

HMNZS NGAPONA ASSOCIATION INC

LONGCAST

- 10 December 21 - Navy Club Lunch (tbc)
- 17 December 21 - Ngapona Assn Lunch at Orakei RSA (tbc)
- 15 January 22 – Ngapona Assn Lunch at Titirangi RSA
- 31 January 22 – Auckland Anniversary Day
- 7 February 22 – Waitangi Day
- 18 February 22 - Ngapona Assn Lunch at Swanson

Hi Folks

CONGRATULATIONS AND WELL DONE TO AMUS NELSON

AMUS REBECCA NELSON is this year's recipient for the VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD. Muchly deserved for her work with the charitable trust Te Kiwi Maia, the Devonport RSA and the Remembrance Army. A big BZ from Ngapona and the Ngapona Assn. Building the charity from the ground up, it was recognised that the work Able Musician Nelson is doing with Te Kiwi Maia would have a lasting impact on the first responder community. Through a friend's circumstances, AMUS Nelson saw the need for some extra help for people who, as a result of their role in serving, safeguarding and caring for their communities, have physical or psychological injuries. Joining her local Devonport Returned & Services Association, Rebecca quickly became a passionate supporter of the organisation and its objectives. She became a committee member, where for three years she happily gave up her time and brought fresh ideas, igniting development which enabled the Devonport RSA to thrive into the future. Rebecca has also been a Poppy Appeal ambassador, working with the RSA's national body to promote the RSA's work and to encourage Kiwis to give generously on Poppy Day. For the Remembrance Army, Rebecca volunteered to help restore one of the larger North Shore cemeteries, O'Neill's Point Cemetery in Devonport. Initially on her own, she spent hundreds of hours locating, cleaning and restoring veterans' graves. It inspired her to tell the veterans' stories on social media around the graves, and she later encouraged others to join her (such as local sailors from the RNZN). She has shown what someone can do as an NZDF service person, to showcase the rich history and legacy of the NZDF.

Rebecca entertained us at the Ngapona Assn Formal Dinner in July this year.

FUNERAL SERVICE – CDR RG ‘BLUE’ WHITMORE

The funeral service for Blue Whitmore was held last month. If you would like to view the service please click on the link below.

<https://admin.oneroomstreaming.com/email/view/16c58f79e8?fbclid=IwAR1ATrD20clxqWklr-du660loRU6Eng0HcOnlpiZuL0hE1kxXrFYu8xamU>

D-DAY HERO DIES

D-Day torpedo boat commander, golfer, dinner party host and yachting enthusiast. Neil Harton died recently in Whangaparaoa, three months short of his 105th birthday, having already planned his annual birthday bash at his local golf club.

When World War II broke out, Neil and his brother Maurice were both quick to enlist. With their love of the sea, both wanted to serve in the New Zealand Navy, which was then still a part of the Royal Navy. The navy, however, did not respond quickly enough for Neil, so he volunteered to join the RAF in August 1940 and completed a preliminary navigation course. In the meantime, he spotted an advert to join the Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve Scheme to undergo training in England for a commissioned rank.

He subsequently became a torpedo commander serving in the North Sea, with a distinguished career highlighted by rescuing the Canadians, and later taking part in the D-Day landings.

On D-Day his role was protecting the minesweepers clearing the way for the landing craft that would take troops to the beaches.

He travelled to France with the NZ Air Force, to mark the 70th anniversary of D-Day, and was awarded the ‘French Legion of Honour’ in 2015 at a ceremony at Devonport, Auckland.

CHANGE OF COMMAND - HMNZS AOTEAROA

Chief of Navy has announced the appointment of a new Commanding Officer for HMNZS *Aotearoa*, Captain Simon Griffiths DSD, RNZN wef 17 November 2021. CAPT Griffiths has been the Director of Strategic Engagements within the Strategic Commitments and Engagements Branch since December 2019 and has co-chaired the Maritime Culture Guardianship Board over the last year. CAPT Griffiths has a wealth of command experience as Commanding Officer of HMNZS *Wellington*, *Te Kaha*, and *Te Mana*. CAPT Griffiths’ time as Commanding Officer of HMNZS *Wellington* saw him lead the crew to Antarctica, an experience that will serve him and the Ship’s Company well when HMNZS *Aotearoa* departs for Antarctica in early 2022. CAPT Simon Rooke MNZM, RNZN, has been the Commanding Officer of HMNZS *Aotearoa* since her commissioning. Whilst under his command HMNZS *Aotearoa* has achieved significant introduction of her many capabilities. This included the recent successful conduct of Op Crucible 02/2021 where the ship represented New Zealand and the RNZN at the highest level.

