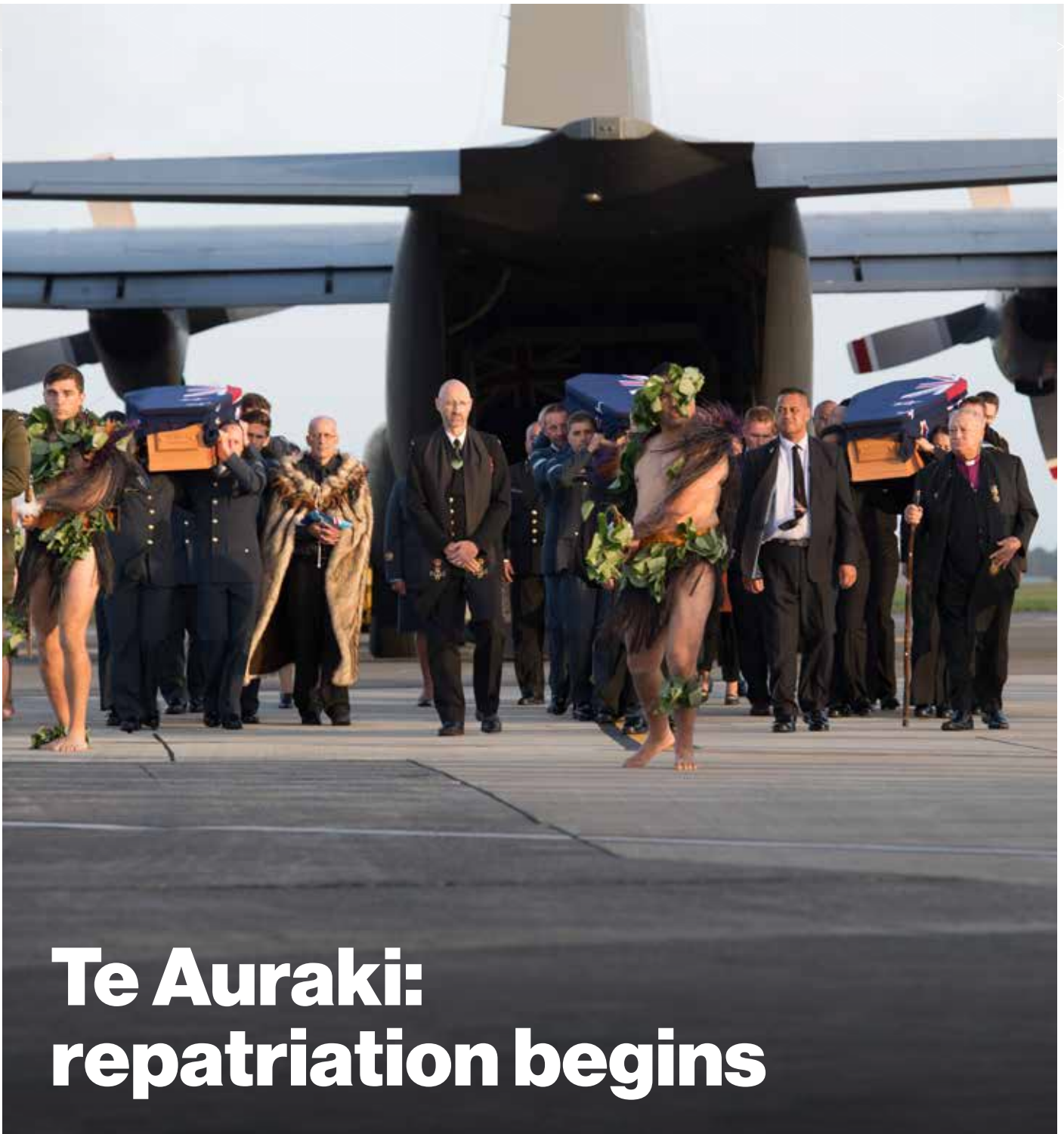


WINTER 2018



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About VA News

VA News is published four times a year by Veterans' Affairs New Zealand—Te Tira Ahu Ika a Whiro.

