector as there was a saying at the time "Hector the homeless hun", which was German and meant something about a dog. When the girls found out his last name was Eagar, they named him

"Johnny" after the movie actor Johnny Eagar. So, he decided to keep it.

John enlisted into the Army in 1946 as an infantryman and was sent to Papakura Camp for basic training. On day one, the instructors announced that they were looking for Lance Corporals, so after letting on that he had two years experience with the Air Training Corps and demonstrating good squad handling, he was promoted straight away to Lance Corporal.

Following basic training, John hopped on-board the troop ship HMS Chitral on 18 August 1946 and set sail for Japan as part of 22 Battalion J Force.

During his one year tour of duty in Japan, John happened to rupture his knee ligaments during a recreational cricket game. With no hospital in the area that could care for this injury, John was loaded onto the back of a truck for a 200 kilometre drive to the nearest hospital. Unfortunately, John's treatment was rest, until he got home for further treatment (the knife).

"John recalls his first Inter-Districts Summer Sports Tournament was at Papakura Camp in 1958."

In August 1947, John returned to Wellington where he got married and later had two children. In between children and working on Saturdays, John played for the Marist Brothers Old Boys Team. It was during this time that he

met Maurice Bull and his father, who was a top umpire in the region.

John re-enlisted back into the Army in the Royal New Zealand Armoured Corps as a storeman on 31 May 1957. He spent 8 years in the city working in the clothing store in Buckle Street.

John recalls his first Inter-Districts Summer Sports Tournament was at Papakura Camp in 1958. He was also selected into the Army Team that year and continued playing for 14 consecutive seasons.

When asked what sort of things they all got up to at the tournaments in the early days. He said “if there were any trouble makers, we would take them out the back of the building and sort them out, if you know what I mean. But this rarely happened.”



In 1971, John was appointed the Army Men’s Team coach, a position he held until 1973. During this time he was also the Code Chairman and the Combined Services coach.

“In 1975, John was presented the Army Colour (known also as “the Army Blue”) for his outstanding service to Army Softball and Soccer”

In 1974, John turned to the dark side and became an umpire. Over the years, he regularly offered his services to Inter-Regional and Inter-Service Tournaments.

In 1975, John was presented the Army Colour (known also as “the Army Blue”) for his outstanding service to Army Softball and Soccer.

In 1976, John and his family moved to Christchurch where they would become permanent residents in the garden city. It was not long before John and his wife Peg, offered their services to the local softball association as an umpire and committee member respectively.

In 1983, John was an umpire at the Men’s Invitation Mini World Series held in New Zealand.

In 1986, John was assigned as an umpire to the 11th Junior Men’s World Championships in the USA. His son Dale was also at this tournament as the coach of the New Zealand Team. The following year in 1987, John was an umpire at the Women’s World Championships in Auckland. In 1989, John was awarded Life Membership of the Canterbury Softball Umpires Association in recognition of his services to softball.

In 2000, John was an umpire for the Millennium Series in Christchurch.

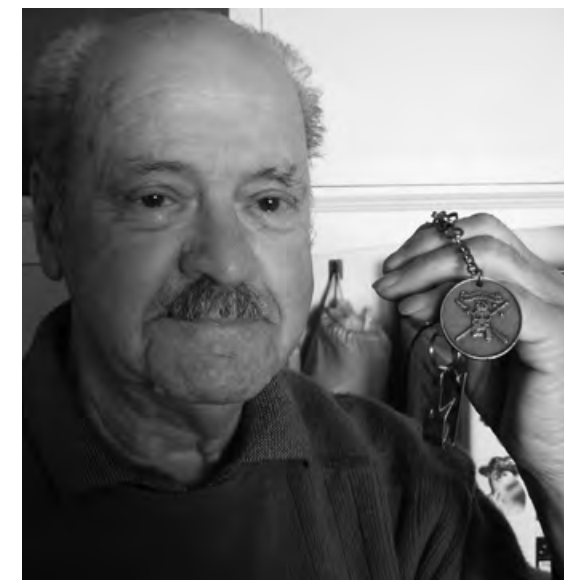
In 2001, the New Zealand Softball Association awarded John with the Umpires Distinguished Service Award.

On 2 December 2004, at the Inter-Services Tournament prize giving at Waiouru Camp, John was appointed Patron of New Zealand Army Softball, a position he holds to this day.

His son Dale has followed in his father’s softball footsteps as a player, coach, official and as the CEO of Softball New Zealand from 2005 - 2008.

In 2007, John was invited to tour Australia with the Army teams who were competing in the Australian Defence Force Softball Association Softball tournament at Randwick barracks in Sydney. John accepted the invitation and was a key member of the touring party both on and off the diamond. He underestimated the power of the sun on the first day of tournament play and got his legs sunburnt, but other than that, he fully supported all activities.

Below: John watching the Army play at Randwick barracks, Sydney 2007



Above: The Patron with his Army softball coin.

In 2007, John kindly donated “The Patron’s Trophy” to Army softball for the most outstanding player (male or female) in the Army. John is particularly proud of being the Patron of Army Softball and rates this appointment as one of the highlights of his softball career.

John is highly regarded by all Army softballers and is known by most today as “The Don.”

“His son Dale has followed in his father’s softball footsteps as a player, coach, official and as the CEO of Softball New Zealand ...”

John has spent an unprecedented amount of time involved with softball (at all levels) in the Army from 1958 to 2008 (50 years). Had his health been a little better, you could bet that John would be officiating in some form at this year’s tournaments.

It was an absolute honour and privilege to visit and interview our Patron for this journal – he is a true legend and treasure of Army Softball.

ARMY SOFTBALL COMMITTEE

Written by Major Dean Pascoe

Each sporting code authorised to conduct approved Army sports tournaments is required to have a committee. For softball, the Army softball committee is made up of a code chairperson, a secretary and selected representatives from each of the three regions (Northern, Central and Southern).

The eleven sporting codes within the Army are required to document a five-year strategic plan. The plan is an indication to the Army Sports Committee of that code's intentions for tournaments (dates and venues), training camps, tours, team resources and sports orientated courses, etc. The Army Softball strategic plan ensures that the code is heading into the future in the right direction.

CODE CHAIRPERSON

The chairperson of an Army code committee is directly responsible to the Army Sports Committee for all matters pertaining to the code within Army. The list of the chairperson responsibilities is comprehensive and encompasses all aspects of running an effective committee, including the responsibility for organising and running tournaments, budgeting, team resources, developing athletes and officials, and promoting the code within the Army and wider community.

The outgoing Army Softball Code Chairperson is Captain Grant McCarroll, RNZALR. Warrant Officer Class Two Dean Groves, RNZALR

has been appointed as the incoming Code Chairperson.

CODE COMMITTEE

Supporting the Code Chairperson is the Army Softball Committee. The committee meets at the end of each season to reflect on Army Softball's results; the tournaments it has conducted over the season; discuss general business; review uniform and equipment requirements; and to forecast and plan the coming season's activities.

The Army softball code committee is specifically responsible for the following functions relating to the code:

- ▶ recommending dates and venues for inter-regional and inter-Service tournaments within any restrictions laid down by the Army Sports Committee;
- ▶ appointing referees or umpires for Inter-Regional and Inter-Service tournaments;
- ▶ recommending Army representative team officials (manager and assistant, coach and assistant, strapper(s), selection panel, and scorer(s));
- ▶ recommending for the approval of the Army Sports Committee, Army representative fixtures and tours other than Inter-Service; providing for the approval of the Army Sports Committee rules and format for the conduct of Inter-Regional tournaments;
- ▶ developing the standard of coaching in

the code through qualification of all code coaches on sport-specific civilian New Zealand Qualifications Authority certified level two coaching courses;

- ▶ recommending to the Army Sports Committee the purchase of equipment and clothing as required by Army representative teams;
- ▶ presenting a budget for all Army team expenses to the Army Sports Committee when called for by the Sports Co-ordinator, Human Resources Executive; and
- ▶ replacing code committee members as required to maintain the committee at its required strength.

The current committee acknowledges the services and efforts of past committee members in developing and maintaining the strong framework, ethos and values that our current players and officials embrace.

Continued improvement is the current committee's main focus (as well as the never ending desire to remain Inter-Service Champions!).

“We support people within Army Softball who have the desire to take up coaching, umpiring or become a statistician.”

Not only does Army Softball look at continually developing its players, but it also looks to support people within Army Softball who have the desire to take up coaching, umpiring or become a statistician.

The Army softball code committee is a very important component to the sport of softball and is always on the lookout for those capable of contributing to the sport – do you have what it takes?

Below: Army Softball present its 2003 successes to Chief of Army, Major General Jerry Mateparae, ONZM.



WHERE IT ALL BEGAN

Written by Dean Groves

In the early 20th Century, Trentham Camp was a very large training establishment. It accommodated thousands of troops in white canvas tents and corrugated iron huts before they were shipped abroad to fight in the two World Wars.

Following the Second World War, the Army were finding their feet again, but still had stabilisation deployments to contend with, such as J Force in Japan and K Force in Korea.

N31261 Ernest Maurice Alexander Bull, enlisted into the New Zealand Army on 17 December 1941. He entered Trentham Camp in February 1942 as part of the 2nd National Reserve. Maurice was promoted to Lance Corporal in October 1942 and Corporal two months later.

Maurice was deployed to Norfolk Island (N Force) in March 1943 and returned to New Zealand (Wellington) in December of that year. Maurice had several postings within the Wellington Area and promotions from 1943 to 1947. He was attested into the Regular Force of the New Zealand Army on 17 December 1947 and was posted to the Main Ordnance Depot in Trentham. He was promoted to Sergeant in December 1949.

Maurice was a keen softball player, who came from a strong Wellington softball family. His father was a top Wellington umpire and his siblings were all talented softballers.



It was at Trentham Camp that Maurice Bull's desire to develop softball in the Army first started. He approached the Cadet Schools hierarchy with the intention of coaching and entering a cadet team in the Hutt Valley competition.

Maurice took good care of the cadets and was well liked by many of the young soldiers who were coached by him. He would take the team to games in the city on the weekends and then take them home for dinner. A few of the former cadets from the 1949/50 era have said "he really made us feel part of the family". They also referred to him as "the Big White Father."

"Maurice Bull was a true pioneer for Army softball"

It is believed that the 1949/50 Cadet team were undefeated and won the 'Bat and Ball' competition. They also played in the 'Knockout' competition, which was for all grades, but, because of their youth, the cadets would have had a 4 - 5 run handicap for games against senior teams. Despite this handicap, the cadets, under sound coaching from Sgt Bull, won the 'Knockout' competition. Of the

20 games played over the 1949/50 season, the cadets won 18 games and lost 2, a promising start for the cadets and for Army softball.

It is believed that softball became part of the Summer Sports Tournament for Inter-District competition in 1952/53. It could have been earlier but there is currently no evidence to support this. One thing is for sure, "Maurie" Bull was heavily involved with all softball in the Army at that time.

In March 1953, Maurice deployed to the United Kingdom with the New Zealand Coronation Contingent. He returned to New Zealand in August that year and was promoted to Staff Sergeant in October 1954.

WO1 Maurice Bull took his release from the Army in June 1970 having completed 28 years and 299 days service.

He was awarded the 1939 to 1945 War Medal, the Defence Medal, The New Zealand War

Service Medal and the Queens Elizabeth the Second Coronation Medal.

In May 1960, he was awarded the Army Long Service and Good Conduct Medal on completion of 18 years exemplary Service. Maurice became one of the select band of 20 serving personnel to be awarded the Meritorious Service Medal in February 1969, recognising long and Meritorious Service in the New Zealand Regular Force.

Unfortunately, it is not known if Maurice was awarded the Army Colour for his outstanding Service to Army Softball.

He was undeniably the driving force behind softball in the Army for a great number of years, especially during softball's initial phase. His long association with softball in the Army is fixed with all of those players and officials who were coached and or managed by Maurice. Maurice Bull was a true pioneer for Army softball - may he rest in peace.



REGULAR FORCE CADETS

Written by Trevor Gilbert
and Des Hammond



THE RF CADET SCHOOL CREST

Regular Force Cadet School was where softball started in the NZ Army. There is some speculation that the Americans who were based in Wellington during the Second World War may have played some games, but it is not recorded anywhere that we can find.

Sergeant Maurie Bull (RNZAOC) was posted to Trentham Camp and he is credited with the introduction of Softball into the Cadet School in 1949. The photograph from that 1949/50 team is displayed on page 90 of this journal.

Several of those players were to later play in the NZ Army team. Russ Luscombe (1949 Cadet) was a very accomplished sportsman and played softball and rugby for the NZ Army and Combined Services. Kina Lawrence (1950 Cadet) was a long serving player, coach

and administrator. He played representative softball for Manawatu and was a strong advocate of women's softball at District and Army level. Georgie Boyd (1950 Cadet) gave many years to softball at the Inter-District level.

Unfortunately, like most sports within the NZ Army, the strength of the cadet teams was very dependant on the Regular Force staff members that were posted to the school.

In the early 1950s, it was Maurie Bull, and in the 1960s it was the likes of Alan Shirley, Bobby and Howey Wilson and Oma Nepia. All of those people were accomplished and established players in their own right and gave up their time and expertise willingly to maintain the tradition of RF Cadet Softball.

There was also a reliance on other Regular Force servicemen to assist when there was a shortfall on the RF Cadet staff.

Below: 1961 RF Cadet School Team 11.



The contribution that Alan Shirley made to RF Cadet softball was considerable. In the mid 1960s he was responsible for the nurturing of the likes of Henry Dixon, Des Hammond, Roy Seaman and Robbie Turner. All of those players went on to represent the NZ Army and serve as coaches and Code Chairmen. During his second TOD to the school in the mid 1970s, Alan Shirley once again took the RF Cadets under his wing and produced another batch of fine softballers.

The 1964/65 RF Cadets Teams contained many players who would later play at Inter-Region and Army level and some progressed to even higher honours.

“Regular Force Cadet School was where softball started in the NZ Army.”

The RF Cadet Magazine of 1969 records that there were 92 cadets participating in softball and that there were 7 teams formed that played in the regular weekly competitions. The “A” team had a record of played 11, won 8, drew 1 and lost 2 and one of those losses was against the Waiouru Command Team.

The 1969 magazine refers to 72 players turning up and forming 6 teams. Several of the cadets of this era were to represent Waiouru Command at Inter-District level. Cadet teams who participated in the Inter-Unit competition that took place every Wednesday afternoon also performed very well.

Regular Force Cadets played softball against many High Schools and played very well at these fixtures. The recollections of players claim that the RF Cadets were undefeated during the 1960s. However, those cadets were showing the signs of age as the 1969 game against Whakatane High school was lost 10 - 9 after the cadets led 6 - 2 at the bottom of the 5th innings. The annual clashes with Whakatane



High School and St Stephens College were features of the summers and produced some thrilling games.

Many away games in the local area involved a trip on the back of an RL Bedford, which on many occasions did not have a canopy. So, in the Waiouru environment, these trips were particularly testing.

When the team travelled to Whakatane, the cadets were housed in the local Army Drill Hall and slept on stretchers in a large open hall area. “It was good character building stuff” one ex cadet recalls.

The Schools that they played at would normally put on a dance for the cadets. Considering that the availability of the company of young ladies was rare, the dances were always popular. There are a few rumours floating around, that one cadet was caught in a canoe in the main street in Whakatane, but the circumstances are not known (may be revealed at the reunion?) There was also mention of the big parties under the wharf somewhere near the Drill Hall.

When the cadets travelled to St Stephens College on the Bombay Hills, a night in Auckland was the reward and a chance to visit “the Big Smoke.”

In summary, the influence that Regular Force Cadet School had on softball within the NZ Army was substantial and the closing of this institution in the 1990s was lamented by all.

OVER THE DECADES

THE 1950s

Written by Dean Groves

The Command Trophy competition began in 1948. It was an annual competition between the Military Districts of the New Zealand Army. The original sports concerned were: athletics, cricket, rugby, basketball, swimming, tennis, boxing and hockey. The Command Trophy winning District was determined once the Inter-Districts Summer and Winter Sports Tournaments were completed.

Each individual sports had points allocated that would go towards the Command Trophy points table. The points table was maintained throughout the year and the champion District would be presented the Command Trophy the following year.

The Disabled Servicemen's Association of New Zealand donated the Command Trophy, which is made out of New Zealand woods with a central chiming clock.

The Inter-District names and boundaries were at the time, defined as:

- ▶ **Northern Military Districts (NMD)** comprising Fort Cautley, Papakura and Ngaruawahia Camp.
- ▶ **Central Military Districts (CMD)** comprising Fort Dorset, Trentham and Linton Camp.
- ▶ **Southern Military Districts (SMD)** comprising Burnham Camp and King Edward Barracks.

The early history of softball in the Army stretches back to the days of wooden bats,

stiff rawhide leather gloves and a time when batting helmets and protective equipment for catchers were not worn.

During the early 1950s, softball had become a regular weekend activity for the Regular Force Cadets in the summer outside of their scheduled training commitments. According to a few of the cadets from 1950 (Russ Luscombe, Kina Lawrence and Terry Fell), they believe that it took until 1953 for softball to become part of the Command Trophy. Terry Fell also recalls that softball did not receive a great deal of enthusiasm from the Army's hierarchy in those days and had to organise and conduct its tournaments fairly ad hoc. If softball had had the prestige of cricket in those days, it would have wanted for nothing. Travel to and from the Inter-Districts Tournaments was usually by bus or train to the Inter-Island ferry, an 11 hour overnight sailing depending on the seas and, finally, either a bus or train trip to the hosting Camp.

“The dress to, from and during tournaments was Service Dress (SDs).”

The dress to, from and during the tournaments was Service Dress (SDs). The coach (coacher) and manager both wore Service Dress during the games.

The Army Welfare Service was initially responsible for running the tournaments. The tournament teams all socialised together, in SDs at the tournament bar.

Army softball also has an urban myth from the 1950s (told amongst former Army softballers in 3 versions).

Version 1: Softball was apparently banned as a sport within the Army from 1958 until 1961, for the reason that senior officers were not impressed with the amount of noise generated on the diamond. When softball was reinstated, the catcher was the only player permitted to say anything on the diamond.

Version 2: In 1958, senior officers were so incensed at the level of noise and barracking that occurred during softball games that they barred softball from the Summer Tournament for 3 years.

Version 3: (as told by John Eagar) Burrows Field in Burnham Camp was in those days used exclusively for cricket, which was a game predominately played by officers (gentlemen). Softball was not permitted to play any games on Burrows Field (sacred ground), the alternative

being the rough paddock outside camp across the road.

John Eagar states “softball was permitted to play on Burrows Field, depending on who was the Camp comedian” (Commander) at the time.

The following photograph is a CMD Team, which is believed to be from one of the first Summer Sports Tournaments where softball was played. But, it could well have been taken a year or two after softball was introduced. Despite that uncertainty, you can see that Service Dress was worn for team photographs and some of the faces in the team are those who were with softball in the Cadet Schools (eg, Corporal Kina Lawrence, Craftsman George Boyd and Staff Sergeant Maurice Bull). Other faces include Lance Corporal Ernie Rogers and Corporal Terry Fell. It is not known where this photograph was taken or the camp that the Summer Sports Tournament was hosted by.

Below: The 1954 CMD Men's Softball Team.



OVER THE DECADES

THE 1960s

Written by Trevor Gilbert, Des Hammond and Phil Packer

The period of the 1960s was probably where Softball in the NZ Army came of age. Sport in the Army was being actively encouraged and mass involvement was the key.

The Inter-District Summer Tournament and Inter-Service Tournaments were large gatherings of sports players and officials for a week of competition and fellowship, possibly more of the latter. At the Summer Tournament there were teams from the four Regions of Northern, Waikato, Central and Southern, and the sports represented were softball (Men and Women), athletics, cricket, swimming and water polo and tennis.

“Chaperones were the norm in those days, so the players simply abided by the rules.”

Games were played over the period of the week and games from the various codes timed so that all the other participating sports could support their Regional teams.

Travel to and from the tournaments was invariably by surface travel and on the rare occasion an Air Force flight was available. If travelling by surface, those in the furthest regions, could spend as much as two days getting to and from tournaments. Tournaments in the South Island were always looked forward to by the Northern contingents as this meant a day trip from Wellington to Lyttelton

by overnight ferry, where many people experienced the first trip by sea and the beer available was particularly bad.

A strong allegiance to their Region was instilled and all sports fiercely fought to win the overall tournament trophy.

The evening functions during the tournament were normally held in a suitable sports bar within the camp. They were a sing a long, fine or dob session and player of the day awards. It was not uncommon for any person who committed a misdemeanour or act of foolishness to be required to sit on a chair upon the tables and drink a large bottle or jug of the sponsor's products.

The final function was when all the NZ Army sports teams were announced. It was a formal occasion and all participants were required to attend dressed in full SDs. Those who were new recipients of their Army pocket were presented by a senior officer from the host region. It was normal for those new recipients to ask members of the women's team to sew their new pockets on their blazers before the Army teams proceeded to the Inter-Services. The ladies were suitably rewarded with any beer of their choice.

By 1962, the Summer Tournament comprised cricket, water polo, swimming, athletics, tennis and softball teams who all competed for points towards the Command Trophy. It was also in 1962, that Waikato Military Camp became a command to create a quadrangular tournament.

In the 1962 Summer Sports Tournament programme, is a notice regarding the Command Trophy, which reads as follows: “An allegation in the early 1960s that the Trophy was successfully destroyed by Southern Military Districts who could not bear to lose it in fair battle, are utterly without foundation”.

The military district with the highest aggregate points following the completion of the Summer and Winter Tournaments would be declared the winner of the Command Trophy. For a time, the Summer Sports Tournaments were mainly for male competitors, with the exception of mixed tennis and softball, which had a separate men's and women's competition.

The custom of wearing the colours of the Region in the form of ribbons was popular in the 1960s and 1970s and it was the responsibility of the women's teams to make these up and present them to the men's team. To lose your colours was tantamount to losing a gang patch!



Above: NMD, CMD and Waikato Ribbons.

Softball games were particularly close, and throughout the decade the mantle of Regional Champions was shifted around the country frequently. There were no tie-breakers and all games were played until a result was achieved after equal innings.

The women's team were very dependant on the Unit OC's releasing their players and a great



Above: 1962 SMD Women's Softball Team.

deal of the women employed in the Army in the early days were from the RNZSigs Corps.

This meant that there was great difficulty in getting players released to attend tournaments as it would greatly effect the operation of the comcens etc.

Chaperones, usually a senior NCO or an officer, were appointed to women's teams at the Inter-Districts tournament, whose duty it was to ensure that the ladies acted appropriately and with decorum. The women's teams' barracks outside doors were locked at 10 pm in those days. But, the end of tournament function nights, were extended up to midnight.

Below: 1966 CMD Women's Softball Team with chaperone.



Chaperones were the norm in those days, so the players simply abided by the rules. “No hassles” one former player admitted.

The Prendergast trophy was presented by Mrs Prendergast (Air Force) for women’s Inter-Service competition.

During the 1965/66 season, the Army teams followed the Air Force lead when they attended the National Inter-Provincial Tournament for the first time. Three years later, the Navy teams would also attend the National Tournament. One year later, the NZ Police Team joined all three services at the same tournament.

When the Inter-Districts Tournament finished, the selected Army teams would travel to the Inter-Service Tournament and compete against the Navy and Air Force.

It is believed from 1966 to 1970, Combined Service Teams were chosen between the Navy, Air Force and Army.

The crest at the time had the Army crowned lion standing on a royal crown, the Air Force eagle and the Navy anchor (pictured below).



In 1967, the NZ Police Teams took their place in the Inter-Services Tournament, which was held at Burnham Camp. The Lauthala Bay trophy was donated by the Air Force at this tournament for the men’s competition. The Army Men’s Team won this tournament, which is engraved on the Lauthala Bay Trophy.

“In 1967, the NZ Police Teams took their place in the Inter-Services Tournament ...”

John Eagar recalls before the Police started attending the Inter-Services, the social functions were fairly segregated between the other Service teams. But when the Police came along, he said “they were more jovial than us, less regimented. We slowly loosened up and started to conform to their ways” (the Police).

On most occasions the NZ Army Teams would play build up games against local provincial teams, eg Counties, Canterbury and Manawatu. The opportunity was often taken to entertain these sides at the nearest Defence establishment as closing times were very liberal and the cost of alcohol much cheaper than the local hotels or clubs.

At the completion of the Inter-Services Tournament, a Combined Services men’s and women’s teams were selected and these teams would play the local Provincial team in the area.

A number of Army players also played for Provincial teams, such as Counties, Wanganui, Manawatu and Canterbury.

The NZ Army sides would also compete at the National Inter-Provincial Tournaments over the Xmas New Year period. Sometimes this side varied from the team that represented NZ Army at the Inter-Services due to postings, release from the service and other factors. One of the

main reasons for non-attendance was that the tournament was held over a time that placed a big demand on those with families.

At the National Provincial Men’s Tournament, depending on the number of teams attending, the tournament would be split in to two or three divisions, the Beatty Cup, Dick Headifen Trophy and the Ed Barr Cup.

A Combined Services side was selected by NZ Softball selectors at the completion of the Inter- Provincial Championship. This team would play against a Dick Headifen / Ed Barr selection team. This was started in the 1960s and continued until individual Service teams were replaced by the Combined Services Teams in the mid-1970s.

REGULAR FORCE CADETS

Softball was also very strong in the RF Cadet School over this period due mainly to the influence of Alan Shirley who was posted there as an Instructor. RF Cadets would play annual fixtures against St Stephens and Whakatane. RF Cadets also played in the Waiouru Camp Wednesday Inter-Unit and Saturday Competitions with considerable success.

Training was additional to all other activities in the RF Cadet routine and required a great deal of personal sacrifices by the Regular Force



Above: 1965 RF Cadet School Softball Team at Waiouru.

Cadet staff and those cadets who wished to play.

Many of the cadet prodigies would go on to represent the Army and Combined Services sides for many years to come.

COACHES AND MANAGERS

NZ Army was fortunate in having amongst their ranks some very fine coaches in the likes of Alf Hamilton, Maurie Bull, John Eagar, Charlie Strauss and Len Robinson to name but a few.

Maurie Bull

Maurie Bull can be rightfully called “the Father of NZ Army Softball” having started the RF Cadet team in 1949 and his hard work in the 1950s was to bear fruit in the 1960s.

He coached the Army team to many tournament victories and also at the National Tournaments where his teams were to win the Ed Barr Trophy at Invercargill in January 1970.

Maurie was also instrumental in arranging the two reunions in 1995 and 1996 in Palmerston North. He was also very heavily involved in the administration and coaching in the Wellington area.

“NZ Army was fortunate to have great coaches ...”



Below: 1967 68 CMD Men's Softball Team.

Alf Hamilton

Alf remained a very staunch supporter of Army Softball right up to his retirement in the rank of Brigadier. His influence at command level was instrumental in all sports throughout the Army being encouraged and supported.

Whilst he was Commander of the Northern Region he also was the driving force behind the establishment of the Papakura Army Softball Club.

This club went on to be one of the foundation teams when the Counties Softball Association was established.



“Alf remained a very staunch supporter of Army Softball”

John Eagar

John was known by Army softballers as either; “Father” or “The Don” or “Old Man” and many more affectionate names. John has been one of the stalwarts of Army Softball and is featured in another section of this journal in his capacity as Patron of NZ Army Softball.

As a player in the 1950s and 1960s John was a very accomplished outfielder and upon his retirement from the field went on to be a very successful coach and umpire.

Charlie Strauss

Charlie was a catcher who had a natural ability to read a game. A great lover and stalwart of softball both in the NZ Army and Counties. At the completion of his playing days he became an excellent coach who expected a high standard of commitment from his players



“As a catcher Charlie had a natural ability to read a game”

both on and off the field. Charlie later shifted to his native Australia where he established a museum of softball memorabilia in the basement of his house. Sadly Charlie passed away several years ago.

Tom Keong

Tom was “Mr Magician” who kept the teams entertained with his magic and slight of hand tricks and who, in partnership with Maurie Bull, consolidated the side during the latter part of the decade as assistant coach.

Warner Davis

Warner went on to be a very successful coach for the NZ Army Women’s Teams after he had finished his playing days, which included representing NZ Army.

Len Robinson

Len is not recorded as ever representing NZ Army as a player but was a very successful coach both at Inter-Regional, Inter-Service and Provincial level. Len coached Wanganui for a number of years and showed great commitment to the game, he travelled between Waiouru and Wanganui sometimes 3 times a week to practices and games.

Jim Carter

Jim was the guiding light behind Papakura for many years. His devotion to the game of softball was unquestionable and he was an extremely efficient organiser of both Regional

and Inter-Service Tournaments.

Whenever Jim ran a tournament, you didn’t want for anything. He could put on a tournament, everything was there.

Gerry Slack

Gerry will be remembered as Charlie Strauss’s shadow, however, in his own right he was an outstanding manager. Gerry had the knack of getting things done on time with the least amount of grief.

THE PLAYERS

Below we have tried to highlight some of the players who left their mark on the game of softball in various ways. We apologise for those we have not mentioned but our memory is not as good as it once was!

There were many characters that graced the softball diamond over this period. Some remembered for their ability on the field and some remembered more for their activities off the diamond.

“we have tried to highlight some of the players who left their mark on the game of softball in various ways”

Russ Luscombe

Russ was also a member of the 1949/50 Cadet Team. A natural sportsman who made his presence felt on first base and in the batters’ box. We believe that Russ was one of the best players to represent NZ Army and Combined Services at softball.

Russ was also an All Black trialist and many argue that he was very unlucky not to don the black jersey. Russ was also awarded the Army Colour in 1954 for rugby.

Kina Lawrence

Kina was a member of the “Originals” 1949/50 RF Cadet Schools Team who went on to play, coach and manage both the men’s and women’s Inter-District and Army team’s. Kina also represented Manawatu in the early 1960s.

George Boyd

George was another 1950 cadet, who played a number of years for District and Army teams. He later coached women’s District and Army teams.



“George Boyd was another 1950 cadet ...”

Heta Wawatai

Heta was another member of the 1949/50 team who was a player of natural ability and who was an inspiration to many younger players.

Oma Nepia

Oma was also a member of the 1949/50 cadet ‘stable’ coached by Maurie Bull. He continued playing softball well into his twilight years. A true gentleman and a credit to the game of softball.

Alan Shirley

Alan was a man who many believe possessed the best arm around the diamond. His left arm throwing action caught many a player trying to steal bases who never saw the ball coming. A man that played very hard both on and off the diamond. His nickname “Zap” was given to him because of the fact that the strength of his throw caused the softball to resound in

the glove with a zap. Many players can vouch to the phenomenal speed that Alan generated with his throwing technique by the resulting sore hand.

He was the father figure to many RF cadet players having served two postings to the unit. A great number of the younger players that he moulded during this time were to later form the backbone of softball within the NZ Army.

Keith Evans

Keith was a captain and catcher for the NZ Army team and a player who was held in high esteem by his peers.

Reginald “Reg” Bennett

Reg only started playing Army Softball in 1967, as he spent 3 years serving in Borneo and Malaya from 1963.

Whilst posted to Burnham Camp, Reg played club softball for Kaiapoi, where he was selected to play for the New Zealand Softball Team in 1968.

He has represented both the Army and Combined Services at Softball and Soccer, a bit of a twinkle toes one might say.

Roy Seaman

Roy was a third baseman who had a rocket arm and became a dominating figure on the pitching mound. We believe that he was probably the biggest hitter to play during this era, he was feared by all opposition pitchers. Injuries probably stopped Roy from being selected for higher honours. He represented the NZ Army, Combined Services and Wanganui with distinction. His son (Jimmy) represented the NZ (Black Sox) team on many occasions during the 1990s up until his retirement in 2004. Jimmy pitched the Black Sox to victory at the 2004 Men’s World Softball Championships in Christchurch.

Henry Dixon

Henry was a short stop of real class who was a regular starter in Army teams for many years. The bane of many a side because of his outstanding fielding ability and because of this ability he was his team pitchers best mate.

Rolly Horopapera

Rolly was a very fine softballer who contributed to the game in Singapore and NZ. He had a great will to win and was an innovative batter and base runner. Rolly kept the teams we were involved with together with his humour and activities (how softball is blessed to have people like this).

Peter Niall

Peter spent many years in the Army team. A more than capable outfielder who represented the Army and Combined Services in several other sports

Charlie Elkington

Charlie was a colourful character and later went on to be a NZ badged umpire and who to this day has a fear of elephants. This is following the Nationals at Invercargill where he walked into one on his way home from the bar. Charlie later found out that the circus was in town so he was not hallucinating. Charlie played NZ Army softball and was also a successful coach of the NZ Army Women’s Teams. Charlie still assists Army and Inter-Service Tournaments as an umpire and the Defence Force is extremely lucky to have people like Charlie involved.



“Charlie later went on to be a NZ badged umpire ...”

Eddie Chadwick

Eddie was a larger than life guy who represented the Army Men’s Team during the 1970s and later went on to become the Code Chairman and a leader of softball in the 1980s.

Peter Richdale

Peter was the first of the “junky” type pitchers to represent the Army. His throwing style and movement made him a very difficult pitcher to hit. He was a very good infielder as well, who represented the NZ Army, Combined Services and Wanganui.

Min Simons

Min was a very accomplished infielder who swung a mean bat.

Ken Turner

Ken coached and played for many years at Regional level and had great softball knowledge. Ken was one of the people responsible for developing a competitive Ngaruawahia Camp Team back in the late 1960s (according to Stu Neshausen).

Ted Priest

Ted played and coached for many years. Another who was part of the emergence of softball in Ngaruawahia Camp and is also recognised as one of the stalwarts of softball within the NZ Army.

Tom Matiaha

Tom was rated by Roy as his best catcher. Tom was another member of Alan Shirley’s RF Cadet teams and went on to represent Army with distinction at several National Tournaments.

Stu Neshausen

Stu started in the outfield and ended up as Coach. Stu was to dedicate a large portion of



“Stu started in the outfield and ended up as Coach ...”

his Army career to the game of softball and after coaching the NZ Army team for a number of years took on the task of coaching the Combined Services during the 1980s. He is still involved at club level in the Hutt Valley.

Dave Morgan

Dave must have been rated with the sweetest arm to grace the diamond. From 3rd base he was very good and swung a better than average bat. Dave captained the Army Team to victory at several tournaments. Dave also represented Counties

Robbie Turner

Robbie was another of Alan Shirley’s prodigies from the RF Cadet teams. Robbie represented the Army team and would later go on to assist in coaching Regional and Army teams.

Dan Cunningham

Dan was one of the better second basemen to come out of the Central Region. Dan was a gifted sportsman and excelled at several other codes. Dan represented NZ Army teams for a number of years.

Wally Morgan

Wally was a real character both on and off the diamond. A live wire in the outfield (just like his son Patrick, who represented Army and Combined Services from 1990 until his release in 1997 – see “the 1990s” and “Honours”

articles about 'Rik'). Wally's wife Derryn, was also involved with softball in the Army as a scorer.

Murray Cooke

Murray's small stature was no handicap to him. A very quick base runner and a source of real entertainment in the tournament bar.

Les Stowell

Les was the baby of the 1960s, who progressed in the 1970s to be a softballer of real class. He pitched a very good drop ball, and from 3rd base had real vision and read the game well. He was another out of the RF Cadet ranks. Les represented both NZ Army and Combined Services.



“A softballer of real class, Les pitched a very good drop ball”

Tom “The Baron” Hurinui

Tom joined the Army having already played representative softball for the Nelson and Blenheim regions. He was posted to Papakura Camp where they had an established side with many current Counties and NZ Army reps. He led that team to be the top one in the area.



“Being a left hander, Tom perplexed many who faced him”

He was a pitcher who read the batters exceptionally well. Being a left hander, he perplexed many who faced him.

He was to become an integral part of many NZ Army and Combined Services teams as well as Counties for most of the decade.

He had been known to go to a tournament with \$2.00 in his pocket and return home with change despite getting on the “turps” every night.

Des Hammond

Des was a prodigy of the RF Cadet team who was very successfully coached by Alan Shirley. Des epitomised the ethos that was installed in Army softballers during this era.

Des captained the NZ Army, Combined Services and Wanganui teams and was to later serve as Code Chairman.



“Des was very successfully coached by Alan Shirley”

Rick Nathan

Rick epitomised the NZ Army Softball culture that to participate was the reward. Rick did not care where he played as long he was



“Rick did not care where he played as long he was playing”

playing. He always featured high in the batting statistics. Rick also represented the Combined Services.

Mac Douglas

Max was a 2nd baseman and a solid batter. Mac was a reliable and valuable asset to any team.

Maggie O'Neill

Maggie was another who played on 1st base and threw with his left arm. Maggie also coached and managed Women's Regional Teams.

Phil Packer

Phil was a prodigy of the Hutt Valley Softball area who played for the NZ Army and Combined Services for many years and then turned his hand to coaching the NZ Army side. Phil is now a NZ badged umpire and still involved at every level of the game.

A proud moment for him came about in 2008 when his son was selected to represent NZ Army and continue the proud Packer tradition. Phil's wife Anne was the NZ Army Scorer for a considerable length of time.

Richard “Dicky” Wilson

Richard was Baron's No 1 catcher throughout the later part of the 1970s. He read the game very well and not too many runners stole bases on his arm. He was another to represent both NZ Army and Combined Services.



“Not too many runners stole bases on Richard's arm ...”

Trevor “Storky” Gilbert

Trevor was another to represent NZ Softball when he was selected for the NZ Under 21 Team following the National Provincial Tournament in Invercargill in 1969.

This team played against the Arizona All-Stars on Athletic Park. Trevor went on to represent NZ Army, Combined Services and Counties.



“Trevor was was selected for the NZ Under 21 Team”

Stu Ross

Stu was another gifted sportsman who excelled in this game.

Mark Anderson

Mark was a prodigy of RF Cadet's from the second posting of Alan Shirley. A real live wire on the diamond and very difficult to pitch to.

Mike Dellow

Mike was an outstanding outfielder who represented NZ Army for a number of years.

Noel Kahui

Noel was a player of natural aptitude. He was a very good pressure batter and was called on many times to start the momentum going again.

Ian “Hot Shot” Hall

Ian was a natural softballer and one of the better infielders to come out of the NZ Army. Represented both NZ Army and Combined Services.

THE UNIFORMS

Who can forget the uniforms that we wore during the 1960s and 1970s. Each region was responsible for supplying their uniforms. An example of this was when the Papakura Camp wished to enter a team in the local competition. Spare jungle green pants were acquired from the Q Store and dyed black and the jerseys were made by the wives.

Uniforms are covered in more detail in the article “Pride in the Red Jersey”, which is on page number 136 of this journal.

The Bats

It was not until the end on the 1970s that aluminium bats came into vogue. Before that

it was the good old wooden bats. You would finally find a bat that suited you and then someone would use it without having the label to the top. If the bat was not used with the label upwards it would split or break.

Batting Helmets and Catchers Protective Equipment

Unheard of and no one was ever hurt without them. The only crayfish legs were the ones we ate.

Skin Diamonds and Dugouts

Back stop netting had not been thought of back in the 1960s. Games were played in the corner of the rugby fields and overthrows took a bit of time retrieving up until the early 1970s.

Below: 1966 Army Women's Softball Team



ARMY'S FIRST NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE



Above: Reginald Bennett.

An interview with Reg Bennett

Written by Dean Groves

Reginald Bennett hails from Wanganui and that is where he played his softball under the guidance of Don Brewer (Police and Combined Services coach), which is one of the main reasons that he played.

