



The National Commemoration of New Zealand Service in the Korean War

**HALL OF MEMORIES
PUKEAHU NATIONAL WAR MEMORIAL PARK
25 JUNE 2026**



Above: Gun from 161 Battery, 16th Field Regiment supporting an air strike on well-fortified Chinese hillside positions. Gun crew are Gunners Alexander Downie (Mandeville), Edward Evans (Christchurch), Moana Wyllie (Gisborne), and Bombardier Graham Young (Tapu), 19 February 1953. Image courtesy of Alexander Turnbull Library, Ref: PA1-f-113-1861

Cover image: Gunners from 16th Field Regiment headquarters – Clifford (Taffy) Thomas, Raymond (Snow) Butt, and Patrick O’Shea – with their Korean assistant, Cho Too Hyuns, 21 May 1953. Image courtesy of Alexander Turnbull Library, Ref: PA1-f-115-2049

Aotearoa ki te pakanga o Kōrea

New Zealand in the Korean War

Around 6000 New Zealanders served in Korea between 1950 and 1957: 4700 were members of an army force known as ‘Kayforce’, while 1300 served around the Korean peninsula on six Royal New Zealand Navy frigates.

The Korean War began on 25 June 1950 when Communist North Korean forces swept southwards across the 38th Parallel, the dividing line between North and South Korea. New Zealand was one of the first countries to answer the UN Security Council’s call with combat assistance, providing two frigates and promising a volunteer ground force to serve as part of a Commonwealth formation.

In September, the frigates took part in the UN’s successful amphibious landing at Inch’on (Incheon), near Seoul. The operation transformed the war: Seoul was liberated and the North Korean army collapsed. When UN forces crossed the 38th parallel in October, however, Chinese forces, poorly equipped but in vast numbers, responded with a series of offensives, the second of which led to a ‘big bug out’ of UN forces and the loss of Seoul.

Kayforce joined the Commonwealth formation in January 1951 – 75 years ago this year. This 1056-man brigade took part in the operations which saw UN forces fight their way back to and across the 38th Parallel, recapturing Seoul in the process.

In April 1951, when the Chinese launched another offensive, the Commonwealth brigade fought a successful defensive battle at Kap’yong (Gapyeong). Between 23 and 25 April the New Zealand gunners provided crucial support to Australian and Canadian troops.

Armistice talks opened in July 1951, but progress was slow. By the end of the year a stalemate had emerged as both sides sought to improve their defensive positions. An armistice signed on 27 July 1953 finally brought fighting in Korea to an end, although no peace settlement was subsequently concluded. A reduced New Zealand force continued to serve in a garrison role in Korea until 1957. Today 12 New Zealand Defence Force personnel serve with the United Nations Command & Military Armistice Commission in the Republic of Korea.

Forty-five New Zealand servicemen (including two naval personnel) lost their lives as a result of the conflict, while two other New Zealanders died serving with Australian forces.

The Korean War had a major impact on New Zealand’s approach to international relations, focusing attention on the threat of communist expansion in Asia. It also helped New Zealand achieve its objective of a security commitment from the United States, leading to the ANZUS Treaty of 1951.

Ngā Whakaritenga Order of Ceremony

KARANGA

Hana Buchanan

Ngāti Haumia ki Te Aro, Taranaki Whānui

Response by

Hollie Pohatu

Ngāti Porou

NATIONAL ANTHEMS

National Anthem of
the Republic of Korea

Ethan Ross, Yuli Kim and Jina Yoon

National Anthem of New Zealand

Corporal Barbara Graham

accompanied by

Corporal Leonardo Coghini

KARAKIA TĪMATANGA

Peter Jackson

Taranaki Whānui

WELCOME

Lieutenant General (Rtd)

Rhys Jones CNZM

Chair

National War Memorial Advisory Council

COMMEMORATIVE ADDRESS

Tim Costley MP

MP for Ōtaki

WAIATA

Pokarekare Ana / Yeon-Ga

sung by **Corporal Barbara Graham and
Ethan Ross, Yuli Kim and Jina Yoon**

accompanied by

Corporal Leonardo Coghini

READING

George Gardner

Korean War veteran

PRAYER OF REMEMBRANCE

Chaplain David Julian

New Zealand Defence Force

LAYING OF WREATHS

Tim Costley MP

on behalf of the Government and
people of New Zealand

Sebyuk Yang

Chargé d'Affaires a.i.

on behalf of the Government and people
of the Republic of Korea

Air Vice Marshal Darryn Webb MNZM

Chief of Air Force on behalf of the
New Zealand Defence Force

Together with

Phil Wallace

on behalf of the Korean War veterans

Greg O'Connor MP
on behalf of the Opposition

Together with

**His Excellency
Alfredo Rogerio Perez Bravo**
Dean of the Diplomatic Corps and
Ambassador of Mexico on behalf
of the Diplomatic Corps

Ethan Ross, Yuli Kim and Jina Yoon
on behalf of youth of New Zealand and
Republic of Korea

Together with

Soon sook Kim
President
on behalf of the Korean Association
of Wellington

Peter Jackson
National Vice President
on behalf of the Royal New Zealand
Returned and Services' Association

ROLL OF HONOUR

Read by
Peter Jackson
Royal New Zealand Returned and
Services' Association

THE COMMEMORATION

THE ODE

Te Reo Māori recited by
Warrant Officer Guy Lipsham
Warrant Officer of the Air Force

English recited by
Peter Jackson
Royal New Zealand Returned and
Services' Association

LAST POST

Uniformed personnel salute

The flags of the Republic of Korea and
New Zealand are lowered to half-mast

ONE MINUTE SILENCE

ROUSE

The flags of the Republic of Korea and
New Zealand are raised to the mast-head

CLOSING PRAYER AND BLESSING

Chaplain David Julian

KARAKIA WHAKAMUTUNGA

Peter Jackson



This National Commemorative Service was arranged by
Te Tari o te Rāhiri me te Manaaki Manuhiri Ōkawa
Visits and Ceremonial Office, Te Tari Taiwhenua
Department of Internal Affairs
in partnership with
Manatū Taonga Ministry for Culture and Heritage,
Manatū Aorere Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and
Te Ope Katua o Aotearoa the New Zealand Defence Force.

*Right: New Zealand and Australian personnel next to the sign for Anzac Park –
a playing field for rugby, football, athletics, and other sports. Pictured are (left to right):
Private Frederick Marks (Australia), Bombardier Leonard Webster (Masterton),
Bombardier N. Miller (Christchurch), Private E. H. Bennets (Australia) and Private
Eric Roberts (Australia), October 1951.*

Image courtesy of Alexander Turnbull Library, Photograph by Ian Mackley, Ref: K-O457-F



"ANZAC"
PARK.