Our team takes care in writing great content and—to the best of our knowledge—has sourced accurate information.


The views expressed in VA News are not necessarily those of Veterans' Affairs or the New Zealand Defence Force.


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Please note our Hamilton PO Box is now closed.

Cover image: The ramp ceremony at RNZAF Base Ohakea for repatriated personnel Flight Lieutenant George Beban, Leading Aircraftman Ralph Scott and RNZN Engineering Mechanic 1st Class Russell Moore.



New Zealand Government

From the Minister for Veterans

You will have noticed a lot happening in the veteran sector since the previous issue of VA News.

Like you, I was very keen to see Professor Ron Paterson's report following his review into the operation of the Veterans' Support Act 2014. I received it in May, and have presented it to Parliament. Professor Paterson did a very thorough job, and I have thanked him personally for this. I was particularly pleased to see how closely he had listened to the veterans who made submissions to him. He has relayed your views to me very clearly in the report.

There's a lot of follow-up work to be done and this is now under way. I'm sure that the outcome of this review is going to be very positive for New Zealand veterans, as I hoped it would.

Also in May, I had the pleasure of launching a major piece of work developed by Veterans' Affairs over the past year. This was the new Veteran Rehabilitation Strategy—the first ever such strategy we have had in New Zealand. Veterans' Affairs worked closely with veteran advocate



Hon Ron Mark,
Minister for Veterans

groups and others while this work was being done.

I want to see more of this sort of collaborative approach. It shows a shared understanding of what is needed, and a shared commitment to making the final product work well—and that gives it a special strength.

I'm looking forward to seeing the difference the strategy will make to the lives of our veterans.

Ron

From the Head of Veterans' Affairs

Tēnā koutou katoa

It has certainly been an eventful start to 2018. In my last message, I mentioned that we would be conducting our annual client survey. This was rolled out by an independent provider at the end of April and I would like to thank everyone who completed the survey. Your feedback is important to us. I have read all your comments and will be using the information to improve our services to you.

In May, Hon Ron Mark, Minister for Veterans, launched the first Veteran Rehabilitation Strategy. This is a major initiative for providing rehabilitative support. It makes available to those who have been injured or become ill because of their service to New Zealand, modern, targeted and high quality rehabilitation. A plan of action has been developed covering the next



Bernadine Mackenzie,
Head of Veterans' Affairs

two years and this will sit alongside the strategy. We have a clear aim and we want to ensure that our New Zealand veterans get the best rehabilitative support available.

The story of the caskets for the Unknown Warrior

In November 2004, the remains of New Zealand's Unknown Warrior were returned to the care of New Zealand from Caterpillar Valley near Longueval in France—the site of the Battle of the Somme.



The remains were laid to rest at the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior at Pukeahu National War Memorial Park. This significant event marked the courage and sacrifice made by thousands of New Zealanders during the First World War, and all conflicts since.

Robert (Bob) Jones—a veteran who served in Malaya, Borneo and Vietnam—was given the honour of carving the casket which would hold the remains of New Zealand's Unknown Warrior.

A qualified cabinet maker, Bob rejoined the building and joinery trade following his military service, eventually working for Westland Funeral Services in Greymouth. It was during his time with Westland Funeral Services, that Bob was asked to carve three kauri caskets. The outer and inner caskets were sent to Caterpillar Valley Cemetery to collect the remains of the Unknown Warrior. The third casket was donated to Te Mata Toa—the National Army Museum—after having been used for training purposes and held as a spare until the return of the remains had been completed.

Bob undertook careful research connecting the timber and symbols he used to New Zealand's military history. During the making of the caskets, Bob showed in his actions what these caskets meant to him as a soldier and as a cabinet maker.

