



## HMNZS NGAPONA ASSOCIATION INC

### LONGCAST

17 July 20 - Ngapona Assn Lunch at New Lynn RSA  
22 July 20 – Navy Club – Bus trip to Wellsford  
9 August 20 – Ngapona Assn AGM at Birkenhead RSA  
15 August 20 – Navy Club AGM – Remuera Club  
16 August 20 – Sanders VC memorial ceremony, Takapuna  
21 August 20 – Ngapona Assn Lunch at Birkenhead RSA

#### **NGAPONA ASSN – MONTHLY LUNCH**

Our monthly lunch will be held this Friday, 17<sup>th</sup> July, at the New Lynn RSA, starting at 1200hrs.

Once again there will be a door prize to be won by one lucky guest.

Come and enjoy good company, good food and perhaps take a prize home.

#### **FROM THE SICKBAY**

Mike Dinwiddie remains in North Shore Hospital, but I understand there has been a slight improvement.

All the best Mike.

#### **NGAPONA ASSN – AGM**

The HMNZS Ngapona Assn will hold the 2020 AGM on Sunday, 9<sup>th</sup> August, at 1500hrs at the Birkenhead RSA.

## **FIRE ABOARD USS BONHOMME RICHARD**

Most of the sailors injured in a massive fire aboard the amphibious assault ship Bonhomme Richard Sunday suffered from smoke inhalation, Rear Adm. Philip Sobeck, commander of Expeditionary Strike Group 3, told reporters Sunday evening in San Diego, where the ship had been burning for nearly 12 hours.

The sailors were in stable condition, he said.

“Most of them are attributed to smoke inhalation,” Sobeck said. “I don’t have the facts of all of them.”

Seventeen sailors and four civilians were injured in the blaze.

While the precise cause remained unknown Sunday night, Sobeck said there was “nothing toxic” in the ship, and that the black smoke billowing from the amphibian all day was caused by office and berthing items burning.

The fire is believed to have started below those spaces, in the lower cargo hold of the ship, known as the “Deep V,” Sobeck said.

It is a “huge open area where you store a lot of (Marine Corps) equipment and everything else,” he said. “That’s where we believe it was started.”



## **AMMUNITION DISCOVERED**

Explosive ammunition has been discovered and removed from a former defence force site in Auckland.

A New Zealand Defence Force spokeswoman said staff had recently visited the site of the former Hobsonville base at Bomb Point in West Auckland. Explosive and non-explosive items were located in the area and have since been removed for scrap or destroyed by controlled explosion.

Bomb Point – part of the former Hobsonville Air Base – was once used for ammunition storage purposes while the base was active, a NZDF spokesperson said. It started out in the late 1920s as a seaplane station. Until the 1960s, the Air Force flying boats would land in the nearby water and ‘drive up’ onto the land where hangars were on the water’s edge, the spokesperson said. At Bomb Point, old empty ammunition storage bunkers remain.

“Over many decades these would have stored various weapons and pyrotechnics used by aircraft based at Hobsonville, and also the nearby Whenuapai Air Base,” the spokesperson said.

“At the time this was a helicopter base, examples would include ammunition for the helicopter’s machine gun, and pyrotechnics such as flares.”

In 2003, the land at the former air base was sold to a private company, the spokesperson said. Before the sale, a “methodical due diligence” process was undertaken to assess the risk of old ammunition. It included a physical survey and

ground search of the area. “All resulting information was made available to the private company which took ownership of the land. “However, in a facility that was used back as far as the 1920s, there is always some possibility that a remnant of some historic munitions could be found.”

### **CHANGE IN BALANCE OF NAVAL POWER**

A major reversal of fortunes at sea has gone largely unnoticed. Over the past decade, the Chinese Navy sped past the Japanese maritime service across key measures of material prowess. The trend lines suggest that China will soon permanently displace Japan as the leading regional naval power in Asia. This historic power transition will have repercussions across the Indo-Pacific in the years to come. It behoves policymakers to pay attention to this overlooked but consequential shift in the naval balance between two great seafaring nations.

The growing power gap between the People’s Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) and the Japan Maritime Self-Defence Force (JMSDF) is stark and will widen at an accelerated pace. China already boasts the largest navy in the world with more than 300 ships and submarines. By comparison, the JMSDF’s naval strength in 2019 included four light helicopter carriers, two cruisers, 34 destroyers, 11 frigates, three amphibious assault ships, six fast-attack missile boats, and 21 submarines. By 2030, the PLAN could have more than 450 ships and close to 110 submarines while the JMSDF will likely not be much larger than it is today.

*By Toshi Yoshihara – CIMSEC*

### **JUBILEE DOCK, WELLINGTON**

Jubilee Dock, near Aotea Quay, Wellington - 1935

Jubilee Dock was a floating 'dry' dock used to lift ships up to 17,000 tons out of the water for maintenance.

Built in England for the Wellington Harbour Board, our new Jubilee Dock was 178m long, 36 m wide and could lift ships displacing 17,000 tons. Two Dutch tugs undertook the record 22,000km tow, via the Suez Canal, which began 15 July 1931. The dock’s 11-man crew lived on board.

Excitement grew as the dock neared. Wellingtonians could accompany it from the Heads by ferry for 1s 6d, or view it from the air for £1. Thousands more watched from the shore.