Reg enlisted into the Army as a rifleman in the Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment at 2nd/1st Battalion RNZIR at Burnham Camp in 1961. After his corps training and various courses, Reg found himself heading on a Tour of Duty to Borneo and Malaya in 1963. Reg

did one tour in the South East Asian region and returned back to New Zealand in 1966 and resumed his post at Burnham Camp. It was there in Burnham that Reg met up with another Army softballer Des Hammond, who asked Reg if he wanted to join his Kaiapoi team, which he duly obliged. Reg became the pitcher and he and Des (the catcher) formed a great understanding of each other as Reg's “suckerball” (curveball) was the bane of many a batter. This pitcher/catcher combination worked very well and helped a strong Army men's team to victory at the 1967 Inter-Services Tournament at Burnham Camp.

In 1967, whilst Reg was with Kaiapoi, he was selected to trial for the National Team along with Roy Seaman, who would be his Army team mate for a number of years. Unfortunately, the pair were both unsuccessful. However, the following year with great form on the mound for Kaiapoi, Reg was selected into the New Zealand Team.

“Reg's ‘suckerball’ (curveball) was the bane of many a batter”

On Saturday 17 February 1968, Reg Bennett became the first Army softball player to represent New Zealand. He played at third base against the visiting San Antonio Team from the USA.

During the late 1960s, Reg was part of Army

team's that won the Ed Barr Cup (C Section) three times at the National Championships during that time.

Reg took his release from the Army in 1970 after 9 years' service. Reg has been living in Sydney for a number of years and is still heavily involved with softball in Australia.

Looking back on his time with Army softball, Reg recalls his favourite pitcher Roy Seaman, he said "Roy was a really quick pitcher." He also acknowledges Des Hammond as being a big influence during his time at Kaiapoi and for becoming one of his close friends.

Reg would like to mention in this article that he rated John Eagar "as an upstanding gentleman", who he always looked up to during his time with Army softball.

Reg moved to Australia some years ago and when he visited New Zealand in 2004 he

saw John still umpiring at the Evergreens Tournament in Christchurch and thought that that was just "magic".

Reg has been in contact with Army softball leading up to the 60th Anniversary in November. He said "I will be attending the reunion and am really looking forward to the anniversary games. I've been pitching a fair bit recently and will be throwing the gas in Trentham".

Below: Reg Bennett playing for NZ against San Antonio at English Park in 1968.



STORIES AND MEMORIES OF THE 1960s

The following is written by Bernard Hughey (Roy Seaman)

I have just recalled another memory, this one of Alan Shirley. The RF cadets were playing against St Stephens College and I was catching to Des Hammond. Des threw a drop ball which dislocated one of my fingers. Grimacing with pain and holding my wrist Alan ran over to the catcher's box took a look and then told me to turn my head away. He grabbed the hand and gave a tug on the finger, problem was he tugged the wrong finger and I ended up with two dislocated fingers that he had to put back. I ended up having two fingers strapped with tape and carried on catching (with the fingers outside the glove).

"Des threw a drop ball which dislocated one of my fingers"

From my point of view, one cannot express enough the contribution Alan Shirley made to us during our years in Cadets.

I guess a lot of other softballers who have known both Des Hammond and I would not have known that during our cadet days Des was our pitcher and I was the catcher, until one day we decided to change around. In hindsight, I wish I had stayed catching fulltime as that was the position that I enjoyed the most. I ended up catching to the likes of Peter Richdale, Des, Tom Hurinui, Phil Packer, Max Baldwin,

Clayton Veitch and also whilst playing for the Huia Chiefs and Manawatu.

Yes, I agree the trips to the schools with the cadet teams were very enjoyable, but won't comment any further.



Bernard (Roy)

Not sure what team it was, but we were travelling from Wellington to Christchurch on the ferry, it was a very rough crossing and Charlie Strauss was walking around the lounge on the ferry offering people oysters. Can you imagine what that was doing to a number of people who were finding the rough cross hard to handle? At the same time an un-named person was chatting with a couple of people in one of the lounges, asking if they had ever seen an elephant with a black trunk and white ears.

Written by an innocent RF Cadet:

Being a young innocent lad at the time I was introduced to the finer arts of womanising and drinking very early in life thanks to Inter-District and Inter-Service Softball Tournaments.

The following is written by John Mudgway (Service number 581769)

I marched into Trentham Camp in June 1962, into MOD, Motor Transport spares with WO1

Maurice Bull (“the Great White Father”) as my Company Sergeant Major, and in the summer of that year I played in the Camp team and tried out for the Army team, which meant a trip to Linton Camp for trials. I was unsuccessful at these trials so ended my Army team career.

Some of the blokes in the Army team and myself, combined with the Upper Hutt Ladies Hockey Team, helped to bring Upper Hutt Rangers Softball Club out of recess in 1963 and we ran this club for several seasons. In later years this club became Totara Park Softball Club.

In the 1980s, I was Chairing a Lower North Island Junior Softball Committee and Maurie Bull arrived as a delegate for the Horowhenua Softball Association. I mentioned to him that after all these years he would now have to take orders from me – his immediate response was “no way sonny”, so I chaired the meetings and Maurie did what he thought was best anyway.

Written by Ranje Tamepo and Martha Mariu

We remember Reg Bennett and Roy Seaman on the plate and no favouritism either from Roy when the women practised against the boys... (curse!)



Ranje Tamepo

The following is written by Trevor “Storky” Gilbert

The Army team were staying in the barracks at Philomel in 1969. Each floor corridor had a loudspeaker system that would regularly bellow out a Naval announcement or order ending with “lay-aft”. We were resting in our rooms, when these announcements got to Charlie Strauss. He said, “If there is one more announcement, those speakers

are history!”. Right on cue, another announcement, so Charlie grabbed a nearby softball bat and promptly bashed a speaker off the wall and out of action. The end result, peace and quiet for Charlie and the team.

The following is written by Allan Sinclair

A brief history of Papakura Camp Softball in the 1960s:



Allan Sinclair

The Engineers always had a good team and this formed the basis of the Regional and Camp team in the Counties competition.

The first Northern Military District team I can recall in 1961, was Oma Nepia, Terry Fell, Allan Sinclair, Henry Clark, Heta Wawatai, Bill Poka, Ralph Flavell and Bob Wilson. Later, Alan Shirley, Charlie Strauss, Tom Hurinui, Bob Helmbright, Tom Charman, Warren Porter, Bob Mason, Murray Lipsham, Jim Moon, Colin Pollock, Trevor Gilbert, Rick Nathan.

Dave Morgan, Dickie Wilson, Sam Peti and John Osbourne.

The Camp team’s best lineup Tom Hurinui, Bob Helmbright, John Osbourne, Dick Wilson, Sam Peti, Dave Morgan, Jim Moon, Allan Sinclair, Charlie Strauss, Tom Charman, Trevor Gilbert and Jack McDonald, most of whom played for Counties for years.

Eight players representing Army.

Don Smith, a registered umpire, suggested that the Engineers form a unit team and enter in the Counties competition. So we did, and were supplemented by other units’ when our regular players were away.

We basically coached ourselves, few tactics or signals, never winning the competition, but

coming second year after year to Pukekohe.

One highlight was when Charlie Strauss and Tom Hurinui arrived and we were drawn to play Pukekohe. Strauss, first batter, hits first pitch out of the park and Tom takes 10 strikeouts and we still lost. Real close game, lost by 1 run.

Counties requested that we get a decent uniform, jungle green pants we dyed black and some of our wives ran up some black tops (talk about giving batters an advantage). The camp played in this competition for at least 10 years. Army players, Sinclair, Morgan and Osbourne played for the inaugural Counties team at the Beatty Cup, 1967-69 at the Hutt Recreation ground.

I first met Tom Hurinui playing for Nelson and coach Ed Dalgleish. Ed was the best technical coach I have ever listened to after many years of softball. He talked of tactics and plays I had never dreamed of.

Whilst playing for Counties against Auckland Marist, Roy Bufforia, a power hitter blasts a low screamer between centre outfield and right outfield and out of nowhere an outstretched hand gets it. Even the Marist supporters appreciated it. It was Storky on the end of the glove, having covered 15 metres to his left. Best outfield catch I have ever seen since Sky Toffler, centre outfielder for America.

Papakura Dream Team 1960–1970

Charman, Peti, Gilbert, Morgan, Moon, Hurinui, Strauss, Osbourne, Helmbright and Sinclair

Army Dream Team 1960 - 70

Phil Packer, Trevor Gilbert, Roy Seaman, Reg Bennett, Dave Morgan, Tom Hurinui, Pete Niall, Charlie Strauss, Bob Wilson, Des Hammond, Alan Shirley, Russ Luscombe, Allan Sinclair, Henry Dickson. Reserves, Les Stowell, Jobe.

Incidents while on Army Softball trips:

Dave Morgan, being restrained by 4 others. Sam Petty saying afterwards, I’m disappointed

Dave, if you had used the correct procedure you could have cleaned them all out.

Sam was at a party in Palmerston North and was invited outside to find 5 guy’s waiting for him. So, he kicks down a picket fence and charges into the 5 guys, with the fence, scattering them like a bowling balls knocks down the pins. Sams last act was picking up the last guy by the ankles and swings him like a softball bat into a lappost. The Police arrive and want to know where Sam’s mates are to explain the scuffle. Sam had no assistance other than his black belt instructor skills.

At the Inter-Services Tournament at Whenuapai in 1968/69, we were not doing so well, so we decided to go on the plonk on our day off. We got into Charlie’s Consul van and headed into the vineyards. Strauss, Stowell, Sinclair and a guy from battalion (an outfielder). As we drive into the first vineyard, the auto shotguns go off (for birds), so someone screams “Ambush left” so we bail out of the right side of the vehicle, including Strauss the driver, assuming the prone position in the front of the bar. Charlie chats to the elderly female owner, we buy some grog at half price and head for the Wade Pub. When we got there, Charlie goes to get some smokes from the machine, which malfunctions, and he comes back with an armful, this prompts the rest of the smokers to follow suit.

An unnamed centre outfielder, goes to chalk the pool cue and snaps about 1 foot off the end. When we started to drink our own plonk in the pub we were asked to leave. Back to the vineyard, ambush right again, cars still moving in first gear, back to airbase, drunk as skunks.

The next day, Les is in on the mound, still out of it, and he starts throwing drop balls and takes 9 strikeouts. At the final night party I tried to help the bar staff tally up the night’s takings, offering to count the big stuff. There were many great memories.

My high points

Tom Hurinui in a positive batting mood.

Gilbert coming in from the outfield saying “Can you feel it?” We were going so well, every batted ball went to glove, every out perfect! Pity we couldn’t have bottled it.

Hitting a homerun against Air Force with a broken wooden bat (fibreglass break in handle) stopped ball in strike zone and it sailed to the outfield.

Mark (son of Policeman who played and coached Combined Services) sets to bat, relaxes and places the bat behind his back and parallel to ground and drops a dead bunt. Safe on first did the same thing again later in the tournament. He had never tried it in a game before.

The best game was holding Auckland to a 3 - 2 loss when I was with Counties.

The worst play, with two outs, a flyball is hit to me at first base with a runner on one. I catch the flyball and instantly bring the ball to ground to execute a double play. I look up to see my second baseman Strauss walking off the diamond with his glove under his arm. He was not impressed!

My best play was a wildly thrown pick off play at first base. I jumped in the air, caught the ball and tagged the runner on the head for the out.

Ooops, almost forgot about Ted Priest and Ken Turner not fronting one year to coach Northern Districts and I think the Army team too?

The following is written by Una Chadwick (nee Owen)

I had never played much softball before joining Army. It was just called “rounders” back in those days.

In 1962, a Central Military District (CMD)

team was chosen from Trentham, Dorset and Linton based personnel for the Inter-Districts Tournament. At the time, I was based at Fort Dorset and working in Wellington City at CMD HQ.

Our CMD team went on an Army truck to the ferry terminal in Wellington for an overnight 11 hour, trip to Lyttleton, Christchurch. It was early to bed so as not to get dizzy (sea sick). The rooms consisted of 4 bunk beds. When we docked at Lyttleton, we stepped off the ferry and onto the train for a trip out to Burnham, as the trains would go direct to the Camp in those days. All teams outside of the hosting Camp generally all travelled together to the tournament venue.

The tournament had teams competing from Northern (Papakura), Waiouru and Southern (Burnham) Military Districts. At the end of the tournament, Army representative teams were selected, the selector and coach was Maurie Bull. At the completion of the formalities, we then turned to the social function arrangements, which was a way of meeting up socially and making new friends from the different camps. The old faithful guitar was the main source of entertainment and there were no shortages of players.

From memory, the Army teams played against Canterbury B at English Park the following day as the Inter-Service Tournament had not been formed at that stage.

The Inter-Services always followed the Inter-Districts Tournament for all sport played at that time. These tournaments followed the general format of the Inter-Districts including the formalities. The Police Teams entered the Summer and Winter Tournaments in the late 60s – a great bunch they were.

While I was based in Burnham, to get to Waiouru or Papakura to play tournaments’ all Southern Military Districts (SMD) sports teams went by train to Lyttleton, ferry to Wellington,

overnight express to Waiouru Camp (arriving 1am) or Papakura Camp (arriving 7am). We were all stuck in these carriages with hardly any room to stretch our legs, trying to sleep; well that was literally a nightmare. Some slept on the floor and guards often struggled to get through to collect tickets or do passenger checks. But it was all fun and it was all part of the package.

I would also like to mention that we all travelled in Service Dress in those days. If we left camp at all to visit relatives or friends, we had to be back in barracks by 10 pm for “lights out.”

When I played for SMD at the tournament in Linton, we had a team, but no fast pitcher. We knew the other teams had fast pitchers and big hitters, so we just told those who asked that we had a “secret weapon”, just to give them something to think about. Up comes our secret weapon Beryl Dowling from Invercargill

and when she pitched (they just couldn’t get their rythmn, ha ha) she was so slow, that they either swung too soon or too fast making them hit the ball high into the air for an easy catch.

We went on to win the tournament that year. The Waiouru lot had “short sheeted” our beds the first night. We all had to bunk down on camp stretchers at the old Camp Hospital (which is now long gone) and we used the ablutions up the road, which was covered in coal dust as we had to pass the boiler house. Then we had to walk across the paddock to get our meals.

NMD stayed in camp hospital as well, on the old type hospital beds, and when you turned over at night, the beds would screech on the wooden floor, followed by pillows being thrown at you to be quiet.

Those were the days.

Below: 1962 Army Women’s Team (Una #7 is far left, front row).



OVER THE DECADES

THE 1970s

Written by Phil Packer

Softball, in all forms of the game, varied so much through this time period, which resulted in numerous changes across the board. The early stages of the 1970s saw a change from Inter-Districts combined summer sports to that of individual sports holding their own Inter-District Tournaments.

My first experience of softball within the Army was as a RF Cadet (clubbie) in 1971. An opportunity was presented to trial for the ATG Waiouru team, after only being in the Cadets for a little over one month. This experience was, for a 17 year old, was to set the stage for, not only my future career in Army softball as a player, but also as a team Captain, Selector and Coach for many years to come.

See, what happened here was that although I was selected for ATG Waiouru to attend the next Inter-Districts Tournament, I injured my back whilst undergoing Basic training one week prior to the tournament and could not go. However a fellow team member, who was to become a much valued and respected team mate for Districts, Regional's, Army, Combined Services and now Umpiring teams, spoke to me and offered the encouraging comments mentioned above. Thank you so much Charlie ("Black Dad"). Maybe some of you who happen to read this article also have someone to say thanks to. Do it now before it becomes too late.

The lesson I learned and was able, I believe, to pass onto other aspiring Army softball players, was no matter what your age, so long as you

believe in yourself and are prepared to do whatever it takes to get where you want to be, then you will do it.

Coaches and Managers were very important in the making of a successful team. My first Army Coach was none other than our Patron of Army Softball John Eagar. His partners in crime were the infamous Charlie Strauss as Assistant Coach and Gerry Slack as the team manager. These three worked so well together in creating a great team environment, which in turn created a strong team that went to the Inter-Services in search of victory.

I recall as time went on and he eventually took up coaching, it was always his intention to surround himself with a manager and an assistant that were committed to a winning team formula, which involved full commitment to training, playing and afterwards came the rewards.

Below: 1971/72 Army Men's Softball Team.



In 1971, all four Service teams were merged into a representative team following the Inter-Services Tournament and were still called the Combined Services. The crest changed to the Navy crown, the Air Force eagle, the Army crossed swords and the Police laurel leaf.



Above: The Combined Services crest.

The 1970s were a time when softball within the NZ Army was probably at its strongest. The battalion were still in Singapore, which presented an ideal climate to play softball and there are many who were introduced to the game during their tour of duty and went on to represented NZ Army with distinction.

Every year there was a Sports Week Competition between all the Battalion and Minor Units where was an integral part of it. Some NZ Servicemen were selected to play for the Singapore National side.

During the mid 1970s slow pitch softball became very popular and the NZ Force had a team in the local competition. Although this was seen as a social event the NZ team always performed to a high standard. It is understood that they also set the benchmark at the after match social functions.

At the 1970 Inter-Services Tournament, the Army Men's team started the 1970s in style with a tournament win.

A week out from the 1971 Inter-Services Tournament, the Coach Alfie Hamilton was called away and therefore could not attend the tournament, so his incumbent, John Eagar, the assistant coach took over the team. He was also appointed the Combined Services coach and the Army Softball Code Chairman and held these positions until 1973 and 1974 respectively.

It is not known where the 1972 Inter-Services Tournament was held or which Service was the host, but Army softball do know that the women's team won the tournament.

After some lobbying by John Eagar during the 1973/74 season, Army men had a team scorer accompany them to the Beattie Cup tournament in Lower Hutt. Anne Greig, to later become Anne Packer, represented Army Softball for many years as an official with representative teams to club and national tournaments. She, in later years, was attached to Combined Services Men's teams, as their team scorer.



Above: Anne Packer (nee Greig)

It is unsure, at time of going to print, whether this service to our game was ever officially recognised. From a grateful softball fraternity, thank you Anne for your years of support.

In 1973, the Inter-Services Tournament was hosted by Army at Papakura Camp. According to the players who were at this tournament, the men's final came down to Air Force and the Army. In the bottom of the 7th inning, the scores were locked at 3 runs each with Army having their last chance to win the game if they could score a single run. Doing the pitching for Air Force was Mike Singleton. Stu Neshausen was on first base and there was one out when Roy Seaman came up to bat. Roy hadn't been hitting all that well and was confronted by a handy pitcher in Mike Singleton. A drop ball was thrown and Roy recalls swinging like he was using a pitching wedge. The next thing, the Air Force centre outfielder was seen throwing his glove in the air at the ball that must have been a good ten feet above his head.

Roy said, "The hit was one of the biggest I have ever seen. I can't remember what I had to do but it was worth it."

"The NZ Combined Services Men's Team for the 1974/75 season was made up of 5 Army representatives"

The Inter-Service win sent Army to the Pan Am Club Championships in Tauranga. Des Hammond recalls, the story of "the phone call". Lynda was having our first child, Paul. The Army team were in Tauranga and we were in Christchurch. The buggers decided to call us and congratulate us, we didn't realise they had called collect, everyone spoke and Lynda and I thought that was very nice of them. It wasn't until we received our next phone bill that we found out the call was collect, very expensive call.

The NZ Combined Services Men's Team for the 1974/75 season was made up of 5 Army representatives, that being Rick Nathan, Des Hammond, Roy Seaman, Phil Packer

and Anne Packer (Scorer). At the Inter-Club Championships held 13-16 March 1974 at Tauranga Domain, the Army Men's Team won the Tom Voyle trophy. This team was pretty much unbeatable and went through the tournament undefeated. The final was played against Douglas Villa from Carterton and I remember after the final out was taken, a strike-out from memory, Roy, who was catching, jumped up and fired the softball out over second base and out over my head at centre field and as far as I know it is still flying somewhere!

There were many memories at this tournament, like staying in the Tauranga Police Station Social/Bar area. Beds were two to three mattress, sheets and blankets. Stu Ross had problems with somebody's alarm clock until he decided enough was enough and proceeded to teach it to fly. That didn't work and it died a painful death. Softball was great, team spirit excellent, social activities – well what goes on tour stays on tour!

The Army Men's Team were able to repeat the previous year's victory by winning the 1974/1975 Inter-Service Tournament at RNZAF Base Auckland.

Below: Part of the 1975 Central Women's Softball Team at the Inter-Regionals at Burnham Camp.



The 1975/76 Inter-Services Tournament was hosted by Air Force at RNZAF Base Wigram. The Army Men's Team won the tournament yet again. It was also at this tournament that John Eagar was presented with the Army Colour.

The 1976 Army Women's Team won the tournament; unfortunately there was no information provided that could give any details of the win, but the team is pictured below.



Above: 1976 Army Women's Softball Team.

The 1977/78 Inter-Services Tournament was held at Philomel. It was at this tournament that an unnamed player asked rookie Mark Anderson, "Hey, can I borrow some money, my wallets been stolen". Mark replied, "yeah sure", and handed a small amount over. The next night, the same player asks Mark the same question, this time Mark replied, "No, I can't mate, someone has stolen my wallet too".

There is a sporting "urban myth" that you can have a rookie on for a few days at a sports tournament, that is until they figure you out. Unfortunately, the rabbit (rookie) had cottoned onto the sly fox. This sort of team bonding was invaluable and helped the men's team go on to win the Inter-Services championship.

The 1979 Inter-Services Tournament was hosted by the Air Force at Te Rapa. Following the women's team win, the ladies were literally "on fire" and because of this, some of the team decided to strip off and take a swim in the Fire Pond (under the cover of darkness). Some of the men's team were inspired by this good thinking, and so jumped into the pond minus their clothes to.

Here ends the 1970s.

1960s and 1970s DREAM TEAM

Please note that this team was selected by a couple of past players and is meant as a discussion exercise and does not reflect the opinions of the committee.

Pitcher: Tom Hurinui

Catcher: Charlie Strauss

1st Baseman: Russ Luscombe

2nd Baseman: Les Stowell

3rd Baseman: Reg Bennett

Short Stop: Henry Dixon

Left Outfielder: Phil Packer

Centre Outfielder: Storky Gilbert

Right Outfielder: Peter Niall

Designated Hitter: Roy Seaman

Designated Runner: Des Hammond

Reserves

Peter Richdale, Alan Shirley,

Dave Morgan, Keith Evans,

Rick Nathan, Richard "Dickie" Wilson

Coach: Maurice Bull

Assistant Coach: John Eagar

Manager: Alf Hamilton

STORIES AND MEMORIES OF THE 1970s

The following is written by Phil Packer

My softball memories are many and varied, but some that have stuck after all these years are as follows:

- ▶ **“C” Block barracks** and ablutions (cold water mostly), Papakura.
- ▶ **Hedge-line** between the barracks and hospital, Papakura.
- ▶ **Rolly Horopapera** ironing his dirty two-day old knickerbockers on the “C” Block parade ground with a RL Bedford, trying to put creases in them.
- ▶ **Phantom pisser** in the Police Mess in Tauranga, where the men’s team stayed in 1974.
- ▶ **Rick Nathan** jumping up at second base to receive a throw from Alan Shirley and the ball hitting him smack on the forehead.
- ▶ **Stu Ross** – got cheesed off with an alarm clock ticking away through the night at Tauranga, which caused him to get up and chuck it out the window, which was 3 stories up.
- ▶ **Travel** – well what can I say that you are not already aware of i.e. the “rattler” between Wellington and Auckland, Army buses through the night, and the Inter-Island Ferry. For those who are not sure what the “rattler” was, it was the over-night train from Wellington to Auckland.
- ▶ **Meals** – again what can I say. Over the years meals progressively got better, but overall we were pretty well fed, that is for those who could get themselves out of bed to go for breakfast and also who could be bothered going to evening meal prior to going to the “sports bar”.
- ▶ **Being selected** for Region and Army teams – these were always high-lights and then ultimately being selected for the Combined Services team.
- ▶ **Sad times** – having to say good bye to team mates who did not make representative teams and also to former colleagues who had passed on.
- ▶ **Good times** – meeting up again the next softball season, with mates that you may not have come in contact with for the last 12 months.

Finally, some extra special high-lights:

- ▶ First being selected for the Army Men’s Team in 1973.
- ▶ First being selected for Combined Services Team in 1975.
- ▶ Being named team Captain in 1977/78.
- ▶ Being selected to be the Code Chairman in 1989.
- ▶ Being selected to Coach the Army Men’s Team in 1985.

- ▶ Being selected to Coach the Army Women’s Team in 1990.
- ▶ Being selected Coach of the Combined Services Men’s Team in 1990/91.
- ▶ And last but by no means least, when one of my son’s, Kevin, was selected in the Army Men’s team in 2008/2009.

Memories of the 1973/74 Beatty Cup Tournament in the Hutt Valley, on New Years eve at old Royal Tiger Tavern, was Charlie and Alan Shirley having boat races drinking out of their very old and smelly footwear. This happened on more than one occasion throughout the early part of the evening before going over to my place and my bar. Needless to say we had a great night, which management instructed us to do, as we had already won the Ed Barr Cup that day and had only one game left to play the next day. We did play and win that game and actually if my memory serves me correctly, we were undefeated in all our games.

If I recalled the phrase “Cool Charm”, I am sure most of the 1973/74 Beatty Cup team would remember what it was for and what it meant!!

I am sure you all will have many and varied recollections of your time in the Army Softball

Below: 1977/78 Army Men’s Softball Inter Services Team.



family and I would like to say with all sincerity, that there was never a moment had that I came to regret and would love to do it all over again.

If you are at a loose end and wondering what you can still give back to the game, well then how about considering coaching, umpiring or scoring. I can tell you from personal experience there is still a lot of satisfaction to be had at this level of the game. Give it ago.

Forever yours in Softball – Phil

The following is written by another innocent RF Cadet

The Inter-Services Tournament that was held in Linton Camp in the summer of 1970, which was one of the last of the combined Summer Sports Tournaments.

The tournament bar was in the cinema and at the end of the night it was the Orderly Officers task to close the bar and ensure that the place was cleared. On one particularly good night the members of the Navy team were not ready to finish their festivities and were told by a young enthusiastic Orderly Officer to leave or he would have them all arrested. Their solution to this problem was to carry him out the door and throw him in the adjacent fire pool complete with his SD’s and Sam Brown. He was not impressed but the bar stayed open.

During the Nationals at Christchurch in the early 1970s the NZ Army team was accommodated in the Addington Barracks adjacent to the men’s prison. We received an official complaint from within the prison and were asked to keep the noise down as the inmates were finding it hard to sleep at nights. Of course that worked! the WO’s and Sgt’s Mess became the tournament bar by default and there were many great nights had with all the other Provincial Teams. This is the same tournament that Roy and Charlie Strauss damaged the Army van that we had for our use and parked it nose first into a garage, departed hoping that no-one would notice and the damage would go away?

The following is written by Derryn Morgan

My late husband Wally (Wharekonehu) Morgan was involved with Inter-District and Army Softball from the late 1960s to mid 1970s as a player until moving into managing and coaching women's teams. I remember watching an Inter-Regional Tournament in 1970 being played on Ongley Park in Palmerston North. Obviously Colquhoun Park had not been developed at that time.

“Not sharing my birthday together during our marriage became a standing joke between us”

Not sharing my birthday together during our marriage became a standing joke between us as he was always away with “his girls”. Them's the breaks when you hook up with a Defence fella!



Above: Wally and his girls.

Sadly Wally was killed while on duty in the Solomon Islands in 1980.

The following is written by Bernard Hughey (Roy Seaman)

Talking with Reg Bennett recently in Sydney, we believe that Charlie was the comedian in the Army Team. When playing in National Tournaments like the Rothman's Cup etc you could count on him to pull off a stunt, like doing a down trou in a pub, of course he had a few tattoo's that caught the eye. He really liked his rum and come to think of it, it was probable Charlie that got me onto rum.

I recall at one National Tournament when we were waiting for the official party to arrive before the announcements of the trial teams when Charlie walked out of the room then a couple of minutes later walked back in a said, “Ladies and Gentlemen”. There was absolute silence. Everyone was thinking this was the moment. Then he said, “The time is a quart passed five, thank you” and walked back to the tables where we were sitting. The crowd really burst out with jeers and laughter.

Rolly Horopapera was the catcher in our Battalion Team in Singapore. We were playing against the top team, the Singapore Pirates, and the game was very close. We were having problems with the umpires calls, so Rolly called time and walked out to me on the mound and said I want you to throw a bean ball straight at the umpire. Well, I threw the fastest pitch I could, Rolly jumped to the side of the catcher's box leaving the umpire exposed, but to everyones surprise their number nine batter hit the ball. The batter was run out at first base, the umpire called time and ejected Rolly from the game.

Two day's later Rolly and his family returned to New Zealand having completed his Tour of Duty both in Vietnam and Singapore, and then we were advised by the Singapore Softball Association that Rolly was banned from playing softball in Singapore for twenty years.

Peter Niall was a quite unassuming type of guy, played centre or right outfield and was up with

our top army players from the out field guys. He was also named in several Combined Services Teams during his playing days.

Sadly my memories of Maurice were not a good one. I first played District Softball as a Cadet in 1964 as a 16 year old and competed in my first tournament in Papakura along with Des Hammond.

Prior to the announcement of the Army Team that year, I was told by Maurice that I was too young to be selected and so from that point on I guess my opinion of Maurice was somewhat clouded.

A few years later whilst pitching for the Army at a Inter-Services tournament in Philomel I asked Maurice to take me off the mound as my arm was very sore, he refused and again my personal feelings were very clouded. Although I did not know at the time, I had a serious injury to the shoulder joint from an accident in the military, which has resulted in me having a total shoulder replacement. The good thing out of this operation is I don't get any pain like I use to and I am still able to play golf, although throwing a ball is somewhat difficult.

Below: Bernard and co.



As to our Dad, Alan Shirley, what about the time he got struck out on three sucker balls.

Army Women's Team played at the Inter-Services Tournament in Philomel in brand new red uniforms. They all ended up in the Navies swimming pool after a game, but guess what, the next day they were playing in Pink uniforms as the colour's had run.

Who was the coach (a married man at the time) who ended up going home with love bites from one ear to the other ear, one each from all the girls in the team, I think they had just won the Inter-Services Tournament. Sorry, I cannot recall who the coach was.

Tom Keong was very loud when he snored, more so after consuming many beers at the end of each day's play. I recall once arriving back at our barracks in Papakura Camp after being kicked out of the club house by the Orderly Sergeant. Tom was already in bed and snoring his head off, so a group of us picked up his bed and carried it out of the barracks across the paddock to the Artillery Parade Ground where he spent the night.

Around 6.30am the Orderly Sergeant was on his way to the mess hall when he noticed the bed, so he went to investigate and found Tommy in it. He woke him up, you can imagine the look on Tom's face to find himself in the middle of the parade ground. Adding to this problem, was Tommy always slept in the nude so he had to wrap a sheet around him to get back to the barracks to find someone to help him recover the bed.

“Tom Keong was very loud when he snored, more so after consuming many beers at the end of each day's play.”

Of course we all denied any knowledge of doing this to him and said we where already in bed when he came home from the club.

At the 1974 Inter-Services at Papakura Camp, I was up to bat with 1 out and it was the bottom of the 7th inning. The scores were all tied up. “Boom”, a big homerun, Army win’s the game and tournament. “Yep without a doubt that would have been the biggest homerun I ever hit”.

Not sure about all the details, but Tom Hurinui crash tackled a Police women’s team player on the dance floor at one of the Inter-Services Tournaments. We are not to sure on the actual dance move Tom was trying out with her, but she was hurt in the process, which didn’t go down too well at the time.

Well they are some of the memories I recall, but hell there are many more, which I guess will get told in time.

The following is written by Alex Whittaker

I knew Charlie Strauss, not because he was in my era, he was the generation above me. He served with my step father (Jim Carter) who was involved with the Papakura Army Softball Club for a number of years. He was also the old man of one of my school friends, Karen Strauss. I can’t recall any playing moments

Below: Charlie Strauss #1, bottom left.



with Charlie, but I certainly know the man and he was always around when I was a kid (an Army brat) hanging around the Army Camp and playing little league.

I also know that the Strauss family migrated to Australia in the 1970s.

“The Army teams were travelling south by Army bus one year and he kicked one of the ladies off (Noema) because she had jeans on ...”

My Step Father, Jim Carter was heavily involved with softball, especially in Papakura Camp. I was going to school in Papakura and Jim was behind the scenes big time during those days. When he wasn’t at work, he was at the Papakura Army Softball Clubrooms (or Rugby Clubrooms during the winter).



Above: 1977/78 Papakura Men’s Softball team.

He was a bloody hard man. I know that the Army teams were travelling south by Army bus one year and he kicked one of the ladies off (Noema) because she had jeans on. Anyway, that was that. Cheers.

The following is written by John Eagar

Alf Hamilton was one of the boys during the game, it wasn’t until he got back to camp that he put his rank back on.

The players in the Defence Forces Tournaments are good to the umpires, compared to civilian club competitions.

I was tossed into the pool fully clothed at Navy one Inter-Services Tournament. We won, so the boys were really happy.

I stopped playing because of my age, but I played as long as I could, when I felt it was “Old bastard, get out” time, I became an umpire.

My biggest highlight is the camaraderie.

The following is written by Grant Childs

Like all sports the ole “What Goes on Tour, Stays on Tour” applies but what has never been determined is for how long? Surely after all these years have passed it is permissible to release a few snippets but let’s keep the names out.

Interesting observations were made on many occasions in respective barracks as the sun rose on a new day, yep lots of bare arses poking out from under the sheets telling tales that should not travel back to camp. Now that one looks to be too cute and smooth to be one of the boys and this one here looks to be way too hairy to be in the female barracks.

Putting some chicks bra and knickers in one of the boys bag of dirty washing to be dropped off to his wife while he went on to the Inter-Services Tournament wasn’t very sporty was it now. Some fast talking was required to get out of that one.

The following is written by Allan Sinclair

Strauss again at the 1970 Nationals in Invercargill playing for the Beatty Cup, being massaged by Peter Kirkland (British PTI)

screaming like a stuck pig.

My worst game was losing to Ramblers 28 to something? with the Papakura Camp team at the Vic Guth (Waitangi Weekend). With six strangers in the team, most regular players away on exercise (the joys of Army Sport – why would you not play for a regular civvy lineup?)

I was the player coaching Burnham Camp Team in 1978 to 1980. We beat the previous Christchurch winners to gain entry into the A competition

One afterthought is telling Bob Helmbright at the Beatty Cup in Wellington, not to get struck out because the National Team selectors were picking the Combined Services Team. Both of us got into the team even though we did not bat all that well, but no strike outs. That year the Combined Services played an NZ B Selection, I got fanned at least once, could never handle the big stuff, although I did get a hit off Peter Roberts (Manawatu) and a bunt off the greatest (Kevin Herlihy), but it cost me a peeled back finger nail.

“My biggest highlight is the camaraderie”

I tried to start softball in the Fijian Army 1975 to 1977, but as soon as a rugby ball appeared, that was the end of that.

I played against most of the embassy teams in Moscow in 1979, such as the Marines, Japan, England, Canada and Australia.

I played baseball for two seasons on Sundays in Auckland, it was a long and slow game, at the same time playing softball for the North Shore Evergreens on Saturday.

The Evergreens tournament in Hastings, Tom Hurinui played for Australia. Some real old guys from Southland won the tournament, I was 50, they had to be 60 plus, fit as and batted like mad things all grey haired. Embarrassing.

The following is written by Stu Neshausen

Des made the statement to me “I’ll kiss your ass if you get on base”.

This was said in the bottom of the 7th inning,

“Guess what Des had to do to one of my butt cheeks that evening in the tournament bar!... kissy kissy Des.”

last game of the tournament and we were batting. Well, I get on base, next batter gets out, then up steps Roy who hits a towering blast over the centre fielder to score the both of us and win the game. Guess what Des had to do to one of my butt cheeks that evening in the tournament bar!... kissy kissy Des.

Whenever Tom Hurinui was at a tournament, he would raffle off a bottle of rum and his team always won it.

That concludes the 1970s, no more flared trousers because here comes the 1980s.



SOFTBALL IN SINGAPORE

Interview with Bernard Hughey (Roy Seaman)

Written by Dean Groves

Prior to Bernard’s adventures in Singapore in the early 1970s, he enlisted into the New Zealand Army in 1964 with the Regular Force Cadets in Waiouru. On graduation, he was posted to 21 Transport Company in Waiouru as a driver.

Bernard played softball in the Wanganui competition for a team called Hautapu Softball, which was one of several Waiouru Teams. They played games against the Braves team, which is where he first met Don Brewer (Police), who Bernard would meet again through Combined Services softball. Bernard hurt his shoulder in 1969, but like most sportsmen, continued to play sport.

Bernard received his marching orders for Singapore in February 1970. He packed his bags, jumped on an RNZAF Boeing and would not return to New Zealand until 2 years later.

He arrived at his new unit, the Headquarters Far East ANZAC, located in Tanglin (off the top of Orchard Road, central Singapore). He was a corporal responsible for driving duties, duty driver, VIPs, bank runs, etc.

During his settling in period, he learned that softball was played in Singapore and that there was a fairly strong competition. Bernard made some enquiries and found a team called the “Drilco Drillers”, which was a mining team made up of Americans, South East Asians and a couple of New Zealanders. He had a car and

with Singapore being pretty small, could travel around without any difficulties.

Bernard played softball for six months of the year and rugby for the remainder. On a Thursday night, he used to play slow pitch at an American school. There were no team club rooms to socialise at, so after games the players would either go out to restaurants for a meal or head straight to a bar.

When Bernard moved to Kangor, he was attached to 90 Transport Platoon as a section commander, it was an Australian Transport Unit and Dieppe Barracks where the Kiwi Battalion was based was just across the other side of a huge paddock.

After one season with the “Drillers”, Bernard changed clubs to the All Nationals team and join up with his good softball mate and catcher Tom Mataiha. The All National team (called the “Singapore Blue Team”) was selected from all the other teams in the local competition, to even up the number of teams for the Pesta Sukan Tournament (which was divided into an

Below: Bernard (Roy) in action for the Drillers.



A and B section with the top team from each section playing in the final). The All Nationals Team ended up beating the Singapore Gold Team, which was basically the Pirates Team, 2-1 in the final for the gold medal.

Bernard was then selected to pitch for the Singapore National team, but he was subsequently ruled ineligible due to their citizenship criteria.



Above and Below: 1RNZIR v the Dragons.



Another one of Bernard's Army softball team mates, Rolly Horopapera, had recently returned to Singapore from his tour of duty in Vietnam and had started playing again for the battalion team (1RNZIR). It was at this time that Rolly asked Bernard to come and pitch for the battalion and Rolly would be Bernard's catcher, which Bernard thought would be great.

The 1st Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment was located at Dieppe, so getting to training and games was even easier. Like most New Zealand units, the deployed battalion played a number of sports and recreational activities to break the normal routine of soldiering and to provide sporting activities and team spirit. Softball it just so happened, was one of those sports played in the battalion. The Battalion team were also entered in the local competition.

The Battalion team only trained after work, which if they were lucky, was once a week and

quite often they would have problems getting their top players off due to exercises in Malaya. But, if you were in the Battalion rugby team, then it didn't seem to pose a problem.

When all of their players were available, they had a really good team and they could match it with the local teams. Most of the team had played for Inter-Regional teams at some stage back in New Zealand and about half of them had been in the Army teams.

Bernard was considered to be the top pitcher in the Singapore competition, and he thinks that it helped the Battalion team to perform at a higher level than it had before.

