



# DESPATCHES

*Newsletter of the Queen's Redoubt Trust*

ISSN 2324-5271

## CHAIRMAN'S COMMENT

It has been a while since the Queen's Redoubt Trust' produced a Newsletter but our Secretary/Treasurer Ian Barton has taken on the role of Editor, with a view to promoting QRT's objectives and encouraging more people and organisations to support the project. Since acquiring the property in 2002, the main focus has been on rebuilding the ditch and bank plus archaeological excavations in 2004 and 2009. After a seven year 'battle' we finally acquired the paper road on the south side of the property in 2012, when the Waikato District Council vested management of the area in QRT. This expanded our landholding by 25% and has provided better access and car parking outside the redoubt itself. Now we are about to commence an exciting new stage of the project to erect a representative 1860's barracks building, inside the redoubt and adjacent to the west entrance. The Trust would like to begin construction later this year. Half the building will contain a small interpretation/display centre, the balance being for artefact storage and curation and a small library. The Trust is hopeful the building itself will 'advertise the site' and create more interest for school groups and interested

visitors, and encourage more local residents to become involved.

Neville Ritchie



**Sign at entrance to Queens Redoubt**

with portion of West wall behind

## THE BUILDING OF QUEEN'S REDOUBT in 1862

The first mention of Queen's Redoubt in the written record was that the construction of the redoubt at Pokeno (later called Queen's Redoubt) and a stockade overlooking the landing place on the Waikato river (Bluff) were ordered in April 1862. (1) In the Daily Southern Cross of 9 May 1862 we read that "it is understand that a redoubt will be erected some three miles this side of the Waikato". Another record appears in the 1862 'Digest of Service of the 65th Rgt, (1st Bn)'. "A detachment of 2 companies under Lieut Colonel Murray marched to Pokeno near the Waikato River where an outpost was established called Queens Redoubt on 1st June". On 13 June 1862 Lt Col Gamble (deputy QMG) reported that "Lt Gen Cameron visited Queens's Redoubt from Selby's Farm where work of excavating the ditch and constructing banquettes (firing steps) has begun. This redoubt will be 100 yards square with a caponniere at each of two opposite angles for the defence of the ditch. A commissariat store, hospital and huts for the accommodation of troops will be provided inside" (2). By January 1863 he reported that, "Huts in course of construction at Bluff and

Queen's Redoubt were occupied as soon as completed and all men under cover by 28 Sept 1862. From November 1862 the extension of the road from the Redoubt to the Waikato River began. Work directed by Col Mould RE. All timber for the huts at QR was cut and sawn in the neighbourhood". (2)

The first full description of Queen's Redoubt is found in the NZ Herald of 20 November 1863; "There is the redoubt 300 feet square with its ditch 10 or 12 feet across and a height of 16 feet from the bottom of the ditch to the parapet, quite inaccessible, I should think, to any enemy without artillery. Inside are clustered wooden offices and tents and spread round outside are the tents of detachments of the 65th and 40th Regts and the Artillery. Stretching away, right and left are excellent metalled roads, and for some little distance along them wooden and iron buildings stand and are still in course of erection. Queen's Redoubt is now pretty full with rows of tents extending on the road towards the Naval camp".

(1) Jnl of the Auckland Historical Soc. (4) April 1964  
(2) Jnls of the Deputy QM General in New Zealand. 1864

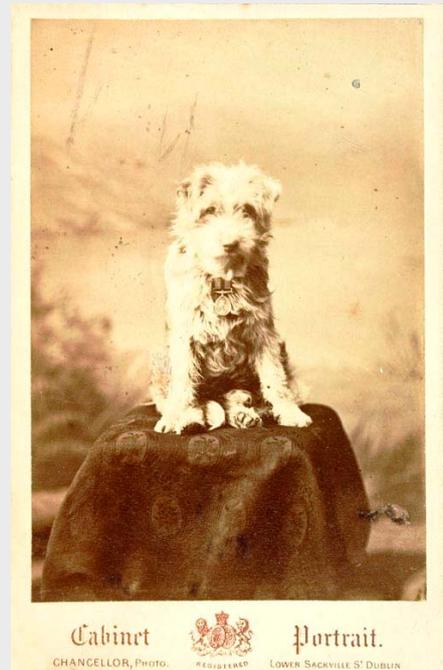
## P o k e n o

While making enquiries for information on the 50th (Queen's Own) regiment of Foot, I was astounded to receive a copy of the photograph on the right, along with the following inscription.