USS SAMPSON TO VISIT NEW ZEALAND

A US Navy ship will visit New Zealand for the first time in five years. The gas turbine-propelled destroyer is expected to berth in Wellington this month, the NZDF said. Sailors will spend at least 14 days in isolation at sea before entering New Zealand. They will have to test negative for Covid-19 before disembarking. The last US Navy ship to visit was gas turbine-propelled destroyer USS SAMPSON, shortly after the 2016 Kaikoura earthquake. USS *Sampson*'s arrival epitomised a thaw in bilateral relations after the decades-long impasse over nuclear-powered ship visits. SAMPSON arrived with the Canadian frigate HMCS *Vancouver* and Australian frigate HMAS *Darwin*. The upcoming ship visit was a positive sign for bilateral relations, political scientist Steve Hoadley said today. The fact it had taken five years since the last visit was possibly because the US Navy took a back seat to some other uniformed services under the Donald Trump administration. He said bilateral relations sprang a leak in the 1980s when Prime Minister David Lange and US Secretary of State George Shultz couldn't agree on nuclear-free policies. "They hadn't had a ship visit for 32 years after the breakdown between Shultz and Lange. They had an altercation at Manila and Schultz finally ran out of patience." Shultz told Lange at the 1986 Asean meeting in the Philippines: "We part company as friends, but we part company." Associate Professor Hoadley, from the University of Auckland, said bilateral co-operation had continued in other arenas. He said there was some dispute whether the intelligence communities of both countries experienced any disruption. US presidents from Bill Clinton on reviewed the relationship and progressively warmed to the idea of closer US-New Zealand relations, Hoadley added. It was under Barack Obama's administration that USS SAMPSON visited. "They decided that, particularly in competition with China, the US needed all the allies it could get, or partners," Hoadley said. Although USS SAMPSON arrived shortly after the Kaikōura earthquake, the visit was believed to follow at least a year of planning. Hoadley said the Trump administration directed more attention to its nuclear deterrent and the United States Space Force, founded in 2019. The US Navy missed out in some ways under Trump, Hoadley said, so visits to distant countries like New Zealand were sometimes not advanced. He said in virtually every respect today, the US-New Zealand bilateral relationship was strong. The ship visit follows recent breakthroughs in the US-China relationship after months of escalating tensions between the world's two biggest economies. China and the US agreed last week to encourage decarbonisation, green design and renewable energy, and to co-operate in reducing methane emissions. The bilateral agreement appeared to surprise many other countries and was announced while the United Nations Climate Change Conference was on in Glasgow. Hoadley said a virtual meeting of the US and Chinese presidents this week was a positive development for regional and international peace and stability. He said the meeting showed Joe Biden could be a "friendly" competitor rather than vicious adversary, but also that the US would push back where it took exception to Beijing's policies. Hoadley said tensions did remain over issues such as the status and security of Taiwan. But he said the US was encouraging Taiwan to invest in more missiles, submarines and defensive equipment to discourage aggression from China. He said Xi was also increasingly concerned with domestic social and economic issues and the country's

"common prosperity" policy aimed at reducing wealth disparities. Hoadley said armed conflict with Taiwan or a wider military conflagration would jeopardise Beijing's ability to curb the power of Chinese billionaires and pursue egalitarian local policies.

Source: NZherald



CANTERBURY DOCKING

HMNZS *Canterbury* has just completed her 15-year drydocking in Singapore and is now on her way home. The project was undertaken at ST Engineering Marine Ltd, Tuas, overseen by Babcock NZ Ltd / Royal New Zealand Navy. Well done to all involved for their hard work in a challenging COVID environment. *Canterbury* is looking impressive in her new livery.



LIGHT HOUSE OF THE WEEK - FRENCH PASS

Position: 40.55.5S 173.50.1E

Characteristics: F WR

Range: 7NM

Structure: White

French Pass separates the mainland from D'Urville Island. During the second voyage in his ship *Astrolabe* in January 1827, the famous French navigator and explorer Admiral d'Urville watched the tides in Current Basin from the hills of the island. He had made an unsuccessful attempt to transit the pass but — in his words: “When the corvette was not a cable's length from the Pass the bar all at once became covered with boiling foam; and the water came rushing through whirlpools of an unbelievable violence. On the instant the corvette obeyed the action of the currents, which carried her back rapidly into the bay of currents making her turn round several times.”

D'Urville surveyed Current Basin, taking soundings right throughout the pass and remained confident that, given the right wind direction and strength, he could safely sail through.

He set sail on 28 January from Croisilles (little crosses) Harbour.

The Maori name Whangarae means Bay of Capes. D'Urville sailed on a slack tide, making the flood with a west-south-west wind when he positioned his ship accurately by using a stern hawser. At the channel entrance the wind died and the tide-race quickened, swinging the ship's head to port towards the reef. The aft sails were quickly furled but, with insufficient headway to correct the swing, the ship swept onto the snout of the reef. She struck twice, heeling alarmingly to starboard, with the crew fearful that she might be rolled over into eddies and whirlpools on the lee side. She lay almost on her beam ends when the rising tide carried her off, with little damage save to her false keel.