In 1972, Bernard returned to New Zealand where he was posted to 10 Transport Company at Linton Military Camp, ending a memorable and exotic taste of softball in South East Asia. He naturally resumed playing softball again in Palmerston North playing for the Huia Chiefs from 1972 to 1974. He also played for Miramar in Wellington in 1979 to 1981. He finally had

the operation to fix his shoulder, but it ended up worse – go figure.

He decided to give playing away in 1983, while he was posted to Burnham. He then made the transition into coaching and he coached the Army and Combined Services in the mid 1980s. He remained involved with softball coaching and eventually became the Code Chairman from 1983 to 1985.

“During his settling in period, he learned that softball was played in Singapore and that there was a fairly strong competition. Bernard made some enquiries and found a team called the “Drilco Drillers”, which was a mining team made up of Americans, South East Asians and a couple of New Zealanders.”

Below: 1RNZIR Softball Team 1972.



OVER THE DECADES

THE 1980s

Written by Dean Groves

The 1980s had begun, punk rock had faded, new wave music, shoulder pads and big hair were all the rage and David Hasselhoff (Michael Knight – Knight Rider) was the man! Oh dear. As for the Village People, well let's not go there.

Success at Inter-Services Tournaments over this decade would be rare, with the domination of the NZ Police in the men's and Air Force in the women's games.

The 1980/81 Inter-Services Tournament was hosted by the Police at the Police College, Porirua. The Army women's team played extremely well throughout the week and went on to win the tournament. The men however, were no match for the strong Police team.

Below: An Army team player holding the Prendergast Cup.



Above: 1982 Army coaching staff and Code Chairman.

“Success at Inter-Services Tournaments over this decade would be rare, with the domination of the NZ Police in the men's and Air Force in the women's games.”

The 1984 Inter-Services Tournament was hosted by Army at Burnham Camp. Neither Army team were able to regain the tournament crown on their home turf, and they would have to wait for several more years to get it back.

In 1986, the Inter-Regional Tournament was hosted in Wanganui and the games were played at the Wanganui Braves ballpark. The tournament was accommodated out at Languards Bluff, which is still standing after hosting softball players, so it is believed that nothing untoward happened.

The Inter-Services may have been held at Whenuapai in December of that year. Unfortunately, neither team was able to bring home the Inter-Service Champions trophies, not for the lack of trying.

At the end of the 1986/87 softball season, both Army Teams went on an end of season road trip to Taupo to attend the Cosmos All Stars Tournament, which was hosted by the Midlands Softball Association. The teams based themselves out of the Army Leave Centres in Acacia Bay. Unfortunately, not a great deal of softball was played due to the wet weather, so the players were forced to entertain themselves until the weather cleared.

Luckily, Taupo offered a number of recreational activities to entertain idle hands. Two days later, with a number of card games and a few refreshments down range, it was time to play some ball.

The last day of the tournament was basically a cram session to squeeze as many games in as possible to determine a winner. The Army

Below: The Army Women's Team at Ngaruawahia, 1982.



Above: Mouse and Dean at the Inter-Regional Tournament in Wanganui.

teams jumped straight into what would be a very long day, playing 4 games back to back.

The women's team performed exceptionally well, despite the problems encountered with obtaining a pitcher. Had they not been faced with this problem, it is believed they would have taken out the women's section; instead they finished third.

The men's team battled their way through to the final against a team from Tauranga, who had won the tournament for the last three years. Army went on the win the game 7 - 3 and, in doing so, won the tournament.

In 1988, the Inter-Regional Tournament was hosted by Linton Camp. The only new cap in the Army Men's Team was “Dog” Ryan who recalls being stitched up by Darren Rea, Grant McCarroll and Chris “Mouse” Waterhouse.

The Inter-Services Tournament was hosted by Army and was held in Linton Camp. According to an Army Men's Team player, the Police team convincingly beat Army in the final. It was at this tournament that Grant McCarroll was first selected into the Combined Services Team.

Following Christmas of 1988, the NZ Combined Services Men's Team finished the highest it



Above: 1988 Combined Services Team.

had ever achieved, by finishing fourth at the National Men's Provincial Championships in Invercargill. John Schoulton (Police) and Darren Rea (Army) were both selected into the New Zealand Emerging Players Team for a series against the touring USA Team.

In 1989, at Fort Dorset, the Inter-Regional Tournament kicked into life on Monday evening with a Youngies v Oldies softball game. It was a light hearted way to break the ice at the tournament, which was well received by all in attendance. It is believed to be the last time such a game has been scheduled at the Inter-Regional Tournament.

It was not until the last day of the tournament and the last games that the large glass windows to the buildings, that were right behind both tournament diamonds, were broken. Why anybody would mark diamonds in front of all that glass, we will never know.

Following the Inter-Regional Tournament, both Army Teams assembled at the Police College in Porirua for the Inter-Services Tournament. The competition was intense as each Service Team went hell for leather in search of the Champions crown.

The Army women's team were lead on the mound by Lisa Botting who, combined with Chrissie Paenui, shut down the opposition

during the week. As for all round team hitting, the women had a blinder that year with big hitting from Lisa Botting, Sheila Black and Milo. Fiona Cassidy was the speed demon around the bases as was Louise Robertson. Louise and Alex Whittaker were the bunters of the team. The women finished off a great week with a tournament win, which was achieved 7 years before. The team is arguably the best Army Women's Team of the decade.

The men were not to be outdone by the ladies and ended the Police team's dominance of the 1980s by beating them on the last game to win the tournament and be crowned champions for the first time since 1978. Yes, that ends a 12 year drought.

The win by both Army teams at the Inter-Service Tournament in Porirua was a fantastic way to end the 1980s.

“the women had a blinder that year with big hitting from Lisa Botting, Sheila Black and Milo. Fiona Cassidy was the speed demon around the bases ...”

Below: 1989/90 Army Women's Team.



STORIES AND MEMORIES OF THE 1980s

Written by Chris Waterhouse

New Cap

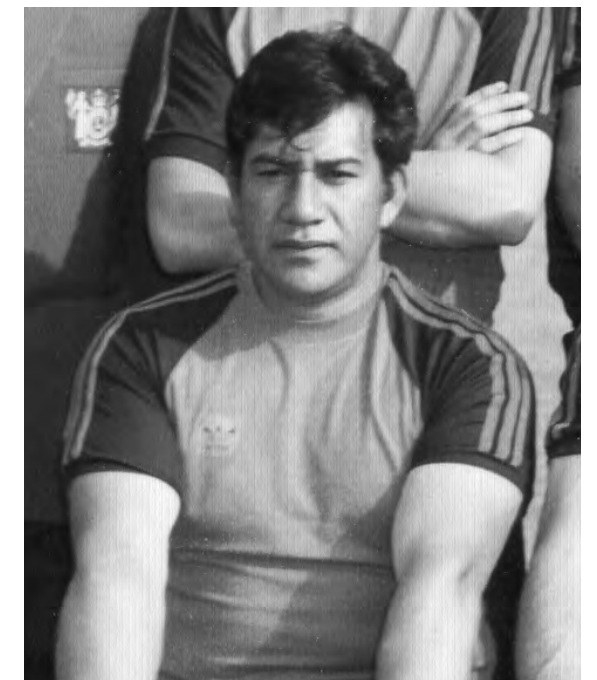
It took a number of years for me to gain Army honours in softball. In the 1970s and 1980s most Army teams were tough teams to get into. I attended a number of Inter-Regional Tournaments only managing to achieve non-travelling reserve status. At one Inter-Regional Tournament I attended, an established Army player Alan Mclean said to me “mate, it's harder to get out of the Army team than to get in it”.

When I finally made the team, I understood that the reason for this was because the players around me were all skilled and experienced. Stepping up another level to Inter-Services was daunting at times. I remember my first tournament at Porirua and my first turn at bat. I came in for a pinch hit for Tom Hurunui (jnr). I had to face Graham Chard, result, strike out. Tom said as I trudged back to the dug out “I could have done that”. So true ... welcome to Services softball.

The Wooden Bat

The first time I ever saw Simon Koko step up to the plate with his wooden bat I thought, who is this big powerful fellow with a chunk of wood? I soon found out as he drove a hit up the middle that nearly cut our pitcher in half. Okay, he wasn't the fastest guy around

the bases, but that didn't matter when he hit the ball so far. What a fine bloke and a real gentleman to boot.



Above: Simon Koko.

Lost in Taupo

The Army teams went to the Taupo Cosmo Tournament and we stayed at Acacia Bay for the duration. Unfortunately the weather was atrocious and it rained for two days non-stop. This meant we had to sit around playing cards, having the odd drink and trying to amuse ourselves. The guys in one room, I think it was Steve Fleming and Dean Taurima, told me that



Jim Blackwell was asleep in the bedroom and to go and wake him up. This I duly did, with a payback body slam.

We went drinking in Taupo one night and one of the young players got lucky with a local girl. He decided to make his own way back and returned the next morning minus jocks and socks, saying he couldn't escape out of there quick enough.

There was some serious softball played when the weather eventually cleared, all of the games were played on the last day. The games were one-hour timed games and needed to be completed innings. We were ahead with minutes left on the clock and I was up to bat. Phil Packer told me to strike out to ensure we completed the innings and won the game. Normally this wouldn't be a problem for me, but I was getting such jip from the catcher (who



“Tom stuck his big foot out to try to stop it but missed ...”

Left: Tom Manahi.

was my cousin) after swinging ridiculously late at the first two pitches, that I just had a huge swing at the next ball no matter where it was and proceeded to hit the pitcher and gain first base safely. I led off real early to try and get out but the base umpire was asleep, safe on second. He was watching the next time and called me out. A sad way to win the game before the hooter went, but worth it in the end as we went on to win the final against Papatoetoe.



“Hacksaw” Jim (at Woodbourne)

In the 1980s, World Wrestling Federation (WWF) was all the rage and a certain player “Hacksaw” (Jim) enjoyed body slamming people in their beds, until myself and Puppy Ryan decided it was time for some payback. After a few sherbets at the tournament bar we came back to the barracks in the dark and proceeded to Jim's bed to give him a double body slam. Too late ... Oops, sorry Sony (Hona) we didn't mean to get you! Bizarrely, Jim was dobbed at the next session and had to carry a length of 4 x 2 timber to the mess and do his best “Hacksaw Jim Duggen” impression.

The Phantom Pisser

The Inter-Regional and Inter-Services Tournaments produced someone in Army who became known as the “Phantom Pisser”. Each morning there would be tell tale puddles in the corridor or on beds. The perpetrator was caught in the act of relieving himself on a bed one night. I know who the person was and, without revealing his name, will let you know that he drinks tall Steinies.

Catch it with your foot

One year the Army men attended the Inter Club Champs in Dunedin. We struggled at that tournament, only winning one game. However, we still managed to have a good time. One game in particular comes to mind where Tom “Chainsaw” Manahi was playing on first. A drive came his way down first so Tom stuck his big foot out to try to stop it but missed. Phil

Packer's comment to Tom “Put a bloody glove on your foot”.

Scare me in your jocks

Young Steve Fleming was busy chatting up one of the Army team girls on the bus back to the barracks after a few sherbets at Ngataranga Sports Complex.

For some reason “Crowbags” Crowley took offence to this and said “Leave her alone boy, she's got a boyfriend”. Later in the barracks when Darren Rea heard about this, he stormed out of our room clad only in his underpants to give “Crowbags” the message. What a sight for sore eyes that was.

Written by Darren Rea

At an Inter-Services Tournament in the 1980s, myself, Steve Fleming and one other came back to the barracks and found that Tom Manahi had not yet returned to his bed. Knowing Tom was still holding up the bar, we knew we were in for a tough night because of his horrible chainsaw snoring.



Left: Darren (left) and Steve (top).

So, we decided to tinker with Tom's bed, which was one of those metal frame beds that was held together by the two detachable ends.

Once his bed was tinkered to our satisfaction, we all got into our beds and awaited Tom's return. Right on cue, Tom entered the room, walked over to his bed and collapsed onto it. We all lay motionless not believing that it had held up, then the plantation cutting began. We sat up, looked at each other, wondering what went wrong. We waited a little more and finally, when Tom rolled over, "crash" down he came. We all assumed the prone position trying hard not to laugh. We looked over at Tom, who sat up slightly and paused thinking it was himself that caused the accident, then he laid back down again and went back to the firewood.

Written by Grant Childs

Whilst playing left outfield at the Inter-Regionals in 1981, it wasn't a good feeling seeing the Orderly Sergeant in the dugout talking to the coach and reserves then the boys are pointing to you. Oh Oh, wife is back in Waiouru in labour six weeks prematurely. I had a very quick trip from Linton Camp to the maternity annex in Waiouru to see my daughter born 7 minutes later. All was well, but not a good idea to ask if one can return to the tournament with a six week newborn. Sorry to let the team down boys.

"Not a good idea to ask if one can return to the tournament with a six week newborn. Sorry to let the team down boys ..."

Written by Carol "Skip" Tarrant (nee Ngatai)

What About The Time

Oh my Gawd. A bit of pressure to write something for the softball journal Doon, you sent the "Muscle" (Winnie Shanley) up the line to gather the photos and articles. Mate, no one

ever says no to the Muscle. She always had a way of making you do things you didn't want to do, but always made you feel good about doing it after you did it. Jeez and at her age, she is still playing softball. She's a legend.

Usually I do like to conform, however as I leave the naughty 40s and head into the nifty 50s, I really don't give a toss. So if you're reading this in the journal, then it has gone in unabridged and are my original writings.

I think some of my softball mates will be bloody hoping I wouldn't write anything, 'cause they'll be praying that I have forgotten some of those memorable moments. Yeah right. I haven't forgotten, and when I think back to those days, we had some bloody awesome times within the softball fraternity. So, for those of you who are thinking, "if she tells that story, my life is over", or "I'm gonna be in the dog box for the rest of my life", or "I'm gonna have to suck up to him/her or just stay clear", then be worried. Nah, chill out, as the old saying goes, "What goes on tour, stays on tour". Ah nah.

If after reading this piece and I haven't mentioned you, and you know that I know I could have mentioned you, then don't thank me but buy me a beer at the Softball Reunion. If you don't, when the next reunion comes around and I am forced to write another article for the journal, your moment will be mentioned.

Here are some of the moments I remember during my time in the softball fraternity. If you were there, then I hope it brings back hilarious memories for you. Anyway, I'll try not to mention any names and hopefully my descriptions and their antics will give them away.

In January 1979, I came straight from the NZ Women's National Softball Tournament in Christchurch playing for the Poverty Bay Team and started my Basic Training. Yeahaaa green as and then posted to Trentham Camp. Went

to my first Inter-Regionals at Linton Camp 1979 and was coached by a chick who had a fellas name and she looked like a fella too. Yeah, you know who I'm talking about. I think she was a "truckie". Do as I say and not as I do. A hard coach, but she was committed and loyal to us. She must have been pretty good 'cause I think I got into the Army Team that year.

Oh My Gawd. We had the blackest Maori coach for the Army team. His nickname is the perfect description of his drinking prowess. Actually as a couple of years went by I think he got the hard word and became a teatotalter (or however you spell it). And when he did give up drinking he still acted as if he was drunk. Anyway, this coach had the meanest massages. He could unknot the hardest knots in a muscle. A bloody good coach and you hardly ever saw him without a baseball cap. You looked after us on the field and off the field. Mate, you gave me my nickname, and every now and then when I hear it, I know it is someone from within the softball fraternity.

I learnt how to play hard on the field and then, at the after match functions, I learnt how to play even harder. The "dob" sessions, you made dam sure you weren't late and you had lots of money. Rank was thrown out the window and you could spin the biggest lie about anyone you wanted. The bigger the lie and the funnier it was, the more they paid. The more they argued the more they paid. So, really, you took whatever came your way, everyone had a laugh at your expense and you paid up. Hey, it all went into the kitty to buy more booze and that was us for the night.

The last thing you wanted to happen was having to suffer further embarrassment by doing something like the engineer who had to act like he was a 'poof' and serve everyone at breakfast the next morning (actually, I think he might have been a bit gay).

Oh my Gawd, going to the Inter-Services Tournament was a real eye opener for me.

Only 17 years of age (born and bred in an East Coast town) and the baby of the team. Well actually, being the baby was good as the guys were very protective of me and it wasn't only to do with the sailors, airmen or the policemen. Jeez, some of the chicks were really, really, really friendly. I remember either

"I learnt how to play hard on the field and then, at the after match functions, I learnt how to play even harder. ..."

the Army Code Chairman (big cuddly teddy bear off the parade ground and a formidable RSM when in uniform) or my coach (yeah the blackest Maori) pulling me to the side and explaining the "butch" had nothing to do with Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid. And yet, I made some bloody good mates, who knew I was straight as and we respected each other for our preferences.

The first Inter-Services I went to was at Te Rapa in 1979. After the tournament bar had closed we decided to go for a feed at the restaurant outside the main gates of the base. However, someone had found the gate to the pool was unlocked, so we all jumped in, naked as. Thank goodness there were no lights on, cause I wouldn't like to have seen some of those old fellas, swimming around naked. Anyway, our listening post gave us a heads up and we were out of there before the security guards arrived. We sat in the restaurant, wet as, laughing and carrying on. To this day I can remember a couple of people from that night. I hope to catch up with you at the reunion.

Oh my Gawd, when the Police came to tournaments, who would have thought they were the law abiding citizens catching criminals blah, blah, blah. They were the biggest crooks out and they played harder than anyone else, and I mean off the field. They hit on anything

with a skirt and slept where they fell. And then when we use to go the Police College for the Services Tournaments, bar closed exactly on time, all out within 15 minutes of bar closing and curfew every night. The Police teams on their best behavior - women's blouse. And yep, they had slack tournaments.

“I remember two gentlemen and they really were. I don't think they knew how to swear ... I would look to these two for advice”

I remember playing in the Central Regional team and the Regional's up in Papakura. This was the first tournament that introduced me to “dead ants”. Anyway, whoever was the dob master for the day, they called it and no matter what you were doing, you had to get on your backs, shaking your feet and hands as high as you can until we were told to get up. Can you imagine sitting in the mess having a feed and someone yells dead ants? Yep.

Oh my Gawd, the classic tale. We had to play on a diamond that was the furthest from any toilets. One of the gals had to go so we had a couple of blankets that we were holding up so she could, you know. She was half way through doing her business, the dob master did the call, the rest of the team went down in the ‘dead ant’ position, we (the ones holding the blankets) looked at each other and down we went. The funny thing was, I don't think she was the last one down, however she had a wet bum and trousers and I think the umpire (who always had red cheeks and glasses) had redder cheeks than normal. Now I actually cannot remember which softballer it was. There are two names that come to mind and I think one of them was the dob master and the other one was the one who had the wet bum. If anyone can remember this, please let me know at the reunion who they were. Cheers!

I remember two gentlemen and they really were. I don't think they knew how to swear. Little did they know, but both of them were part of my safety net. If I needed to get myself grounded I would look to these two for advice or inspiration. In fact, I think they were well respected within the softball realm. One of them was really tall and could pitch a mean ball. The other gentleman we young ones use to call the ol' fella and he looked mean in his catching gear. Thanks guys, I'll buy you a beer at the reunion.

With fond memories, I remembertwosoftballers who have now passed on. One of them was our scorer for the Army Team, Willie Walker, always last to bed and up before anyone, getting our gear sorted and ready for the day. The other was Poppy, who was the life of the party and our motivator. It was awesome when fellow softballers sang the song “We're all going up to Sunshine Mountain” for her... Lest we forget.

Righto, enough said about memorable moments. Many thanks to the organizing team for putting the reunion together. I've got my leave pass from my family and work and look forward to catching up with fellow softballers.

See you at the diamond.

Written by Maureen Duffy

Probably not the type of story you are looking for, but I have to come clean. I only attended Regional Softball once, and that was only as the team mascot!!! I can't play softball to save myself. I think I probably drank more alcohol and partied the hardest and longest than any other tournament I went to.

It was in Fort Dorset and I think at one stage the team wanted me to pitch, but I couldn't get the ball over the mound. Their strategy was that it is harder to hit a pitch from someone who can't actually pitch!!! I did manage to get a ‘hit’ in, and when I hit the ball, I ran like I the

wind. However, as I ran, I hurled the bat into the distance, almost taking a player out, so I was sent back to home base by the umpire. I have never had a hangover like I had at those softball regionals!!! Haha

Cheers

Written by Louise Waiariki (nee Robertson)

My first Inter-Services Tournament was in 1989, where I got into the Combined Services Team. The coach didn't know me, but my stats were good (and I was fast then!). “Loui the fly” was what they called me, or was that earlier?...I am now confused. I think it was the team effort and we did have a very good team makeup and bond between us all. Good coaches, manager and the all round parcel. If I had my pick this would be the team of the Century in my eyes for the all round experience. I think Lisa Botting and Megan Leonard all had good games. I may be off base and forgotten which year it was?

I actually think the 1989 Inter-Services Tournament at the Police College may have been the year when we had the court session and Alex had found some “Y” front undies in the toilets in our accommodation block and put someone's initials on it. When we did dobs, she said he was drunk and came in and left them there! We were all pissing ourselves laughing and his name has slipped my mind, but can see his face. Does M D ring a bell - Mike? I will remember in time for the reunion. That's my two cents worth.

Written by Dean Groves

My early days of Army life at Trentham Camp in 1989, were at that time, the centre of my new world. I overheard someone mention at lunch that an Army softball tournament was coming up. After further enquiries I learned a sports nomination was required. Once that was done and dusted, I found myself heading

into Fort Dorset in Wellington for my first taste of softball in the Army and a week off work – how cool.

Much of the tournament was a blur for obvious reasons, but I recall meeting Chris “Mouse” Waterhouse and two other players who would all become life long team mates and very close friends. The two others made immediate impressions at this tournament, which I will now share.

The first was Grant Anthony McCarroll. I watched Grant (from the sidelines) who was playing for Southern in one of the early games of the tournament, fire his coach who had failed to call the play that Grant thought was appropriate to the game situation. Unbelievable!

Throughout the remainder of the tournament, Grant would do his thing and question calls made by the umpires. This would become widely known in Army softball circles as “tea potting” (single handle or more often double handled when he was particularly annoyed). So, quite rightly, I thought this guy was a real “joker”. Little did I know we would be Army team mates a week later.

“Throughout the remainder of the tournament, Grant would do his thing and question calls made by the umpires ...”

The second, well what can I say, an Army softball classic moment. Lining up for dinner at the mess at Dorset, there was a roar from the TV lounge. Suddenly all of the people in the line, including myself, scurried to the lounge to see what was going on. One of the tournament players, Mike Norris, was staring on the hit TV show Blind Date. The classic moment came when Mike, who was mentioned as a “Professional Soldier from Auckland”, had his nickname announced by the show's

host, when he said “Iceman, come on down”. Well, the laughter in the lounge was incredible and directed of course to the red faced but still smiling “Iceman” himself who was also in the lounge. A phrase often yelled across the tournament playing fields was “Iceman, come on down”, usually by none other than Mike Te Hau.

I didn’t do too much at this tournament, but was selected as a non-travelling reserve, only to be called into the team a week out from the Inter-Services Tournament due to Tony Namana being injured in a Battalion rugby game. It was at this time that I received my Army pocket for softball, which is my proudest softball moment for sure.

I recall quite vividly the intensity of the 1989 Inter-Services Tournament, every game was extremely tough, each team was stacked with gun players (like Ngawhika, Schoulton, Reid, Purcell, Chard and Chuck to name a few). Grant and Darren were my calming influence during each game, yeah hard to believe, but I can tell you they were offering advice and reassuring me of what I was about to try and do with the bat. Anyway, we won the tournament, but I wasn’t aware of the importance and how long it had been since Army last won (12 years), but it became clear alright during the evening’s joyous celebrations at the Police College. I was also named in the Combined Services Team that night and pretty much lost the chain of events after 10pm.

At the National Provincial Championships at Colquhoun Park in Palmerston North, I was certainly a very nervous rookie, playing at a tournament well above my reserve grade level at Cardinals in the Hutt Valley. My first taste of Provincial level softball was against Hutt Valley and I was told I was playing at third, a position I had never played before – “oh marvellous” I thought. Whilst I was taking a few ground balls over at third during the warm up pitches, I was snatching at the ball and felt rather rigid as

rookies do. So Dave Sorenson, the Hutt Valley coach who knew me from our Cardinals club, proceeded to say to his dugout, “There is a lot of nerves on third today, keep him busy”. He turned back around, looked at me, winked and smiled.

My first turn at bat saw me front up against Jimmy Seaman, who was standing on the mound looking my way. To make me even more nervous in this game, doing the catching for Hutt Valley was none other than the legend Mark Sorenson. I don’t recall seeing any of the six pitches, but ball four was called, I discarded my tiny blue “toothpick” bat (as named by Roddy Reid from Police) and I was off to first base.

This tournament had a significant meaning to me, not just because it was my first Nationals, but it was where my first name was spelt incorrectly in the tournament programme. Instead of it reading Dean, it appeared as Doon. This was very amusing to my Combined Service team mates and it is a nickname that has stuck to this day.

For some reason I still remember Noel Kahui wearing a big straw hat whilst wearing the Combined Services uniform around the ballpark at the Nationals, which I thought was a bit odd. I also remember buying a new Easton bat to replace my blue tooth pick. I couldn’t swing the new bat to save myself; I’d eventually work that out, one day.

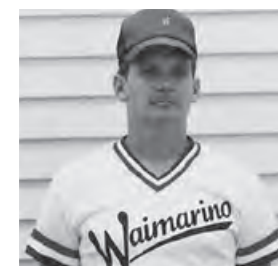
Written by Derryn Morgan

Sitting in the dining room at the Police College enjoying breakfast at the 1989 Inter-Services Tournament, when two young men came skipping down the aisles and having to perform certain tasks in each one of them. “Oh my goodness”, I said, if it isn’t Grant McCarroll and the infamous Darren Rea. I believe the name “Jack and Jill” stuck for a long time. How could you not enjoy these times, there

were so many funny antics being played out so often. Not forgetting the Scorers and Umpires, I remember us sitting on the top steps at the Police College (and wasn’t that a climb and a half) having a... wait for it...would you believe a winegum and coke party. Simple fun but fun it was.

Written by Chris “Mouse” Waterhouse

I remember Grant having to have a wee before each turn at bat, and untying and tying his shoe laces each time. It was at one of the Club Champs tournaments that there was nowhere for him to have a wee and he more or less had one in the open, much to the delight of some of the ladies present.



“I loved every minute of it ...”

Left: Chris “Mouse” Waterhouse.

A story from the ladies’ side of the house is, I remember in Burnham after the Army teams were selected that the men’s team used to go around biting the arses of the new caps for the women’s team. This used to be Tom Manahi’s job. It was up to the men’s team new caps (rookies) to tackle the girl in question, so Tom could do the damage. One of the Army girls was a real tough customer in Roimata Te Pa. She put up a hell of a fight, punching anybody who came near her, but finally had to succumb to Tom’s gnashers.

How did I manage the Alex versus Darren situations? This was difficult at times as Alex had no patience at all when it came to Darren. I just tried to placate both sides really, which was difficult as Darren could be pretty head strong at times and difficult to control.

Charlie Elkington used to whack me on the head and say, “Catch the bloody ball” if I missed one and he got hit.

At the Inter-Regional Tournament at Maidstone Park in 1993, I think Charlie’s cousin came along to help out with umpiring. He was not confident at all and constantly clicked his clicker, looking at it when under pressure. To add more pressure, Grant and Darren were playing and a close call came at home plate. There was a long pause as Grant and Darren together yelled, “Well is he safe?”, to which this poor fellow was furiously clicking his clicker and looking at it for inspiration.

John Holley managed to always dig some obscure rule out of the rule book that confused everyone, but was always technically correct.

We were and are the best Army sporting team in recent history. I loved every minute of it.

Last one. “Puppy” Ryan was just a young fellow in the Army Softball world when he was in the Central team with me and Tom Manahi. I think he didn’t like his name too much at the time as at one stage he said, “The next bastard who calls me Puppy, I am going to punch him!”, to which Tom Manahi replied, “Shut up Puppy!”. The poor boy didn’t know what to do.

Written by Brett “Crowbags” Crowley

Hi the 1980s crew! Hope you all have an awesome Army Softball reunion... gone are the days when you could play softball, drink and drive home! Ha just kidding.

Anyway my apologies, I will be at work overseas during this period! Enjoy what will be an awesome weekend. Cheers, enjoy and stay safe!

Crowbags

(The wannabe pitcher who ended up in the outfield, where Phil would position me “left right out.”)

OVER THE DECADES

THE 1990s

Written by Dean Groves

The 1989/90 NZ softball season was nearing an end. In March 1990, the Army Men's Team attended the Pan Am Club Championships in Dunedin, which was a National club team tournament.

The trip would be remembered for a very long bus trip from Burnham to King Edward barracks, Dunedin, caused by all of the toilet stops, which seemed to frequently occur after Timaru. It was at this tournament, that a few players could be heard yelling from Tom Manahi's barrack room, and for good reason. Tom had appointed himself team masseur. You only had one rub down from Tom and that was enough - if you could get away from him.

"Tom had appointed himself team masseur. You only had one rub down from Tom and that was enough - if you could get away from him."

One of the players recalls a good function at the pub across the road from the Central Barracks that they stayed at in Dunedin. When they left on the bus the next morning all the local ladies of the night were there and gave a "shirts up" flash as they drove off! Unfortunately, the men's team batting and results did not improve from that eye catching experience.

In 1990, the Inter-Services Tournament was hosted by Air Force at Wigram, where the



Above: Alex in hospital with her team mates.

Army Men's Team carried their form from the previous year into the tournament and again won the tournament.

It was at that tournament that both Army Teams won their competitions

At the end of the 1990/91 softball season, the Army Women's Team attended the Inter-Club Championships at Rosedale Park, Albany in March 1991. It was there that Alex Whittaker would spend time in North Shore hospital nursing a broken ankle sustained during a game. Apparently, the umpire called her out, which is not how Alex sees it. The injury may have contributed to Alex hanging up her cleats after that incident.

It is believed that Army women's player Lisa Botting was around that time invited to trial for the NZ White Sox at Fraser Park, Lower Hutt. Lisa had played well during the Inter-Provincial Championships and must have caught the eye of the selectors.

The 1991/92 Inter-Regional Tournament was

hosted by ATG in Waiouru. The men's final ended up between ATG and Central (Wellington and Linton Combined). The ATG team had a few Army representatives and a number of regular softball players, making them the team to beat. They also had positioned an entire Basic Recruit Course in left field to cheer them on – it must have been voluntary. The game was a hitter's game and ATG ran out close winners 11 - 10, apparently much to the delight of the camouflaged cheerleaders (the recruits).

The 1991 Inter-Services Tournament was hosted by Navy at Ngataranga in November 1991. The tournament welcomed to New Zealand shores the Australian Defence Force Women's Softball Team, who were touring New Zealand for the first time.

Unfortunately, that tournament was not a happy hunting ground for the men's team as they struggled to find form and were lucky to finish in third place. The drinks did not taste good at that tournament.

However, the women lifted the men's team spirits by winning the tournament – good oh yah ladies!

At the end of the regular NZ softball season in March 1992, Corporal Darren Rea was selected into the NZ Men's Softball Team (the Black Sox) for a tour of the USA and Canada. He was only the second Army player, since Reg Bennett in 1968, to be selected into the NZ Men's Team.

In March 1991, the Army Men's Team attended the Wainui Classic in Wainuiomata. Darren Rea had organised two pick up players, Scott Cootes and Jimmy Hall from Christchurch. Jimmy, an ex Black Sox member was a pretty handy pitcher and did a superb job on his first outing for the Army team, which was to his detriment.

He was subsequently pitched the next two games in a row making it 3 games for the day, which blew out his arm. End result, tournament over for Jimmy Hall.

In 1992, the Inter-Regionals were hosted in Waiouru for the second year running. Unfortunately, the details from this tournament were not available at the time of printing this journal.

The Inter-Services Tournament was also hosted in Waiouru by Army. The higher altitude of the Central Plateau seemed to favour the hitters as several homeruns over the outfield fence were achieved during the tournament, or maybe it was due to the fences being in a little closer than normal.

Both Army teams played well throughout the week and christened the new skin diamond at Waiouru with championship wins for both teams.

Following the final function, a very drunk Policeman got disorientated on his way back from the toilets in the Korea East barracks and collapsed asleep on what he thought was his bed.

The comatosed lump eventually woke the drunken Army men's team player who was on the bed at the time. All of a sudden the Army player couldn't breathe. Before being smothered, the Army player woke to gradually manoeuvre the comatosed Policeman off the bed and onto the floor with a thud!

This woke up the offender. The disorientated Mr Gould looked around scratching his head, looked at the Army player, apologised and then walked off slowly to his own bed.

The 1993 Inter-Regional Tournament was hosted by Trentham Camp and played at Maidstone Park.

It is believed that Darren Rea and Grant McCarroll dreamed up the shower cap that would be presented to the player for the last strikeout of the day as they both believed they would never get it themselves, but eventually they did.



Above: Darren with the "shower cap".

The 1993 Inter-Services Tournament was hosted by the Police College in Porirua. It was at this tournament that the "Red Rocket" made his debut. One of the team rookies would don a helmet, underwear and a towel and make a dash through the tournament bar for all to see. Former Army softballers believe the "Red Rocket" was brought in to rival the Police "Blue Blazer", which was a similar ceremony. The "Red Rocket" was talked about for years to come, but it didn't really take off again, so to speak.

That tournament would go down in Army softball folk law for all the wrong reasons, despite both Army teams winning the tournament. The tournament fell over the RNZEME Corps day, which saw a few members of the men's team conduct a few stealth pranks. Long story short, flagpole super glued, bus and car tyres were deflated (one being the Police College Commander's), which resulted in the Army contingent being rejected from the Police College facilities.

Army, now accommodated over the Haywoods hill in the Messines barracks Trentham, would have to make a 40 minute bus trip to and from the ball park in Porirua for the remainder of the tournament. Despite this set back, the men's team were able to maintain their focus and pulled off a famous tournament win with a final game victory over arch rivals Police.

Due to the misdemeanours, no Army players were allowed to attend the prize giving or be eligible for selection into the Combined Services Teams for that year.

The Army contingent then gathered (in the corridors of Messines) for refreshments to mark the tournament victory albeit under a dark cloud. That cloud was instantly forgotten for the time being when Winnie Shanley, who was the only Army representative allowed to attend the prize giving, struggled her way into the barracks with her arms full of the tournament trophies that Army had won. Joyous celebrations erupted in the corridors, which went well into the night.

But, the Military justice system would catch up with the offenders at a later date.

In December 1994, the Inter-Service Tournament was hosted by Air Force at Hobsonville. A few Burnham-based Army men's team players (Vinny, Doon and Darren) made the long trip North, leaving the 2/1RNZIR RP hut at 2 am and heading to Picton to catch an early morning freight ferry. After checking in on time, the guy's had enough time before departure to head to the waterfront shops to order a cooked breakfast. Whilst tucking into their bacon and eggs, one of the chaps noticed a ferry (their ferry) sailing towards Wellington much earlier than expected. They had no other option than to wait 3 hours for the next ferry.

Once in Wellington it was a bus ride to Auckland via Linton and Waiouru picking up the remaining Army contingent along the way. They eventually arrived at Hobsonville

bus fatigued and tired at 2am and feeling hard done by. The Police men's team were traditionally still up socialising at that time, no surprises there. Army's first game was at 9am at Rosedale Park against the Police, who had new recruit Colwyn Shortland, a pitcher who came highly recommended. Army were up for this game in every aspect and won the game and went on to win the tournament.

One of the notable men's games at the tournament was the end of round robin one game against Navy, who struck a rear blow to the Army by beating them 8-5 on diamond 2. A classic Inter-Services moment during the game was the towering homerun hit by John Kohi, which sealed the deal for Navy. Grant McCarrol still goes on about "that homerun". He states, "We we're beaten by a bloody golf swing" (as he simulates a golf swing).

The Army men's team attended the National Club Championships at Cuthberts Green in Christchurch 15-19 March 1995.

Below: NZSA President Ms Lyndsey Leask QSM presents Rick Morgan (Army) with the Paul Higgins trophy



The teams had mixed results against some of the country's top club teams. Army had battled their way to the final of the 3rd Division and played Richmond from Christchurch for the Paul Higgins trophy. It was a hitter's game with Richmond taking a quick lead, which didn't bode well for Army, especially when spectators decided that they had seen enough and left the park. But Army's bats came alive in the middle innings and they scored a bunch of runs. Five homeruns literally back to back surged Army into the lead, which they were able to cling on to for a hard fought and exciting 12 - 9 win. Following the win, Army's coach "Mouse" could be seen bouncing around the dugout like a boy with candy.



It was also in 1995, that the NZ Army crest was changed (pictured above). One of the two crossed swords was removed and replaced with a taiaha (Maori weapon). The significance of the taiaha facing down is that it is in a position of readiness that is consistent with the drawn sword. Army pockets presented for sport from this year onwards would have the new crest embroidered.

The 1995 Inter-Services Tournament was hosted by Navy at Philomel. The tournament would go down in NZ Defence Force sporting history because it brought to an end the attendance of the NZ Police Teams who were withdrawing from the tournament. Police teams had been part of Inter-Service Softball Tournaments since 1967.

At the end of the prize giving formalities, all three services rose to their feet and performed the haka to the NZ Police contingent inside the Ngataringa Sports Complex.

There are a few versions to the story, but here are two of those versions.

Version 1: the Police were asked to contribute funds towards all Combined Services Sport, but they declined due to already committing funds towards their own Police sports. So, they were told that they couldn't attend unless funds were provided.

Version 2: being that certain Military hierarchy were sick and tired of the Police always winning the majority of the Inter-Service Tournaments, they decided to revert back to just the three Services.

If you know of a third or the real version, please share it with us.

In December 1995, the NZ Combined Services last softball fixture loomed. The men's team attended the National Provincial Tournament played at Cuthberts Green, Christchurch, and were accommodated at Burnham Camp.

It was at this tournament that the team beat Australia 6 - 5 on diamond 2. A giant homerun over both fences by Navy's Rene Rangī with runs on base sealed the memorable victory over the Aussies. It was at this tournament that two pick up players were brought in, Ricky Grant (brother of Marty) and Steve Tau. What can be said about these two? It was Ricky who partially brushed (nah head butted) an umpire with the peek of his helmet following a close call at first base, but no ejection from the game - amazing. Steve broke down on the mound part way through the game against Canterbury, he had broken one of his peculiarly long toes - what a shambles brother, but a situation that created a few laughs!

Following the last game of the tournament, and to mark the closure of Combined Services

softball, all team members gathered in a huddle for the last time. Each team member was able to have their say, many felt deeply about being part of the Combined Services family and the mood was sombre to say the least.

“the mood was sombre to say the least”



Above: Adam McDonald, final team huddle.

Due to his outstanding performances in the field and with the bat for the Combined Services, Rick Morgan (Army) was selected into the New Zealand U23 Team at the end of the tournament.

The 1996 Inter-Regional Tournament would follow previous tournament formats, but the tournament would hold a more permanent memory - it was to be the last “Regional's” for some time.

In 1997, the announcement by Chief of General Staff Major General Maurice Dobson that Inter-Regional sport was not part of the programme anymore literally shook the sporting community within Army. This was a miserable time for all of the Service sports men and women, who would be faced with an extra week of work each year. “Oh no, not real work!”

A former Army player and Code Chair recalls, “I am fairly sure it was due to monetary cut backs and also the concern that Regions were having trouble filling the teams. I know in the 70s and 80s there were actually trials for

the Regional teams, consisting of Northern, Southern, Central and ATG”.

