

HMNZS NGAPONA ASSOCIATION INC

LONGCAST

- 25 October 21 – Labour Day
- 12 November 21 – Navy Club Lunch
- 19 November 21 - Ngapona Assn Lunch at Grey Lynn RSA
- 10 December 21 – Navy Club Lunch
- 17 December 21 – Ngapona Assn Lunch at Orakei RSA

Hi Folks

DEATH NOTICE - WHITMORE, Richard Graeme: VRD and Clasp. Service Medal. Commander RNZNVR (Retired).

It is with great sadness that I have to advise of the passing of Graeme, 'Blue' Whitmore on Tuesday, October 12, 2021, peacefully at Ashley Suites, Russley Village, in his 88th year. Dearly loved and loving husband of Lesley for 61 years. Much loved father and father-in-law of Laura and the late Wayne, Julie and Brett, and Jason. Loved and caring poppa of Richard, Demi, Flynn, and Lily. A true gentleman. Well loved. Messages may be addressed to The Family of the late Graeme Whitmore, c/- PO Box 39001, Christchurch 8545. A celebration of Graeme's life will be held in our Westpark Chapel, 467 Wairakei Road, Burnside on Monday, October 18, at 10.00am, private cremation to follow. Cdr Whitmore was CO Ngapona from 1980 to 1986. RIP 'Blue'.

EXERCISE BERSAMA GOLD

The New Zealand Defence Force last month announced its participation in Exercise Bersama Gold 21, and that it would interact with the United Kingdom's Carrier Strike Group (CSG) as it conducts engagement activities in the Indo-Pacific region.

While with the CSG in recent days, there have also been exercises and training with ships from Japan, the Netherlands, Canada, and the United States, including the US aircraft carriers USS *Carl Vinson* and USS *Ronald Reagan*.

HMNZS *Te Kaha* and the Navy's replenishment tanker HMNZS *Aotearoa*, with a Seasprite helicopter on board, departed Auckland in September.

HMNZS *Aotearoa* recently met up with HMS *Queen Elizabeth*, the Royal Navy's flagship vessel in the CSG, as both ships conducted exercises off the coast of Guam.

Now it is HMNZS *Te Kaha*'s turn as the frigate enters the South China Sea and transits in company with the CSG and ships of other partner nations.

The NZDF has operated in the South East Asia region for decades as part of bilateral and regional defence engagement, and demonstrates its commitment to regional security through its presence in the region.

NZDF deployments exercise freedom of navigation and overflight. The NZDF undertakes all activities in accordance with international law, and for ships in particular the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. The South China Sea is one of the world's major sea lanes and is routinely transited by merchant and naval vessels and aircraft.



GUAM REPAIR FACILITIES

Sixteen years ago, the attack submarine USS *San Francisco* (SSN-711) struck a seamount, surfaced, and went to the island of Guam, America's westernmost outpost in the Pacific Ocean. After the hurt sub arrived at Guam's Apra Harbour, the *Los Angeles* class submarine went into a local dry dock, where shipyard workers made the damaged ship safe enough to make a 6,500-mile journey home to Puget Sound Naval Shipyard for permanent repairs.

History, it seems, is repeating itself.

Earlier this month, after the *Seawolf* class attack submarine USS *Connecticut* (SSN 22) struck an underwater object, the damaged sub surfaced and made for America's safe-haven at Guam.

But this time, the reception of the USS *Connecticut* is going to be a little different. Today, the only thing Guam offers the USS *Connecticut* is privacy. The dry dock that supported the USS *San Francisco* is gone. A handful of Guam-based ship repair workers are available, but they are only certified to conduct basic, pier side repairs. Only the specialists aboard a set of 42-year-old submarine tenders can help.