To the Dog Pokeno  
Born in New Zealand  
1863  
Died at Kinsale  
Oct. 20. 1876  
For 13 years He  
Followed the Colours  
Of the 50th Queen's Own

The inscription was from a granite slab found in a field beside the Kinsale Barracks, which are adjacent to Fort Charles at Kinsale, on the south coast of Cork. It seems that after returning from New Zealand and Australia in 1869, the regiment was located in England and Ireland until 1881 when it was amalgamated with the 97th Regiment of Foot.

Details of the inscription were found in the Queen's Own Gazette but no publication date was given. However, from the information above, it was probably between 1876 and 1881. The remarkable thing about this photograph, obviously taken before 1876, is that Pokeno has remained remarkably still for the up to one minute period of exposure required at the time. No doubt he learned this while standing on parade with the regiment!



**Pokeno -wearing his New Zealand service medal**

## C o n s t r u c t i o n   r e p o r t

***The Trust always needs more active members, so please contact Ian Barton 09 239 2049, if you have an interest in the project.***

After Queen's Redoubt was decommissioned in 1868, the buildings were offered for sale by tender. Over the years, without maintenance, the original defensive banks gradually slumped and the deep defensive ditch became infilled, but it took two further earthmoving efforts c1900 and c1960 on behalf of the then landowners for the ditch to be completely infilled so that by the end of the twentieth century only a shallow swale marked the line of the ditch. One of the QRT's first objectives was to reinstate the ditch and bank defensive works within the QRT property (3 sides of the original square redoubt) by digging out all the fill in the ditch and rebuilding the defensive banks, but this time to ensure they stay together the banks have been rebuilt using geogrid gabions to contain the fill. This work has occupied Trust members on monthly working bees for some 8 years from 2004 to the present. Initially all the work was done with picks and shovels and wheelbarrows, but in late 2005, the Trust acquired a tractor with front bucket and back blade which has made the task a lot

easier and quicker. An excavator is used to dig the fill out of the ditch itself, except for the bottom of the ditches which are excavated manually for the most part. But the job is not over, undercutting has occurred in places on the sides of the ditch under the rebuilt walls necessitating some remedial buttressing work. This will be ongoing for a year or two but the main problem areas have been fixed. Before the visitor centre/barracks building is erected, part of the west and south walls will be modified to replicate the firing step which is a feature of many redoubts.

Neville Ritchie



**North end of east wall under construction; Dec 2008**

# Friends of Queen's Redoubt

At its last meeting the Trust resolved to formally set up a group to be known as the "Friends of Queen's Redoubt". A membership database is being set up and anyone with an interest in the work of the Trust is invited to join.

Current membership fees are \$20 for individuals and \$30 for families. We are currently reviewing membership grades for organizations and when these are known it will be announced in the newsletter. At present it is suggested that any organizations that wish to join, register at the same rate (\$30) as Family members.

Please post a completed application form with a cheque for the appropriate amount to:

**I Barton, 40 Isabella Drive, Pukekohe 2120**

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

**Given Name:**

**Surname:**

**Address:**

**Telephone:**

**Email address:**

**Membership Category:**

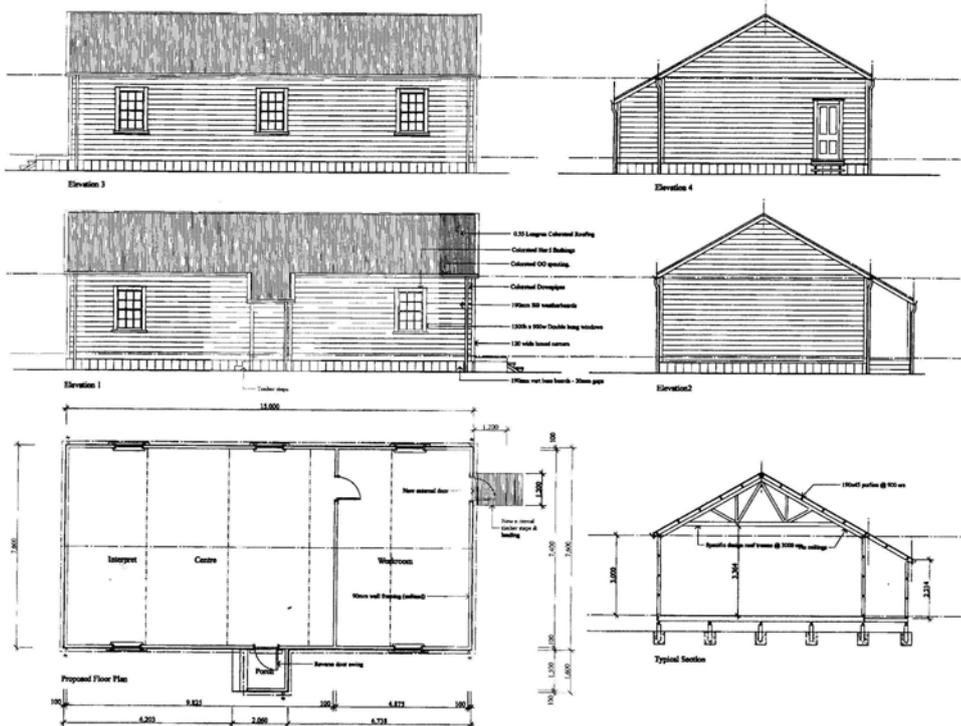
**Individual \$20      Family \$30      Organization \$30**