He also states, “I know in some units you had what were called “Gladiators of Sport.” These are people who would play 4 or 5 sports and be away from work for a lot of the year if they were good enough to play Army and Combined Services”.

This changed in the early 1980s when it was ruled that you could only play one winter and one summer sport. Also, the CGS declared that if you didn't play for the local campo team then you couldn't play Regionals or Army. I remember Robert Kururangi who played for Ardmore and the All Blacks, but wasn't allowed to play Regionals because he didn't play for Papakura Army Seniors.

I think after a while OCs got sick of losing staff for long periods of time for sport, so I am assuming this led to the Regionals eventually being canned.

In 1997, Army lost its dynamic outfielder and power hitter Rick Morgan, who took his release from the Army and headed to the UK. Rick was a tremendous Army softball player who consistently made Army and Combined Services teams. Rick travelled to and settled in London, where he would play softball for teams in Great Britain. His British passport came in handy as he was eligible to play for Great Britain. He was quickly selected into the National team and represented them at two World Softball Championships (2004 in Christchurch and 2009 in Saskatoon Canada). His mother Derryn, remained the men's team scorer until 1999.

The Inter-Regional Tournament would not be held again until November 2002 by Trentham Camp.

The intention to restart the Inter-Services Tournament was talked about in 1997, but it wasn't until February 1998 that the much

loved tournament would swing into action again. The tournament host was Army, based out of Trentham Camp, and the games were all played at Fraser Park, Avalon, in front of the main grandstand. The Army Men's Team dominated their opposition right throughout the week and comfortably ran away with the tournament title.

Because the Combined Services now ceased to exist and the current Defence Force Sports Committee was in its infancy, only paper tournament teams were named. At the prize giving at Messines Army Centre, Defence Force Teams were announced, the players came forward, but no representative pockets were ever presented or fixtures arranged.

It was at this tournament where a customary dob session was held in the corridor of the Messiness barracks that had one unusual request. Several dobs into the session, and when most team members were getting into the swing of things, “Vica” Flynn addressed the audience and asked if we all would stop swearing as it was not a good thing to be doing both on and off the diamond. Well, you can image the enthusiastic replies that were fired by none other than Darren and Grant.

Grant had arranged umpire “Tokoyo Joe” and Cardinals players Steven Ratu and Gene Lutton to help out with the officiating. They were also introduced to the social side of the Inter-Services Tournament prize giving and after match function in the barracks, which they were amazed with.

In December 1998, the Inter-Services Tournament was hosted by Air Force at Woodbourne. It was at that tournament that Jenni Mumm would make her Army debut as a pitcher. Jenni made an immediate impact with her velocity and control, which spearheaded her team to regain the Champions title. The Army men's team followed suit and retained the title with a comfortable win over the Air Force.



Above: The last strike out of the day ceremony at Woodbourne.

It was also at that tournament that the last strike out of the day was reintroduced again.

A small team ceremony would be held on the diamond following the last game of the day, where a pink shower cap would be handed over to the next recipient, unless the current holder was charged with the last strike out again. The recipient was required to wear the shower cap that evening at the tournament bar for the entire night.

The NZDF teams were announced and this time, NZDF pockets were issued to members of the team. However, there were still no fixtures organised for the NZDF teams.

Mr Travis Wilson, the ex Black Sox World Champion and current professional baseball player attended the tournament as the finals day commentator and as the guest speaker at the prize giving function. He was well entertained by his former Christchurch softball

buddies Clayton Willocks and Army's, you guessed it, Darren Rea and Grant McCarroll, who celebrated well into the early hours following the Army men's and women's tournament clean sweep.

However, the next morning the men's team coach was advised by the Base Warrant Officer that a fire extinguisher had been discharged in the tournament barracks. Army softball received another strike against its name, but many players thought the Army teams' bats had caught fire during the tournament and required extinguishing.

Following the Inter-Services, both Army teams were scheduled to tour the South Island, however, the women's team were forced to withdraw at the last minute due to player shortages. So, the first internal tour in a long time began in Christchurch with just the men's team on a bus, complete with BBQ. For

the record, the team played Canterbury U19s twice, Papanui and United reserve grade teams and Cardinals, which they won. The only loss was to South Canterbury in Timaru, which was a really tough game that the team should have won. The tour was a huge success, with competitive games and memorable BBQs with the opposition. An apology must be mentioned to our scorer Derryn, who had to put up with a bunch of noisy blokes for a week.

The tour will also be remembered for an Army softball classic moment when Millie Mildon was confronted with, and duly accepted, the challenge of circumnavigating the large sculpture, within a small pond, outside the entrance to QEII Park.

Unfortunately, he was unable to complete the challenge and required 9 stitches in his elbow for his trouble. Darren Rea, who fainted at the sight of all the blood, also required attention. Upon review, his team mates came to the conclusion that Greg's velocity and elasticity were his down fall. The failed attempt caught the eye of an elderly woman who was quietly enjoying the peace in the general area, and was interrupted by a groaning individual and several laughing softballers. She was seen to be waving her index finger at the team in disgust, but the group of softballers were too consumed with making hasty plans to get Millie to Christchurch A&E.

In 1999, another tour was planned, this time it was to be across the ditch to Australia. Unfortunately, an operational commitment that burst into life a few months out from the tour put a stop to it going ahead. The details can be read in the article "Touring Australia" on page 115.

In 1999, the Inter-Services Tournament was hosted by Navy in Philomel. Both Army teams performed well during the first round robin.

Midway through the tournament the NZDF teams were announced to play fixtures against

North Harbour at Rosedale Park. The women's team won their game, but the men's team lost 2 nil against a strong North Harbour team. Both NZDF teams did themselves proud, but the following morning it was back to business for the final day of the Inter-Service Tournament.

The Army women's team continued their good form and went on to win the tournament.

"The first internal tour in a long time began in Christchurch with just the men's team on a bus, complete with BBQ ..."

The men's competition came down to a showdown between Army and their rivals Air Force. The Air Force were leading 1 nil late in the game until Grant McCarroll, the tournaments top batter, stepped up to the plate and crushed a long homerun down the leftfield line to seal a 2 - 1 victory and the tournament win for Army.

The 1990s were closed with the cancellation of the Inter-Regional Tournament in 1997, but on a positive note, both Army teams were the Inter-Service champions.

Below: Millie (second right) with the guys outside QEII Park.



STORIES AND MEMORIES OF THE 1990s

Written by Grant Ryan

A classic “Darrenisum” occurred at the 1990 Inter-Services Tournament at the Police College. The men’s team were all playing cricket with a softball bat after training, which was supposed to be a cool down and relaxing game, but Darren as usual was trying to hit the ball out of the park. Noel Kahui was bowling to Rea and Rea was getting pissed off as he deemed Noel’s bowling to be too fast. Darren had had enough and threw a hissy fit and yelled out, “Slow spinny stuff ya dork!” Darren always had a way with words.

Written by Lisa Poi (nee Bottling)

I trialled for the NZ White Sox at Fraser Park in 1990, or thereabouts. It was the only time ... I got top batter at the National tournament. The trial was full on. I managed to forget my running shoes, instead I had a pair of basketball boots. I ended up running the last couple of laps barefoot on the run. I also managed to lose count of how many laps I’d done and finished one early ... duh. Anyhow, the run was pretty much the distance for an Army RFL, so that was easy enough to give them a time. We did play against each other while trialling and I almost got clobbered by the pitcher I was facing at the time. Ask Winnie Shanley who the pitcher was, she was the main Canterbury pitcher and played for either Saints or Marist ... Lovey Waitoa? Not sure now.

I’ve got a lot of great memories from Army Softball and the thing I remember the most is the friendship and fun we always had, whether we were winning or not. We stuck together and always had a laugh whether at our own expense or someone else’s, it didn’t really matter to us. Our coaches were all good, they put up with us and in the process we learnt a lot from them. Cheers.

Written by Derryn Morgan

We were fortunate to be blessed with 3 wonderful sons, one being Patrick (Rik) who went on to follow in his father’s footsteps with an Army career and involvement with softball. He joined the RF Cadet Class of 1990 and, following graduation, Rik was posted to Linton Camp to begin his trade as a Plant Operator with Engineers. This also started his term of softball, moving from Inter-Regional to Army and finally Inter-Services Honours.

He was selected into the New Zealand U23 Team to play Japan in December 1995 in Christchurch. After completing 8 years, Rik decided to experience life further afield. He moved to the UK where he became a British Citizen.

He never gave up his love of softball, continuing to play and gaining selection into the Great Britain Team to play at the 2004 World Softball Championships in Christchurch. He was named

the tournament Top Batter. He was in the team again in 2009 and attended his second World Championships, this time in Canada.

He is at this time happily settled in Brisbane with his beautiful partner “Trey”.

Written by Alex Whittaker

I broke my ankle sliding into third at Club Champs, Rosedale Park, Albany in March 1991 - here ends my playing career and the cheek of the bloody Ref who called me out – I was safe.

As for the new uniforms we had that year, which I thought looked pretty good. I can tell you now that looking at this uniform brings back bad memories. I was wearing this uniform when I broke my ankle and they had to cut the knickerbockers off in North Shore hospital to relocate my dislocated ankle. Not a pretty sight I tell you.

Waking Trev King up in Blenheim 1998 with a rubbish bin and a little bit of cranky screaming was very invigorating for me.

The NZ Forces Women’s Team (Singapore) was sooooo out of their league in Kuala Lumpur 1987, but we took it all in our stride and gave it our best. 15 nil to Japan in 3 innings, so what they talked funny.

After an horrendous telling off at Nationals after drinking until “all hours”, the Army girls sure as shit showed the others that we could still deliver, hung over or not. So it might not have looked too pretty but we got the job done.

My favourite coach was Phil Packer, my favourite scorer - Willie Walker, my favourite umpire - the blind one.

Written by Clayton Willocks

My earliest Services softball memory:

At the 1992 Inter-Services Tournament at Waikouaiti, I was a young fresh faced Aircraftsman

playing my first Services tournament at 2nd base for the Air Force. I remember the Army 2nd baseman hitting numerous homeruns. He must’ve hit 5 or 6 on the first day against the Navy & Police. Anyway, Army played Air Force on the morning of the second day - Graham Chard alias “Six Guns Chardy” was on the mound for Air, and Dean “Doon” Groves the Army 2nd baseman, in the form of his life, was up to bat. Doon had hit a first pitch homerun at his first plate appearance of the game. This time, Doon swung and missed at the first pitch. Chardy gave him the “Six Guns” salute - as if to say “Your in the wrong league now boy”. Next pitch ... homerun!

Written by Chris Waterhouse

Back to the 1993 Police College Inter-Service, where Wayne Small was reserve for the game against Navy, so he was chasing foul balls. One ball was hit into an adjacent property, so Smally had to climb over a low fence. It was always a problem to find trousers big enough for Smally to wear and on this occasion, whilst negotiating the fence, his trousers managed to fall down slightly revealing a pair of white bum cheeks and builders crack. The Navy girls playing on an adjacent diamond noticed this and gave Smally a hearty cheer and round of applause.

That evening at the dob session because the Navy men had not been privileged enough to witness Smally’s “half moon” at 7 pm he was to reveal it to them. At 7 pm I remember clearly the immortal words of the dob master (D Rea), “Smally, isn’t it about time the moon rose?” Wayne proceeded to the Navy men’s table stood on a chair and lowered his trousers to the half moon position, much to the joy of all those present.

Footnote: At Wayne’s orderly room (as bizarrely he was charged for this) the OC had to stop himself laughing when the witness statement was read out, stating, “Sgt Small lowered his trousers to reveal his buttocks, but not so far as to expose his genitals”. Case dismissed.

Written by Bruce McNabb

At the Women's Inter-Club Tournament in Hastings, Alex was the coach and I was the Assistant Coach/Manager. We took an Air Force pitcher with us as well and Tai Hiroti couldn't come as scorer that time. We stayed in the Napier Army Hall, some staying up all night! When my wife visited us, the women were reminiscing over old times, which kept me awake all night. Pay back was fun the following morning during the game warm up!

The 1993 Inter-Services at the Police College. "Mate our girls were angels, they did no wrong!" That's why we couldn't understand why we (the women's team) had to be returned to Trentham when it was the men's team that super clued beer bottles to the Police College, and let down the tyres to all the buses the night they had the helicopter crash on the Auckland Motorway (spaghetti junction). After all we had no idea that had happened.

Personally I couldn't understand the problem the following morning, I mean all the district commanders were able to catch far more comfortable taxis to the airport and it was bad planning on the college's part not having any kit to change bus tyres, thus having to spend \$\$ getting a civilian tyre company to come in to do it for them ... After all, all the service buses were okay.

Written by Louise "the fly"

1993, was this the year we got kicked out of the Police College? Or should I rephrase that, the men helped to have us expelled! Anyway, we had a good team and won, so that's all that counts.

Written by "Bawdie"

Just want to add a wee secret. The 1993 Inter-Services Tournament held at Porirua, where we (Army) were banished from the Police College, confined to barracks at Messines Trentham and

placed on the "dry" (no drinking).

The Manager for the women's team ordered us ladies to remain in barracks on the last night before heading home the next day. I won't mention names, but two of us decided to sneak ("ninja") out of the barracks after the refreshments in the corridor that evening, jumped in the van with the boys and headed into town. We got home at some ungodly hour in the morning. Somehow the manager found out about our wee escape and wouldn't talk to us the whole trip from Trentham to Waiouru.

To put it bluntly, she was p----- off. So, suffering from a nasty headache and various dangerous fumes within the van, it was a very long/quiet trip home. Upon arriving in Waiouru, we naughty girls had to clean the vehicles by ourselves. To this day, it was still a top tournament.

Written by Ronnie Gurney

Remember the final Inter-Services for the NZ Police at Ngataringa in 1995. A great tournament because of the incredible camaraderie – "it was brilliant". The haka performed by the teams to the Police contingent during the tournament prize giving and the Police reply was mind boggling. I don't think there was a clear eye after that.

Written by Doon Groves

December 1995 was the end of an era for Combined Services softball. I was in that team with my Army team mates Andy Chambers, Grant McCarroll and Rik Morgan. It was a great week's softball, especially beating Australia 6-5. The final team huddle after the very last game where each team member had their chance to say a few words about what Combined Services softball meant to them was very moving.

In 1996, I took leave in July and travelled

to the USA, to watch the World Softball Championships in Midland, Michigan. I met up with Army softballers Darren Rea and Vinny Flynn at the tournament. The Black Sox win was great and to be there to see it was fantastic. Who would have known that 4 years later, Darren Rea would be selected and play for the Black Sox in a World Championship. His selection would also start a common trend of Army softballers being part of NZ Softball's elite and age group teams.

Patrick "Rik" Morgan was a multitalented sportsman who represented Army and Combined Services Basketball and Softball over the years. He was a dynamic outfielder who robbed many a player a safe hit over the infield or a hit deep into the gap due to his exceptional speed to track down the ball. A solid hitter, who swung the bat sweetly and had the speed to stretch the extra base hit. He was (in my opinion) Army's best outfielder.

The countless times Darren "Ram" Rea would play injured or was suffering from some sort of fatigue-related ailment and would still deliver the goods. I recall numerous times when Ram would go into his gear bag, pull out a tube of super fix glue and put some on his index finger of his pitching hand, which would split open after pitching a number of rise balls.

Darren was without a doubt, a gifted softball player and a major factor in the success of the Army Men's Team. He was a power hitter and a pitcher who developed into a dominating figure on the mound. He was (in my opinion) the most outstanding all round player in the Services from the late 1980s until his release in 2001. Darren was also extremely entertaining off the diamond.

"Fingers" McCarroll, the master dancer who had moves that even the best dancers could not reproduce, or keep up with for that matter. He ruled every tournament dance floor - ka pai Michael Flatley.

I got muddled up with the barracks at one Inter-Services tournament at Philomel and went into the wrong room. Once I realised my mistake, I made a stumbling get away. The following morning I got in the crap, and post tournament I spent some time at the guard hut on extras. Fingers often reminds me of my initial comments that morning when questioned about it. He states that I said, "Bloody Navy, making their barracks all look the same".

Written by Jenni Mumm

The December 1998 Inter-Services Tournament at Woodbourne, was my rookie year. It seems so long ago to me. This was when you actually had to trial for your position and I had no idea what I was up against. Who was to know this would have been the only year that my pitching duties would have been shared, from here on in my pitching would be a solo act.

After making the team and getting the nickname "skippy", this would be the start of pulling on the red jersey and representing Army. In true Army style, all games leading to the final were very close scores. But meeting Air in the final the ladies "unleashed the fury" and the mercy rule was enforced, marking my first victory with many more to come.

This was my first softball Inter-Services, so I didn't know anyone, but this is where one friendship in particular started for me - Mike Norris. A true good guy and had the passion for softball the same as I had. Norrie had all the time in the world for his friends and softball. He would be seen at the bar after each day of play buying a bottle of Red wine, and always the first wherever services were held to do reconnaissance on the best local cafés to get his fix of coffee. Norrie's famous words "unleash the fury" could be heard echoing across the ballpark putting fear into those who challenged the Army team.

I was experiencing my first ever barrack party. It was a big night for the lads due to the fact that our guest speaker was in most young ball player's eyes a softball god. Mr Wilson had given an inspirational speech on his softball and baseball career and was now catching up with the boys.

The party came to a very abrupt end when Darren Rea accidentally let off the fire extinguisher in the barrack kitchen.

The next night the Army women were given a curfew and were to be in bed by 10 pm due to the incident the night before. However, there were a few who were heading into town to get a feed and a couple of our ladies ninja'd their way to the waiting taxis out the front.

I had been asked to go, but being new to the Army softball scene I was fearful of the consequences from our coach Alex if I was caught ... how gullible can one be.

I really wanted to go, but being the rookie I wanted to do the right thing and stay. I was pondering what to do when Padre Koia (the Dre) approached me and said, "What's up Jen you look worried", so I explained my dilemma. He then said, "You do what you think is right", so with that I decided to stay. The Dre then started to head for the taxis when I asked him, "Where are you going?" He responded with. "I'm going into town to tend to my stray flock."

Below: Army Women's Softball Team in action at a tournament North Shore Auckland February 1991.



Whilst the 1999 Inter-Services Tournament was being held at Ngataranga Devonport, it was also the time that NZ Army troops had just been deployed to East Timor, so morale was not the best. I remember being woken up on the second day of the tournament by someone's clock radio. The 6 am news was on and everyone in the 20 person room was listening to the news headline that said a New Zealand soldier had been killed in Suai, East Timor. There was no name mentioned or how he had been killed. Believe me when I say that it left a sick feeling in the pit of my stomach due to the fact that my husband was over there and this was the first deployment away from each other.

The comfort, support and reassurance from my team mates was overwhelming. It was later that day that we had found out that it was not my husband, but someone else.

Again we went to the final with Air force and again the fury was unleashed as the mercy rule was enforced - I really thrived on this feeling of victory.

I also remember when "Fish" from the men's team and Karen Walker decided to challenge each other at the famous Navy mud run at 2 am. Nobody knew the event had taken place until the next morning when we all had a 6 am start to pack up and catch a bus home. Karen happened to be in the bunk next to me and when there was no sign of movement from her so I decided to check if she was okay. Leaning over the bunk to give her a gentle shake I was taken aback with a horrible smell of sea water and mud. Karen was covered in mud with scratches from head to toe. I had no success at waking her up, so her sister Diane was then instructed to get her up and moving out the door. The funny thing was, no one wanted to go near her because she smelt so bad.

To this day, I still don't know who won the mud run between Fish and Karen?

OVER THE DECADES BEYOND 2000

Written by Dean Groves

The millennium was welcomed in without the predicted power outages, Y2K computer crashes and planes falling out of the sky... phew.

The Army crest would change yet again, with the addition of the Maori words 'NGATI TUMATAUENGA', the tribal name for the New Zealand Army. All future Army pockets would have the new crest embroidered.



In July 2000, I was in the barracks eagerly listening to Radio Sport for news about the Black Sox World Championship quest in East London, South Africa. Army had Grant McCarroll and Darren Rea in that team along with Clayton Willocks from the Air Force.

As I was listening, word came through that the Black Sox had won gold. So, I raced to the nearest phone to call Grant McCarroll's mobile. I was greeted first by Marty Grant, then I was handed over to Darren Rea, who was showering. I said "Hey, it's Doon", to which

he replied, "I'm on top of the world Doon, I'm a world champion". A memorable moment for me to hear those words I must say.

A few months later, at a Trentham based unit happy hour, SSgt Grant McCarroll was presented with the Army Colour by his unit Commander Major Dwayne. The presentation acknowledged Grant's outstanding service to Army and New Zealand Softball.

Approval had been given that same year by the Burnham Camp Commander Colonel Martin Dransfield for the Burnham Softball Club to commence the construction of a skin diamond on Burrows Field.

In September 2000, Dale Tamehana attended the Olympic Games in Sydney, Australia, as an scorer for the Women's Softball Competition. Dale Tamehana performed extremely well and was awarded the prestige of scoring the bronze and gold medal games.

At the Army hosted Inter-Service Tournament in February 2001 at Burnham Camp, Warrant Officer Class One Winnie Shanley was presented with the Army Colour by Captain Chris Waterhouse. The presentation took place at the tournament opening at the Burnham Sports Bar.

In 2001, arguably Army men's softballs most dominating and successful player, Darren Rea took his release from the Army and moved to New York where he resides today.

A few months into winter (softball's off season), a visiting Japanese frigate stopped

into Wellington and requested a number of sporting challenges, one of them being softball, against teams from the Wellington Area. Once it was known that there was an opportunity to play softball against a Japanese team, basically the whole Army team turned up at Davis Field, the majority coming from Linton. We didn't wear a uniform, but our opposition sure did. They got off their bus and looked like a real deal baseball team, albeit a very short one.

Despite being a couple of months out of season, the Army team oops I mean Trentham team, went ballistic with the bat and hit after hit scored a bunch of runs against the shell-shocked visitors. I think we ended up with 18 runs and then let them have a couple at the end. This game will be remembered for Trevor King's out of season monster swings against the slow Japanese pitching. Unfortunately, TK received one of the few strike outs of the game and the term "Rusty Gate" was used for a few years afterwards.

By the middle of winter, the new skin diamond at Burnham Camp was finished and dubbed by some as "The Pascoe's Play Pen." With the support of Chaplain Raharuhi Koia, who was resident in Waiouru at the time, the fencing and bases from the Waiouru diamond were relocated to Burnham. The pearl of Waiouru softball in the 1990s, now overgrown, had seen a massive decline in interest and had not been used for years. So, a number of components were dismantled and sent to be fully utilised at Burnham Camp. Unfortunately, Burnham were unable to secure the outfield fencing as Waiouru had retained it for the rugby clubroom fields.

One of only four skin diamonds in Canterbury, the Burnham diamond is a regular attraction for teams playing in the local Canterbury competition.

In November 2001, The Inter-Services Tournament was hosted by Air Force and played

at Rosedale Park. The first round robin was barely completed, when the heavens opened up and put an end to further tournament play. Army women and Air Force men were crowned the Tournament Champions having won round robin one.

In 2002, the NZ Army crest changed yet again. The words Ngati Tumatauenga were placed on a scroll under the royal crown.



After a 5-year hiatus, Army Inter-Regional sport was back. Softball held the Inter-Regional Tournament at Davis Field, Trentham, in November 2002, where the Code Chairperson Captain Alex Whittaker and committee member WO1 Grant McCarroll delivered the tournament back to Army softballers again.

The Army's Regional Sporting Boundaries had changed yet again, this time the Regions and team colours were as follows:

Northern: The Northern Region is a combined region comprised of unit members from Auckland, Northland, Tauranga, Waikato, Land Doctrine and Training Group (formerly Army Training Group Waiouru) and Wellington. The Northern Regions colours are green, white and black.

Central: The Central Region comprises unit members from Linton Camp, Wanganui, Taranaki, and Napier. The Central Regions

colours are red, white and black.

Southern: The Southern Region comprises all South Island unit members. The Southern Region colours are blue, white and black.

The tournament also welcomed back, long-serving umpires John Eagar and Charlie Elkington and scorer Teina Scoon. There were no uniforms at this stage, so Central used the old Regional uniforms, Southern used the Burnham Club uniforms. Northern borrowed a set of uniforms that had "Centurions" across the front, (loaned from Softball NZ).



The tournament had a full compliment of teams in attendance, but this would be a one-off as Regions would struggle with numbers for many of its future tournaments.

The 2002 Inter-Services Tournament was hosted by Navy at Philomel. On the way to the tournament opening at the Marae, the men's team decided to walk there past the tournament diamonds, but were drawn to the diamond markings, which were marked at baseball distances (larger than softball distances). Grant quickly picked up on the error and immediately said, "I don't think you are going to steal many bases this tournament Norrie."

However, his team mate Rhys Paul (the DR), set an unofficial Inter-Services Tournament record

of 18 stolen bases during the tournament from 5 games.

The 2003 Inter-Regional Tournament was again hosted by Trentham. Three men's and two women's teams assembled to do battle fashioning the new Regional uniforms provided by the Army Sport Committee.

It was at this tournament that the Deputy Chief of Army Brigadier Rick Ottaway (a former 1966 RF Cadet Softball player) was asked to deliver the first pitch of the finals, a tradition normally associated with the Major League Baseball World Series. For the record, the DCA (a left hander) pitched a ball that was far from being called a strike, and following the ceremony said a few words as a lead into the final contest and tournaments conclusion.

In December 2003, The Inter-Services Tournament was hosted by Air Force at Woodbourne and welcomed to New Zealand shores the Australian Defence Force (ADF) teams. The tournament will be remembered for two things; the ankle injury to Vincent "Vinny" Flynn the day before the tournament started, and the hakas that were performed by the men's team prior to the two matches against the Australians.

"During the men's team training, Vinny was moving backwards to catch a ball, but rolled his ankle on a bat that was on the ground ..."

The day the Army contingent arrived in Woodbourne, both teams headed over to the sports fields for a training run. During the men's team training, Vinny was moving backwards to catch a ball, but rolled his ankle on a bat that was on the ground. The initial prognosis ruled Vinny out of the tournament, which was a big blow to the teams preparations.

It is believed that at this tournament, an Army men's team performed the haka for the very first time. Performing the haka certainly fired the team up, and their bats too for that matter, as they showed no mercy to the Aussies and comfortably ran away with both games.

“Performing the haka certainly fired the team up, and their bats too for that matter ...”

The tournament draw brought the top two men's teams together for the last game of the tournament. Approximately 20 minutes away from the start of the deciding game, Army pitcher Grant McCarroll broke down in pain and could not pitch another ball. When all seemed lost for the team at the worst possible moment, Vinny, who had nursed his ankle all week, came off the bench to pitch for his team. As Vinny moved from the dugout onto the mound (diamond one at Woodbourne) to take his warm up pitches, a call came from the Air Force dugout “Vinny, you're joking!”, to which Vinny replied in a pumped up voice, “No, I'm not!”. Vinny went on to shut the Air Force hitters down, spearheading the Army to a memorable triumph amidst extraordinary circumstances. Good on ya Vinny!

In February 2004, the Men's World Softball Championships were hosted in Christchurch New Zealand.

Burnham Camp played host to part of the Black Sox pre-tournament build up and also to the USA teams. Some lucky Burnham softballers were even involved in a game against the Americans, which would have been a real thrill for those involved.

With such a prestigious tournament on our front doorstep, and with Army's Grant McCarroll and Air Forces Clayton Willocks in the Black Sox team, who wouldn't want to be there to support our mates. So, Smally, TC, Trevor King and I

made arrangements to get to Christchurch. Our accommodation had been prearranged, but when they all saw it for the first time, it was sub-standard, even for soldiers... let's say no more, other than it was free and it would take too long to go into details for this journal.

The tournament result was fantastic. With a hitting line up like that, the Black Sox were untouchable. Grant also brought the Army softballers into the Black Sox victory celebration at Christchurch Park, which was a great way to end a memorable week for all. Yet again, who would have thought WO1 Wayne Small who watched from the grand stand would be selected into the Black Sox as manager and attend the 2009 World Softball Championships in Saskatoon, Canada.

The 2003 Army Sports Awards were held in April 2004 at Trentham Camp. At the awards another classic moment occurred when WO1 Wayne Small presented the Chief of Army (CA) Major General Mateparae (ONZM) with the Trans-Tasman trophy that the NZDF had won in December 2003 at Woodbourne. Smally was explaining the trophy victory to the CA when a photograph was taken, which was not unusual except when the photograph was viewed later on. In the photograph, it looks like Smally is doing karate or a close quarter battle move on the CA, but to those who were there it was just Smally standing rigid while talking with his hands. See what you think below.



2004 marked a busy calendar year for Army softball.

Firstly, the Inter-Regional Tournament was hosted by Waiouru for the first time since the mid 1990s. The teams first up on day one of the tournament were welcomed with sleet, as only Waiouru could arrange in the summer.

The women did not have sufficient numbers to hold a tournament, so Army selection was determined from training sessions and inter-squad games. The Southern Men's Team went on to defeat Northern comfortably in the final. Following the tournament prize giving, the Army teams to tour Australia in two weeks' time were announced.

The final function will be remembered for the delicious pig on the spit that entertainment co-ordinator, Paula Biddle, had organised. The left over pig somehow made its way into the Camp gymnasium weight room, where it remained along with a sea of bottles and one sleeping party goer who welcomed the astonished early morning gym junkies. Oh dear!

In November, the inaugural tour of Australia finally became a reality as an invitation to attend the ADSA Softball Carnival at RAAF Base Richmond in Sydney was welcomed with open arms. The tours results and stories are enclosed in the “Touring Australia” article on page 115.

In December, two weeks after the tour, Army hosted the Inter-Services Tournament in Waiouru. The weather was rather cold for those non-Waiouru based participants and “darn right freezing” for a couple of statisticians (Ronnie Gurney and Ruth Dare) who were first timers to Waiouru.

Army's pitcher and hitter Ra Koia, impressed the men's team with his solid hitting using a very old bat, which he called the “punga stump”. Nobody could determine what decade Ra's bat

was from or what 1970s gang had previously used it in scuffles. He also wore a pair of Army issue black GP working gloves, which looked identical to the gloves supposedly worn by OJ Simpson in the 1990s murder trial. Despite his unorthodox accessories, Ra was a very successful hitter in the Army Men's Team for years to come.

The NZ Fire Service Team attended the tournament for the first time and became the fourth team in the men's competition. They did not have a women's team, but brought 3 players along to help make a Navy Women's Team who were really struggling to even make the tournament.

The Army Women's Team played very well and in doing so retained their champion's crown. Not to take anything away from the Air Force Men's Team who beat Army to win the tournament, but it would be fair to say that a number of the men's team were still reminiscing and partying like they were back in Sydney. That lack of focus was to the men's detriment, and the lessons learned that week really hit home when Air Force had the trophy and we did not.

Code Chairman Army Softball WO1 Grant McCarroll announced Mr John Eagar as the first Patron of Army Softball.

The tournament highlight was the final function, which was staged at the QAMR workshop's bar (opposite the camp wash point). The bar was outside in a small compound that was surrounded by several shipping containers and sprinkled with gravel. The bar had a makeshift toilet and large bonfire in front of the open air part of the bar. The sheltered part of the bar was a wooden structure with a mixture of camouflage nets and hessian scrim, but the most important part of the bar was the dozens of cold drinks. Everyone else had a great time, especially when the bonfire was sparked into life. The Fire Service players

were getting into it, but kept a close eye on the bonfire as its flames got closer and closer to the nearby line of pine tree's, not to mention the hessian roof.

In 2005, the Inter-Regional Tournament was hosted by Burnham Camp and the games were played at Burrows Field. Most of the games were played on grass as the skin diamond had recently been re-laid and the surface was considered too soft to play on. However, the final match was played on the number one diamond without too many players sinking into the ground. Southern tipped Northern through a fine pitching display from Damian Allan.

The Inter-Services Tournament was hosted by Navy in Philomel. True to form, the Navy put on an excellent tournament at the Ngataringa sports fields. The tournament opening ceremony at the Marae is always a highlight too. It was also at this tournament that the Dale Tamehana Memorial Trophy was up for grabs and won by Army who collectively outscored the other Services.

Unfortunately, in the men's last game and the tournament deciding match, the Air Force got off to a flier and the Army bats could not spark into life, not for the lack of trying.

The women's team lifted the men's spirits, yet again, by winning their fifth consecutive tournament. Thanks ladies.

“The guys were in a group huddle at the diamond and told about one of the Black Sox values, which is to show class when you win and class when you lose ...”

The 2006 Inter-Regional Tournament was hosted by Linton. The tournament had a full compliment of teams, but each team only had 9 players, with no reserves there could not be any injuries – yeah right.

The games were played on the grass fields by the confidence course and canteen due to the skin diamond infield surface not being suitable to play on, which was a shame.

Southern women won the ladies competition through good team hitting and sound pitching by Jenni Mumm. Central men bounced back after previous indifferent years to win the tournament in front of their home crowd against Southern.

A new protocol was introduced at the tournament prize giving where the Patron would come forward and take part in the naming of the Army team's by being the first person to shake the hand of each team member. He initially thought he was being called forward as a member of the Army team (again), but once up there, he was told that he was actually up there to shake the hands of the newly named team members.

The Inter-Services Tournament was hosted by Air Force and held at Ohakea. The tournament welcomed the Australian teams back to NZ shores for the first time since 2003. The women's team met the ADF in the final, which meant the ladies had already won the tournament with Air Force being knocked out of the final. This situation did not distract the ladies, who played well in a close game against the visitors, but went on to win the game and the tournament.

The men once again failed with their batting, having scored a bunch of runs during the tournament, they could not get started. The Army pitching was good, but a few errors in the field saw the Air Force comfortably win the deciding game.

Dejected after the tournament loss, the guys were in a group huddle at the diamond and told about one of the Black Sox values, which is to show class when you win and class when you lose. To their credit, they held their heads up and their spirits, which helped contribute

to a fantastic social function at Ohakea that evening. That value has been adopted by the team and is re-emphasised each year during the training camp.

In 2007, the Inter-Regionals were hosted in Trentham, but due to the lack of numbers, the women's tournament was cancelled, which was a major blow to Army Coach Sue Harrison who worked tirelessly to get a women's tournament together, but to no avail.

A few weeks later, the Inter-Service Tournament was hosted by Army in Trentham, the games were played at Fraser Park, Lower Hutt. The women's team were beaten by Air Force in the final. The Army men's team were strengthened by the winter recruiting of former Air Force and Black Sox player Clayton Willocks. In terrible weather, the Army men spurred on by tight pitching from Grant McCarroll and good all round team hitting saw the team beat the Air Force and regain the champions crown.

The tournament was capped off by a farewell haka performed by (mainly) Army and Air Force players to members who were leaving the Defence Force. They were Gavin Kotua (Air Force), Darna Arcus and Te Uru Cribb (Army), who all stood on home plate on the number one diamond as the haka was given.

In 2007, the Army teams were invited to tour Australia to attend the ADSA Tournament at Randwick Barracks, Sydney. We duly accepted the invite and were off to Sydney in November. The contingent was strengthened by the addition of the Patron John Egar, who came along to keep us in line. Well let's say our Patron got up to mischief himself with sunburnt legs that resembled stop lights and during the tournament, he was seen wearing a Star Wars (“Chewbacca”) costume at a tournament function – good work Patron, but you're not coming next time!

The women's team had mixed results, but performed extremely well with a number of new

comers to the game of softball. The men's team however found the ADF pitching to their liking and found the middle of the bat on a number of occasions. A full report is enclosed in the “Touring Australia” article on page 115.

In April 2008, the Army Men's Team were named Army Team of the Year at the Army Sports Awards, marking a very successful 2007/08 undefeated season.



“In April 2008, the Army Men's team were named 2007 Army Team of the Year ...”

In October 2008, Army Softball received its new uniforms, much to the delight of both teams. (After being told that softball would not get uniforms from America, the submitted quotes came back with a surprising answer – go to your American vendor).

The Inter-Services Tournament was hosted by Navy at Ngataringa, Philomel. Both Army teams strutted onto the diamond with their new and smart-looking uniforms.

Both Army teams dominated throughout the week, scoring runs at will, the Dale Tamehana Memorial Trophy was back in Army's trophy cabinet along with the Prendergast and Lauthala Bay Trophies.

Jenni Mumm lead the way on the mound and rookie sensation Cherie Field (pictured below) played very well and was subsequently named the Women's Rookie of the Tournament. Grant McCarroll was the Army Men's Team outstanding player and he was awarded the Tournament Top Batter Trophy and was right up there in the pitching statistics and a strong contender for the Men's Most Valuable Player.



On 18 February 2009, the Army Sports Awards were hosted in Trentham Camp to highlight Army Sports successes for the 2008 season. SSgt Nicky Hansen was named the Army Sports Official of the Year for her outstanding performances with Army softball and rugby league.

On the 26 March 2009, Captain Grant McCarroll was presented with the NZDF Colour for outstanding commitment to NZDF softball. Grant is the fourth NZDF serviceperson and first softball representative to receive this prestigious award. Grant received his award from the Minister of Defence Dr Wayne Mapp and Chief of Defence Force Lieutenant General Jerry Mateparae, ONZM.

During the year, Sue Harrison, Lyndah Pascoe and Nicky Hansen were selected into the Junior White Sox as team officials and SSgt Phil Johnston was selected into the Junior Black Sox Development Team.

In July, WO1 Wayne "Smally" Small attended the Men's World Softball Championships in Saskatoon Canada as the manager of the Black Sox.

The team performed superbly throughout the tournament, but found the Australians tough going at the first playoff game. The team faced elimination and had to beat Japan, the USA and Canada to reach the final, which they did through sheer determination. Unfortunately, the Black Sox were no match for the Australians and lost the Champions crown the team had held since 1996. The Black Sox won the silver medal.

On the 6th and 7th of November 2009, Army Softball will host the 60th Anniversary of Softball in the Army at Trentham Camp. The reunion will acknowledge the efforts of many Army softballers over the past 60 years.

The year will finish with the Inter-Regional Tournament in Trentham and the Inter-Services will be hosted by Air Force in Whenuapai. Both tournaments will be conducted after this journal is printed.

"On the 26 March 2009, Captain Grant McCarroll was presented with the NZDF Colour for outstanding commitment to NZDF softball ..."



STORIES AND MEMORIES FROM THE 2000s

Written by Ronnie Gurney

The 2004 Inter-Services Tournament held in Waiouru. A summer sport – yeah right. Just go to the tournament photographs and see the one of an ex NZ Softball statistician, who was attending her second Inter-Services, freezing her butt off. But the Army boys came to her rescue and brought her a beanie that she still has today and wears it on the odd occasion in Napier. But she tells me Napier is not as cold as Waiouru!.

To me, the Inter-Services Tournament is all about camaraderie. Everyone is always made to feel part of the game and tournament regardless of what position they hold, from cleaner to player.

The Services know how to put on a great competition and bring out the very best in people. Thank you to the Army, Air Force and Navy for letting me be part of these great tournaments. I look forward to attending a lot more, whether it is as a Scorer, Statistician or general dog's body.

I have family in all codes, which makes me part of you all. It gets hard to split yourself 3 ways, but all 3 will always get my up most support. (If Police ever come back, I will have family there as well) LOL

I wish the Army all the very best with their 60th Anniversary and hope that there will be many, many, more.

"The Services know how to put on a great competition and bring out the very best in people ..."