Can you put names to these faces? Taken late 1962

BOOK OF THE MONTH

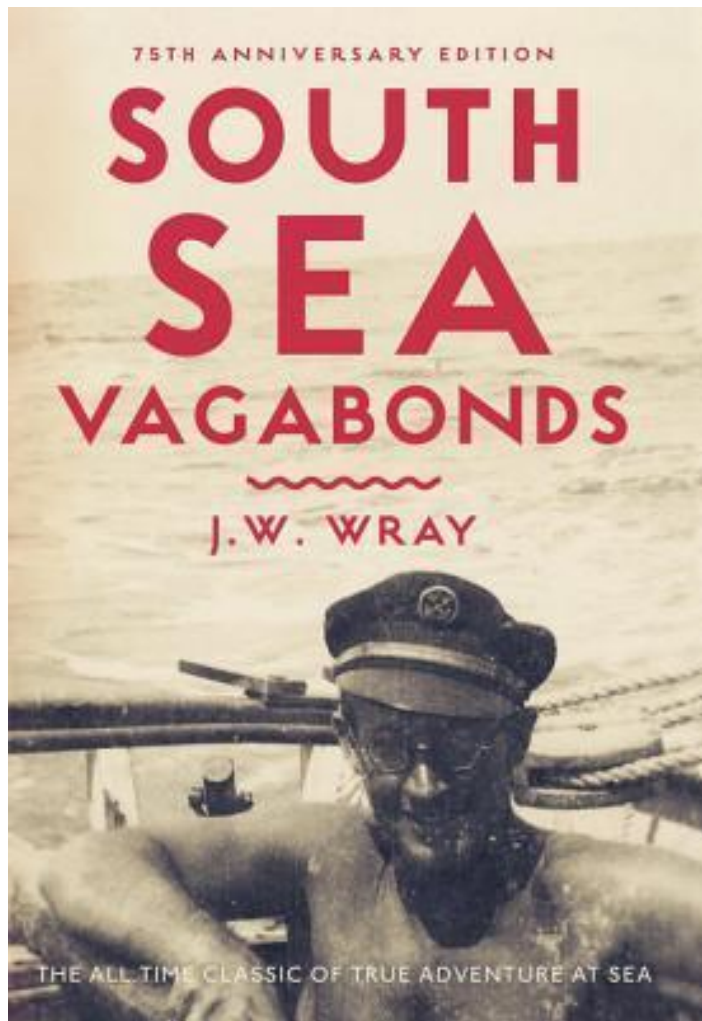
SOUTH SEAS VAGABONDS by JOHNNY WRAY

In 1932, young Johnny Wray, fired from a job he was doing indifferently, thought it a good idea to stay at home with his parents and build a boat in the front yard. He had precisely £8 10s to his name, no boat building experience, no tools and no materials. Wray had the good fortune to be living in Auckland, New Zealand, in a society that was used to making do, being resourceful and not holding much store by the “proper” way to do things.

Undaunted by his lack of experience, he began making a small model of a boat, using his recollection of the *Teddy*, a Norwegian pilot boat on which he had previously sailed, as inspiration. Realising rapidly that his skills would preclude an exact copy, he determined that his boat would need to be square bilged and have a stern simpler than *Teddy*'s. He whittled away at his model until he was happy with its lines and then began acquiring the materials to build his full-size boat. Wray collected timber from the beaches around Hauraki Gulf, using his friend's boat to tow the massive logs home. Each of these excursions was an adventure in itself and a series of harsh lessons for the young chancer. At night he chipped excess tar from the side of roads and melted it to coat the No 8 fencing wire he used to bind his boat together. He had a fortunate break when the salvager of the *Rewa* traded him some wood and materials for fresh food and was lucky in his friends for they lent or gave him tools and encouragement that kept him going through the long build.

Wray settled on a name for his boat by looking through a Maori dictionary. There he found *Ngataki*, which meant “abode of the elite”, and that was good enough for him. When his boat was finished the next year, and after a six-month, shakedown laze around the New Zealand coast, he recruited some friends with boating experience for voyages north to the warm Pacific islands. During the next few years, the sturdy *Ngataki* bore a motley crew to islands that dreams were made of through days of blissful sailing and storms that hardened sailors would have wished to avoid. In the same understated, knockabout way that he constructed his boat, Wray later pieced together an account of its construction and his first few voyages into the Pacific and across the ditch to Australia.

South Sea Vagabonds was first published in 1939. That he was “not a writer” had as little impact on the young Wray as that he had not been a boat builder. Fortunately. Like his strong, enduring boat (*Wray* sold *Ngataki* in 1946 and after several owners it fell into the hands of Debbie Lewis who sailed it around the world and made other voyages before donating it to the Tino Rawa Trust in 2010) his story proved durable too, spawning the dreams of many later sailors and cruisers who went on to build boats or simply buy them and sail away. His legend has outlived him. The qualities that are evident in his account – the determination to make something out of nothing, to test himself against the elements, to live his life his own way - are what make his book compelling.