Bob was formally invited earlier this year to attend the national Anzac Day commemorations in Wellington. Bob attended both the Dawn Service and the Civic Service and was formally acknowledged at both services for his creation and craftsmanship of the caskets for the Unknown Warrior.




Bob in 1967

The carving of the caskets continues to hold special significance for Bob. He served in Victor One (V1) in Viet Nam, and four soldiers from this company were killed while on operations. Viet Nam—and all 37 New Zealand lives lost during the Viet Nam War—are represented in the carvings on the caskets.

A copy of the strategy is available on our website at www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz/rehabilitation-strategy.

Also in May, I was honoured to attend the repatriation ceremony at RNZAF Base Ohakea, to welcome home three of our Service personnel who lost their lives abroad in Fiji and American Samoa. Flight Lieutenant George Thomas Beban MBE, Engineering Mechanic 1st Class Russell James Craig More and Leading Aircraftsman Ralph Henry Scott, had been buried where they served. The repatriation ceremony was extremely moving for all who attended and none more so, than for the whānau and loved ones of those who have made the final journey home.

**Ka maumahara tonu tātou
ki a rātou
We will remember them**



“This is a time when the inequalities and inconsistencies of the past are put right and everyone is treated the same, regardless of wealth, rank or cause of death.”

Repatriation begins

Three New Zealand military personnel repatriated from Fiji and American Samoa were returned to their families at a ramp ceremony at Royal New Zealand Air Force (RNZAF) Base Ohakea in May.

An RNZAF C-130H(NZ) Hercules returned RNZAF Flight Lieutenant George Beban and Leading Aircraftman Ralph Scott from Fiji and Royal New Zealand Navy Engineering Mechanic 1st Class Russell Moore from American Samoa.

This is the first tranche of repatriations as part of the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) Te Auraki project. Te Auraki—meaning “The Return” in English—will see the families of New Zealand military personnel, and their dependants, buried overseas after 1 January 1955 offered the opportunity to repatriate their loved ones.

This decision came as the result of recommendations made by the Veterans’ Advisory Board.

The ramp ceremony was attended by relatives of those being repatriated, Minister for Veterans Hon Ron Mark, the Head of Veterans’ Affairs and senior NZDF officers. Senior representatives from Fiji and the

United States were also invited to the event, as well as members of the veteran communities.

The repatriated personnel were received with a traditional Māori welcome, before being carried past a guard of honour and handed back to their families.

A short private family service was held, followed by the NZDF haka.

RNZAF Group Captain Carl Nixon said the ceremony marked a big milestone in the mission to bring home 37 NZDF personnel buried around the world.

“This is a significant moment in New Zealand’s military history, as we honour the lives of three NZDF personnel who died serving their country in foreign lands and more importantly bring them home to their families, who have waited more than 60 years to be re-united,” Group Captain Nixon said.

“This is a time when the inequalities and inconsistencies of the past are put right and everyone is treated the same, regardless of wealth, rank or cause of death.”

Families will reinter their relative at a place and time of their choosing in New Zealand.

The NZDF will not conduct military funerals because all of the deceased had military funerals before their interment.

Families will be offered some NZDF support, such as chaplains, buglers and pall-bearers as required.

Remains will be reinterred at Service, public, or private cemeteries depending on family preferences and the Service person’s qualifying service. Memorials—headstones or plaques—will be provided and \$1000 will be given towards a headstone for those who wish for their relative to be interred in a public/private cemetery.

The NZDF deployed an expert disinterment team of bioarchaeologists, forensic anthropologists from Otago University and NZDF odontologists (dentists) to carry out the repatriation process. The team is led by an NZDF doctor.

Planning is already under way for the next tranche of repatriations from Malaysia and Singapore. The NZDF anticipates repatriating 29 Service personnel and one child from Malaysia, and one from Singapore. They are due to arrive in New Zealand in August.