Written by Dean Groves

The passion Mike Norris has for Army Softball and the dedication he consistently demonstrated throughout his time in the sport was exceptional. When I visited him at his house in Linton, he was sign writing all of the regional team helmets by hand, (the Regional name Central across the front and Army across the back). A painstaking job, no one would do that except Mike.

In 2003, the Army Men's Team did the haka on day one of the Inter-Services before the game against the Aussies. In my time in the men's team, I have not seen an Army dugout fizz like the way we did during that game, our bats were on fire and we ran out 8 - 0 winners in 5 innings against a very handy ADF pitcher (Tony Chave). We were really up for that game!

I had been really crook leading up to the 2006 softball season; I had been off work for two months and spent more than 6 weeks in bed. The day I was allowed to get up and about just so happened to be the final day of the Inter-Regionals in Linton, so there was only one place I wanted to be that day – in Linton, with the softballers.



Above: Past, present and future Army softballers.

A week later, still feeling like crap from all of the drugs, Grant encouraged me to attend the Army Sports Awards. Sitting up straight at the table during the long awards dinner was not fun having lain flat in bed for so long. I was sitting there when the MC said my rank and name, which caught my attention. I looked over at Grant puzzled. He looked at me and said, “That’s you yah dork”, as I had missed my regimental number moments before. I had been awarded the Army Colour.

The following week was the Inter-Services at Ohakea. Still feeling unwell, I headed up to the tournament to watch the Army teams, despite reservations from my wife.

What can be said about the Army women’s softball team? Ladies, your results and tournament wins throughout the 1990s and 2000s are second to none when stacked up against any Army sports team. You get grazes, bruises, knocks and sprains, all on the coat

tails of that magic pairing of catcher/coach Sue Harrison and super pitcher Jenni Mumm. Jenni you are without a doubt the “work horse” of Army women’s softball and you are (in my opinion) the most dominating NZ Defence Force women’s player I have ever seen.

In 2008, I had the pleasure to play for my club team Totara Park in a game with a number of Army softballers. There was Grant doing the pitching for our team up against our other club team who had Darren Rea’s son Kelly Rea pitching. I can still remember pushing Kelly around his parent’s house on a kids buggy in Burnham in the early 1990s. Darren was also there, he was over from New York and took the opportunity to watch his son pitch. He couldn’t resist the occasion to play and to strike out Grant and myself, but that was not to be, we both got hits. Clayton Willocks was also there to catch up with Darren and watch a bit of the game. To finish, Phil Packer was doing the umpiring making it a big turn out from Army softball. Kelly is expected to be recruited into

the Army in 2010.

Patron (John), you continue to be an inspirational and magnificent servant to Army softball at all levels. I cannot recall you ever missing a tournament. Thank you for openly demonstrating your love of Army softball and helping me realise just how special this group of people both past and present really are. You are a treasure of New Zealand Army Softball.

To everyone else who has played, socialised and helped me during this particularly enjoyable sporting part of my life. I sincerely thank you.

Lastly, Grant Anthony McCarroll (aka Grunta, Capt Mannering, Bomb or Fingers). When I first meet you I thought you were John McEnroe’s younger brother. We became team mates and played alongside each other for many years. It has been a pleasure to work for you as Code Chairman and under the umbrella of the Army Softball Committee. You are a very close friend to me and my family and I personally thank you for what you have done for us.

When I think of Army softball, whether it is now or in years to come, it will be you alongside John Eagar who best represents Army Softball.



R.F. CADETS SOFTBALL TEAM — 1950



Winners of
BAT & BALL
COMPETITION
KNOCK-OUT
COMPETITION
(All Grades)

Games Played 20
Won - - - 18
Lost - - - 2

Back Row: Cdt. GARNER, L. R., Cdt. NEPIA, T. O. T., Cdt. TE KARU, M. J., Cdt. LAWRENCE, V.
Centre Row: Cdt. CLARKE, A. W. A., Cdt. BOYD, G. G., Cdt. PARRY, R. T., Cdt. WHAKATOPE, H. A., Cdt.-Sjt. MORGAN, E. J.,
Cdt. GORDON, L. S.
Front Row: Cdt. LUSCOMBE, R. B., Cdt.-L/Cpl. CAMPBELL, A. D. (Capt.), Sjt. BULL, M. (Coach), Cdt.-L/Cpl. WAWATAI, H. K.,
Cdt. WEALLEANS, L. T.











ROLL OF HONOUR

**“TO ALL THOSE WHO HAVE
SERVED, PLAYED AND GONE
BEFORE US”**



“WE DO REMEMBER YOU”

COURAGE COMRADESHIP COMMITMENT INTEGRITY

NZ ARMY
NGATI TUHATAUENGA

MEMORIES FROM 3 DECADES

Written by Winnie Shanley

REMEMBER WHEN

The 1970s

I remember when I was at school, my favourite subject was Geography. In 1970, I joined the Army as a NZWRAC. As a player, team official and administrator, geography and softball played a big part in my Army career. The tournaments over the years have taken me to places around New Zealand and overseas that I would not normally have visited.

I remember Basic Training in the early 1970s and being selected for the Southern Region while posted to Burnham.

I remember one of my first tournaments, in the days when it was “bad luck” to wash our uniforms. After the second day, they almost stood in the corner by themselves. We had a good excuse; we would be late for the bar and we soon discovered the price of being late or last. This was my introduction to and the beginning of a long and very expensive ‘love-affair’ with the dob sessions. At first I thought it was sooooo unfair... yeah right!

I remember one of our antics in those early days. After the bar closed and while returning to our barracks we climbed over the pool gates and went skinny dipping at Papakura. The not so good memory was getting stuck in the hedge. I’m so glad I don’t have a photo. This hedge was to feature in a number of sporting activities involving many codes over the years.

I remember the team chaperones who were command appointed. They were there to keep a “watchful eye” over us, and some were very supportive. However, this changed as the years progressed and chaperones became team managers and were sometimes put on the team lists as players.

I remember travelling overnight by train from Auckland to Wellington after the inter-Regional and Services Tournaments at Papakura. We were banished to the guard’s van to party and “someone” was seen sitting on the toilet singing “my ding-a-ling”. I’ve got a photo somewhere but it’s a little blurred!

On the same trip, the guard tried to get through our carriage to check the tickets. There were too many sleeping bodies on the floor in the aisle and between the seats so he was told to walk on the outside!

I remember my first Inter-Services tournament at the Naval Base. The games were played in front of the Cruiser block barracks and our bunk room was opposite the swimming pool. No skinny dipping, but we were still thrown in the pool. Tournaments at Devonport after that were played at Navy’s new sporting complex, Ngataranga.

I remember when my first mascot, a panda bear named Sgt Sam, got a bit heavy after the first day of his first tournament. On the way to the bar I had an offer to carry Sam. I said, “Never mind him, carry me”. That cost me dearly and Sam became a non-travelling reserve after that.



Above: Sgt Sam and Peanut.

Then Peanut joined us. Remember him? He was more manageable and everyone thought he was cute and felt real soft and life-like. Unfortunately he became an easy target for ransom by the other teams. There have been other mascots over the years but I remember these two because I still have them.

Who remembers Harvey Fly? I remember standing outside of the CPO Auckland at the bottom of Queen Street. You were able to drive along there back then. We were looking up and telling Harvey not to jump. Well, a small crowd gathered all looking up. The team moved to the centre island and continued to point upwards calling to Harvey. During this commotion cars stopped to check out the “observation”. Time to leave – we continued up Queen Street causing havoc by entering each chemist store and spraying each other with the perfume testers. We didn’t buy any perfume but it was a very expensive dob session later.

I remember when the Army Team was staying at an Army Hall and Willie asked if anyone wanted their washing done. Two ladies handed over their “frillies” and Willie was seen pegging up bras and panties with his eyes closed. Later that evening after a few drinks Willie fell asleep. He managed to remove his dentures and place them in a glass of water. He woke the next morning to find someone had “dressed” his teeth with fruit and veges. He tried to hide them from us after that but we always found them.

I remember playing representative softball while doing shift work. Due to the hours, logistics and rosters always had to be juggled. It often went like this; finish night shift, get on a plane to the tournament, play softball and move from the diamond back to the plane. I would arrive at Wellington airport to be met by a staff car and driver who took me straight back to night shift. On one occasion, a Colonel was waiting for his transport and was not impressed when a Landrover arrived to pick him up while the staff car was still there. You know the saying, “It’s not what you know but who”. Thank you DSTP.

I remember my first visit to Invercargill with the Combined Services Team. We had a buffet of seafood. Really huge kinas were scattered over the backyard. The oysters and the raw fish were delicious. During a second visit we had roasted mutton birds, whitebait, mussels, paua, fried bread and rewena bread. Notably there weren’t many brown faces at the table.

The 1980s

I played at the competitive level until I broke my leg in 1984. It was a local game and the injury resulted in a vertical fracture of my upper right tibia while sliding into home plate. Those darn catchers who stand their ground! You know the type! It resulted in two weeks in Wanganui Hospital then six weeks of recovery with daily visits to the Waikouaiti pool to run in

the water – with togs on of course!

After my leg healed, I moved into manager and admin appointments.

I remember when the Combined Services Women's Team went on tour to Australia (Sydney) in 1988.

I received a phone call Sunday morning asking if my passport was current and would I like to join the team on tour to Sydney. Having answered yes to both, I was told, "Well, get your butt up to Auckland before 12 noon tomorrow". I got there and replaced a player who unfortunately got the measles, so it was bad luck for her.

The team set up a training camp for three days at Malabar Rifle Range – just on the outskirts of Sydney. There was excellent transport to and from the city and we called this temporary base "home on the range"!! After we vacated the facility the NZ Army Rifle Team arrived. A week later they were flooded out.

We moved to Ingleburn, a small and almost deserted camp near Holsworthy, and made ourselves comfortable. It was like stepping back into the 1930s and 40s. On our first morning together, both teams (NZ/AS) "paraded" for breakfast (0730 – 0800). The day after, three of us paraded for breakfast at 0755 to ensure no rations were wasted and we delivered bacon and egg toasties to the troops who decided to have extra shut eye. It took the Aussies three days to follow our example.

I remember the many Christmases in the late 1980s and early 1990s when my husband and I only had time for a ham sandwich each on the back porch for Christmas dinner before heading in different directions; him to Army shooting tournaments and me to softball.

The 1990s

I remember; after breaking my leg (you know, those catchers not getting out of the way),

my time in the appointments of Army and Combined Services Code Chairman was both challenging and very rewarding. They gave me the chance to give something back and to do my little bit to keep the fellowship alive. I remember the many occasions waiting in ambush for the Chairman of the Sports Council so he could sign our cheques.

I would like to acknowledge the pioneers of Army softball who laid the foundation for us to build on and their vision for the future that is still evident today. To all those who have been involved with organising the many and various tournaments over the years, along with all the support staff, we wouldn't have got this far without you. Thank you.

In Summary

I remember the camps and bases hosting tournaments – you know; the geography:

Papakura. My first Inter-Regional Tournament was at Papakura, having travelled up from Burnham. I still laugh at the thought of us climbing over the gates, skinny dipping in the pool and getting stuck in that ugly hedge by the hospital barracks.

Ngaruawahia. Best ever venue for any tournament! Everything was within arms reach. Fall out of bed, turn right to the softball diamond, turn left to the mess and bar. Never got lost but we couldn't find the swimming pool.

Army Training Group (ATG). The good - the fun of Sunshine Mountain. The not so good - my broken leg. The pool was great for rehab, but not so good for skinny dipping.

Linton. Teams were accommodated in the hut lines. The challenge was trying to find your bed after the bar and coping with the long walks across the grass to the toilets and showers. We couldn't find the swimming pool there either to go skinny dipping.

Trentham. Fraser Park. Rothmans National Tournament usually held during Christmas and New Year period. Pan Am Inter-Club Tournament usually held at the end of the season – February and March. The Trentham catering staff were very generous with rations and we enjoyed sharing our bulk lunch with our many supporters.

Fort Dorset. No pool for skinny dipping, just the ocean.

Burnham. Thirty years after my first selection, retiring from the Army having attended my last tournament there, the 2001 Inter-Services Tournament.

I also remember visiting Whenuapai and Hobby, Te Rapa, Shelly Bay, Woodbourne (before the wine trails), Wigram and diamonds around Sydney Australia while on the Combined Services tour in 1988.

I don't remember visiting Ohakea, 'coz I don't have a photo, and we mustn't forget the numerous provincial towns like Rotorua, Hastings, Palmerston North, New Plymouth, Invercargill, Masterton and Blenheim where

we played over the years.

Of course, we must remember the Police College ... did I get a photo or was it just a negative!? Couldn't find the swimming pool - perhaps it was behind the bar zzzzz...

Today

Today, in the twilight zone, I still play softball with the Evergreens. Well, my name is on the team list anyway. It takes six months to prepare and six months to recover and you need to hit a homerun to get past first base! You know the saying – "the mind is always willing but the body is a bit slow to keep up with the play".

I remember the good, the very good, the fun and the happy memories. I will always remember the awesome people I have been associated with over our years of softball. It's been great!

Now my recall button is stuck but I'm sure there are many other such memories out there.

Take care, keep smiling and keep your eye on the ball!



Written by Alex Whittaker

Highlights of my 24 years with Army Softball

I'll start by saying that it was an absolute blast from start to finish. I enjoyed every minute of it (well just about every minute). My era had some really good times at all levels, be it the Inter-Regionals, Inter-Services, Combined Services, New Zealand Defence Force, Inter Club, National Champs and the overseas tours. Even playing for the NZ Forces Team in Singapore in the mid 1980s and attending an International Series in Kuala Lumpur against world class teams who kicked our "you know whats".

Over the years, we played some fantastic softball, putting forward some very competitive Army teams to take on Police, Navy and Air; we played hard on and off the diamond and had some very successful years in terms of bringing home the trophies.

I actually got involved in Army softball when I was still at school. I used to fill in for the Papakura WRAC team some Saturdays when they were short and the games didn't clash with my club games. I first met Winnie Shanley in those early days when we played in Papakura. Looking back, those times were a pretty strong motivator for me joining the Army. Playing sport and getting paid for it kind of appealed.

Desert Rats – ATG

Softball in ATG in the early 1980s was huge. A very competitive competition across all grades was played throughout the central plateau with the majority of them culminating with presentations at the rugby club each Saturday afternoon/night. The Desert Rats was a tough squad with some real rat bags in it. Our coach (Sunny) was a hard task master. She would push us all to get the very best out of us. We played hard on the diamond and even harder off the diamond. Sunny, Missy Campbell,

Emma Ward, and Bertha Ratahi totally lead me astray during that time and I loved every minute of it. It was here that I witnessed the Sunshine Mountain for the very first time. I couldn't believe it, everyone just started dancing on the tables and they were sober. Very impressive and I've been dancing on tables ever since.

Inter-Regionals

I played at many a regional tournament. I have very fond memories of the player of the day presentations when drinking (or sculling) your prize was compulsory. It always set the scene for the rest of night and I think it is fair to say that many of us lost a lot of brain cells during those days but, we still turned up with the goods the next day. A very social tournament, but you did have to attend trials in those days because there were so many people wanting to play across all four regions (Northern, ATG, Central and Southern).

Dob Sessions at Regionals were an absolute hoot. You were never safe, everybody got dobbed and you had no choice but to pay up and shut up. Many a truth was stretched during dobs, which added to the flavour somewhat. Nobody cared, as long as it was funny, and everybody could have a good laugh at some else's expense. It was always cool watching the antics in the mess the next morning when some poor sod had to dance for their food, or do something ridiculous with an audience as part of their dob punishment.

The Sunshine Mountain showed itself at many a regional tournament. Nobody was exempt, it didn't matter who you were or what you were doing. If someone came to you, you had to participate and the song would continue until you stood up and took part. A really fun way to remove barriers, whilst reinforcing that some white men really can't dance.

To JB Ward, thanks mate for managing the ATG girls, taking part in the Sunshine Mountain

and in doing so, giving up a front tooth and taking home a black eye for the cause. Pays to be sober on those tables.

Initiations were memorable. I always enjoyed seeing the retired players return in management or coaching roles and thinking that they were safe from initiations. Not the case. I found out the first year I took up coaching and found an "around the world" waiting for me to consume. I did get my own back though because I was coaching for a long time and saw many players hang up their cleats and return as team management.

I also enjoyed watching and encouraging the newcaps from the Army men's team who were completing their initiations. Now they know how to play hard – they either had lead lined stomachs or no stomachs at all having to drink and hold down their nasty concoctions.

The low points for me:

Parting with all that dob money due to the many lies told (you know who you are). The year of the Barracuda (you know who you are).

Some of the special chicks during my time. Carol Ngatai (Skip), Poppy, Sue Harrison, Toni Konui, Mitch Ransfield, Amo Williams, Winnie, Carol Kitson, Tulip, TP (Maria Te Paea), Jan Taylor, Heeni Tangiora, Fiona Cassidy, Lisa Botting, Chrissy Paenui, June Waititi, Flo Tamehana, Alley Ooop (Alverta Amaru), Jenny Mumm, Missy Campbell, Milo (Vila Milo) , Kono (Anne Clarke), Moetu, Blackie (Sheila Black), TA (Tania Anderson), Megan Leonard, Dizzy Lizzy (Liz Abraham), Loui the 'Fly' (Louise Robertson), Nicky Hansen, Linda Sorenson, Wendy Cunninghame, Jackie TeAmo, Tania White, Sharon Crack, Kathy Walker, Phoebe Fabricius, Angel Ngapera, Heather Ratahi, Toby Sharp, Clare Bear (Clare Leedon), Noema Munro, Dawn Boxer, Kimi Grant, Bakes (Leesa Baker), Temo (Relda Temoananui), Charlene Baird, Bernie Robertson, Shar Sincock, Lee Jones, Bawdy (Vanessa Bawden), Ana

Paterson, Marama Puketapu, Mel, Vicky Allen, Diane Walker, Ange Fraser, Princess, Blandina Diamond, Paula Biddle, Maree Little, Bernie Skeddon, Georgie Fox, Linda Manual, Lyndah Pascoe, Lisa Knap,

There are many more but the volumes of bourbon over the years have taken it's toll because I can't recall all the names.

Team Management

Numerous people who were passionate about softball or passionate about someone who played softball or who was just passionate about having a bloody good time being off work for a week or two.

Tournament Officials

Tui and Bill Smith, Eddie, Black Dad (Charlie Elkington - some years later), John Eagar, Ronnie Gurney, Naughty Teina Scoon, Dale Tamehana, Derryn Morgan, Derek Albert and many of us players who got dragged in to be base umpires from time to time.

Combined Services, Inter-Services and NZ Defence Force

It was great to return year after year and catch up with our old mates and form new friendships with the newcaps. I always enjoyed being awarded a slave from the Navy men (newcaps) who had to do everything I asked of them for a few hours on the final night. I was always amazed how many of them were happy to volunteer additional services (I never entertained that by the way).

The level of softball played at these tournaments was a step up from regionals and the competition was always fierce. Army and Air Force women battled it out for years and continue to do so to this day. It was a sad day for the tournament when the Police were no longer able to participate. Having 4 teams participate made it a better tournament and they managed to be pretty competitive – even

when their team was not that strong. I was always amazed at what Carol Cody could do with her team.

To Mike Dellow, thanks Mike for your great sportsmanship at a Police College dob session. We set you up good and proper (hook, line and sinker) and you never even batted an eyelid. Never really knew who those undies belonged to but they did look like they might be your size.

Some of the special chicks there included Rats Ratana, Carol Cody, Black Mitch, White Mitch, Peanut, Queenie, Leonie Bloxham, Rose Nepia (Bubby), Lee ?, Terri Hancock, Karen Middlemiss, Sue Harrison, Dawn Papuni, Sailor (Anne Graham). Jacquie Alder, Odette Boyd, Nicky Carr and Shar Carson. Again there would be many more that I just can't remember now - more bourbon issues.

Another low point for me was when the whole Army contingent were asked to leave Police College and were not allowed to attend the prize giving, despite cleaning up the majority of the trophies.

Team Management

Taffy, Pat Hokianga, Terry Hokianga, Willie Walker, Alky (Charlie Elkington), Hep TePuni, Phil Packer, Alex Whittaker, Sue Harrison, Nicky Hansen, Marion Kareko

Tournament Officials

Tui and Bill Smith, Ed Hardie, Black Dad (Charlie Elkington – some years later), John Eagar, Ronnie Gurney, Teina Scoon and Dale Tamehana

Inter-Club and Nationals

Many a Christmas and New Years or a week off in March was dedicated to softball. I always thought it was great that our holidays, playing softball in the sun, were paid for and no leave was needed. We were able to use our leave at other times in the year once softball was

over. Again the level of ball played stepped up another notch and we got to see the real names in softball play and we sometimes faced them, which was a real test for us.

Off the diamond, some of you will remember our bar game called “Suck and Blow”. This was played with much humour during one Nationals tournament in the Hutt Valley, which saw us playing up a bit in Trentham camp on New Year's eve.

My last tournament was Inter-Club at Rosedale park cut short on day 1 after breaking my ankle in a bad slide. I spent the next 6 days in Auckland hospital while the girls battled it out in Albany. I never went back out onto the diamond as a player after that, but enjoyed the next 12 years or so in the coaching role.

Sadly we lost a few people from my era along the way **‘Lost but not Forgotten’**



Poppy (Maree Popham)



Nam (Tony Namana)



Milo (Vila Milo)



Dale Tamehana



Lee Jones



Willy Walker

I think it's fair to say that softball played a major role in my military career and it was certainly a major highlight of my youth (and my more senior years too). I met some fantastic people playing softball. Whilst I'm not involved in the sport so much now, I still keep an eye on what's going on through the Army news and through my mates that are still there. Keep going ladies – fight to keep the sport alive in the Services.

Lastly, I just want to salute the many people who planned all the tournaments and tours. A hell of a lot of work went on behind the scenes where the Code Chairs of the time and their Tournament Committees worked tirelessly to put the tournaments together and make them the success that they all were.



A special thanks to the current Committee for really going all out and organising this reunion for us all. It's a great opportunity to get together and reminisce about the good old and bad old days.

Written by Chris “Mouse” Waterhouse

Waimarino days

When I moved to Waiouru the softball was pretty strong with a Waimarino Competition. There were teams from Ohakune, Raitahi and Taihape as well as Waiouru. I was actually selected for the Waimarino rep team and we had a game against the touring China Taipei team. I was actually lead off to my surprise and

managed to hit a home run through the field (open diamond). We did eventually lose the game 4 - 1, so I was pretty chuffed to score the only run.

Waiouru skin diamond

Due to the popularity of softball at the time, the then Chairman of the Waiouru United Club, Ross James, suggested we should build a skin diamond. Funding was requested and fund raising carried out. I obtained the plans for Maidstone Park from my old Totara Park mate, Stu Neshausen, and away we went. With assistance from the Engineer troop to dig out the turf, lay the matting and then spread the limestone, we were half way there. Sonny Hona, Grant Hohua and myself spent many an hour wiring the netting into place on the poles. The diamond had many years of use, including Regional and Services tournaments, however sadly the interest in softball waned and the fences were eventually moved to Burnham where they now reside on their skin diamond.

ATG finally win

Being posted to the Army Training Group, Waiouru, was challenging in relation to softball as there wasn't a strong softball presence there. A number of players ended up playing for The Braves in Wanganui, including Grant “Ho” Hohua, Grant “Puppy” Ryan and Mike “Hammer” Smith. That year, ATG fielded a strong team with “Ho” and big Tom Hutchinson doing the chucking. George Emile and “Mouse” attempted catching Tom who had loads of heat but not the best control. The final came down to Central and us (ATG), when George called time out and said, “I can't catch this guy any more he has busted my hand”. Checking George's hand it was badly swollen, so I threw myself into catching Tom. Then “Ho” took over on the mound to try and close out the game. It was a batter's game and ATG won 11-10 and I remember clearly the last out was “Puppy” Ryan grounding out to short with the throw

to 1st seeming to hang in the air. I watched almost in slow motion as the ball went into big Tom Hutchinson's glove on first base. My eyes went straight to the base to ensure he was on it and that was it game won, tournament champions. That would have to be the best feeling I have ever had as a player. I don't think the Central boys appreciated our choice of song at the party that night, being AC/DC for all those teams that were "Thunderstruck" by ATG.

Wainui Classic 1991

The Army men had a strong tournament and managed to make the play off against Hutt Valley Marist for third and fourth place. One incident comes to mind in the game. Rick Morgan tried one of his one handed running bunts with the ball going foul. Unfortunately, the Marist third base moved up close for the next pitch, to which Rick took a long handle swing and connected, catching the player flush on the nose and jaw. He proceeded to bleed profusely on the diamond before being taken to hospital. On Rick's next turn at bat from the dugout we had the cheek to tell third to move up. You could still see the red stain on the diamond and the replacement third base gave us a pained smile. This must have upset the opposition as we went on to win the game and finish third.

Police College Drama

It was the Inter-Services Tournament in Porirua and unfortunately also RNZEME Corps day during the tournament. Some of the EME boys got a little carried away that evening and let down one tyre on a number of cars (and the Navy bus). Although this may have seemed funny at the time, the Police Commandant took a dim view and so did Brigadier "Morrie" Dodson who subsequently banned both teams from the Police College (sorry Army ladies). We were allowed to continue playing in the tournament, however no Army personnel were

allowed to represent the Combined Services or attend the final night prize giving function. I think this proved the Army Men's Team's ultimate motivation as we faced Police in the final game. I used this as my motivational speech, and I think the collective opinion of all the players was to "show them". It was a close game with Daren Rea and Grant McCarroll to the fore. In the bottom of the seventh Army was leading by one run in a tight contest. Grant McCarroll was pitching a blinder, and with Police having a runner on second and two out he struck out the final batter. It was a surreal moment as Grant threw both hands in the air and the team erupted, swamping each other on the diamond. One of the best feelings I have had as coach. Job done, showed them "cops". That evening we had to celebrate the victory in the corridor of the Mezzines Army Centre until we had a few mates from Trentham drive us to a \$15 all you can drink bar in Wellington. I know Winnie Shanley attended the prize giving at the Police College that night and had trouble carrying back all the trophies that the Army men and women had won. When she entered the barrack corridor with our trophies in hand, well the place erupted once again with utter joy.

National Club Champs Division 3 Champions

We attended the 1996 Inter Club Champs in Christchurch with a reasonable team, which was boosted by some pick ups in Rod Reid (Loddy Leed) from the Police, Gavin Kotua from Air Force and Brian Hegney (Doon's team mate) from a local Christchurch club. To be fair, we did struggle at the tournament, but did manage to make the 3rd Division final against Richmond from Christchurch. During the tournament we faced Poneke Kilbirnie in Round Robin play. This was a reasonable game for us in the end as I put Mike TeHau on the mound. With his slow spinny stuff the PK batters struggled to really get hold of him. One inning Mike threw a straight ball right down the

middle and the batter just looked at it. Mike said, "Ohh you should have hit that one, you won't get too many of those". It was a bit of a laugh really and the boys were glad to get out of the game in five innings. To the final, and a certain Darren Rea and Grant McCarroll (who were playing for their club team United and not us) supported us for the first couple of innings as the more fancied Richmond team were ahead. They deserted us and we ended up turning the game around with homeruns from Roddy Reid, Rick Morgan, Mike Norris and Doon. The team was on fire and won the final (much to the surprise of Darren and Grant) 12 - 9. The next day Rick Morgan picked up the 3rd Division trophy and he was also selected for the New Zealand Colts team.

The Road Trip

The Army trials and training camp were held at Linton prior to the 1999 NZDF Inter-Services Tournament at Navy. The RNZAF let us down and we weren't able to move all of the two teams to Auckland, so a handful of unlucky souls had to travel in a hired Previa "people mover" along with all of the team gear bags squeezed in the back. I volunteered to drive and I was joined by the bourbon team; Darren

Rea, Grant McCarroll, Doon Groves and Puppy Ryan. Doon had recently returned from overseas and had 5 bottles of Jimmy (combat supplies) for the tournament. The trip was pretty uneventful until the end of the second bottle of bourbon, when the alcohol started taking effect. At one stage, I remember Puppy holding Darren's head saying "We're gong round a corner now, and straight ahead and now another corner", talking like a mother does to a baby and stroking his head, around and around. A truly classic moment. Things were more interesting at the welcome function as the boys were a bit under the weather and started heckling the speakers. We managed to survive unscathed though, but received a few stares here and there.

Round up

In 20+ years of involvement with Army softball, I have loved every minute of it. Army softball made me a better player and coach. I made friends with players and officials alike and will always cherish the memories of the tournaments attended. A number of stories haven't been told, but these will remain untold to protect the innocent (and the guilty).



AN AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE PERSPECTIVE

Written by Trevor Murphy

The Australian Defence Softball Association (ADSA) was formed in 1986 as the Combined Services Softball Association (CASSA), with the first championship tournament being held in 1987. Therefore, in comparison to New Zealand Army Softball the ADSA is relatively young. We are not yet twenty five years old. However, our forbearers' first encounter with our Kiwi brethren was in 1991, when we were merely youngsters and I recall sighting a plaque on the wall of the club at Philomel on my last visit to NZ. The following account of that first visit has been penned by CPO Mel Daggs (retired – she will kill me for saying that if she reads this).

1991 saw the Combined Australian Services Softball Association tour New Zealand for the first time. Accommodated at HMNZSPHILOMEL, the 10 day tour afforded the Australian women plenty of opportunity to travel and enjoy all the hospitality the Kiwis could offer. Unfortunately, at the time, a men's team could not be assembled.

Competing in the round robin tournament allowed us Aussies plenty of game time to hone our skills and work on our team cohesion against the NZ Army, Navy, Air Force and Police. It was also an opportunity to watch men compete in a service competition, something that we followed suit with shortly thereafter. Who said that the Kiwis could not teach us anything!

At the end of the round robin tournament, the Kiwis selected their squad to challenge

for the very first Trans Tasman trophy. While the specifics of the game and names are now long gone, the moment that stood out for me remains etched as clear as if it happened yesterday.

The Kiwis are fielding and they had a very good Army Pitcher on the plate. A hit to the outfield just behind third, third goes out to field, runner goes to three, catcher goes to three, pitcher heads to home plate, runner heads home, throw to home, its gonna be close, pitcher fields ball, runner slides, tag play, massive collision, ball rolls free, runner safe. Now while that was exciting enough, what happened next left my jaw on the ground and still fills me with awe when I think about it.

Players pick themselves up, pitcher is in obvious distress. It seems that in the collision she has dislocated her shoulder, her pitching shoulder. Coaches rush to her assistance, she brushes them aside, walks determinedly to the temporary back net and Mel Gibson style, slams her shoulder into the fence relocating her shoulder, walks back towards the pitcher's plate picking up the ball along the way, rolls her arm over a few times and proceeds to continue pitching. I mean, really, who can do that? You sure breed them tough in New Zealand..."

As Mel stated in her account, in those early days there was no men's team. In fact, in the beginning CASSA was strictly formed for women. However, policy changes across defence sport paved the way for men to play softball in the Australian Defence environment.

Frankly, for me, as an adolescent and even a young man, the closest I came to a Softball game was sniffing around the local ladies association of the Central Districts League in South Australia and attending the odd cabaret or dance with one of those ladies in tow. You see, I was a baseballer.

It was in 1991, when I became a commissioned officer in the Air Force, that I became involved in Softball. As a junior officer one is expected to accept a secondary appointment and, where possible, the preference is generally to become involved with a sport or hobby rather than be assigned burials officer or a duty that would become laborious. I am guessing similar protocols exist in the NZDF. As Baseball was not an active sport in the ADF and Softball was, I requested the position of OIC Air Force Softball Victoria.

With pending policy changes, this presented a great opportunity and we soon had men playing in most States and the competition was strong and furious. Over the next couple of years the women learned to accept us and we developed the camaraderie that both the Australian and New Zealand Defence Force personnel are known for.

Then in February 1994, somehow a Kiwi by the name M/ALM Rosco Patterson (RNZAF) got hold of my details and contacted me with a proposition for an RNZAF contingent to travel to Melbourne in 1995 and compete in our Victorian Inter-Service Competition. The first of many Trans Tasman softball adventures - 34 Kiwis arrived on the 26 February and departed on the 11 Mar 1995. I was lucky to be the host for that tour and while many of the faces and fun times come to mind, most of the names have slipped away. However, some names that I do remember from that first encounter are Gregor McKenzie, Graham Chard, Mike Thomas, Tui, PJ and Aircraftsman (now an Army Major) Clayton Willocks.

Sometimes it is difficult to maintain the momentum, and during the late 1990s any opportunity for an Australian return tour was missed due to a changing of the guard, postings and deployments.

However, in 2002 the initiative was taken to restore an interest in the Trans-Tasman Softball Challenge - and so started a new era. Since then, teams have enjoyed what is fast becoming an annual event with teams making the journey "across the ditch" to enjoy each others' company, a good Australian beer and plenty of sunshine, or the Kiwi alternative. I know our teams sincerely enjoy the camaraderie of our friends from across the Tasman.

"It seems that in the collision she has dislocated her shoulder, her pitching shoulder. Coaches rush to her assistance, she brushes them aside ..."

On every occasion there is something to remember but, when you've played ball as long as I have, games and the years all seem to flow together for me. However, one aspect that always causes an adrenalin rush, generates excitement and discussion is when the Haka is performed by the NZ teams. I have always enjoyed the pleasant stroll to the playing fields, whether that be at Woodbourne, Ohakea or Philomel.

In 2003 at Woodbourne, I often made late night visits to the SNCO bar to raid the drink machine just prior to closing time to ensure we had sufficient supplies to get through the night. And I couldn't forget the tours to the wineries and a leisurely boat cruise around the bay. From Ohakea in 2006, we took trips into and around Wellington and the Museum, and up to the midlands. From Philomel in 2008, we travelled across the bay to Auckland and

were lucky to catch the Christmas parade and share a few ales with the locals.

We have had some very exciting games throughout the years and even a little controversy in games played against Air Force, Army, Navy and Fire Services (Ohakea). While scores are not important (well, in Little League anyhow), our ladies teams have always fought out some very close games. I recall one ladies game that went for eleven innings in the test match and I am still unsure who won that one.



Above: An expression of the NZ Army and ADF Camaraderie at Woodbourne 2003.



Above: Jenny Mumm (NZ Army) at bat, Jenny Work (ADSA) catching and John "Santa" Hickman (NZ Air Force) umpiring at Ohakea in 2006.

Probably the most memorable game for me was the Trans-Tasman Cup match at Woodbourne when the game was tight with no score for the first 3 innings and only 9 batters from each team facing up.

The pitchers were Tony Chave for ADSA and Graham Chard for NZDF. In the fourth innings the game started to open up a little with both teams getting bat to ball. With one out, Grant "Fingers" McCarroll got what should have been a single to left field.

Unfortunately, the ball got past the fielder and with lightning speed Fingers saw his opportunity and raced around the diamond to score the first run of the game. This unsettled the ADSA boys and another error and a couple of poor choices allowed the NZDF to score again in the fifth innings.

Regaining some composure in the sixth and with nothing to lose but opportunities the ADSA boys put in a great fight back to score one run from consecutive safe hits. Unfortunately, those errors had cost us the Cup. For the ADSA men, that was probably the most competitive team we have fielded, not the most experienced team however...

"We have had some very exciting games throughout the years and even a little controversy ..."

On a personal note, many of you will recall I have been a player and coach and have enjoyed those aspects very much and hold some fond memories of my achievements.

However, more recently, I have taken to umpiring and, while I continue to strive to achieve the highest level, one of my proudest moments was last December at Philomel when Bill Smith presented me (an Aussie) with my NZ Umpire badge and stating I was welcome back to umpire in NZ anytime.

Now, on a regular basis games being played against each service and the Trans-Tasman Cup is contested almost annually, as displayed in the following:

2002	RNZ Air Force tour to RAAF Base Richmond, Sydney.
2003	ADSA tour to RNZAF Base Woodbourne.
2004	NZ Army tour to RAAF Base Richmond, Sydney.
2006	RNZ Air Force tour to RAAF Base Williams, Melbourne.
2006	ADSA tour to RNZAF Base Ohakea.
2007	NZ Army tour to Randwick Barracks, Sydney.
2008	RNZ Navy tour to RAAF Base Williams, Melbourne.
2008	ADSA tour to RNZ Naval Base Philomel.



Above: Bill Smith (right) presents Trevor Murphy (ADF) with the NZ Umpire Badge at the 2008 Inter-Services at Philomel.

Over the years I have been lucky to share the softball diamond with so many people, there are far too many people for me to remember them all. However, I would like to recall some of the Army characters and those that have helped maintain the momentum and these are Dean "Doon" Groves, Grant "Fingers" McCarroll, Trevor King, Wayne "Smally" Small, Te Uru Cribb (now an expat Kiwi living in Western Australia), Sue Harrison and Jenni

Below: The 2004 ADSA and NZ Army Men's Teams at Hawkesbury Park, Richmond, Sydney





Above: The 1991 Combined Australian Services Softball Association tour.

Mumm. All of these people in some small way have etched themselves in my memory – thank you to all who have shared part of their softball experiences with us Aussies.

If I may use the term loosely, with respect for those who have served before us, we ANZACs have always had very similar values, that have always drawn us together. And in closing I would like to express that it is the courage we display, our commitment to our team and the camaraderie and respect we afford our competitors that makes us who we are.

Play hard and with intensity, but also play with integrity and respect for others and you will always have fun and many friends.

Good luck to New Zealand Army Softball fraternity for the next sixty years.

Below: ADSA women's players at RNZAF Base Ohakea NZ in 2006.



Written by Peter Davis

Wing Commander and ADSA President

Congratulations to the New Zealand Army Softball Association on reaching a very significant milestone. A 60th Anniversary is an exceptional achievement in these times, particularly in Defence, where there is always constant pressure on cost cutting and activities like sports are usually considered the 'nice to haves' and are usually the first to go.

"The Australian Defence Softball Association's affiliation with the New Zealand Army Softball Association has been one of great friendship ..."

The Australian Defence Softball Association's affiliation with the New Zealand Army Softball Association has been one of great friendship and of course great rivalry on the diamond. On behalf of all members of the Australian Defence Softball Association, I extend congratulations to all members, past and present, of the New Zealand Army Softball Association and I wish you all the very best for many years to come.

I look forward to seeing you back in Australia in 2010 and trust that will you have a very memorable 60th Anniversary.

TOURING AUSTRALIA

Written by Chris Waterhouse

1999 The Almost Tour

I remember a lot of planning was put into the attempted first tour to OZ. Dale Tamihana was on the Army Softball Committee and Sue Harrison and others whose names I honestly can't remember. We had funding assistance approved from the Singapore Fund via the Army Sports Council.

We also had received our invitation to the Australian Defence Softball Association Tournament. I had spoken to the softball people in Australia, confirmed the dates, wrote the Administration Instruction and the souvenir apparel was ready to be ordered. We were all ready to go. Then the deployment to East Timor came along and scuppered the plans really. I am sure we could have still sent the two teams, but they would not have been our strongest line-ups and at the end of the day the Committee as a whole decided to postpone the plans. It was a sad day for us all; an anti climax would be an understatement. I am glad that eventually the tour did go ahead and well done to all those involved.

Written by Dean Pascoe

2004 The First Tour

The NZ Army Women's and Men's Softball Teams toured Australia for the first time 13 to 21 November 2004, competing in the 2004 ADSA Softball Championship at RAAF Base Richmond, Sydney. The NZ Army eams

participated in the tournament against ADF State teams (NSW, Northern Territory and Queensland), culminating in test matches against the ADF.