Before the lighthouse was built the channel was used by small boats. During the 1870s, with the growing settlements in Wellington and Nelson, passenger and mail steamers also began to use French Pass. It was a quicker and more comfortable trip, provided the ship avoided the reef between the mainland and D'Urville Island. During the 1860s a stone beacon had been placed on the outer edge of the reef, but at night this was difficult to see. By 1880 the Wellington to Nelson mail steamer was using the pass regularly at night, to the horror of the Secretary of Marine who wrote: “Some serious casualty will arise if a light is not put up.”

Despite this, it was 2 years before a light was fitted to the beacon. Then, as soon as it was finished, the beacon was struck by a steamer, causing considerable damage to both the beacon and the boat.

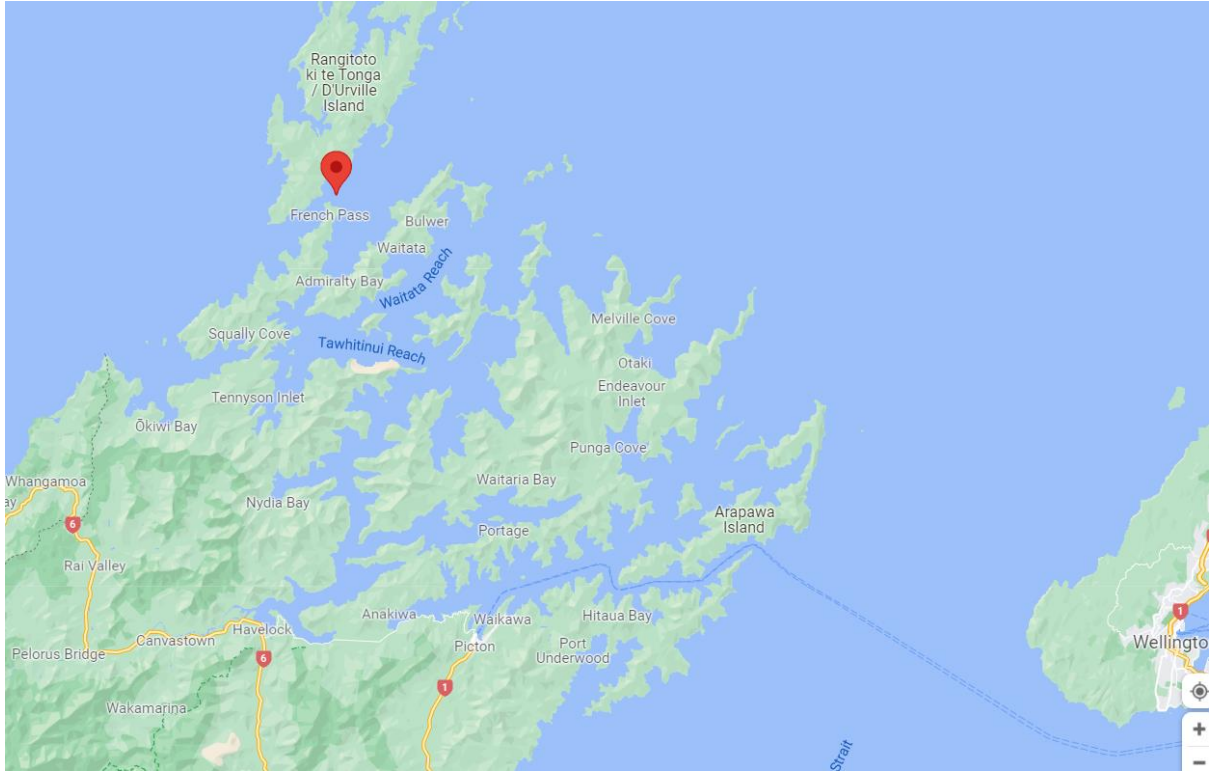
In 1884 the French Pass Lighthouse was built on the mainland, facing out to the repaired beacon. The lighthouse was first lit on 1 October 1884.

Road access to the tiny settlement of French Pass starts at Rai Valley on the Nelson—Picton highway. It wends its way along the crests of rolling hills giving expansive views over Croisilles Harbour, Current Basin, D'Urville Island and eastward to the Marlborough Sounds. The gravel road is narrow and tortuous, sometimes passing through bush but mostly through open farmland. Visitors need ample time for a slow journey to enjoy the magnificent scenery, culminating in the unforgettable sight of the surf, whirlpools and wild water of the pass in full spate. The most spectacular period is at spring tide. French Pass lies between the ridges and islands of the Marlborough Sound and D'Urville Island (Rangitoto).

Four lights and an unlit starboard hand buoy keep mariners in the channel, the southernmost being Okuri ('place of Maori dogs'), which provides a departure point from the south and an excellent pointer for southbound vessels. The little light

beacon on Anatakupu Island, built in October 1999, provides a steering point of reference for a northbound vessel. The largest light, the old French Pass light on Channel Point showing fixed red, marks the edge of the land. The smaller French Pass Reef light flashes white every one and a half seconds standing on the reef just over 100 metres away. The rationale for showing a fixed red light is to preserve the night vision of ships' watchkeepers, who must pass close by.





Regards

Jerry Payne

Editor

HMNZS Ngapona Assn

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