The dock entered the harbour on the afternoon of 28 Dec 1931 and anchored that evening. Next morning it was moved to a purpose-built dock near Aotea Quay. Later that day it slipped its temporary moorings in a northerly gale but was secured by the Dutch tugs.

Its first lift, of the Ruahine, was made on 2 April 1932.

However, it proved too small for modern container ships and In Dec 1988 the port tugs Kupe, Toia and Ngahue shifted the Jubilee dock a few metres to nearby Aotea Quay, the first time it had moved in 57 years. It was sold in 1989 to a Thai-based shipyard and was to be taken overseas, Whilst underway to Bangkok, in the first leg of the voyage, it broke in two and sank, in separate stages, into the Tasman Sea.



## **HMNZS LEANDER**

HMS Leander was built in His Majesty's Dockyard Devonport, England, being the name ship for a class of light cruisers. Leander was laid down on 8 September 1930, launched on 24 September 1931 and commissioned into the Royal Navy on 23 March 1933. The ship was acquired by New Zealand in 1937, on loan; along with a sister ship HMS Achilles, to replace HM Ships Dunedin and Diomedea, respectively.

On **13 July** 1943, Leander was with Rear Admiral Walden Lee Ainsworth's Task Group 36.1 of three light cruisers: Leander and the US ships Honolulu and St. Louis. The task group also included ten destroyers. At 01:00 the Allied ships established radar contact with the Japanese cruiser Jintsu, which was accompanied by five destroyers near Kolombangara in the Solomon Islands. In the ensuing Battle of Kolombangara, Jintsu was sunk and all three Allied cruisers were hit by torpedoes and disabled. Leander was hit by a single torpedo just abaft 'A' boiler room. 26 crew from the boiler room and the No.1 4-inch gun mount immediately above were killed or posted missing. The ship was so badly damaged that she took no further part in the war. She was first repaired in Auckland, then proceeded to a full refit in Boston. She returned to the Royal Navy on 27 August 1945. In 1946 she was involved in the Corfu Channel Incident. She was scrapped in 1950.

Photo # NH 59838 HMS Leander underway, circa the mid-1930s



## **SHIP OF THE WEEK – HMNZS PAEA (Q1184 P3552)**

Q1184 (Paea P3552) was built by Madden & Lewis, in Sausalito, California, USA and shipped to Wellington on the Liberty Ship Frank Joseph Irwin with Q1183 (Tamure), arriving on 18 January 1943. She was commissioned on 9 March 1943 and then joined the 124th Flotilla in Auckland.

Paea, along with other MLs, was used extensively for fishery protection around the New Zealand coast until the Lake Class patrol craft came into service in 1975. Paea also assisted in hydrographic duties from 1972 to 1976.

She was attached to HMNZS Ngapona from 1981 till she was decommissioned and sold in May 1985. Keith & Heather Nicholson bought the boat in November 2008 and in December, with a crew of seven bought her up the East Coast (a trip of six days), including a stop at White Island on the way north to their mooring in the Upper Waitemata Harbour in Auckland.

Extensive maintenance work has been carried out by Keith & Heather and she is now one of the few HDMLs, world-wide, that are still in original condition. She is now berthed at Whangarei.



**DID YOU KNOW?**

Bernard Cyril Freyberg, Lieutenant General 1st Baron Freyberg, VC, GCMG, KCB, KBE, DSO & Three Bars, 7th Governor-General of New Zealand from 1946 to 1952.

Lieutenant General Sir Bernard Freyberg was a dentist from Wellington who joined the Royal Naval Division in 1914, serving in Gallipoli and France, before transferring to the Royal West Surrey Regiment in 1916.

Bernard Freyberg was born in Richmond. There is a blue plaque on the house he was born in, in Dynevor Road, along with a V.C commemorative paving stone outside Richmond station. His parents emigrated to New Zealand when he was two years old.

Freyberg's actions at Gallipoli were one of the most astonishing individual feats of courage and endurance of the whole Gallipoli campaign. An accomplished swimmer, he swam in bitterly cold water in the gulf of Xeros towing a waterproof canvas bag containing flares to a beach at Bulair where he set them off. His object was to light the flares to divert Turkish attention from the main landing. He then managed to swim back in the dark, icy waters, suffering from cramp and hypothermia and find a boat. A remarkable act of heroism, bravery and physical endurance.

He was wounded twice at Gallipoli, eventually being evacuated in January 1916.

Bernhard was awarded his V.C for his actions on 13th/14th November 1916 when his regiment, the Queen's Royal West Surrey regiment captured the village of Beaucourt on the Somme. Seriously wounded in this action he was evacuated to the U.K.

He was mentioned in despatches five times during the Great War.

Three of his brothers also served in the war and two died. Oscar was killed on the 04/06/1915 at Gallipoli when the Collingwoods were decimated. His name is in the Helles memorial. Paul died on the 18/06/1917 and is buried in Boulogne East Cemetery.

Bernard also served in the Second World War, performing well during the evacuation to Crete. He was admired, respected, compassionate and approachable.

Wounded again in 1942, Winston Churchill would later describe him as "the salamander of the British empire," like the mythical creature who could pass through fire unharmed. Altogether he was wounded nine times.

After the wars Bernhard became New Zealand's Governor General. He eventually returned to England and died at Windsor on **4 July** 1963 following the rupture of one of his Gallipoli war wounds.

He is buried next to his wife Barbara and his son Paul in the churchyard where he was married.



Regards

**Jerry Payne**

Editor

HMNZS Ngapona Assn

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