The contingent assembled at Trentham on the evening of 12 November, departing NZ for Australia in the early hours of 13 November. On arrival in Sydney, the contingent settled quickly into accommodation at Richmond and knocked out a couple of light training runs to acclimatise and brush off the cobwebs and to familiarise themselves with the tournament bar, which ran dry on the first night.



Above: The girls and the contingent arrive at Richmond.

All games were played at the Hawkesbury Softball Association Grounds at Bensons Lane, Richmond.

The Army men had two games on day one. First up was Northern Territory (NT) who was unceremoniously pounded by Army 23 - 0. The guys did the haka before the game and with the built up excitement of the tour, they were understandably fizzing.



Above: The 2004 ADSA v Army test match haka.

The second game was a closer affair against NSW, with the men winning 10 - 6. NSW were very good and looked like the team to watch. Day two saw another two games for the men. First up was Queensland (QLD), again the guys bats went to town and won the game 17 - 1. The second game was a similar result, beating NT 11 - 1. Day three saw the men play NSW and QLD. The NSW game was an extremely close fought affair, with the men scraping home 5 - 4 and keeping their unbeaten record intact. The second game against QLD proved an easier challenge where the men ran out the winners 14 - 2.

The following day was a rest day for the Army as the Australian State teams conducted their tournament finals games.

The next day was what Army were there for, to win the test match against the ADF team (Combined State Team). The men's team performed the haka and went right up to the ADF to show the challenge would be accepted.

As expected, the game was fierce with the lead changed hands throughout. Fortunately the men held on to beat the ADF men's team 11 - 6.

Due to a lack of numbers for the Aussie women's teams at the tournament, the Army

women's team only had two teams to play against for the week. The first day of play for the women saw the team playing a combined Northern Territory/Queensland game with Army winning 8 - 5, and then the NSW team in which Army lost 5 - 11. Jenni Mumm received a hard knock to the knee and spent the rest of the tournament with a beauty bruise, but as per usual she soldiered on and did all of the pitching. She was also joined by her mother and step father, who drove all the way down from Brisbane to see their girl. Having family around of one of the contingent members was a real boost to everyone.

The results for day two consisted of a win against the NT/QLD team 11 - 2 and a win over the NSW team 10 - 5. Day three saw the NSW team come out firing with a point to prove and they certainly did beating the women 12 - 6. The next game was again played against the NT/QLD team in which the Army won 6 - 4.

Off the diamond, the phrase "In the hole" became a nightly echo throughout the Kiwi barrack line, as the contingent and many of the Australian players participated in the ritual of climbing into a manhole in the barrack floor. Had anyone checked for other residents (insects, etc) before hopping into the confines of a very dark cavity – my guess is not. As it turns out, nobody was bitten, so all is well.

Below: Lee Jones in the hole.



Like the men, after a well earned rest day the women played the test match against the ADF team and yes the competition was tough and although the ladies gave it their absolute best, they lost to the ADF 4 - 2.

For the ladies, of particular note was the off the diamond antics with Dawn Boxer running a Pilates lesson in the middle of the diamond in her huge underpants and Jenni Mumm and her mint paddies.

With the exception of one player (TK) who sustained a broken arm, only minor injuries were sustained by the remainder of the contingent during any of the matches. This was due to the pre-game preparations by each team and the concerted efforts of the two team strappers.

The official dinner and presentation of the ADF Softball Championship was held in Windsor at the Windsor RSL Function Centre, and proved to be an enjoyable end to the week's work. Paddy's market and central Sydney also took a beating from the Kiwi contingent towards the tail end of the tour as everyone chilled and awaited their flights back to NZ.

The tour was funded by a combination of funding from the Singapore Fund, funding from individual camp and unit UPFs, sponsorship, fundraising and an individual levy from each of the tour participants. WO1 McCarroll and WO1 Small managed to secure sponsorship, which enabled the contingent to be outfitted with NZ Army polo shirts, embroidered caps, NZ Army backpacks, water bottles and t-shirts.

A special mention must be made of our Australian counterparts WGCDR Peter Davis (President of the ADSA), SQNLDR Trevor Murphy (Vice President of the ADSA), F/S Darren Whitford (Competition Coordinator) and SGT Ginny Morris. They kept regular communications with us and ensured that all arrangements and administrative support in Australia were arranged accordingly before our

arrival. The hospitality and friendship shown to us by the Australians participating in the tournament was overwhelming and very much appreciated.

"Sportsmanship on the field was mirrored off the field ..."

Overall, the 2004 NZ Army Softball tour to Australia was very successful. The game results are perhaps less important than the manner in which the contingent conducted themselves. Their tenacity, team spirit and sportsmanship on the field was mirrored off the field. Both teams worked together as units and displayed obvious pride in representing the NZ Army. Lasting friendships were made not only within the NZ Army, but also with our Australian counterparts. The contingent was a pleasure to manage and each member an ambassador for the NZ Army.

Written by Dean Groves, Sue Harrison and Dean Pascoe

2007 Second Time Around

The 2007 Australian Defence Force Softball Championships were held at the Randwick Barracks in Sydney, from 12 to 15 November, and for the second time in three years, the NZ Army was represented. The Army teams participated in the tournament against Australian Defence Force (ADF) State Teams (NSW, Victoria, Northern Territory and Queensland) culminating in test matches against the ADF.

On arrival in Sydney, the Army contingent settled into camp quickly with the warm and pleasant conditions to our liking. A couple of light training runs were held over the weekend before the tournaments first pitches were delivered on Monday morning.

The Army women had one game on day one, which was against a strong NSW team.



Above: Jenni in full flight.

Some early solid pitching from LCpl Jenni Mumm kept the opposition scoreless, but in the third inning errors cost the Army women dearly. NSW eventually showed their class by winning the game 6 - 1.

The Army men had two games on day one. First up was a game against Victoria with their second game against Queensland. Following the pre-game haka, which pushed the adrenaline levels through the roof, the Army men's team found the Victorian pitching to their liking by quickly putting on the pressure in the first inning. That forced their opponents into a change on the pitching mound with a part-timer coming into the game. "This sort of pitching can change a hitter's focus and see them trying too hard to hit the ball out of the park, but the guys maintained their discipline and piled on the runs", said coach SSgt Mike Smith. The final score was an impressive 31 - 3.

It was much of the same in the second game against Queensland. The men showed the form that won them the Inter-Services Tournament back in New Zealand just over a week earlier, running out comfortable winners over Queensland 26 - 2.

Day two saw the women's team face off against the Northern Territory before they could look to seek revenge over NSW in their second game of the day.

Against the Northern Territory, the women unleashed their bats and ran away with the game 18 - 0. The second game against NSW was a hitter's game with runs coming thick and fast, which kept the scorers busy. At the end of the game it was Army women who pulled one back over NSW, winning the game 20 - 11.

The men's team had one game on day two against the pre-tournament favourites NSW, a team they had tough games against on the 2004 tour. As anticipated, it was a good workout for the Army men. Both teams traded the lead under the Sydney heat, but some wayward NSW pitching late in the game put Army runners onto base. The Army hitters were able to hit their base runners into score resulting in a closely fought 5 - 2 Army victory.

Below: Codee Tumataiki.



The overall results of the games played against the state teams, were as follows:

Women's results

Lost vs NSW 1 - 6

Won vs Northern Territory 18 - 0

Won vs NSW 20 - 11

Won vs Northern Territory 8 - 1

Men's results

Won vs Victoria 31 - 3

Won vs QLD 26 - 2

Won vs NSW 5 - 2

Won vs Victoria 18 - 3

On Thursday 15 November, the Army and ADF teams competed at Randwick barracks in one off test matches for the Trans-Tasman Trophies. The trophies were established in 2002 when the Royal New Zealand Air Force and the ADF first played for them. The ADF teams are selected from the best players from each state team and are announced by the President of the Australian Defence Softball Association (ADSA) following the Inter-State Championship games.

In 2006, when the ADF competed in the NZDF Inter-Services Tournament at Ohakea, the Army women's team beat the ADF. The desire for a repeat in 2007 wasn't to be, as the experienced ADF team, playing on home turf, capitalised on Army errors and forged ahead to a final score of 9 - 2.

Coach Lyndah Pascoe said, "The unavailability of experienced softball players in 2007 provided a great opportunity for six new members to be selected into the team. We are going through a rebuilding phase and given the complexity of the game we were extremely proud of the results achieved by the team at this year's Inter-Services and on the tour".



Above: The ADF and Army test match.



Above: TC leading the Army haka.

Then came the men's test match. Before the first pitch, Te Uru Crib "TC" was given the honour of leading the haka, which also marked his final game for the Army.

The test match exploded into life as the first pitch of the game by Army was unceremoniously blasted for a monster home run by the ADF lead-off hitter. The ADF then strung a few hits together to manufacture another run to take an early 2 run lead. Army kept their composure by scoring four runs of their own to lead 4 - 2 after the first inning. The ADF then came back strongly to lead 5 - 4 going into the bottom of the second inning. It was then that the power of the Army batting line up came to the fore again, scoring five runs to lead 9 - 5 after two complete innings.

“A good series of performances by the men’s team, again going undefeated on Australian soil”

The ADF were held scoreless for the remainder of the game and some wayward pitching by the ADF combined with good contact hitting and discipline by the Army hitters saw them pile on the runs to win the test match convincingly 20 - 5. Overall, a good series of performances by the men’s team, again going undefeated on Australian soil.



Above: TK taking a big swing.

Below: The McCarroll’s.



Women’s test match

Lost vs ADF 2 - 9

Men’s test match

Won vs ADF 20 - 5

Off the diamond, for one of the nights during the tournament, the tour coordinator called for the contingent to get dressed into 1970s Punk theme. So, all members gathered safety pins, studded wrist bands and neck collars, punk rock t-shirts, a little makeup and lots of gel and went to the tournament bar which initially surprised a few of the Australians, but what do you expect – we are on tour.

The Australians organised a ‘Superheroes and Villians’ theme for the final night function. Many of the contingent members made full use of Paddys Market and Bondi Mall, where they found themselves some interesting costumes. Unfortunately, wearing full body costumes at night in the Sydney heat forced the smarter Superheroes to re-hydrate regularly.



Above: Superhero’s and Villians.

The tour also presented a final opportunity to farewell an Army Men’s Team member Mr Te Uru ‘TC’ Cribb, who had been a defence employee working in the Combined Mess at Burnham Camp. ‘TC’ had been a part of the Army men’s softball since 2001, and was always a prominent member of the team.

His playing ability saw TC in contention for the major individual tournament awards at the Inter-Services Tournament. Army Code Chairperson Warrant Officer Class One Grant McCarroll said, “TC loves playing softball for the Army. His commitment, loyalty and passion towards our team is infectious and when he dons “The Red Jersey”, he is an example to us all. He will be deeply missed from the team



Above: Te Uru Cribb (Centre).

line up. TC and his family venture offshore to take up residence in Perth in the New Year - We wish them well.”

The Army contingent members were able to apply to the Singapore Fund and Formation UPF committees and other agencies that assisted financially towards the tour. A special thanks was given to the ADSA Tournament coordinator Mrs Ginny Morris for her outstanding work and support towards our tour and the tournament.

The next tour to Australia for the Army is scheduled for 2010, but the ADSA have expressed an interest to invite all NZDF teams over to Australia in 2011 to help the ADSA celebrate their 25th Anniversary. This concept is exciting, as it will also double as the Inter-Services Tournament, the first time it will be held outside of New Zealand.

“His commitment, loyalty and passion towards our team is infectious ...”



MEMORIES FROM THE UNFORGETTABLE TOURS

THE 2004 TOUR

Written by Sue Harrison

The first year we toured Aussie and stayed at Richmond, the coach at the time (Alex), after a rather late night out on the town, woke the next morning in a real panic because she couldn't find her glasses and she is as blind as a bat without them. She was feeling really sorry for herself at this point (not sure why). She called out for my help and on entering her room I found the glasses where she had left them, on the window sill.

Bex Dymock trying to impersonate Spiderman and jimmying down the two storey accommodation block, so she could continue to party... after already consuming enough wine for the whole women's team. Also deciding that she could take a leak anywhere at anytime with no regard to who was watching ...lol ... and lastly having to test her escape and evasion techniques on the Aussie MPs when she was caught trying to get out of camp.

Paula Biddle may she rest in peace shopped until she dropped – she was always first off the bus and the last one on when it came to shopping. She ended up going home with another suitcase.

Dawn Boxer giving a Pilates lesson in her oh so attractive super large undies on the diamond at the conclusion of one of the games.

And lastly, the awesome, fantastic chilli bin full of all the left over duty free grog that we all sat

around drinking on our last night in Richmond, funnily enough no hangovers....ha ha.

Written by Grant McCarroll

Wayne Small (sometimes called WAL), Doon, Vinny and I were talking to two of the Aussie umpires at the tournament bar, trying to butter them up prior to the tournament starting. During our conversation, I lent over and asked them both, "How old do you think Smally is?". They looked at Smally a little bit and then one of them replied "53" This almost caused me to fall off my chair laughing. Smally on the other hand, gave a rather wry smile back. This estimation provided ammunition for further laughs at "WAL53's" expense (from myself) on many occasions in the years since.

Written by Dean Groves

On day two of the tournament, we played NSW and were fielding. One of their batters, during his swing, stepped back (I saw him step back) and as he swung the bat hit our catcher, Trevor "TK" King, on the forearm, which broke his arm. The batter, when questioned about what he did, seemed to be on another planet, dork! so I assumed he wasn't a regular softball or baseballer. No further action taken.

Anyway, this put TK out of the tournament, which was a real blow to the team at the time. However, the injury did not slow TK down off the diamond.

After we beat the ADF team to win the test match all the boys were extremely happy, having won all of our games and especially after the very tough game with the ADF boys. A few minutes after that game, TK (with a broken arm) and Ra Thompson picked up the large water container, filled with ice cold water and poured the contents over the victorious coach Smally's head (pictured below).



THE 2007 TOUR

Written by Sue Harrison

A team very similar to a bag of liquorice allsorts prepared themselves for the trip to Aussie. Some old heads who have been part of the NZ Army Softball team for many years, younger girls who have been involved for a couple of seasons and 5 new rookies.

Congregating from all over New Zealand, the team all arrived safely in Australia on Saturday the 10 November 2007 and travelled by bus to our temporary home for the next 8 days.

The accommodation was great and we quickly spread ourselves across our allocated rooms. The first port of call was the Mess to partake in a late lunch, this is where we got to meet our new best friend for the next 8 days, the Mess Manager (who was displaying his "not pleased to see us face"). The rest of the day was spent getting ourselves settled in to our new home and acclimatising to the heat. A number of the Australian State teams also arrived at the

barracks where we renewed old friendships and where new ones were made.

I mistakenly let it be known to the girls that I can't stand jelly, so throughout the tour jelly was always on the menu at the Mess and, to my disgust, they regularly tried to put it everywhere. Not happy.

Sunday started with a light training run to get the cobwebs out of the system. Nicky issued each member of the team with a small Kiwi that had to be on our person at all times (including in the shower). If caught without your Kiwi, your name would be added to the dob list and heinous tasks would be given to you to perform in very public arenas.

In the afternoon, we had made arrangements to be dropped in to the centre of Sydney for a little shopping expedition. The teams spread to the 4 winds, with some people wanting to sample the large array of different food stalls and shops, other descending in to the underground Sydney markets. After 5 hours of shopping, we all returned to the rendezvous point tired, satisfactorily plump and with many shopping bags hanging from our arms. The evening was spent watching fashion shows of all the shoes, dresses, shirts, jewellery and bits and bobs that the ladies had bought and watching Groover and Damien try to come to terms with the toy helicopters they had supposedly brought for their sons.

Monday was the ladies first game against a touch NSW team. Jenni's pitching kept their hitters quiet for most of the game, but the NSW hitting strength and Army errors handed NSW a 6 - 1 victory.

On Tuesday we had two games. The first was against a combined Northern Territory (NT)/Queensland (QLD) team, who we beat 18 - 0. The second game in the afternoon, presented an opportunity to reverse yesterdays lose to NSW. The game was a hitters game with home plate being crossed many times by both teams. But in the end, Army beat NSW 20 - 11. A good

day at the office from the team in what I would say were very trying times with the heat and so many inexperienced players in the team. Well done ladies.

On the way back to the room after the game, Lyndah nearly had a heart attack due to a small piece of black tubing that had been placed strategically in a tree by two members of the ladies team. This event set off an array of tit for tat activities during the Tour, and the purchase of a very realistic snake made for a number of entertaining screams at all hours of the night during our stay. The snake survived the Tour and managed to travel back to New Zealand unchallenged by the NZ Customs at the Christchurch Airport. Big black bugs and creepy crawlies found their way into various pairs of Lyndah's shoes, but payback is a woman

“The purchase of a very realistic snake made for a number of entertaining screams ...”

scorned and these reared their ugly heads at an event held in Burnham Camp a few months after the tour in someone's food (watch what you eat Bawdie).

Temperatures soared again, so after playing our game and watching the guys most of the team adjourned to the swimming pool to cool off. A game of touch in the pool and a bit of lazing around revitalised everyone for that night's event. The first of the social's in the bar where the theme was “Punk”, some great costumes and some very scary makeup jobs came out for this event. A great time was had by all, with some people drinking into the wee small hours of the morning.

Wednesday and we had no game, so this was an opportunity for us to support the men's team and rest some of those nagging injuries. Nicky and Dana were kept busy giving the ladies rub downs and working on those stubborn knots in Jenni Mumm's arm, and a

complete working over of Sue. Some of the team partook in a little more retail therapy and a trip to Coogie Beach.

Bawdie and Mata went for a walk down the street and managed to locate a great coffee shop, which, according to them, provided “orgasmic coffees”. Of course all of us wanted a cup brought back.

The entertainment value of Nicky and Dana had already proven itself on the sideline during the Services, but they excelled during this tour. Nicky and Dana acquired some rather lovely sunhats from the markets complete with corks, which they wore to the games, along with colourful socks, and as many noise making pieces of equipment that they could get their hands on. The team did a quick collection at the end of the tour for them both as their services in the strapping, rub down and entertainment area were unbelievable (they both brought neck cushions for the trip home).

Thursday was the last game of the Tournament against the ADF in which they won 9 - 2.

The social event for Thursday was your favourite “Superhero”. The costumes were amazing and even “Dad” (Johnny Eagar), complete with very bad sunburn, got into the swing of things, coming along wearing a Chewbacca mask.

On one of the last nights, I became Jenni's personal bodyguard when a visiting Aussie cricketer tried to jump into bed with her in the middle of the night and Sue was sleeping down below. Sue jumped up and chased him down the corridor telling him to something off (a curse) and not come back.

Poor Goose, being confronted in his own room by a drunk and half dressed “sheila” who was lost and took one look at Goose and started screaming the barracks down. The poor guy ran out of his room saying, “I didn't touch her I swear!”

I recall the great kidnapping saga resulting in a headless Kiwi, with emergency surgery being conducted to re-attach his head. Ransom notes for personal items meant a fun time was had by all.

Final dob sessions were held, Kirsty Kohere starred in this event, with many lap dances being given to a number of people from across all the teams at the Tournament. A very emotional farewell for “TC” was given by both the women and men's teams, and he was presented with his Army Softball shirt with his number 15 on the back.

Great music, great company and a great night was had by all. Some of us ended up at a bar in Coogie Beach and some of the younger prettier bodies ended up skinny dipping in the sea in the wee small hours.

Friday and Saturday were farewells and clean up for many of the other teams. For us it was chill out, more retail therapy, trips on the Manly ferry, a group lunch at a street side café, cocktails and wonderful photo opportunities

with one of Australia's most attractive men. I'm sure there were a few of us who wished that we were 20 years younger.

“Great music, great company and a great night was had by all. Some of us ended up at a bar in Coogie Beach and some of the younger prettier bodies ended up skinny dipping in the sea ...”

Holly and our little Fi getting plastered on the final night chilli bin session, their room was a bomb site in the morning with nothing packed and nothing done. In fact, the team had to wake them up to catch the transport and also had to shove all of their belongings into suitcases and bags.

Sunday 18th November pack up, cleaning and travel back to the airport for our return trip home.



THE UMPIRE'S CALL

Written by Dean Groves

Softball is a contest between two teams, but the main battle is between the batter and his adversary, the pitcher. A cat and mouse game usually unfolds where the pitcher is trying to get the batter to swing at pitches just off the plate. If the pitcher can make the batter swing at balls, then the pitcher is deemed in control and is generally having a great game.

This contest however, cannot be what it is without the influence of the umpire (the person crouching behind the catcher), who calls and controls the flow of the game. They are expected to be perfect from the first pitch to the last; there is no tolerance for mistakes, which puts a lot of pressure on being an umpire. It cannot be easy when they are learning their trade, especially with all of the so called “experts” out there in the game of softball. You will find it hard to not see a player or official or parent having some sort of confrontation with the match official during a softball game. I guess it comes with the territory.

Below: Dave Workman and Glen Nelapa.



Above: Umpires at the 1975 Inter-Services.

There are three key aspects that help make a good softball umpire, they are:

- ▶ knowing the rules verbatim on the spot,
- ▶ being a self confident person,
- ▶ having a genuine love for the game.

Yes, most of you are saying there is a fourth – “good eye sight”. Well, to answer that, if an umpire arrives on time, at the correct ball park and diamond, then that cancels that requirement out.

On a serious note, the New Zealand Defence Force softball family have for many years been blessed with umpiring support at all of its tournaments, whether we are playing in the Far North or way down South. We must not over look the superb support we receive from the local association umpires who answer the call and turn up at our tournaments year after year.

The umpire calls and controls the flow of the game ...

The following is written by Phil Packer

Umpires that I am aware of over the years were; John Eagar, John Holley, Dick Smith, Ian Gernhofer, Yogi Hansen, Charlie Elkington, Ed Hardie, Alex Whittaker and myself.

We used to get local association support from umpires wherever the tournaments were being held, which was great, considering in the early years i.e 1960s to 1980s, there were usually four Region or Service teams in both



Above: John Eagar

men’s and women’s grades represented at the tournaments, which made for a lot of games to be staffed over the three days of tournament play.

You asked me for any stories. Well there should never be funny stories about umpires as they can always bite you in the bum! But anyway, John Holley was definitely blind and was always the first night recipient at any regional or services tournament, of the “white cane”. He could never understand why he got this nickname so regularly!

The following is written by Andrew Chambers

Everybody knows that softball requires the up most discipline and that is always on display when the NZ Army men’s team is on the diamond... yeah right.

Sometimes, and I must say only sometimes, things do get a bit tense for the umpires when you have the likes of Grant McCarrol, Darren Rea, Clayton Willocks and Wayne Small, who have all represented our National team, in the game. They all have the knowledge that will test any umpire and will use that knowledge

Below: Umpires and Scorers at Fraser Park 2007



and experience to their advantage and signal to players like me, and a lot of other players, that the task of umpiring is not an easy one.

When Grant is out there on the mound pitching his guts out and, in his eyes, clipping the corners of home plate with his pitches and not getting the desired calls (strikes). That is when you tend to see the hands on hips from Grant, which has become famous in Army softball circles as “tea potting”.

“Darren then pitched the egg for a low rise right through the strike zone and into Vinny’s glove ...”

Now how could you trust this man? The things that this fella (Darren Rea) got up to behind the scenes in the dugout would be a whole book in itself. His usual ritual would involve tenderizing the brand new match ball (commonly known as ball tampering) taking the shin of the new leather by scuffing it on concrete or hitting the ball with a bat a number of times. He would finish off this ritual with a generous application of CRC Belt Grip that would be sprayed onto the ball. This process gave him a better grip on the ball resulting in greater spin (movement). He applied so much of the sticky belt grip to the ball that when it was occasionally hit into the outfield and rolled along the grass, the ball would come back into the infield all covered in grass that had stuck to the very sticky ball. This sort of the highly illegal activity went undetected by the umpires for years.

One story that will always stick with me involving an umpire happened at the 1994 Inter-Regional Tournament at Colquhoun Park, Palmerston North.

Darren had the honour of starting the tournament with the first pitch of the game. It was a typical fine and sunny afternoon. Darren was doing the pitching and Vinny Flynn was catching. I forget who the batter was, but I do

remember I was making a rare appearance, all but a brief one, at shortstop. The home plate umpire was WO2 “Mac” McClay.

We had the normal warm up pitches and throw around and everything seemed normal. Then, just before Darren was about to let rip, he turned to me briefly and gave me a wink. What happened next was a real crack up; Darren had brought onto the mound a hard boiled egg from out of the bulk lunch box. Darren then pitched the egg for a low rise right through the strike zone and into Vinny’s glove. The egg didn’t crack!



Above: Charlie Elkington and Eddie Chadwick at Burnham.

There was much laughter from everyone present, especially when Vinnie then threw the egg out of the diamond, over the surrounding fencing, where it hit one of the Southern ladies square on the head. After the tears of laughter from all of the eye witnesses had stopped, Darren then asked the umpire “Whats the call?”. The umpire called it a “strike”, which set everyone off again laughing. A classic softball moment that is rarely mentioned, but is now preserved in the journal!

Thanks “Blues”

FROM THE SCORER’S SCOREBOOK

In softball, if you want to know how you are playing, don’t ask your team mates. They won’t know, go and see the scorers. They are the people who sit quietly behind home plate, tucked into a small desk with a score book and a few different coloured pens. When a heated or contentious situation erupts during play, once the dust settles, it is usually the scorer who is consulted to see where the game was at during the time of the disruption.

The scorers are either wrapped up in blankets and beanie when it is cold or seen juggling an umbrella to keep the harsh sun off them or grasping the desk with all their might while trying to stop their precious scorebook from ending up on diamond number 11 in high wind gusts.

Yes, a special breed of softball enthusiast, but they are the ones who we all come to really enjoy having around (unless you have a zero batting average). Buying them a few drinks however, can sometimes move your batting average out of single digits!

Like the umpires, the Army and Defence softballers have had a fantastic extended family of male and female scorers who again and again, keep appearing at our tournaments for 3 days of softball competition and if you’re lucky, they are with us socialising.

Though to be fair, they are the ones continually behind the scenes, in their barrack rooms, frantically checking eachother’s work to keep the tournament results and multitude of individual statistics 100% correct – because

that is their work ethic. The only time you will ever hear them groan or moan is when the ink to their pen runs dry during a game.

Literally, since softball first started, there has been a scorer there to keep a record of what happened.

Unfortunately, as mentioned earlier, the Army has not kept the score sheets to all of the past games; therefore, there are no tournament results or individual statistics to view. The only statistics available, are the ones that our ex members can recall, and more often than not, those memories are of tournament deciding victories or defeats.

Today, our scorers are called upon, to rally the troops (the scorer’s fraternity) and turn up to a Defence Force tournament somewhere in New Zealand with the compliment of scorers that they need to get the job done.

The New Zealand Defence Force Softball family are fortunate enough to call on past and present Service personnel and or local association statisticians who assist in the general conduct of our tournaments.

“The only time you will ever hear them groan or moan is when the ink to their pen runs dry during a game ...”

The Army Sports Committee and code committee is extremely grateful for the continued support it receives from the statisticians.



Above: Scorers and Umpires at the 1993 Inter-Regional Tournament at the Police College.

DALE MAREE TAMEHANA

Written by Carol Lyttle

Dale passed away Tuesday 28th May 2002.

Dale's passion for Softball began as a player in Christchurch approximately 35 years ago. She went on to represent Canterbury being selected in the Canterbury B team.

Dale then moved on going to Singapore during the mid 1970s where she became a scorer for the New Zealand Force South East Asia softball and slow pitch teams. Not being a player anymore, the next best thing was to be a team scorer, which she did for the Army team. Thus beginning her association with Army and Services Softball.

When Dale returned to New Zealand she continued on with her scoring. Her brother Ray was selected in the New Zealand Men's team, which was travelling overseas. When she was farewelling him she saw the team scorer. She said one day I will do that and she set herself goals to achieve it. And she did.

She obtained her New Zealand badge, but that was not enough for Dale. More goals were set. New Zealand team scorer was next. She also accomplished that, being selected as team scorer for both the New Zealand Men's and Women's teams on various overseas trips. Still more goals were set as Dale strived for the top, and in 1997 Dale was elected New Zealand Chief Scorer. Scoring in New Zealand improved immensely when Dale took command. She saw to it that scorers got the recognition they deserve.

Below: Dale in the scorer's caravan at Woodbounre 1998.



The year 2000 was Dale's best year. She travelled to South Africa with the Black Sox team where they won the World Series. Next Dale was awarded New Zealand Maori Sports Administrator of the Year. She was selected as one of only 4 scorers in the World to score at the Olympics in Sydney. In recognition of her skills she was selected to score the Olympic final. A great year for Dale and one that was truly deserved.

Along the way Dale and her family moved to Palmerston North. She was involved in Manawatu Softball being on the Council and was also a member of the Colquhoun Park Sports Association. She was Manawatu's Chief Scorer for many years. Administrator of the Year was another of Dale's achievements.

Also during her time in Palmerston North was Dale's other love and that was of Army and Services Softball. She was instrumental in seeing that the tournaments were organised and fully staffed with Umpires and Scorers, as well as multiple other tasks. She just loved these tournaments.

In 1992 Dale became on Evergreen – selected in the Manawatu women's Evergreen Softball team. She looked forward to attending National Tournaments every year. Dale especially liked going to Evergreens as she didn't have to organise anything. She could just go along, relax and enjoy herself. That she did with great vitality. Evergreens play hard during the day and play even harder at night. Dale was the spokesperson when needed and she was the front person in team talent quest items too. Dale was always there for advice. She always seemed to have time for everyone. Her Evergreen team name was "Beep Beep", because when she ran those bases her little legs would be going so fast she looked like the "Road Runner" – hence the name "Beep Beep".

You only pass this way once in life, and we are extremely privileged that Dale passed our way.

MY MAGICAL TIME WITH DALE

Written by Derryn Morgan

Where does one begin to describe this wonderful experience? Firstly I must inform those who didn't know that Dale was my mentor for Manawatu Softball as well as being my boss while I was employed by Defence as a civilian caterer.

She was an amazingly talented scorer, so calm and patient as a teacher, and I will always be grateful for what she taught me over this time. As a Manawatu and New Zealand Scorer I was first approached by Dale to score at an Inter-Regional Tournament at Fort Dorset 1989, thus began my teaming up with this talented lady from 1989 to 2001. Time off work on full pay, who wouldn't jump at that (just kidding).

Reunited friendships, idle chatter and lots of laughter seemed to be the order of the first night at these Tournaments as well as the business of handing out the tournament draws to the coaches of the teams and the welcome ceremony.

"She was an amazingly talented scorer, so calm and patient as a teacher ..."

Crazy theme nights seemed to be the norm and everyone had so much fun. I'll have to admit my favourite time was the final night when all the players came to the trophy ceremony dressed in their blazers and dress greys. Very impressive. Of course they couldn't wait to change and get into comfortable gears for the partying that was to follow.

I remember having tea one night when there was a commotion and everyone was rushing to the TV lounge, "What's happening" I said. Oh, came a reply from someone, "Norrie is going to be on TV!". So as you can imagine there was a mad dash from Dale and myself to see this. There he was, Mike Norris ("Norrie") on Blind

Date the dating show. Sadly, he didn't win, but a little birdie informed us he did secure a date with one of them. "Go Norrie" HaHa!

Of course we must not forget why we were all there, Softball - Yah! There were some great games to watch as well as score, whether I was balancing an umbrella to keep the rain off my scorebook or to protect me from the heat of the sun, I loved every minute of my time at these tournaments and the deep friendship I developed with Dale.

I remember my friend Carolyn Lyttle joining us at an Inter-Regional Tournament at Waiouru and the last night party being held at the Oasis Hotel. Not usually one to sing, must have had one lemonade to many? The three of us became known as "the Jandal Sisters". And then there was Dale, while everyone was socializing, her work was still going on in her little room, there were score sheets to check and stats to be done.

Below: Scorers and Umpires at the 1989 Inter-Regionals at Fort Dorset.



Nothing fazed her. She was a true professional, a wonderful friend full of life, with so many ideas she wanted to put in place as NZ Chief Scorer. Sadly it wasn't to be. You lived life to the full Dale as you wanted and I shall be ever in your debt for the opportunity to have shared these magical times with you.

You were one in a million.

A sample of Dale Tamehana's softball achievements

- ▶ NZ Men's Team Scorer (USA and North American tour June-July 1994).
- ▶ NZ Women's Team Scorer (Europe & USA tour, June-July 1997).
- ▶ 1997 Superball Classic International in Columbus, Georgia.
- ▶ Former Manawatu Representative Team Scorer and Manawatu Chief Scorer.

- ▶ 1997 Manawatu Sports Official of the Year.
- ▶ Tournament Chief Scorer (1998 South Pacific Classic, Christchurch)
- ▶ NZ Team Scorer (1998 Women's World Championships, Japan).
- ▶ Official Scorer for the NZ vs International Teams test matches held within NZ, Japan, USA, Canada, Australia, Netherlands and Chinese Taipei over the past few years.
- ▶ National Men's and Women's Provincial & Inter-Club Tournament Chief Scorer, Statistician and/or Official Scorer.
- ▶ Softball NZ's only statistician at the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games.
- ▶ 2000 Maori Sports Administrator of the Year.
- ▶ NZDF Statistician/Scorer and NZ Scorer 1981 to 2002.
- ▶ NZ Chief Scorer 1997 to 2002.

PERSONAL MEMORIES FROM OUR SCORERS

Written by Teina Scoon

I first became involved with Regional Softball in 1979 at Linton. Since then, I have seen a large number of players participate at all levels with many of them going on to represent Army at Services and play at National tournaments.

It is sad that regional's and service's softball has changed so much from the unique rough style and approach that made the game so enjoyable to watch. Team spirit and camaraderie was at its best during these tournaments.

My early days of scoring and involvement were shared with Anne Packer, Dale Tamehana, Ellie Te Ringa, and of course Willy Walker.

However, for the majority of the time it was

just Dale and I. We would go to the diamond, score the game and do the stats. Collation of the daily stats was a task we fine-tuned so they were ready by 1900 hours for presentations. The final day saw the stats complete about 15 minutes after the final game. Technology has replaced the score book with the PDA.

As we gained experience, we looked for suitable candidates from within the Services to impart our knowledge and passion for scoring softball to. We found Albie from Army and Lenny from Navy.

I have some wonderful memories that I would like to share.

There were occasions when homes close to tournament venues lost flowers from their front gardens. I had to read my paper quickly so the pages could be used to wrap the flowers that were then given to the tournament scorers. I loved these.

I recall being at a tournament at Hopu Hopu. We all gathered in a double bunk room to watch an early morning All Blacks game around a portable TV. The smart (and fast) ones got there early and we had the steak and eggs before the others arrived. Thank you Roy and Charlie.

Still at Hopu Hopu; a warning was given to one of our scorers, "Hey Ruth, be careful, the ball may hit your toes," as she sat on the ground behind the net with her feet resting against it. A few balls later, "ouch" was followed by some very colourful words!!! Guess who never rested their bare feet against the backstop again?

An umpire came into the Mess for dinner during a tournament in Wanganui. He looked at people eating their pudding and remarked "hmmm that looks nice." He dished up his food and ate it. The very amused diners waited until he had almost finished and said "umm Robbie, you just ate cauliflower and white sauce with jelly and ice cream."

Still at Wanganui, I was scoring a game between ATG and 2TFR and thought “gee I can hear a guitar and someone singing.” I looked up to see a 1TFR player in softball uniform, singing and playing while making his grand entrance by parachute.

Then there was the ladies selector who kept annoying the scorer for a highlighter. The scorer called “time out” and asked for someone to colour in the spots while she went across to the shops and get a highlighter for the selector; the selector was a dam nuisance and it wasn’t Dale.

At Papakura, the Grand Dob Master, Tom Manahi fined an umpire \$20.00 on two charges. It was for going to the ablutions and getting lost on his way back to his barracks. He somehow found his way to the front gate in his singlet and jockeys. When asked by the guards which barracks he was in he indicated the women’s barracks.

Why two charges? He tried it twice!

Why \$20.00? Robbie had just won \$100 in the team raffle.

Milo. A women’s game was in progress at Porirua Park, Army vs Navy. The Army Pitcher was tiring so Coach Terry Hokianga asked his team, “Who can pitch.” Vila “Milo” put up her hand and said “I can coach.” Coach Hokianga made the appropriate changes with the umpire and scorer.

“The songs that Army teams sang were very memorable. They gave us a sense of belonging ...”

The first pitch thrown was called an “illegal pitch” by the Base Umpire. The coach spoke to Milo who says “Yep I got it this time.”

Second pitch; “illegal pitch” called the Base Umpire. The coach says “Milo!” who replied



Above: 1991 Inter-Service Softball Tournament Officials enjoy a rest after the days play at Ngataranga.

“don’t panic Coach, I can fix this time.”

Third pitch; “illegal pitch” called the Base Umpire. Milo says “I really got it this time coach.”

Fourth pitch; again the Base Umpire called “illegal pitch.”

The coach calls “time” and asks “Milo have you pitched before?” “No Coach, but Allie makes it look easy.” (Milo’s position was catcher). Rest in Peace Milo.

The songs that Army teams sang were very memorable. They gave us a sense of belonging. I have two favourites. The first was Rick Kingi (Shaft) with the Army contingent at Ngataranga singing to the tune of Dean Martin’s ‘Memories are made of this.’ Sadly the official photos taken at that tournament of the contingent were accidentally destroyed.

The other song was Sunshine Mountain with Terry Hokianga and the ladies. It was absolutely awesome, even if the mountain was made from tables and chairs. Ha ha.

On our way to an Inter-services tournament, the Army Women’s Team Manager was delegated to be the ‘chief pusher’ of the Army Scorer in her wheel chair. On more than one occasion, she ‘accidentally’ tipped her out of her wheelchair at Papakura. A costly few days wasn’t it Winnie?

The 1994 Army women’s team competed in the Inter-Club tournament at Rosedale Park and we were playing a game against Otago. The war in Iraq was a happening thing. Army had runners on two and three and the Otago pitcher put the next pitch down. The ball made contact with the bat and landed in fair territory. At the same time, a call was heard “in coming!” Immediately, all of the Army players (including the batter) dropped to the ground. The Otago team was astonished; they did not know what was going on. “Cease fire” was then given; the batter got up and ran to first base. Meanwhile, the ball was still in play and right in front of the pitcher who was still working out what was going on. She picked up the ball and made a play at first base. “Safe at one!” called the umpire. At the same time, the Army runner on third made her way to home safely while the runner on second stood there thinking “oops, was I supposed to run?” The Otago team appealed the play but lost. Ha ha.

Below: 2006/07 Inter-Regional Tournament Umpires and scorers.



Poppy was our driver for that tournament and we appreciated her support. Rest well Poppy.

For our friends who are now battling a 1000 with the angels (and Dale keeping score), rest well.

We celebrate softballers past and present. Thanks for the memories.

“We celebrate softballers past and present. Thanks for the memories ...”

Below: 2007/08 Inter-Regional Tournament Umpires and scorers.



PRIDE IN THE “RED JERSEY”

Written by Dean Groves

Army softball team uniforms have come a long way since the late 1950s and early 1960s.

There are stories that some Inter-District uniforms had the patch pockets removed from the rear so that the holes and tears in the knees could be covered.

At one stage, the Army softball team wore a uniform that was shared with other sports teams. It is good to know we have moved on from those days.

At the completion of the Summer Sports Tournaments in the early 1960s, the Army softball selectors would announce the Army team who would play fixtures against either a local association club team or the Provincial A or B team. These games were played at the camp or at a ballpark in the city.