Rehabilitation strategy launched

Minister for Veterans Hon Ron Mark hosted a function at Parliament on 23 May to launch New Zealand's first strategy that sets out how rehabilitation services will be offered to veterans.

Veterans' Affairs has been leading the work to develop the strategy over the past year. Along with the RNZRSA and No Duff, and Government agencies and non-Government organisations, they focused on identifying what was going to be needed to make rehabilitation work for veterans.

"The starting point was our belief every veteran who has been injured or made ill because of service has the right to live the best possible life," said Veterans' Affairs head Bernadine Mackenzie. "We then had to work out how to make this something that would be more than just words, and that would actually happen."

The new strategy accepts that service-related illnesses and injuries are not all the same. While some may be physical, up to one-sixth of those who go on deployments could develop some form of mental illness. The strategy can offer help in both areas.

It also recognises that rehabilitation can be many different things. For a person with a physical injury it could be help from a physiotherapist. Those dealing with psychological issues might find that counselling or medical treatment—or a combination of the two—might help them get their lives back on an even keel. For a person wanting to be as independent as possible—or to return to employment—the focus might be on social or vocational rehabilitation.

"We think it's important that our strategy provides something for older veterans, as well as younger people recovering from injuries," Bernadine

told VA News. "Those who served in the Second World War, Korea, Malaya, or Vietnam might have illnesses or injuries that they've quietly coped with for many years. They might have now come to a stage in their lives where they need some support to deal with these problems—and our rehabilitation strategy is able to offer that to them".

Veterans' Affairs has trained rehabilitation advisors on staff. Advisors work with veterans individually to find out what they might need. Then—between them—they'll agree on a personal plan that spells out how each person can reach their specific goals.

If you feel the strategy might be able to help you, get in touch with Veterans' Affairs and see what could be available.

You can access the strategy online at www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz/rehabilitation-strategy

Chat with Pat

VA News: *It's a busy time of year for you and your team Pat. Thank you for sitting down with us. As we reach the middle of the year, what's the focus for you and your teams?*

Pat: Our priority is to get support such as medical alarms in place as quickly as possible. We're particularly mindful of this given the risk of falls during the winter months here in New Zealand.

VA News: *What's been one of common misconceptions you've heard recently?*

Pat: I've been hearing a lot lately that you need to have a condition accepted as service-related to get support from us. This isn't quite correct.

While you need—in most situations—to have a service-related condition to receive impairment or income compensation from us, we have a number of other ways we can provide support.

The Veterans' Independence Programme provides a number of services to veterans with qualifying service, such as lawn and garden

Pat Povey is a familiar reassuring face—or voice—to many who interact with Veterans' Affairs. Starting off as a Case Manager, she later became a Case Management Team Leader. Pat is now the Manager Veterans' Services and looks after the case management, enquiry line and rehabilitation teams.

VA News sat down recently with Pat in the first of a new quarterly series—'Chat with Pat'.



maintenance or medical alarms. The exact services a veteran can get depend on their unique circumstances, so it's best to get in touch with us to talk about how we might be able to help.

We're also able to provide financial contributions to support veterans returning to their place of qualifying service. I always enjoy hearing stories and seeing pictures from veterans who have revisited the places where they've served New Zealand. It can really provide a sense of closure.

VA News: *We're now approaching the middle of winter here in New Zealand. During the winter months a lot of kiwis visit their local medical centre. What is your top tip for veterans to discuss with their health care professional?*

Pat: Tell them you're a veteran if you haven't already. I'd really encourage veterans to talk to their doctor, community nurse or needs assessor. Let them know you are a veteran as there may be support we can provide over and above that available from their local District Health Board.

VA News: *Great tip Pat—thanks. Any final thoughts for our readers?*

Pat: While you need—in most situations—to have a service-related condition to receive impairment or income compensation from us, we have a number of other ways we can provide support.

If you haven't spoken to us in a while, please do not hesitate to give us a call if you have any questions or concerns.