## Building representative Barracks at Queen's Redoubt

The Trust's next project is to erect a building just inside the south wall of the redoubt. This will be representative of the type of building used as a barracks block in the 1860's; although we cannot be sure of the exact form, since the only photographs of the redoubt show just the roof lines of the buildings inside the redoubt. The plan below has been costed at \$110,000 with power connected but no other facilities. The Trust has put \$30,000 of its own funds toward the cost of erecting the building; and has received

grants of \$60,000, from the ASB Trust, \$10,000 from the Southern Trust and at least \$10,000 from the Primary Focus Trust. When erected the building will be divided into a smaller storage / work room and a larger interpretation centre. Friends of the Redoubt will be encouraged to make their time and skills available to establish displays in this building.



## Draft Plan of Barracks

**DAVE PARSON ARCHITECTS LTD**  
14 WILSONS ROAD, HAMILTON, AUCKLAND 10

Job No: **Queen Barracks**  
Queen Barracks, Queen's Redoubt, Auckland 10

**Queen Redoubt Trust**

Drawn: JPL	Checked: SHC
Scale: 1/50	Date: 08/08/08
Project: Barracks, 3 October 2012	
Concept	
Client: QRT	Scale: As Shown @ 1/50

**CONTACT DETAILS**

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**PURPOSE OF THE TRUST**

The Queen's Redoubt Trust was established in February 1999 with the intention of acquiring this nationally significant historic place and ensuring its protection; with the long term vision to restore and develop the site into a nationally recognised visitor attraction and education centre. In February 2001 the Trust completed the first major phase of the project, raising the funds to acquire the property in Pokeno which contains much of the site of the Queen's Redoubt.

**OBJECTIVES of the TRUST**

1. To acquire the Queen's Redoubt site at Pokeno to preserve it for future generations.
2. To make Queen's Redoubt accessible to the public by development and interpretation of the site as appropriate.
3. To restore the massive earthwork 'ditch and bank' walls of the fort (they were leveled after the war) as a key interpretive feature.
4. To promote education about the Queen's Redoubt and all the New Zealand Wars between Maori and European.
5. To establish a premier visitor and educational facility on the Queen's Redoubt site. This will be carried out in conjunction with an archaeological excavation programme to maximise knowledge of the site for future exhibition and interpretation purposes, and to promote public participation in the project. At the same time, historical research will continue into Queen's Redoubt itself, the Pokeno district, the Waikato Campaign of 1863-64 and the New Zealand Wars as a whole.

## RECORDS AND ARTIFACTS IN MUSEUMS AND ARCHIVES OF IMPERIAL UNITS SERVING IN NZ

During visits to UK in 2006 and 2009 I visited the museums of the 12th, 14th and 65th Regiments plus that of the Royal Engineers. These visits have yielded useful information about the period which those units spent in NZ during the latter part of the 19th century; so I am intending to make another visit, early next year, to visit the museums and archives of the remaining eleven units . Some early contacts with these have already yielded previously unknown information (see the article about "Pokeno" on page 2) so I am hopeful that this final visit will give us even more useful information. The ultimate aim is to place all information, photographs and books into a library; to be created in the new display area of the barracks soon to be erected.

Ian Barton



**65th Regiment -The Colours with the silver table centrepiece presented by the citizens of NZ to the Regiment when it left NZ in 1865.**  
(held in the York & Lancaster Regimental museum, Rotherham)