During this period, Army softball did not have a designated representative uniform. But, having

Below: 1961/62 Army Men's Softball Team.



completed the Inter-District competition, there were District uniforms at their disposal, which were used.

Army wore a chosen District's jersey and in the early part of the 1960s, it was common to acquire a pair of cook's (chef's) "whites" to wear as softball knickers.



Above: 1962 Army Women's Team using the CMD uniform.

The 1962 Army women's and men's teams (pictured) are wearing the CMD team jerseys and cooks whites for their games against Canterbury B at English Park, Christchurch.

In 1964, the first uniforms for both Army teams were provided by the Army Welfare Service (AWS). It is not known who designed the uniform, but in those days wool was a popular material to use. The jerseys looked smart, but were rather hot because of the wool.



Above: 1964/65 The first Army Softball Team uniform.

In 1967, the Army uniform (pictured below) was replaced by a uniform arranged through Don Brewer (Police and Combined Services) from Wanganui. The colours were maroon knickerbockers and jerseys with white trim. The socks were the Army rugby teams and were made of wool. There were no warm up jackets or caps available either.

Below: 1967 Army uniform.



One of the players in the team (John Eagar) recalls "the uniforms were really nice, dynamite" he said, "but the wool fabric was too much, we all sweated profusely in them, they were a killer".

John also recalls that the tops were not solely softball's, as they were also used by Army hockey and one other sport. The uniform, had players wearing a t-shirt underneath as the material gave them a rash. However, they did look good when they were new.

Most of the jerseys back in the 1960s were predominantly maroon in colour. There is another story that has come to hand during the production of this journal of an Army women's team uniform that came a cropper.

The story goes, that the uniform had been collected after a day's play at the Inter-Services Tournament at Philomel, where someone decided to dunk the entire teams' uniforms into the pool (next to Cruiser Block barracks). The end result was that the chlorine caused the red in the uniforms to run, which turned parts of the uniform pink. This obviously did not go down well at all with the players, but as you can imagine, it was humorous to the other service teams.

At the Rothmans National Championships in 1968, Army wore a white jersey with a maroon trim around the neck and down the front. The knickerbockers were also white – great for grass stains. Short white socks were worn over a pair of rugby socks to replicate sockettes. It is believed that sockettes were available in New Zealand at the time, but the Army hierarchy did not purchase them for softball. According to Des Hammond (pictured below left) this jersey was only worn the once.



In 1969, the Army uniform still had the heavy weighted maroon jerseys, but changed to white knickerbockers.



Above: 1970/71 Army Men's Team.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s the Army continued with the maroon jersey and chopped and changed with maroon and or white knickerbockers.

In 1973, the Army teams received a new uniform (pictured below) that was made out of a lighter material, which was more comfortable for the players. The predominant colour was red, with blue sleeves, team name and numbers.

Below: 1973/74 Army women's softball team.



It is believed that around the late 1970s, Army's uniform was changed again. This version was made by Adidas and had a predominantly white look about it. The sleeves were red with blue Adidas trimming. There were also stirrups which made their first appearance in an Army uniform. This uniform would be worn for a few seasons (pictured below).



Above: 1981 Army Women's Team uniform.

In the early 1980s, the next uniform to be worn by Army was again made by Adidas, and this time it returned to a predominantly red look, with white sleeves and blue numbering. From all reports, this uniform was comfortable and was worn with pride.

Below: 1982/83 Army Men's Softball Team.



“the uniform was comfortable and was worn with pride ...”

In 1986, the uniform switched back to white, with red sleeves and undershirt and blue lettering and numbers. It is not known if this was the first Army team to have worn hats. The men's and women's uniform were not the same, the subtle differences can be seen below.



Above and below: 1987/88 Army uniform.



In 1990, both Army teams received new uniforms, which may have been because both teams won the Inter-Services in 1989. This time would see a change to grey knickerbockers.

The jerseys remained similar to the previous, including the team name lettering and numbers. The players had no problems with the uniforms according to feedback received.



Above: 1990 Army uniform.

In 1998, at the Inter-Service Tournament at Woodbourne, both Army teams received their new playing jerseys (pictured below).



Unfortunately, at the time of the tournament, the knickerbockers were not finished. So, both teams completed the tournament in new jerseys and the old knickerbockers. But, winning the tournament soon took their minds off no new pants. It is believed that this uniform was designed by Darren Rea.

Following the tournament, the men's team embarked on a tour of the South Island (Christchurch to South Canterbury), complete with the new knickerbockers.

By 2001, the women's team decided to part with knickerbockers and tried shorts. The trend in the women's game around this period was changing to shorts and, for the Army women, their knickerbockers were rather hot at times and didn't breath all that well. The shorts looked really good with their uniform, but one thing



Above: 2002/03 Army Womens uniform.

shorts didn't help with was sliding, as many of the side would sport a graze here and there. But, in the words of Jenni Mumm, "They had best learn how to slide or harden up".

During the tenure of the current uniform there were battles to get large knickerbockers for a few of the men's player (Damian, Ra Thompson and Big Joe) who were all big guys. It didn't

help that softball knickerbockers tend to shrink slightly each year, particularly after going through the tumble drier. The poor guys resembled ballet dancers when strutting around the diamond.

Another battle fought during that period was trying to get fitted hats. Once again, Damian had problems getting the supplied cap to fit on his head, which did resemble a skull cap worn by many Jewish men (known as a yarmulke, kippah or kappel).

Many attempts were made to get a uniform that Damian wasn't afraid to wear. Sorry Mate, I did try.

In 2007, the Army Sports Committee indicated to Army Softball that the uniforms would be replaced in 2008. The current uniform, particularly the playing jersey, had been in place since 1998 (10 years) due to its comfort and smart design. So, the pressure was on for softball to design a uniform that was comfortable, durable and would ensure that Army softball teams would continue to look smarter on the diamond than any other service teams. A small group of senior men's and women's team players took up the challenge of designing the new suit of armour. They began by looking at what worked well with the current uniform and what didn't and put those ideas "onto the table". Particular attention was made to the probability of playing in the uniform in both hot and cold temperatures in New Zealand and the extreme heat and humid conditions in Australia while on tour.

The uniform was also required to include the official New Zealand Army colours which are red, black and white. One of the givens was that the new playing jersey would be red as this is seen to be Army's colour. It would also carry on the growing tradition of pride when an Army softball player is given their "Red Jersey" to wear. Many hours were spent playing around with lettering and number fonts and sizes to

see what would suit the red fabric, a durable mesh was chosen. Not so easy to decide on was the knickerbocker colour. For a number of years softball has had grey knickerbockers, so there were some reservations, for good reason, when the Army Sports Committee asked softball to consider changing to black. There are very few softball or baseball teams in New Zealand and abroad that have black knickerbockers. When a general consensus on colour was reached, the internet came in handy as a number of companies have uniform design programmes on their websites. Once the quotes were submitted, the Army Sports Committee agreed to the purchase of the new uniforms from a company in America.

In November 2008, the Army teams stepped onto the diamonds at Ngataranga Sports

Below and Right: The 2008 Army Men's and Women's Teams.



fields at Philomel wearing their new uniforms (pictured below), which immediately turned heads. A number of favourable comments came from the other services, which backed up the team's liking for the new uniforms.

The current uniform was blessed with tournament wins to both Army teams – may it continue!



ARMY SOFTBALL ASSISTING OTHER AGENCIES

Written by Grant McCarroll

For many years Military establishments across the country have been used to support national sports teams as they have prepared to compete and do battle with other nations in their chosen code on the international stage. High profile New Zealand sports teams such as the All Blacks, the Silver Ferns and the Black Sticks at some stage or another have held training camps at military establishments in an attempt to create a military environment to give them that hardened edge required to win on the international stage.

In May 1998, I was appointed Manager of the World Champion Black Sox. I was working as a Physical Training Instructor (PTI) at the Trentham Army Camp at the time. I quickly established a rapport and close working relationship with one of New Zealand's most successful coaches in any sport, the Head Coach of the Black Sox Don Tricker. I was quick to highlight to Don the facilities, resources and environment of an Army Camp were conducive to what the Black Sox required to build a World Championship winning team.

Throughout the build up to the 2000 World Championship in South Africa, all of the Black Sox training camps were held at either Trentham or Waiouru.

In an interview with Murray Decker just prior to departing for South Africa, Don was asked, "Why have you conducted all your build up training

camps at Army Military establishments?" Don's reply was "The Army have been in the business of building and preparing teams for the ultimate battle for centuries, sport is only just starting to understand what is required to build a successful team for their ultimate challenge and therefore can learn a lot off the Army in terms of leadership and team building".

In 2004, the Black Sox were given the ultimate opportunity to win a third consecutive world title in Christchurch in front of their home crowd, families and friends. Once again, extensive use of the Army's resources, facilities and personnel were utilised to help prepare the team to achieve history and win a third consecutive title. In order for the Black Sox to win, they were going to have to raise the bar from where it had been before and take their preparation to a new level.

Burnham was selected as the Camp that had the best resources, facilities and Army personnel available to help prepare the Black Sox to achieve something that had never been achieved before. The staff at the Army Adventurous Training Centre (AATC) developed a leadership and team building training package that proved to be a key part of why the Black Sox had such a strong culture and camaraderie within its ranks.

Adventure Based Experiential Learning Activities in the Arthur's Pass region ensured all

members of the squad had shared experiences and had been taken well out of their comfort zone.

The strong relationship established between the Black Sox and NZ Army has continued in recent years with the appointment of Warrant Officer Class One Wayne Small in 2006 as the Manager of the Black Sox. In true military fashion, 'Sergeant Schultz Small' has kept the troops well drilled and continued to utilise Trentham and Waiouru as key training venues as they fight hard to retain their standing as the number one team in the world.

As with all sports teams, humour often plays a key part in maintaining camaraderie and cohesiveness.

A classic memory is of Darren Rea attempting to perform a solo Haka outside the Warrant Officers and Sergeants' Mess in Waiouru during the 2000 World Championship build up training camp. It is a memory that the 2000 Black Sox, along with the Mess members who were still in the mess at the time, will not forget in a

hurry. Earlier in the day Darren had missed the team haka performed at the Waiouru Primary School. His punishment was to perform a solo when the team departed the Mess later that night. Darren, full to the eyeballs with bourbon, ensured he would never be invited to any future wananga's as his hand actions, together with his pronunciation of "kamate", were not quite on the money, much to the disgust of an interested party of observers from the Mess.

Army Camps over the past decade have been used to prepare not only the Black Sox, but also the women's national side, the White Sox, and the Junior Black Sox for their last two World Championship campaigns. Instructor assistance for all the camps has been provided by the PTI's along with our own resident code APTI Doon Groves.

It is not only national sports teams that Army Softball have supported in recent decades. Doon Groves and myself have also assisted the Joint Services PE & RT School by conducting the specialist 3 day softball phase for PTI courses since 1989.

Below: The 2009 NZ Black Sox Team enjoying fresh air after experiencing CS gas.



ARMY SOFTBALL HITS CYBER SPACE

Written by Dean Groves

Throughout my life I have always enjoyed taking and collecting photographs, whether they were family occasions, school, work or from the hobbies in my life (especially sports). I have several photo albums filled with hundreds and hundreds of photographs, which take their place amongst the things that I cherish the most.

Sometime during 2004 I sat down with John Eagar, who is (in my opinion) a legend of Army Softball, at the tournament bar during an Inter-Services Tournament. We were talking about softball of course when he lent towards me and said “have you seen these before” and presented a small folder. He opened the cover to reveal a number of his Army softball photographs. They were team photographs of Inter-District and Army Inter-Services teams that he had collected over the years, some as far back as 1960.

Being a keen photographer and self confessed Army softball junky, I was immediately drawn to these treasures, which I had never seen before. You see, the Army is, (no offence) guilty of not preserving its photographic sports history that well, more on this later. So, for Army sports men and women, seeing photographs that old is rare unless people like John show them to you.

As John and I slowly flicked through the dozen or so photographs, John would point out most of the faces by name and give the player’s nickname or a short story about

certain individuals. I was fascinated by these photographs and how genuinely passionate John was about them and his memories during his time as a player and coach with softball in the Army. I was truly inspired.

Several months later, after thinking about it, I decided it was time to get the ball rolling and start preserving Army softball history once and for all. I initially thought of the need to gather photographs plus any historical documents that had been written and archived that would form the content for our chronological history.

I began by making enquiries with Gordon Forrester at the Army Sports Council in Trentham. He told me that he had a small number of team photographs and post-tournament reports on file, but nothing further back than the last 9 years. I was also hoping to find tournament programmes that would help prove tournament dates and venues, which were surprisingly not documented anywhere. Unfortunately, I met with a dead end. I myself had all of the Army mens’ team photographs that Gordon had, so I would have to continue elsewhere.

I then called the National Army Museum in Waiouru, but hit another dead end, no Army sports archives were kept, especially softball memorabilia. They did put me onto the Regular Force Cadet Association who had a small number of cadet team photographs – I thought, at least that will do.

I soon realised that the success of this

preservation project lay in the hands of our current and former softball members’ personal collections.

During the initial stages of the project, I put a lot of thought into how all of the history should be displayed. Would it be for internal or external access? Fortunately, since I have been involved with Army softball, it is common knowledge that a large number of ex players and officials still take an interest in what Army softball is doing. Some of them are still Defence Force employees. I decided that the history that softball was about to preserve had to be accessible to both serving and non-serving members in New Zealand and abroad and would need to be accessible via the internet.

Now, where to start? I had contact with former Army softballers like John Eagar, Dick Wilson, Tom Hurinui and Trevor “Storky” Gilbert who I could ask for their photographs, but after that I was stumped. A call had to go out to “rally the troops” and spread the word that Army softball was preserving its history and was basically after anything. After receiving email addresses of ex-members from Storky, sending out emails and making several phone calls, things started to happen.

I also called John Eagar and asked him if I could borrow his photographs and tournament programmes, which he kindly agreed to. So when a box full of Johns tournament programmes and photographs arrived, I was underway, boots and all. To preserve the photographs, they needed to be scanned and saved electronically, which was the beginning of many hours of sitting around a scanner.

The tournament programmes were invaluable revealing the dates, venues, fixtures and in most cases the pre-tournament team list names, which were all retyped using Microsoft Word. The information from the programmes formed the “Tournament Archive” section of the web page. I must say that this was the

least enjoyable task of the whole preservation project, especially working at home late at night on my non-ergonomic and poorly-lit computer table until my aching back called it a night. The only positive I can see from the countless hours spent copying all of the data from the programmes is that softball now has a massive archive of tournament information, which no one will probably spend too much time looking at, but at least it is permanently preserved – hurray!

“One of the best salvage jobs achieved was to the 1972 Southern Military Districts Inter-Regional Men’s Team photograph ...”

Towards the end of 2005, I approached the Army web manager Lyndy Dutch in Trentham to find out what the Army website was all about and to explain the preservation project and how it could be displayed on the internet.

I was told that softball could have its own web page that would be part of the main Army website, at no cost to softball – perfect! The web page would have to uphold the reputation of the New Zealand Army and the content had to be professional. The web manager was really receptive to Army Softball’s initiative, as no other code had done this on the Army website before.

Some of the photographs that were sent in by our ex-members were in bad shape having had years of exposure to UV light, or the undignified comings and goings of the household fly, or been ripped when removed from photo albums. With the magic of Photoshop, most of the damaged photographs were repaired or at least improved.

One of the best salvage jobs achieved was to the 1972 Southern Military Districts Inter-Regional Men’s Team photograph. A few areas of the photograph, I assume, had had tape across it

and was unfortunately removed, leaving just the paper underneath. Quite a bit of damage occurred, particularly to Eddie Chadwick #10. By copying another players' top and pasting it into the missing space, making a new jaw, left bicep and #10, Eddie was looking much better. Jim Porter #7 received a new jersey around the stomach area and Trevor Patrick #12 had his jaw worked on. This photograph needed a lot of time and effort to get it up to scratch, but it was worth every minute.

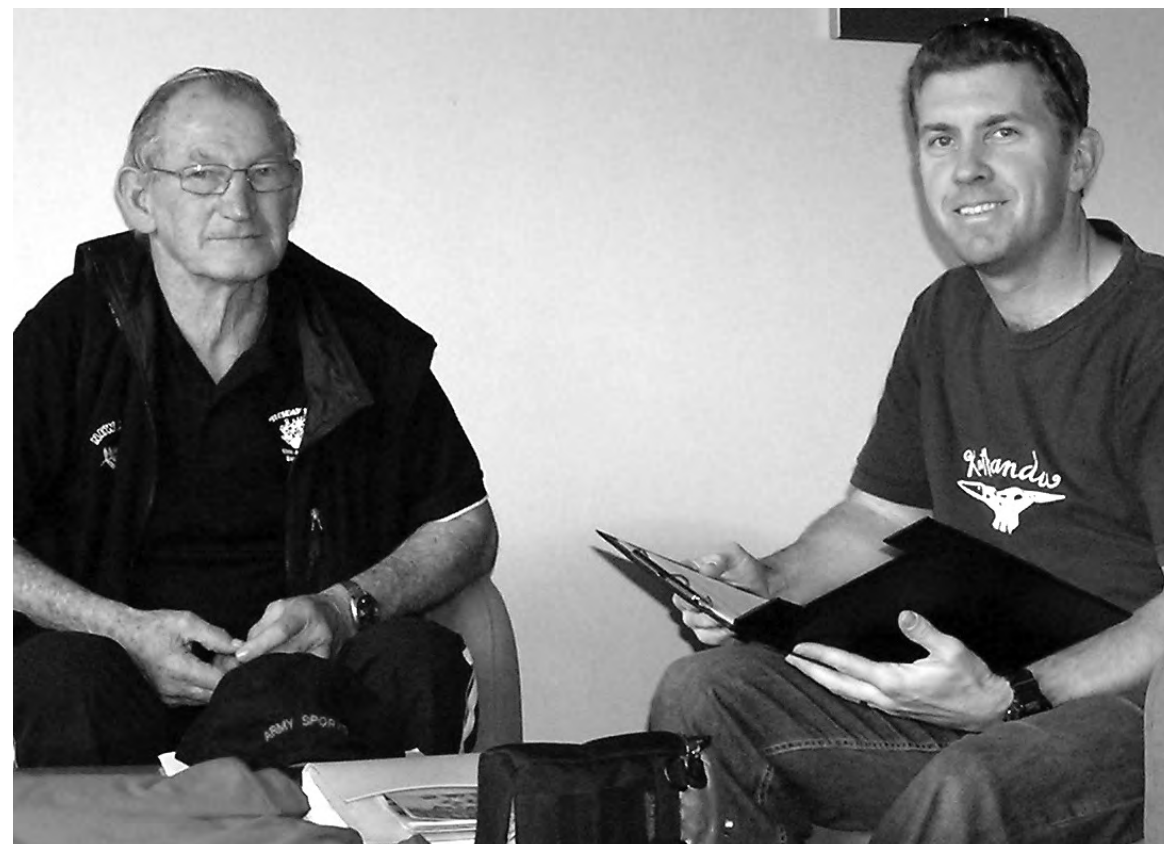
All photographs that were suitable for uploading onto the softball web page had to be scanned at 240 - 300dpi and resized into 3 different sizes, thumbnail, gallery and printable. By now, I had collected around 300+ photographs, which meant a lot of work lay ahead.

Luckily, my father-in-law is a geriatric computer wizard (well sort of), who lives in Brisbane. He became extremely useful though in December

2006, whilst the family and I were across the ditch for Christmas. He found a function in Microsoft Photoshop that could resize all of the photographs into the 3 sizes that I needed for the web page. After setting up the batch function and with the click of the mouse, the gazillion photographs were resized in just 20 minutes – brilliant!

Each part of our softball web page needed a banner, which is a graphic or image that best represents the content. To help me with this I was put onto the Defence Public Relations Unit at Defence House in Wellington. I arranged a meeting with Duncan Allan to outline softballs intention with the web page and to discuss banner options from the selected photographs. The meeting went well and Duncan went about his work knowing what Army softball wanted done. Within 10 days, softball had 8 banners for each section of the web page. I must say that having the banners uploaded onto the

Below: The interview with Russ Luscombe.



web page was fantastic because I could see the web page taking shape.

During the project it was evident that little information was known or forthcoming about the 1950s and early 1960s. So one of the initiatives to get this information was to go and visit the ex-players from this era and interview them. I started by arranging to meet Russ Luscombe in March 2008, who was down in Wellington for the weekend on a bowling trip.

Russ was a cadet in 1949/50, playing softball for the cadets; he also represented Inter-District, Army and Combined Services Teams throughout the 1950s and 1960s. It was great to meet with a person that I only knew from seeing in photographs; so, we sat down and I fired as many questions as I could at him, which helped fill in the gaps.

As more information came to hand, the various historical articles, archives and photographs kept on growing and growing as did the hours being put into this beast. As the winter of 2008 was drawing to an end, I was almost burnt out.

During a chance phone call with Len Robinson, he mentioned that the intention to record Army softballs' history had been talked about before, but unfortunately it didn't get off the ground. Hearing that from Len inspired me to making one last push to get the documents finished, proofread and handed over to the Army web team. What was now required was to upload the articles and data, plus the unenviable task of individually uploading the multitude of photographs.

So, I would like at this point to thank Val Smith for the painstaking task of putting every single photograph onto the web page.

In September 2008, the Army softball web page finally went live on the internet, much to my relief and to Storky's, who I had been

telling since March "we'll be live next month", sorry Storky.

The Army web team were fantastic. They put a large yellow softball graphic on the Army website home page announcing the new arrival of softball to the web site. The Army News also ran an article called "Army Softball Hits a Home run" that explained Army Softball's long road to documenting its history.

"In September 2008, the Army softball web page finally went live on the internet, much to my relief and to Storky's, who I had been telling since March "we'll be live next month", sorry Storky ..."

I must say the day the web page was up and running I instantly felt really tired - it was wierd. I felt like I had not slept for days. Then it real hit me, I have two children under 3 years old - fat chance of a sleep this weekend!

Towards the end of 2008, I met with another 1949/50 cadet player, Uma Nepia, at his home in Palmerston North. And in early 2009, I met with Vince "Kina" Lawrence in Papakura. Kina was a real character who had an amazing collection of military and sporting photographs from his Service career, which he was willing to share with me.

It was an honour to meet and talk with Russ, Uma and Kina, all members of the 1949 RF Cadet School Team – The Originals.

I mentioned earlier that the Army has not preserved its sporting history that well. I can tell you that, having established the Army softball web page, other codes are now starting to take notice of what can be done and the work that is involved. Some Army codes are taking active steps by putting in place processes that will ensure their history is also

preserved now and for years to come.

Army Softball can boast having arguably the most extensive collection of sports photographs of any Service code on public display. For me, the pick of the bunch is the 1949/50 Regular Force Cadet School team photograph that was kindly loaned by Kina Lawrence who is another Army Softball legend. This cadet team is believed to be the first known team to play softball in the New Zealand Army back in the 1949/1950 season in the Hutt Valley.

“There are still gaps in our history to fill, especially in the 1950s through to the early 1960s. Army softball welcomes our ex-members to come forward with those details or any news articles”

Today, we have our sport well represented on the web page, where our members can enjoy walking down memory lane or keeping up to date with Army softballs’ annual calendar.

Army softball now has processes in place that will ensure any softball correspondence and photographs are collected and uploaded onto the web page. There are still gaps in our history to fill, especially in the 1950s through to the early 1960s. Army softball welcomes our ex-members to come forward with those details or any news articles.

Future plans for the web page is to have Army softball souvenir and memorabilia items available for purchase, such as the Army softball coin and apparel items.

It is hoped at the 60th Anniversary of Softball in the NZ Army in November 2009 that photographs and information that Army Softball does not have will be brought along to share. I know for a fact that a number of past and present Army softballers are really looking forward to the reunion, which has been talked

about for some time now. I guess good things are worth waiting for.

When I first approached Storky Gilbert to help track down our ex-members, I did not realise just how many people he still keeps in contact with or can track down, it was truly amazing, I had found New Zealand’s version of Magnum PI. If there is a link between the decades within Army softball, then Storky is that link. Cheers Storky for all the assistance, passion and time you put into Army softball.

I would again like to acknowledge the Army web team (Lyndy, Val and Erana) for all of the hard work you have put in and the guidance that you provided towards developing Army softballs’ web page.

I would finally like to personally thank all of our past and present members and or their families for sending, and trusting me with, the photographs and tournament programmes that I held for months on end.

Army softball now has its history archived and readily available for viewing. There are still a number of information and photographic gaps to be filled in, which will continue when time permits.

On behalf of the Army Softball Committee, I trust you will enjoy the Army softball web page which is I guess our home base.

Yours in Army Softball – what a unique softball family.



OUR SUCCESSES

INTER-SERVICES TOURNAMENT



CHAMPIONS

Prendergast Cup (Women)			Lauthala Bay Trophy (Men)		
1966	1990	2002	1967	1977	1999
1972	1991	2003	1968	1989	2000
1976	1992	2004	1969	1990	2002
1977	1996	2005	1970	1992	2003
1979	1998	2006	1973	1993	2007
1981	1999	2008	1974	1994	2008
1989	2001		1975	1998	



DALE TAMEHANA MEMORIAL TROPHY WINNERS 2005 and 2008



The first recipients of the Dale Tamehana Memorial Trophy at Ngataringa, Philomel 2005 - Army.

NATIONAL INTER-ASSOCIATION CHAMPIONSHIPS

Ed Barr Cup (C Section): 1967 in Christchurch, 1968 in Auckland, 1970 in Invercargill, 1972 in Auckland, and 1974 in Lower Hutt.

Below: 1967/68 Ed Barr Cup winning team in Auckland.



NATIONAL INTER-ASSOCIATION CHAMPIONSHIPS



Above: 1969/70 Ed Barr Cup winning team in Invercargill.

Below: 1973/74 Ed Barr Cup winning team in Lower Hutt.



NATIONAL CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS

1995 Paul Higgins Trophy (3rd Division) Winners



Above: The Paul Higgins Trophy winners at Cuthbert Green, Christchurch 1995. Army beat Richmond 12 – 9.

OTHER TOURNAMENTS

1986 Cosmos Tournament in Taupo:

Army Men's Team –
Champions

Army Women's Team –
3rd place

1991 Wainui Classic Tournament Wainuiomata:

Army Men's Team –
3rd place



Right: 1986 Army Men's Team winners of the Cosmos Tournament.

HONOURS

NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

NZ Men's Team

Corporal Reginald Bennett, RNZIR

“Reg” enlisted into the NZ Army in 1961, he was a prominent member of the Army Men's Team from 1967 to 1969. In 1967, Reg trialed for the NZ National team, but was unfortunately unsuccessful. The following year, his sound performances for the Kaiapoi Club gained him selection into the NZ team.



“Reg
enlisted
into the
NZ Army
in 1961
...”

On the 17th February 1968, Reg became the first Army softball player to represent New Zealand. He was playing for Kaiapoi in the Christchurch competition as the pitcher, but he played third base for the NZ Team against the visiting San Antonio Team from the USA.

NZ U21 National Team

Lance Corporal Trevor Gilbert, RNZE

In December 1969, Trevor was selected into the NZ U21 team following the National Inter Provincial tournament at Invercargill. Trevor was selected as the centre fielder.

The team played against the touring Arizona All Stars at Athletic Park (of all places) in March

1970. This was the first time a Colts team was selected and the team was not presented with blazer pockets and they did not even have a proper uniform made at that time. They actually played in the NZ Combined Services black strip.



“Trevor
was
selected
into the
NZ U21
team ...”

A fact that was concealed at the time was that Army coach Maurice Bull was approached during the tournament in Invercargill and asked if any of his team were eligible for the Colts team and he put Trevor's and a couple of other names forward.

Trevor was 21 at the time and when he played the All Stars he was 22, so technically, he was not supposed to play, but Mum's the word.

NZ Black Sox

Corporal Darren Rea, RNZEME

Darren first represented Army Softball in 1986, at the Inter-Services Tournament at RNZAF Base Whenuapai. He would go on to be arguably the Defence Force's most dominating player throughout the 1980s and 1990s. He won a series of Army and Inter-Service Tournament MVP, Top Batter and Top pitcher awards during this time. Darren represented Canterbury for the majority of his softball career. He also

represented the NZ U21 Team for 3 years from 1984 to 1987. In 1988, at the National Provincial Championships in Invercargill, Darren (NZ Combined Services) was selected into the New Zealand Emerging Players Team for a series against the touring USA Team.

In 1989, Darren was selected into the NZ Country Districts Team that played against the visiting World Champion USA team in front of his home crowd at Cuthberts Green, Christchurch.



“In 1990, Darren was selected into the NZ Emerging Players Team for the second time ...”

In 1990, Darren was selected into the NZ Emerging Players Team for the second time. The Emerging Players Team played against USA at Fraser Park, Lower Hutt. The following year, he was named in the New Zealand Men’s Softball Team (known as the Black Sox), for a tour of the USA and Canada.

In 2000, Darren was selected in the Black Sox Team, which competed at the ISF World Softball Championships in East London, South Africa. His fellow NZ Defence Force colleagues; Grant McCarroll (Army) and Clayton Willocks (Air Force) were also members of the team, which won the gold medal. Darren and his Service colleges are the first NZ Servicemen to win a World Softball Championship gold medal.

NZ U23 and Great Britain National Teams Sapper Patrick Morgan, RNZE

In 1996, Rik, a member of the NZ Combined Services team, was selected into the NZ

U23 team at the completion of the Men’s Provincial Championships at Cuthberts Green, Christchurch. Rik’s explosive speed, solid offence and defence caught the eye of the selectors and saw the outfielder take his place in the team.

In 1997, Rik took his release from the Army and ventured to London. In time he gained selection into the Great Britain softball team. During 2003, the Great Britain team qualified high enough in the European group to gain entry to the 2004 International Softball Federation Men’s World Softball Championships in Christchurch, New Zealand. At the completion of section play, Rik’s batting average put him atop of all other hitters in the tournament. His attendance at the championships was also a great opportunity to catch up with his family and Army softball friends.



“In 1997, Rik took his release from the Army and ventured to London”

In 2009, Rik was again part of the Great Britain Team that attended the Men’s World Softball Championships in Saskatoon, Canada. Rik’s team performance very well and finished the tournament, the highest in Great Britain softball history. Rik’s parents (Wally and Derryn) were also involved with Army softball.

NZ Softball Statistician

Mrs Dale Tamehana

NZ Army Softball was fortunate, to have had a top class softball scorer in Dale from the 1970s to 2002.

From 1984 to 1997, Dale was the scorer at a number of National Tournaments and she

was also the scorer for the NZ Men’s and Women’s Teams at various tournaments around the world. In 1997, Dale was awarded the Manawatu Sports Official of the Year. In the same year, Dale was appointed the NZ Chief Scorer and remained chief until 2002. In 1998, Dale was the Tournament Chief Scorer at the South Pacific Classic in Christchurch. Later that year, she was appointed the NZ team scorer at the Women’s World Championships in Japan.



“Dale was appointed the NZ Chief Scorer and remained chief until 2002 ...”

Dale was the only New Zealand statistician at the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney. Later that year, she was awarded the Maori Sports Administrator of the Year. Dale was a NZ Scorer and NZDF Statistician from 1981 to 2002.

Dale’s softball CV is particularly impressive and shows her outstanding service to NZ Softball, the Manawatu and NZ Defence Force during that time. Her passion and character is second to none.

NZ Black Sox

Warrant Officer Class One Grant McCarroll, RNZAPTC

Grant was first selected for the NZ Army men’s team as an outfielder and pitcher in 1986 in his first year of Inter-Regional Softball. He has been a regular member of the men’s side ever since and has been part of many Army teams that have won the Combined Services and NZDF tournaments. Highlights of his playing career to date, is as follows:

- ▶ Selected for NZ Army Men’s Team

- ▶ 1987-89 NZ Combined Services
- ▶ 1990 Bloomington Beernuts (American club team)
- ▶ 1989-95 Canterbury Senior Men’s Team
- ▶ 1996 NZ Combined Services
- ▶ 2000-04 NZDF Men’s Team.
- ▶ 2006 Played one game for NZ Black Sox (as manager) on tour in Japan

In 1998 Grant was appointed Manager of the World Champion NZ Black Sox, an appointment he stood down from in 2006. A highlight of this appointment has been managing the Black Sox World Series side to Gold medal victories at the 2000 men’s World Championship in South Africa and again at the 2004 World Championships in Christchurch.



“Grant managed the Black Sox World Series side to Gold medal victories ...”

In Grant’s last tour as Manager (Japan 2006) Grant was given the opportunity to realise his playing dream and take the diamond against the Japan U23 national side. For the record Grant had one turn at bat, hit a line drive to left field and retired having gained the perfect batting average of 1000 for his international playing career.

Grant is very proud of his involvement with the NZ Army Softball fraternity and is grateful to the many opportunities that the Army and the sport of Softball have given to him. “The results speak for themselves, both the Army men’s and women’s teams have been the best performed Army sports teams for the past decade”.

NZ Softball Umpires Distinguished Service Award

WO1 (Rtd) Mr John Eagar

in 2001, Softball New Zealand presented John Eagar with the Umpires Distinguished Service Award for the outstanding service John has given to softball, particularly to the Christchurch Softball Association. His award also acknowledges his dedication and service to softball within New Zealand and the International Softball Federation world wide.



John was presented with an award for outstanding service to Softball ...

NZ Black Sox

Warrant Officer Class One Wayne Small, MNZM, RNZALR

In 2006, Wayne Small was appointed manager of the NZ Men's Black Sox team, filling the shoes of WO1 Grant McCarroll. Wayne's first assignment with the Black Sox was to tour Japan with the outgoing manager, in May 2006.

Wayne then toured Australia with the NZ A Development selection in December 2006 and



“Wayne Small was appointed manager of the NZ Men's Black Sox team ...”

then went with the Black Sox to Canada in June 2007. He continues as manager to this day. In 2009, the Black Sox competed at the ISF Men's World Softball championships in Saskatoon, Canada. The team performed particularly well and made it to the gold medal games against Australia. Unfortunately, the Black Sox were beaten by Australia in the final. At the tournament prize giving, Wayne was presented a runners up Silver Medal. Wayne is the third Army softball representative to receive a World Championship medal.

NZ Junior Black Sox Development Team

Staff Sergeant Phil Johnston, RNZAPTC

In 2007, Phil was selected into the Junior Black Sox Team training camp where he used his experience as a physical training instructor and softball coach to good effect. In 2009, Phil was appointed the Assistant Coach of the Junior Black Sox Development Team.



“Phil was selected into the Junior Black Sox Team training camp ...”

NZ Junior White Sox Team

Three Army softball representatives; Sue Harrison, Lyndah Pascoe and Nicky Hansen were all selected into the Junior White Sox Team for the teams build up activities and for the tour to Australia to participate in the Friendship Games from 9 -17 July 09.

Their selection in 2009, along with Wayne Small (Black Sox) and Phil Johnston (Junior Black Sox) marks a time where Army is particularly well represented on the National front.



Mrs Susan Harrison (Assistant Coach)



Mrs Lyndah Pascoe (Assistant Manager)



SSgt Nicky Hansen (Medic)

“Three Army softball reps were all selected into the Junior White Sox Team”

PROVINCIAL REPRESENTATIVES

The following Army softball players and officials are, at the time of printing this journal, the known people who have represented Provincial teams throughout New Zealand.

Vince Lawrence
1960 - 1961 Manawatu

Reg Bennett
1960 Wanganui

Allan Sinclair, Dave Morgan and John Osbourne
1967 - 68 Counties (inaugural year at the Beatty Cup)

Charlie Strauss
1968 Counties

Thomas Hurinui
1968 Nelson
1969 - 70 Counties

Trevor Gilbert
1968 -1970 Counties

Roy Seaman
1969 - 70 and 1972 - 1975 Manawatu

Bob Helmbright
1970 Counties

Richard Wilson
Wanganui, Counties

Nannette Grant
Nelson (date unknown)

Len Robinson
Wanganui (Selector and Coach)

Darren Rea
1987 - 1998 Canterbury

Grant McCarroll
1988 - 1994 Canterbury
1995 - 1997 Marlborough

Dale Tamehana
1990 Manawatu (Statistician and Chief Scorer)

Derryn Morgan
1990 Manawatu (Statistician)

Dean Groves
1997 Marlborough

Jenni Mumm
1998 Manawatu, 1999 Waiakato, 2003 Southern Pride
2007 - 2009 Canterbury Red Hawkes.

Sue Harrison
2004 - 2007 Canterbury U19 Girls (Assistant Coach)
2008 Canterbury Red Hawkes

Phillip Johnson
2004 - 2006 Canterbury U15 Boys (Assistant Coach)
2006 - 07 Canterbury U15 Boys (Head Coach)
2007 - 08 Canterbury U17 Boys (Head Coach)

Lynda Pascoe
2007 - 08 Canterbury (Assistant Coach)

Nicky Hansen
2008 Canterbury Red Hawks (Strapper)

All Service softball personnel who have represented the NZ Combined Services and the NZDF teams at National Provincial Championship Tournaments are considered to be Provincial Representatives.

AWARDS

NZ DEFENCE FORCE COLOUR

The NZDF Colour is awarded to Service personnel and NZDF civilian employees who merit special recognition for their services in Defence Force sport. The Defence Force colour is awarded by the Chief of Defence Force on the recommendation of the NZDF Sports Committee (NZDFSC).

The Defence Force colour is to be awarded only to those who have made an outstanding contribution in an approved Defence Force Sport(s). They must have reached at least a provincial or Defence Force level of representation in the sport and have coached, administered, or made some other significant contribution in the development and fostering of Defence Force sport.

THE NZDF COLOUR CREST

Captain Grant McCarroll

Captain McCarroll's NZDF Colour Citation is as follows:

Captain Grant McCarroll, NZ Army has been involved in NZDF Softball since 2001. Grant has been, and still is, a playing or officiating member of NZDF Softball and has given loyal and dedicated service to the development of softball for the Army and NZDF while also raising the profile of the Code in the wider community.

NZDF Softball now participates at the NZ National Club Championships and this can be directly attributed to Grant's efforts in getting recognition from Softball NZ for NZDF Softball to compete at this high level.



Grant's selection into the NZ Black Sox and as a senior member of Army and NZDF Softball cannot be understated; he is the interface between Softball NZ and NZDF Softball. His experience and leadership sees him actively involved in planning and organising NZDF softball activities and, even when not involved, is often called upon to provide advice and guidance.

Grant is an inspiration to many service personnel and civilian staff to strive for sporting excellence and is willing to give his time to assist with Softball at all levels. Grant is the first recipient of the NZDF Colour and the first softball representative.

He is a consummate professional who has made a significant contribution to NZDF

Softball making him a most worthy recipient of the NZDF Colour.

NZ ARMY AWARDS

The Army Colour

The Army Colour is awarded to service people who merit special recognition for their services to Army sport. The Army Colour is awarded by the Chief of Army on the recommendation of the Army Sports Committee. The Army Colour is awarded only to those service people who have made some outstanding contribution to an approved Army Sport. They must have reached at least a provincial or combined services level of representation in the sport and also have coached, administered, or made some other significant contribution to foster the sport.



Above: The Army Colour crest.

Details of Army softball personnel who have been awarded the Army Colour for softball were not documented until the 1990s. However, through information received from former members of Army softball and personal military files, the Army Softball Committee has

determined the following recipients of this prestigious sporting honour.

Vincent "Kina" Lawrence, RNZE

In 1962, Kina Lawrence was awarded the Army Colour (known in those days as the Army "Blue") for his outstanding and long service to Army basketball, softball, athletics and shooting.



