

## HMNZS NGAPONA ASSOCIATION INC

### LONGCAST

10 December 21 - Navy Club Lunch

17 December 21 - Ngapona Assn Lunch at Orakei RSA

15 January 22 – Ngapona Assn Lunch at Titirangi RSA

Hi Folks

#### **US WARSHIPS IN DESERT**

Satellite images show China has built mock-ups of a U.S. Navy aircraft carrier and destroyer in its north western desert, possibly for practice for a future naval clash as tensions rise between the nations. China has massively upgraded its military in recent years, and its capability and intentions are increasingly concerning to the United States as tensions rise over the South China Sea, Taiwan and military supremacy in the Indo-Pacific. The images captured by Colorado-based satellite imagery company Maxar Technologies dated 7<sup>th</sup> November 21 show the outlines of a U.S. aircraft carrier and at least one destroyer sitting on a railway track.

*Source : CBSnews*



### **SUBS WILL PROTECT UNITED STATES**

Australia's deal to acquire submarines powered by U.S. nuclear technology was aimed at protecting the United States from Chinese nuclear attack and had changed Australia-Sino relations, former Australian Prime Minister Paul Keating said on Wednesday. Keating, who led a centre-left Labour Party government from 1991 until 1996, told the National Press Club that Australia's current conservative government treated France "appallingly" in September when it cancelled a 90 billion Australian dollar (\$66 billion) contract to build an Australian fleet of 12 diesel-electric submarines. Instead, Australia will acquire eight nuclear-powered submarines utilizing U.S. technology under a new alliance with the United States and Britain.

*Source: APnews*

### **LIGHT HOUSE OF THE WEEK – FAREWELL SPIT**

Position: 40.32.9S 173.00.6E

Characteristics: FI WR 15s

Range: 15NM

Structure: White and orange metal tower

The Māori name for Farewell Spit is Onetahua ('heaped up sand dunes').<sup>87</sup> Abel Tasman in December 1642 called it Visschers Sand-dune Hoek after his pilot and navigator Frans Jacobszoon Visscher. Captain Cook named the cape at the base of the spit Cape Farewell as he took his leave of New Zealand on his first voyage in 1770.

The end of the spit was a wild sea of sand dunes carrying stunted vegetation, none of it particularly high but intersected with troughs and gullies liable to fill with water due to the high-water table. Nelson Provincial Council called for a light here in 1859 but the government had other priorities. About the time of the establishment of the Marine Department in 1866, they employed a lighthouse engineer, Richard Aylmer, from Britain to survey the area. The government sent him from Nelson in 1865 to choose a site. The small steamer Wallaby towed him in a whaleboat towards the spit but bad weather caused the boat to run for shelter to Totaranui. From here Mr Aylmer eventually reached the site and dug an exploratory hole that soon filled with water, stating that in his opinion the soft sandy spit could not provide a suitable foundation for a conventional tower. He was probably right, for a tall iron tower would have had a very small footprint in relation to its weight of approximately 90 tonnes. He suggested that instead of trying to construct a lighthouse on the soft sand dunes, perhaps the department could moor a lightship off the extremity of the spit. James Balfour designed a lighter structure of hardwood that looked like a huge power pylon. The lighthouse was built twenty-six kilometres out along the spit. It was a bleak and sand-swept site until a resourceful keeper carted sufficient soil in on each mail trip to support a cluster of macrocarpa trees around the lighthouse buildings. In part, his rationale at the time was to make the low-lying lighthouse more visible during daylight hours to ships at sea. Happily, it also served to turn the station into one of the most desirable lights in the Service. Today the lighthouse site remains an oasis of green amidst its grey, blue and gold surroundings.

When finished it stood 30 metres high with a diameter of 12 metres at the base, hexagonal in shape and unboarded up to 24 metres above the ground. The 'Colonist' brought news of the completed original light when the first lighting occurred on 17 June 1870, having a character of a white flash every 60 seconds, with a red sector showing over the toe of the spit. The builder, Sam Brown, used Hobart Town blue gum, pre-cut into pieces up to 18 metres in length, and placing these pieces upright was 'difficult and anxious'. Mr Louisson painted the alternate storeys red and white, and the tower, stores and keepers' dwellings cost £2496.

The original Farewell Spit tower lasted barely 25 years before sand abrasion and wood rot made it unsafe. A new steel lattice tower replaced the old one in January 1897, taking a scant two days from 17 January to relocate the entire lens apparatus from one light to the other. A new lens system replaced the original lens in 1941 and examinations revealed that the moving parts had worn less than one two-thousandth of an inch (12.5 micro meters) in the 70 years of nightly work.



Regards

**Jerry Payne**

Editor

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