Do your loved ones know your end of life preferences and wishes?

For many people, talking about death with family, whānau and friends isn't something that comes naturally, but it should be. Things can be greatly eased for loved ones when they understand more about what's happening following a death and what someone's wishes are.



Te Hokinga ā Wairua End of Life Service is a new, free, online service, that provides the information and tools someone needs to create a personalised plan for their preferences, which they can print or download to share with people they choose. It's easy to add information to the plan, such as important details and contacts, insurance, wills and funeral or memorial service wishes.

The service also provides guidance for those experiencing the loss of a loved one, with a clear and concise timeline of what to do in the days, weeks and months following the death.

Te Hokinga ā Wairua End of Life Service has been developed as a cross-agency initiative to make a meaningful difference to people's lives. It has been carefully crafted to meet people's needs for access to clear and impartial information about their options, both to encourage and assist people to get organised, and to help guide those through the difficult experience of losing a loved one.

Talking about personal wishes and preferences really is a conversation worth having.

Visit www.endoflife.services.govt.nz to create and share your own plan of end of life preferences.


Our new style VA News


We hope you've enjoyed this second edition of our new style VA News.

What do you think of the new style?

What would you like to see in future editions?

Let us know—we're interested in your feedback.

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New rates

From 1 July 2018 new rates—adjusted for Consumers Price Index (CPI)—will come into effect for some Scheme 2 entitlements. These changes do not affect the rates for entitlements published in the previous edition of VA News.

Entitlements with adjusted rates from 1 July 2018 are:

- Independence Allowance
- Lump Sum Compensation for Permanent Impairment
- Survivor's Grant
- Child Care payments for children of deceased veterans

There minimum payment rate for Weekly Compensation has also been adjusted.

You can view these new rates by going to www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz/rates

Additional operations declared to be Qualifying Operational Service

Earlier this year the Minister for Veterans made two new declarations relating to Qualifying Operational Service.

Mali

Service in the Republic of Mali from 1 March 2018 onwards is Qualifying Operational Service for:

- members of the New Zealand Defence Force
- members of the New Zealand Defence Force on secondment with the armed forces of other nations
- any person seconded to the New Zealand Defence Force with the permission of the Chief of the Defence Force.



New Zealand Embassy in Moscow

Service at the New Zealand Embassy Moscow in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), later known as the Russian Federation, between 1 August 1978 and 31 July 1992 is Qualifying Operational Service.

New Zealand Armed Forces and New Zealand Defence Force personnel seconded to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, or the Ministry of External Relations and Trade, at the New Zealand Embassy in Moscow are covered as part of this declaration.

Personnel with Qualifying Operational Service are eligible to receive support, services and entitlements from Veterans' Affairs.



Korea: then and now

27 July 2018 will mark the 65th Anniversary of the signing of the Armistice between North and South Korea. The Armistice signalled a truce between both countries just over three years after hostilities broke out in June 1950.

New Zealand was one of the first nations to provide support for the Korean War. Roughly 4,700 personnel served in Kayforce, and a further 1,300 Naval personnel also involved. 33 men, including two Royal New Zealand Navy personnel, were killed during the war. A further 12 men lost their lives in the aftermath of the conflict. An additional 79 personnel were wounded, and one member of Kayforce was taken prisoner and held in North Korea for 18 months before being released.

Today, the New Zealand Defence Force has six personnel deployed to the United Nations Command in South Korea. The United Nations

Command is a multinational body that was established in 1950 to defend South Korea. New Zealand Defence Force staff responsibilities vary and include leading that Armistice Education Programme, and the planning and coordination of inspections in the Demilitarised Zone.

We want to hear from our Korean veterans

The year 2020 will mark the 70th Anniversary of the outbreak of hostilities between North and South Korea. To commemorate this occasion, the Korean War Legacy Foundation—sponsored by the Republic of Korea's Ministry of Patriot and Veterans Affairs—is launching a special website.