The Army "Blue" pocket awarded to Kina Lawrence (embroidered with 18 carat gold stitching)

Unfortunately, Vince Lawrence's citation is not available; however, it is known that he was heavily involved for many years with a number of Army sports codes, not only as a player, but as a coach and manager.

In 1961, Vince was selected into the Manawatu Softball Team to play at the National Championships.

Vince Lawrence is believed to be the first softball representative in the Army to be awarded the Army Colour.

Warrant Officer Class One Alan Shirley, RNZSigs

WO1 Alan Shirley was awarded the Army Colour in the 1970s, but the exact year is not known.

His service records state that he was a very capable sportsman, having represented NZ Army Rugby and Softball and NZ Combined



“WO1 Alan Shirley was awarded the Army Colour in the 1970s”

Services Rugby. He was a player in the Army Men’s Team for many years and also went onto hold the position of Assistant Coach.

WO1 Shirley is a worthy recipient of the Army Colour.

Warrant Officer Class Two John Eagar, RNZAC

WO2 John Eagar’s Army Colour citation is as follows:

WO2 Eagar is awarded the Army Colour from September 1975. The presentation of an Army Colour is made to WO2 John Eagar, Royal New Zealand Armoured Corps of the Territorial Force Depot, Burnham Camp.

WO2 Eagar’s award is made on two accounts; as a player and an administrator. WO2 Eagar’s



“John was awarded the Army Colour in September 1975 ...”

two principal sports are softball and soccer. At softball, as a player, he represented his Region and the Army for 14 consecutive seasons from 1958 – 1971. He was a Combined Services representative in 1967 and 68.

In the administrative field he was Army Selector/Coach from 1971 – 73 and in the same years was also the Combined Services coach. He was Chairman of the Army Softball Code in 1971 and since 1974 has been a softball umpire at provincial level.

The award of the Army Colour was made by the Army Sports Committee in September 1975. John was presented his Army Colour pocket at the Inter-Services Tournament at RNZAF Base Wigram in December of the year.

Warrant Officer Class One Alex Whittaker, RNZLAR

WO1 Alex Whittaker’s Army Colour is awarded with effect from 10 July 1998

WO1 Whittaker’s NZ Army softball playing, coaching and administrating career spanned over 15 years. WO1 Whittaker first represented the Army in 1983 and finished her playing days in 1992.



“Alex has been a steadfast supporter of the sport of Softball”

WO1 Whittaker also represented the Combined Services from 1983 to 1985 and represented the NZ Force South East Asia (Singapore) from 1986 to 1988. Her civilian playing career was with the Miramar Women’s team from 1988 to 1991. During this time she has been a steadfast supporter of the sport of Softball in particular. To her credit she has also been involved in volleyball and basketball with NZ Army teams.

WO1 Whittaker’s coaching career saw her appointed as the coach of the Miramar

Women’s team from 1992 to 1993, the Army Women’s team 1992 to 1994 and 1998 and the Combined Services Women’s team assistant coach in 1994 and as the coach in 1998.

Staff Sergeant Grant McCarroll, NZAPTC

SSgt McCarroll is awarded the Army Colour with effect from 06 September 2000.

SSgt McCarroll’s contribution to softball spans 13 years as a representative player and administrator. SSgt McCarroll was the manager of the New Zealand Men’s softball team from 1998 to the present time. In that time, SSgt McCarroll toured with the Black Sox team to Canada and Australia.



“Grant’s contribution to softball spans 13 years ...”

SSgt McCarroll was also the manager of the World Champion New Zealand Men’s softball team, which won the World Series in South Africa 2000.

Warrant Officer Class One Winnie Shanley, RNZSigs

Warrant Officer Class One Shanley is awarded the Army Colour with effect from 13 February 2001.

WO1 Shanley’s involvement in softball dates back to 1972 when she was first selected to represent the New Zealand Army. She was selected to represent the New Zealand Combined Services team in 1977 and remained in both the Army and Combined Services teams through to 1980.

In 1986, WO1 Shanley took on administrative

roles as an Army Softball Code Committee Member and Manager of the Army Women’s Team. She held both of these appointments for four years until 1990, when she was appointed the Code Chairperson for Army Softball and one year later, in conjunction with her Army Softball Code responsibilities, WO1 Shanley was appointed the New Zealand Combined Services Code Chairperson. She held both of these appointments through to 1995 when she stood down due to an overseas posting.



“Winnie’s involvement in softball dates back to 1972 ...”

WO1 Shanley has returned to Army Softball in 2001 as the Army Women’s Manager; her final appearance at the New Zealand Defence Force Tournament. WO1 Shanley takes her release from the New Zealand Army on 19 February 2001 after 30 years service, 24 of which has seen her involved in Softball at Army and Combined Services Levels.

WO1 Shanley’s outstanding service, dedication and commitment to Army softball makes her a worthy recipient of the NZ Army Colour.

Warrant Officer Class Two Dean Groves, RNZALR

WO2 Groves is awarded the Army Colour with effect from November 2006.

WO2 Groves has represented the NZ Army Men’s softball team from 1989 to the present day, he has been the captain of the team since 2002. WO2 Groves has also represented the Combined Services Men’s softball team over the following years 1989, 91, 92, 94 & 96. WO2 Groves has also represented the NZDF



“Dean has represented the NZ Army Men’s softball team from 1989 to the present day”

Men’s softball team since it’s inception in 1998 to the present day and was the Vice Captain in 2003, 2004 & Captain in 2005.

WO2 Groves has represented the Marlborough Senior Provincial team in 1996 and represented the Hutt Valley Cardinals Premiere team in 2000 and 2001.

WO2 Groves has been on the Softball Code Committee since 1997 and is still an active committee member today. He has been the Northern Code Representative since 2000 and was instrumental in organised the 2004 Inter-Regional and NZDF Softball tournaments in Waiouru. On top of this, during his posting to Waiouru, WO2 Groves resurrected the Waiouru Softball club and in particular the junior aspect of the club where they managed to field four Tee ball teams for the season.

WO2 Groves is highly regarded as one of the best softball players in the NZDF, his continued selection as captain of both the NZ Army and NZDF men’s team’s is testament to that. His playing and leadership ability on the playing diamond, however, is only half of what he offers to the Army and NZDF softball. Of as much value, is his unquestioned desire and commitment to NZ Army and NZDF softball behind the scenes, which sets him apart from most other NZ Army sportsmen and women.

WO2 Groves’ success as a player, his appointment as captain of both the NZ Army and NZDF men’s teams and his efforts behind the scenes as a tournament and club organiser,

makes him a worthy recipient of the NZ Army Colour.

NZ ARMY AWARDS

The Army Pocket for Administration

The Army pocket for administration is awarded for outstanding administrative services to Army Sport over a period of at least five years. Service sports people who merit special recognition for their services to Army sport may be awarded the Army pocket for administration by the Chief of Army on the recommendation of the Army Sports Committee. Coaching alone will not qualify a candidate for a Service award. The pocket is the Army badge surmounting the words For Services to Army Sport.



Warrant Officer Class One Wayne Small MNZM, RNZALR

WO1 Wayne Small is awarded the Army pocket for Services to Army Sport with effect from 30 January 2004

WO1 Small’s contribution to softball commenced as an assistant coach of the NZ

Army Men’s softball team in 1991. When he was selected as a player in the NZ Army Men’s softball team in 1993, WO1 Small stepped down from the coaching role, but returned in 1996, again as an assistant coach. He was appointed as coach on the NZ Army Men’s softball team in 1998, the position he held until December 2005. WO1 Small was also the coach of the NZDF Men’s softball team from 2002 - 2004.



“WO1 Wayne Small is awarded the Army pocket for Services to Army Sport”

WO1 Small is a worthy recipient of the Army pocket for administration for his services to Army softball.

Mrs Sue Harrison

Awarded with effect from 30 January 2004.

Mrs Harrison first became involved in coaching softball in 1996 when she was selected as the assistant coach for the NZ Army Women’s softball team. She has held this appointment from 1996 to 2003 and also held the coaches appointment in 1995 and 2001.



“Mrs Harrison first became involved in coaching softball in 1996 ...”

Mrs Harrison has had much success in her role as both assistant coach and coach. The Army Women are the current NZDF Champions and

have been for six out of seven years, under Mrs Harrison’s leadership.

Mrs Harrison has held the appointment of Assistant Coach for the NZDF Women’s softball team.

Major Dean Pascoe, RNZALR

Major Pascoe is awarded the Army pocket for Services to Army Sport with effect from 22 January 2008

Major Dean Pascoe has been actively involved with the Burnham Softball Club since 1998 and has recently handed over the reigns of the Club to a new Club President to enable succession planning over the next 12 months. Throughout his tenure, Major Pascoe has shown commitment beyond that generally expected and over the years has given a considerable amount of his time for the benefit of the Club, its players, officials and the Burnham community in general.



“Major Pascoe has shown commitment beyond that generally expected”

Major Pascoe has held the role of Club President since 1998. In this role, he has displayed superior planning and organisational skills that have added significant value to the management and administrative arrangements of the Club. Since 1998, Burnham has sustained a healthy membership (particularly given the transient population) of between 60 to 120 members. Softball has over these years remained a popular sport within the Burnham community and is a feeder into the Canterbury softball scene. Through his diligence and leadership, the Burnham

Softball Club has also maintained strong links with the Canterbury Softball Association

In addition to the Club President role, Major Pascoe has played, managed and coached various teams. The successful running of the 2001 NZDF Softball and 2005 Inter-Regional tournaments were in the main due to the time and effort Major Pascoe put into planning, organising and managing these events. To enable Burnham members to participate at premier level, Major Pascoe was instrumental this season in fostering a co-affiliation between Burnham and the Royals men’s premier team to enable Burnham personnel to participate at a premier level whilst still maintaining direct links back to the Burnham Club. Major Pascoe is also playing for this premier team in the 2007/2008 season.

Major Pascoe has been involved in Inter-Regional and Army softball since 2001. At regional level he works tirelessly behind the scenes in his capacity as the Southern Softball Code representative to co-ordinate the participation of Southern teams. He has also taken on Manager and player roles over these years in support of Southern regional softball. At Army level Dean has managed the Army men’s team since 2001 and has been Contingent Commander for two tours to Australia (2004 and 2007). In 2003 Major Pascoe was selected as the Manager for the NZDF team. Major Pascoe has made outstanding individual contributions to NZ Army and NZDF sport and is a worthy recipient of the Pocket for Administration.

THE ANNUAL ARMY SPORTS AWARDS

The NZ Army Sports Committee hosts the Army Sports Awards on an annual basis to recognise sporting excellence within the NZ Army and beyond. The first Army Sports Awards was held in 2003 in Trentham. As well as recognising individual achievement, each of

the 11 approved sporting codes is represented at the awards.

The Army Sports Committee usually invites a guest speaker to address the dinner. Previous speakers have been Don Tricker (Black Sox – softball), Dr Farrah Palmer (Black Ferns – rugby), Norm Hewitt (All Blacks – rugby) and Jamie Josephs (All Black – rugby).

Nominations and successes from Army Softball are as follows:

2002/03 Sporting Year

Team of the Year Finalists:
Army Men’s and Women’s Softball Teams

2003/04 Sporting Year

Team of the Year Finalists:
Army Men’s Softball Team

Official of the Year Winner:
Major A. Whittaker

Official of the Year Finalist: WO1 W. Small

Outstanding Sports Award Winner:
WO1 G. McCarroll

2004/05 Sporting Year

Team of the Year Finalists:
Army Men’s and Women’s Softball Teams

Individual Sports Person of the Year Finalist:
WO2 D. Groves

Individual Sports Person of the Year Finalist:
Mrs J. Mumm

Official of the Year Winner: WO1 W. Small

Outstanding Sports Award Finalist:
WO1 G. McCarroll

2005/06 Sporting Year

Team of the Year Finalists:
Army Men’s Softball Team

Official of the Year Finalist: Mrs S. Harrison

Individual Sports Person of the Year Finalist:
Mrs J. Mumm

Outstanding Sports Award Finalist:
WO1 G. McCarroll

Outstanding Sports Award Finalist:
WO1 W. Small

2006/07 Sporting Year

Team of the Year Winner:
Army Men’s Softball Team

Official of the Year Winner: WO2 D. Groves

Official of the Year Finalist: Mrs L. Pascoe

Individual Sports Person of the Year Finalist:
Mrs J. Mumm

Outstanding Sports Award Finalist:
WO1 W. Small

2007/08 Sporting Year

Official of the Year Winner: SSgt Nicky Hansen Softball and Rugby League

Official of the Year Finalist: WO2 D. Groves and Mrs S. Harrison

Outstanding Sports Award Finalist: SSgt N. Hansen

NEW ZEALAND COMMUNITY AWARDS

Mrs Dale Tamehana

In 1997, Dale was awarded the Manawatu Sports Official of the Year in what would mark a very successful softball career.

In 2000, Dale Tamehana was nominated by the Maori Sport Person Association for the Maori Sports Administrator of the Year award for her outstanding performance as a scorer.

Things started happening in May/April 2000 when she was appointed Tournament Scorer at a pre-Olympic softball tournament in Australia. That good start got better in July when she went to South Africa as a New Zealand official

and saw the New Zealand Black Sox Team successfully defend their Men’s Softball World Title.

Then the International Softball Federation and the International Olympic Committee appointed her as an Official Technical Statistician to the Sydney Olympics. Dale said “I got to score the Bronze Medal game and believed I had achieved well throughout the tournament. Then to my delight I was appointed to score the Gold Medal game between USA and Japan, which one could consider the ultimate achievement”.

One would think participating in the Olympic Games the pinnacle of achievement but more was to come!

She was named New Zealand “Scorer of the Year”, received a Sports Commendation from 2nd Land Force Group, NZ Army, was a finalist in the Manawatu Sports Administrator of the Year, and last but certainly not least, was named “Maori Sports Administrator of the Year”.

“I was nominated by my iwi Ngai Tahu and I knew I was on the shortlist of three but didn’t dream I would win. The announcements were made in Maori, which I wasn’t able to fully understand, but when I heard “Ngai Tahu” I knew it was me. I had been ill, maybe it was nerves but I had to concentrate on the job of getting up there. It certainly capped off a great year”.

Grant McCarroll

In 2004, Warrant Officer Class One Grant McCarroll was recognised for his outstanding service with the New Zealand Men’s Black Sox Softball Team and was awarded the following community awards in 2004:

- The Upper Hutt City Outstanding Sports Award for the Administrator of the Year.
- The Wellington Region Sports award for the Administrator of the Year.

THE ARMY DUGOUT

“I used to kick Charlie’s arse”

(John coaching the school boy Charlie Elkington at Titahi Bay 1950s)

“Once you were in the Army team, you had to die to get out” — John Eagar

“The Holly of Holly” (Burrow’s Field, Burnham Camp) — John Eagar

Kaiapoi Pitcher is Dominating Scene

The form of Kaiapoi pitcher Reg Bennett is the talking point of the softball season. With a victory over the champions...

THE CHRISTCHURCH STAR

MONDAY, MARCH 20, 1967



A. Laney (Police) dives back to first base during a softball match against an Army team in the combined services annual sports tournament at Burnham Military Camp to-day. Baseman is C. Strauss.

“Strauss screamed like a stuck pig” (being massaged by PTI Peter Kirkland at the 1973/74 Beatty Cup) — Allan Sinclair

Army Softball Success

New Zealand Army Mens’ and Womens’ Softball teams recently participated in the invitation Cosmos All Stars Tournament in Taupo 21-22 March 1987.

The mens team made the final after winning against an Auckland premier grade side. With this confidence behind them, they went on to win the competition with only one loss against a powerful team of players from Papatoetoe.

The Womens team also made the semi-final but lost to the experienced major grade competitors.

WO2 Packer, the men’s coach, felt a number of lessons had been learnt.

“It is unfortunate that the availability of regular Army players is a deciding factor and that practice in game situations is not always possible because of this.”

It is hoped that this year’s teams will form a core for the 1987/88 season. Coaching staff are devising a winter training programme. The aim? To win the 1988 Inter-Services Tournament of course!



“Can you feel it”

— Storky (in the dugout)

“Cool Charm” Beatty Cup winning team of 1973/74 — Phil Packer

“What Goes on Tour, Stays on Tour” what a load of rubbish

— Grant Childs

“Iceman Come on Down” — Fort Dorset, November 1989

“As the sun rose, in came the sunlight, which brought your attention to the exposed bums in the beds”

— an un-named team official

“Its slow spinny stuff ya dork” — D. Rea 1989

“Dat a boy - girl” — Chaz or Rik

“I didn’t realise our bat boy was a girl”

— Grant, 1992





“Overraaated” (directed at Bubba Rea)
— Mike Te Hau 1991

“Hey ya big Carp” — Mike Te Hau 1991

“I’d like to thank all of the teams for turning up, so we had someone to beat” Inter-Regional Tournament prize giving at Linton 1994 — Darren Rea (Southern Captain)

“Oh, what was wrong with that, was it too straight”? — Darren Rea (questioning one of his pitches that was very close to the plate)

“I would prefer it if you would not swear guy’s” — Vica Flynn 1997

“Meeeeeeehhhhhh, go the GOAT” — Vica Flynn

“Anyone for a Cupacinnno”? — Mike Norris 1998 Woodbourne

“I’m going into town to tend to my stray flock.” — Ra 1998 (speaking to Jenni outside the taxi van heading into Blenheim)



“Mate our girls were angels, they did no wrong!”
— Bruce McNabb (Army Women’s Coach)

“I was breast feeding Sophie in the dugout in between innings at Rosedale Park in 2001 Inter-Services Tournament”
— Jenni Mumm

Bottom of the 7th, the scores were locked at 3 – 3, Roy Seaman up to bat with 1 out and a runner on first. “Boom” towering home run, Army win’s 5 – 3.

“Yep, without a doubt, that would have to be the biggest homerun that I have ever hit”
— Roy Seaman 1974 at Papakura Camp

“Hey, can I borrow some money for drinks, I’ve lost my wallet”
— Baron to Mark Anderson 1977

“Whats up ball bags” — Rik Morgan

Oh no ! it's number 27"

"Bbrrrt! Bbrrrt!Bbrrrt! Bbrrrt! Hello,hey Ra its the Bull Pen" — Mike Te Hau 1997



“Those bloody Navy barracks all look the same at night” — Doon 1999

“Beauty beauty beauty boyz” — Fingers

“The love muscle” — Ra Thompson 2003

“My alarm clocks not working properly”
— Scrappy 2003

“Get in the Hole” — Richmond barracks, Sydney 2004

“Really choked with that one” (being named Patron in 2004) — John Eagar

“We had a darn good lesson in sliding into base from Kina, before we ended up breaking our necks. This sliding caper was news to us.” — Una Chadwick (Owen) 1961

“Never mind Buck - Bring back Ngaruawahia”
— Alex

“The barracuda is dead - I hope” — Alex

“I so wanted to hurt Tui for her crap calls”
— Alex

“Raz - what a dag. She was the smallest on the team yet she wore the biggest pants”
— Bruce McNabb (Army Women’s Coach)



“No further comment on the van incident, guilty as charged.” — Roy

“I did get a bunt off Kevin Herlihy (the greatest), but it cost me a peeled back finger nail.”
— Allan Sinclair 1972

“Alan Shirley never brought a beer, he was always brought drinks”
— Stu Neshausen 1973/74

“Jeez you have a small willy Darren”
— Grunta, Messines

“Telephone call... bring in the lefty”
— the Dre 1997

“Millie, your challenge is to...” — QEII Park
Chch — Grant 1998

“Bang bang bang - Yeah Baby!” — The Dre 1999

“What are your names” asks the bouncer seriously. “We’re not going to tell you!” the two offenders reply. “Right, Person A and Person B, you are both banned from these premises for 12 months” the bouncer replies and writes up a form (the NZDF Men’s Team were about to enter a bar at the end of the Nth Western Motorway Auckland)
— 2000 National Provincials.

“Starkies” (human whales surfacing for air in the pool) — Mule and Ra at Messines, 2003 Inter-Regionals

“The Mangina” — Ra Thompson

“Unleash the fury!” — Nozz 2003

“Ngati Dreads” — TC 2003

Heavy snoring rocks one of the men’s team room ...“F@#! sakes Padre!” (a shoe is thrown, then another) snoring stops, but not for long. — Smally (the coach), Philomel 2005

Picture this: It’s the 5th inning of the last game of the tournament. The pitcher asks his catcher “Hey, what are the signals again”? Nice one Mule! — TK 2007

“Bunny, there are 24 bottles of bourbon in the wardrobe and you are the only one with Rum. Are you gay? we drink bourbon in this team” — Team Captain , Randwick barracks, Sydney 2007



An Army team talent scout came to the fore recommending the next best thing. The scout will remain nameless, but he has feathers?
— “Honk honk”



“Touch is a lot more fun than my previous sport” — Millie (a misquotation by Barry Ellison (Army News))

“Sigor”! (Japanese slang “Sugoi” meaning very good)
— Mike Norris, 2002 Inter-Regionals



“Camaraderie is what the Forces have over civilian teams, there is nothing like it (both Combined Services and NZ Defence Force Softball)”
— Patron of Army Softball, John Eagar September 2009

“Incy Wincy Spider” (climbed out of the barrack window and down the water spout)
— Bec’s barrack room escape, Sydney 2004

”Lets go back up the sunshine mountain”
— Alex

“The annual softball tournaments were the hi-light of my 24 years” — Alex Whittaker

Nobody could do the “Bus Stop” like the NZ Army women - the Aussies tried it but didn’t even come close

Chrissie Paenui standing on a beer crate at the end of the bar leaner - that’s why they call her “shorty” or was that “Ewok”?

“I only saw the end of what happened in the kitchen due to me discovering a baseball player emptying his dinner in the storage cupboard. I think he may have got a little lost?” — Jenni 1998



Nannette Grant (1970 – 1980)

- ▶ Joined the Army in 1970
- ▶ Played for Southern Region for duration of Army Career (10 years)
- ▶ Selected for Army and Combined Services teams
- ▶ Played for Nelson at National Tournaments
- ▶ Coached Southern Region (Men 1978/79) to victory for points towards the Command Trophy
- ▶ Position – Pitcher

Nan recalls that in 1978/79 the Inter-Regional tournament was held in Burnham. “My memory is of coaching this Southern Region Men’s Team to win the Army Tournament.”

“Southern had not won for some time and of course I had Tiny Hill bearing down on me with even more pressure as he needed us to win to get the points for the overall Command trophy for the Southern Region”.

“Thankfully, we won both the men’s and women’s that year in Burnham and I was in Tiny’s good books for a long time as I captained the women and coached the men”.

Nan was very knowledgeable and passionate about softball. As our team captain she ‘led from the front’, her pep talks were simple and along the lines of “do as I do and do as I say”. “Play your best and enjoy the game”.

She always encouraged and motivated the team and had the rare ability to make new players feel important.

If we won, that was a bonus. If we didn’t, we should have!



NEW ZEALAND ARMY SLOW-PITCH SOFTBALL SINGAPORE 1975-76



BACK ROW : W.S. KYLE, B. I. MELLISH, C. D. JACKSON, B. S. DAVIS, G. L. ELSEMORE, G. M. NEWTON.
FRONT ROW : M. L. HOLLINGSWORTH (SCORER), B. J. CLARK, P. K. HOLLINGSWORTH (MANAGER),
A. V. TAMEHANA (CAPT), W. S. NESHAUSEN (COACH), P. J. WHEELER, J. L. ONEROA.
INSETS : W. H. COOPER, P. R. JANE, W. R. DAVEY, D. M. TAMEHANA (SCORER).

REUNIONS AND THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY

Written by various ex-members

Sport in the New Zealand Army is an integral part of developing and fostering team work. Since the end of the Second World War, sport within the Army has brought service men and women together in competition and enjoyment.

Meeting up again with old friends is a special occasion. For some people, it doesn't matter how long the time has been since you last met, because meeting up again is just like it was yesterday. It is also a great opportunity to meet new people.

It is fair to say that camaraderie in Army softball is the single most lasting impression that our current and ex-members regularly talk about, in particular - the good old days.

1995 THE FIRST REUNION

It is believed that Army softball's pioneer Maurice Bull, generated interest to hold an Army softball "Old Timers" reunion. He, along with fellow Army softballers Des Hammond and Tommy Keong, did the majority of the organisation and administration. It was decided that the reunion would be held in Palmerston North over a weekend in January 1995. Tommy Keong contacted some of his former Army softballers (Una Chadwick and Huia Niall) who were at the time, employed at Linton Military, to see what could be done. Maurie drove from Levin up to Linton Camp to see Una and Huia to make a start with the reunion organisation. They gave him all of

the names they could remember. There was a limited budget, so they basically sent out letters and a lot of contact was by word of mouth. Everyone that was approached seemed to be interested.

Maurie Bull had organised a softball team, from his former club Johnsonville, to travel up to Palmerston to play the Old Timers selection at Colquhoun Park. Des had organised some of the finance from down in Lower Hutt and had trophies manufactured for the game.

On Friday the 21 January 1995, the reunion began with a gathering at the Palmerston North RSA for a few warm up drinks before Saturday's game.

The game was a social affair, with several rusty swings seen and not too many stolen bases, but a great opportunity to get together again – on the diamond. Two mixed teams were assembled from who attended and Charlie Elkington was the umpire. Una Chadwick recalls, "That game was hilarious. Most of us hadn't played for years and were all a bit short-sighted to catch the ball, it was fun though."

For the record, the Old Timers team were beaten by Johnsonville, but off the diamond, Johnsonville had their work cut out for them as the Old Timers were just warming up getting into third gear.

A meeting was held to discuss the way ahead and the possibility of organising a second reunion. It was decided that a second reunion would be held the following year.



The first reunion Old Timers team (above) and the BBQ at the Chadwicks house (below).



According to softballers who were at this reunion, the weekend will be remembered for the massive party that was held at Eddie and Una Chadwicks house around the para pool (BBQ and drinks).

On the Sunday, the attendees said their goodbyes and headed home with fond memories and a few sore muscles and aching livers.

“The attendees said their goodbyes and headed home with fond memories ...”

1996 THE SECOND REUNION

One year later, Sergeant Tai Hiroti (an Army softball scorer posted to Linton Camp) was approached to see if he could help organise the reunion. With good local knowledge and contacts, Tai was fortunate to utilise the facilities within Linton Camp, such as the Jock Quinn Bar and the sports fields.

On 21 January 1996, the second Army softball reunion began with a gathering at the Jock Quinn for a few ales to dust off the memories and catch up on old times.

The following day, the Army softball “Old Timers” put their gloves on again and moved out onto the diamond marked on the Linton Camp sports fields (next to the gymnasium). Their opposition was a mixed team made up of predominately Linton Camp softball players. The game was a little more seriously contested compared to the first reunion, but none the less, the backs, knees and arms were given a good going over. Following the game, all in attendance took a short walk to the Jock Quinn bar and made themselves comfortable for the rest of the afternoon and evening.

1999 THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY

On 23 January 1999, the Army softball “Old Timers” got together once again to celebrate 50 years of softball in the Army.

The reunion was in Linton, but this time the facilities used were the Community Centre for the AGM, the school fields for the game and the Linton Conference Centre for the dinner. For those who were feeling keen, a bus was provided to take attendees around Linton Military Camp to look back at units and buildings that they were involved with. But, for those attendees with a terrible thirst, they remained at the Conference Centre bar for rehabilitation. The evening’s programme at the Conference Centre was a karaoke and of course more time to catch up with each other.

At the AGM meeting during the reunion, Roy Seaman offered to arrange the next reunion at Turangi. But, unfortunately, before that reunion could become a reality, Roy shifted to Aussie. Una Chadwick says, “This was bad luck and we didn’t get around to arranging another. I felt very sorry for Maurice Bull and Tommy Keong as they wanted ... weekends to continue, we let them down. But the two we had were great events and many stories were re-told. Storky still has a sore shoulder from attempting a throw to second during his short time as catcher.”

Hold onto your helmet and bat and let’s fast forward to 2009.

2009 NZ ARMY SOFTBALL 60TH ANNIVERSARY

Written by Captain Grant McCarroll

At the 2006 annual Army Softball Code Meeting, WO2 Doon Groves reminded those present that it was in 1949 at Trentham Camp that softball was first introduced into the NZ Army. That reminder to the committee was the catalyst behind the 60th Anniversary being included in the five-year strategic plan, and so

the planning commenced to celebrate 60 years of Army softball.

A big part of the initial planning was to capture our history, as this had never been recorded. All the stories of great victories, Simon Koko’s 40 ounce “kaurie stump”, Vila Milo stepping backwards when she pitched were just that, stories, nothing recorded and very few photos. Our own resident self-appointed historian Doon Groves took on the mammoth task of capturing the history of Army softball. Doon has literally travelled the country, spent countless hours on the phone interviewing former legends of the game, putting together numerous photos and of course was the driving force behind the establishment of the Army softball website.

In order to ensure the 60th Anniversary would be as well organised as possible a carefully selected organising committee was formed, ensuring representation across the eras. The implementation of the Anniversary plan commenced in the New Year, and monthly committee meetings have been held throughout the year to ensure the plan has remained on track. One thing is for certain, all those that attend will reminisce the nights away and relish in the opportunity to relive those tales of the past and rekindle old friendships and with that will come a great time had by all.

I would personally like to thank the organising committee of Doon Groves, Phil Packer, Winnie Shanley and Storky Gilbert for the time and effort they have put into ensuring the Anniversary would be a success.

Below: The Anniversary Committee, Phil, Winnie, Grant and Doon.



EXTRA INNINGS

Written by Dean Groves

We have almost finished team (Army softball whanau). The end of the ball game is upon us and the tournament bar is awaiting you all.

We have covered a great deal in this journal, the first of its kind in Army sport and Defence Force softball. This journal has documented and helped refresh our memories of the achievements, tournament venues and stories of the people who have been involved with softball in the Army at all levels.

Looking back over softball's 60 years in the Army, I think that the softballers were made pretty tough in the early days. The catchers and umpires did not initially wear chest protection or leg guards and groin protection for the catchers was unheard of. They were either really brave in those days or were not planning on having children!

Travelling to and from tournaments was by bus, train and the ferry (in full SDs), making for a long and tiresome journey just to get there let alone then playing a number of games.

“Looking back over softball's 60 years in the Army, I think that the softballers were made pretty tough ...”

Gone are the days when Service teams at the tournament bar would not mix or mingle well with the other Services. Thankfully, the introduction of the NZ Police into the Inter-Services Tournament, not only strengthened the competition but also helped to break down the social barriers between the Services.

Looking into softball's past in the Army (and the Defence Force for that matter) has helped build an awareness of where we have come from, which will strengthen our journey in the future.

Today's Army softball teams have developed team resource kits that list the goals, objectives, ethics and values, which all team members are expected to 'buy into' and live whilst they wear the Army softball pocket. Whenever we represent Army softball in competition, we are not only playing for our team, our Service and ourselves, we are also playing for all of the former Army softballers who have paved the way for us today.

There is an increasing challenge to inspire service personnel to participate in sport and to have a full compliment of teams at our tournaments. Encouraging this participation and recruiting new members is a top priority for the Army Softball Committee to ensure that softball continues to be an approved Army sport.

Donning the Army jersey (the “red jersey”) is an honour, and this is certainly reinforced to all new members of Army softball. Each player is presented their jersey by the team manager at a small team ceremony held at the training camp prior to the Inter-Services Tournament.

The recent introduction of Army softball souvenirs, is slowly, but surely, helping to strengthen our member's affiliation and the promotion of softball within the Army.

The NZ Army softball coin was introduced in 2005 and symbolises the values, ethos and camaraderie of NZ Army Softball. Initially,

only personnel selected to represent the Army teams were eligible to purchase the coin. But now that has changed so that any past or present member who has been involved with Army softball in some way can own the coin.



In 2008, Army softball produced its own logo. The logo is based on the Army Crest and incorporates the Army Lion wearing the Royal Crown, which have both been part of the Army Crest since the early 1950s. The logo also has the wording “Softball Pride”, which is the most



appropriate description of the affiliation to Army softball.

There have been some amazing friendships formed through the tournaments within the Services, some that have lasted a lifetime. This is what arguably sets Defence Force softball apart from other external softball organisations. Opportunities to assemble and reminisce about the good old days are rarely turned down, and when meeting a former team mate or Service rival it is just like you had never parted.

An example of this softball friendship occurred at the 2004 Men's World Softball Championships in Christchurch. Former Combined Services and Service team softballers kept crossing paths during the initial stages of the tournament. So, it was decided that a Combined Services get together would be advertised in the

Below: 2004 Combined Services Reunion.



tournament's daily flier. Sure enough, a couple of days later, a large crowd of former Service softballers assembled at the ball park before the days first game to reunite and catch up. What a fantastic and unique softball family to be part of.

When you ask an ex-service person what they miss the most about the Army, the most common answer is that they miss the camaraderie. To find examples of this look no further than an Inter-Regional or Inter-Services Tournament, both on and off the diamond. The

tournament competition is ferocious (it is them against us (Army)), but we leave that mindset on the diamond, because after the game we are mates again.

In 2007, three service softballers announced before the Inter-Services Tournament, that they were taking their release. So, senior members within each team got together and decided that a farewell for those members was appropriate. Following the final game of the tournament, the three individuals were brought over to the area around home plate



Above: In 2007, Army and Air Force team members perform the haka.

on diamond one at Fraser Park. Standing in the cold rain, they were told to turn and face into the diamond. As they did, a large group of softballers moved towards them and began a fierce haka directed at them.

This outpouring of emotion and respect personifies the strong camaraderie and culture within Defence Force softball today – long may it last.

Family connections are a regular occurrence within the Army, but in softball these occurrences are quite rare. In 2008, at the

naming ceremony for the Army Men's Team at Burnham Camp, two of the new caps selected into the team were following in their father's softball footsteps.

Kevin Packers father Phil, was a regular part of Army softball from the 1970s to the 1990s. He was a player, coach and Code Chairman during that time. Kevin said, "I was over the moon. I just knew Dad would be really proud to hear my good news."

"Family connections are a regular occurrence within the Army, but in softball these occurrences are quite rare"

Joshua Hohua's father Grant was a member of the Army Men's Team in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

An expectation of the Army Softball Committee is that its members will, when the time is right, come forward and volunteer to put something back into the game. The committee is extremely grateful to those members who have given up, and continue to give up, their free time to assist softball organisations such as age group, camp and local association teams.



Phil Packer



Kevin Packer



Grant Hohua



Joshua Hohua



Above: The 2003 Waiouru United Junior Softball Club.



Above: Burnham Camp softballers hosted the NZ Black Sox prior to the 2004 World Championships in Christchurch.



Above: 2004 USA Team at Burnham Camp.

The historical information Army softball has collected over the last 4 years represents the background, results and personal stories of a unique group of Army sporting men and women. The project to preserve this precious information will ensure it is never lost or forgotten. It is hoped that the next generation of Army softballers will appreciate softball's past achievements and the people that have helped forged it will continue to record the history for the years to come.



Above: Gathering Army softballs past through interviews with its former members like John Eagar.

Win or lose, our culture of showing "class when we win and class when we lose" will be instilled into each player who wears the Army pocket for softball. Rest assured, Army softball will do everything it can to maintain our winning record, as the drinks always taste better when you win.



Above: Presenting softballs 2007 successes to Chief of Army.



Above: 2007 Inter-Regional Top Batters Trevor King and Clayton Willocks.



Above: The 2008 Inter-Service Champions – Army.

THANK YOU

On behalf of the Army Softball Committee, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to those people who provided photographs, tournament programmes, articles and comments towards the preservation of our softball history. Softball's interesting history is now preserved on the internet and in this journal for all to look back on, enjoy and treasure in the years to come.

I would personally like to thank Trevor "Storky" Gilbert for all of the work he has done behind the scenes contacting ex players and officials and keeping the softball link between the past and the present firmly fixed.

To my wife Michelle. Thank you for allowing me to convert our lounge into the journal and anniversary "mission control" for the past 4 months. The production of the journal totally consumed me, it was a massive task and I could not have imagined the amount of work it would take. Writing articles is not my forte and the countless hours spent hunched over the computer keyboard was tough. Thank you for also giving up your own free time to proof read and correct the "scramble" that I wrote.



We can now go back to being a normal family again, until the next journal – only joking!

Another thank you that I must mention is to Winnie Shanley, who I asked at the 11th hour to help proof read the journal. Winnie never batted an eyelid and did a great job. So, thank you Winnie.

Thank you also to Amy Trlin at the Defence Communications Group in Wellington for transforming all of the articles and photographs into this spectacular journal. I am extremely impressed with the finished product, the journal is now a reality.

LAST WORD

I am sure that the 60th Anniversary reunion at Trentham in November 2009 will be a memorable occasion for all of the attendees.

So, until we meet again at the next impromptu gathering or at an organised reunion.

Yours in Army Softball.

That's the ballgame folks!

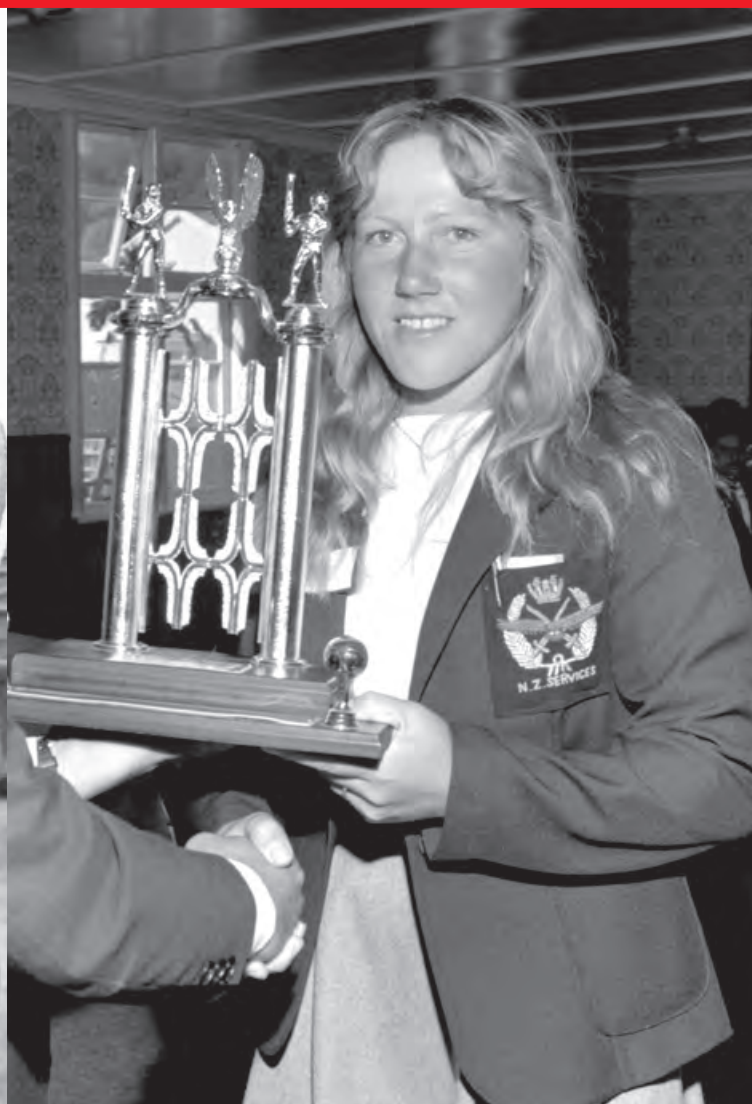
Dean Groves

Softballer and retired Editor



AUTOGRAPHS

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NZ ARMY **SOFTBALL**

60TH ANNIVERSARY 1949 - 2009