LIGHT HOUSE OF THE WEEK – ST ANNE POINT (MILFORD SOUND)

Position: 44.34.3S 167.47.0E

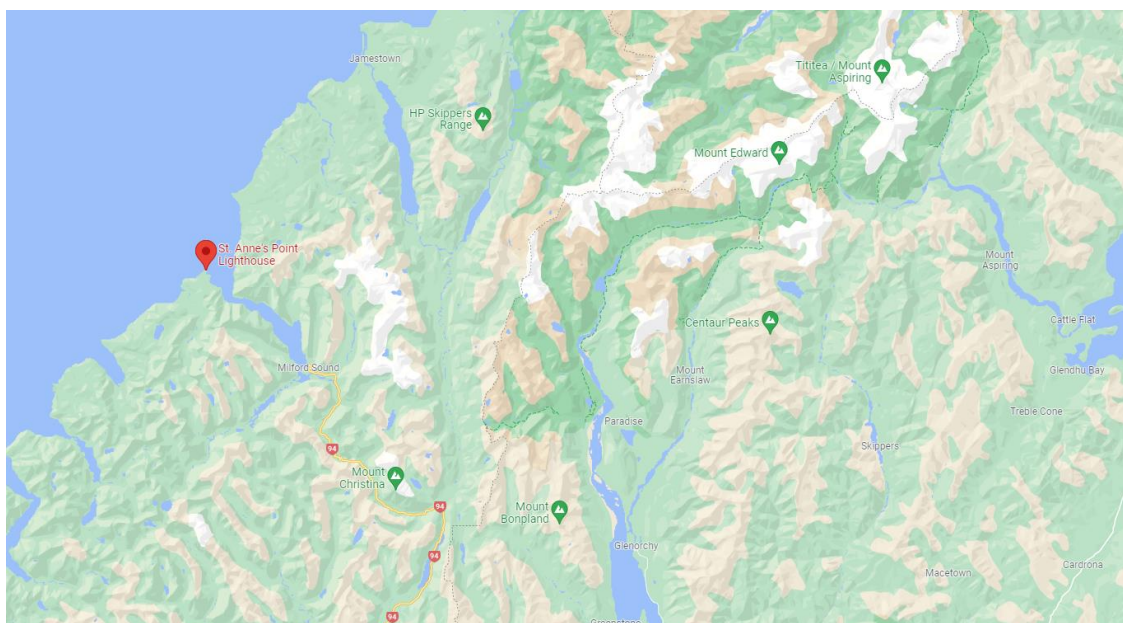
Characteristics: Fl W 5s

Range: 8NM

Structure: White Tower

St Anne Point marks the entrance of Milford Sound, once called Milford Haven. John Grono, a Welsh sealing captain from the Hawkesbury River who based himself in nearby Doubtful Sound before 1823, probably named it after St Ann's Head at the entrance of the Welsh port of the same name. The original Maori name for the sound — Piopiotahi — meant 'a single thrush', or it could have been the name of an early canoe. HMS Clio visited Milford Sound in 1871 with Governor Sir George Bowen on board. They named the Bowen Falls in his honour and rather ruefully named Clio Rock after the ship struck it. Dr James Hector walked all the way to Queenstown to get help.

Captain Burgess of the government ship Matai wrote to the Marine Department in September 1935, saying that the increasing numbers of visiting steamers convinced him a light at the entrance to Milford Sound would be of considerable value. His foresight has been justified. This vital light guide visiting cruise liners and fishermen who land their catches at the sole road access point between Jackson Bay and Riverton. New Zealand Railways workshops constructed a cylindrical steel plate tower rather like a house rainwater tank. It has no door opening, designed as it is to be mounted on top of a cylindrical concrete base some 2.5 metres high, with access gained from within by a ladder. As no large crane could be landed over the rocks at this site, the ship placed the metal tank section ashore at Milford. A launch towed the floating inverted tank, all its holes plugged watertight and ballasted with gravel in bags and the open end of the tower covered with a few planks and a tarpaulin. On arrival at St Anne Point it was parbuckled (rolled) up the rocks using a 'trewhella monkey grubber'. The prefabricated tower was then lifted bodily some 3 metres and placed in position on its base. The estimated cost of the light station was £1140 and the builders celebrated its inauguration on 4 June 1937. It remained unlit for four years during the Second World War.





Regards

Jerry Payne

Editor

HMNZS Ngapona Assn

021 486 013

(To be removed from this email list please reply to this email with "Unsubscribe" in the subject line.)