The new website will include interviews with as many veterans as possible from the 21 countries who participated in the conflict. In coming weeks we will be writing to



Royal New Zealand Navy Lieutenant Payton Kaiwai, who served last year as one of the armistice monitors with the United Nations Command on the Korean Peninsula, near the demarcation line separating South and North Korea.

our Korean veterans, to let them know more about this special project and to see if they're available to be interviewed in New Zealand in early December 2018.

If you are a Korean veteran and you are interested in being interviewed for this project, please contact us to register your details.

The Paterson report has been released

In June 2016, Professor Ron Paterson began a review into the operation of the Veterans' Support Act 2014. He completed it earlier this year and his report has now been made public. You can read it on the NZDF website.

A lot of veterans went to the meetings Professor Paterson organised around New Zealand as part of the review. He talks in his report about how useful this was for him.

"I came to understand in a very direct and personal way how their service for New Zealand has affected their lives" Professor Paterson said. "And also how the Act impacts on them and their families". He dedicates his report to New Zealand veterans.

A total of 64 recommendations came out of the review.

Some cover quite small matters, but others are more complex and go to the heart of how New Zealand recognises and supports those who have served in the armed forces.

Minister for Veterans Hon Ron Mark is keen to follow up on what's been recommended. He has asked Veterans' Affairs to work through what's been said, and provide him with advice on options for follow-up action by the end of the year. He's already announced that he wants further work to be done on one of the issues the report raises—the question of who should be considered a veteran and how our country wants to recognise them.

This topic came up constantly in submissions to Professor Paterson. He felt it was something important enough for him to recommend that it needs looking at again.

There'll be a lot more happening in the coming months as follow-up to the review gets under way. We'll be keeping you up-to-date about this with regular reports in VA News.



Pacific voyage a life changing experience for veteran

When Wayne Matthews' case manager from Veterans' Affairs told him of a sponsored sailing trip he seized the opportunity to step out of his own comfort zone.

The sponsored trip aboard the SV Tenacious would see him as a crewman on a two week trip from Auckland to Fiji. "The only sailing experience that I had to that point was watching the movie Castaway" says Wayne.

It was with great trepidation that he decided to do it. "The idea of breaking routine for some—including me—meant going against all I had going on at that time. You come up with all the excuses under the sun to not do what you could be doing."

But from the very start of the trip Wayne was in good company. On the first day aboard he met Jake, a veteran of the US military. The pair have remained good friends—writing to each other often. They're looking forward to meeting up again in the future, along with their wives.

While aboard the SV Tenacious he had many firsts. "Being aboard a sailing ship as a crewman for one" Wayne reflects to VA News.

"Another experience was when the Tenacious was fully under sail with the auxiliary motors shut down, hearing

the sounds of the rigging and the ship creaking as it was being driven by the wind behind us."

During the voyage to Fiji Wayne got to steer the Tenacious while on duty watch in early morning hours. He was also atop a mast when pods of whales swam past the starboard side.

"When we were 120 nautical miles from Fiji we went for a swim in the Pacific. There would have been close to 4 kilometres of water beneath the keel of the ship and my feet."

At the end of the journey he presented the Captain of the Tenacious a gift. "It seemed so fitting that at the end of the journey that a taonga crafted by my brother would be resting with a leader who had guided us 1600 nautical miles across the Pacific Ocean."

He found this trip to be a restoring experience. "Today I can say, with everything I have, that something in me fundamentally changed on the journey. But in a way most won't understand outside the military."

Wayne believes that this time when he came home, he brought a missing part



"Today I can say, with everything I have, that something in me fundamentally changed on the journey."

of himself back to his whānau. "Now finally after all this time I can say that I am complete."

"I thank those in Veterans' Affairs for what they placed before me. In giving me the chance to sail off into the great blue, came the opportunity to see beyond the boundaries, and to take that step."

