

Member of the Order of British Empire (MBE)

Graham Douglas Birch

30663. Captain.
Royal NZ Artillery
161 Battery

NZ Gazette Number 57 dated 3 October 1966

CITATION

Prior to his arrival in the Republic of Vietnam **in July 1965** Captain Graham Douglas Birch held the appointment of Adjutant 16 Field Regiment, RNZA. In this and his subsequent employment as Unit Emplaning Officer and Observation Post Officer he was responsible for the detailed planning for the formation and movement of 161 Battery RNZA to Vietnam. His aptitude for organisation produced a unique airmobile battery which has proved highly efficient and flexible in all circumstances. His attention to detail and enthusiasm as Unit Emplaning Officer ensured the very successful air movement of the Battery from New Zealand, the first time an operational unit of the New Zealand Army had been so deployed.

He carried out his duties as Observation Post Officer **from 1 July 1965 to January 1966** with a high degree of professional skill, enthusiasm and complete disregard for his own personal safety or comfort, but always with concern for his fellow soldiers and those he was supporting.

In January 1966 he assumed the appointment of Battery Captain at very short notice and again displayed his versatility in this exacting post, which entailed extensive duties involving detailed planning and organisation within the framework of 173rd Airborne Brigade, US Army, both at the unit base and whilst the Battery was deployed in the field. In this his ardent zeal contributed very materially to the efficiency of the Battery.

His devotion to duty, loyalty and leadership were an inspiration to all who worked with him. His good humour and cheerfulness, particularly in times of stress, contributed greatly to the high morale of the Battery and won for him the high regard and respect of all ranks.

The example set by Captain Birch is in keeping with the highest traditions of the Royal Regiment of New Zealand Artillery and reflects great credit upon himself, his Regiment and the New Zealand Army.