

HMNZS NGAPONA ASSOCIATION INC

LONGCAST

15 – 18 April 22 – Easter
20 April 22 – Navy Club visit to Waihi Beach RSA
22 April 22 - Ngapona Assn Lunch at Henderson RSA
25 April 22 – ANZAC Day
13 May 22 – Navy Club
20 May 22 - Ngapona Assn Lunch at Te Atatu RSA
6 June 22 – Queen’s Birthday

Hi Folks

NGAPONA ASSN – MONTHLY LUNCH

Our Lunch this month will be held at the Henderson RSA on Friday, 22nd April. This is a week later than usual due to Easter Weekend. We have arranged a guest speaker this month, Teresa Cousins, who will speak about Veterans Affairs, and the support that is available to you. This is an important topic and there will be plenty of opportunities for questions.

BUSHMASTERS TO UKRAINE

Australian Prime Minister, Scott Morrison, has announced Australia would gift Ukraine 20 Bushmasters, including two ambulance variants, to support their military campaign against the Russian invasion in response to a recent request from President Volodymyr Zelenskyy during his remote address to a joint sitting of Federal Parliament last Thursday evening (31 March).

The Bushmasters have been painted olive green to better suit Ukraine’s battlefield environment, with a Ukrainian flag painted on either side alongside “United with Ukraine” in English and Ukrainian while the ambulance variants will represent the standard Red Cross.

The vehicles are reportedly furnished with radio, GPS and “additional bolt-on armour”, with training of the systems to be conducted via video.

The Bushmaster is billed as an 11-tonne, 4x4 protected vehicle with a four-tonne payload, designed to perform across a range of mission profiles.

The platform has a number of variants, which include troop carrier, command, patrol, support, weapons deployment and ambulance functions.

The Bushmasters can reportedly carry 10 personnel, supported by blast and ballistic protection and off-road mobility.



FALKLANDS WAR - 40th ANNIVERSARY

The conflict began on 2 April, when "Argentina invaded" and "occupied the Falkland Islands", followed by the invasion of South Georgia the next day. On 5 April, the British government dispatched a naval task force to engage the Argentine Navy and Air Force before making an amphibious assault on the islands. The conflict lasted 74 days and ended with an Argentine surrender on 14 June, returning the islands to British control. In total, 649 Argentine military personnel, 255 British military personnel, and three Falkland Islanders died during the hostilities.

The conflict was a major episode in the protracted dispute over the territories' sovereignty. Argentina asserted (and maintains) that the islands are Argentine territory, and the Argentine government thus characterised its military action as the reclamation of its own territory. The British government regarded the action as an invasion of a territory that had been a Crown colony since 1841. Falkland Islanders, who have inhabited the islands since the early 19th century, are predominantly descendants of British settlers, and strongly favour British sovereignty. Neither state officially declared war, although both governments declared the Islands a war zone.



HMS Sheffield in the Falklands

CAPT BЛИGH R.N.

Charting the Torres Strait

During the voyage, Bligh, ever the navigator/explorer/hydrographer, chose to chart what he could of the Fiji Islands. Travelling westward, he charted a group of islands north of Vanuatu which he named the Banks Islands.

The ships approached the Torres Strait anchoring prior to entering the area. An island close to his position he named Darnley Island which is now called Erub Island. This island is located near the Gt Barrier Reef and is just south of what is known as Bligh's Entrance.

Assistant launched two boats to reconnoitre the area when they were attacked by islanders in four canoes. The boats signalled for assistance. Before the islanders could get within range with their spears and arrows, the crew in the boats let off a volley of musket fire. This caused the islanders to break off the engagement.

12 Sept 1792. The court martial of the *Bounty* mutineers who had survived the wrecking of the '*Pandora*' begins.

12 Sept 1792. In the Torres Strait, *Providence* and *Assistant* are attacked by up to ten canoes of natives. Accurate musket fire warded off the attack which left three men of the *Assistant* wounded. One subsequently died. The island the natives came from Bligh named 'Warrior Island' The name of the island in the native language is Yam Island or lama. This island is in the central island group of the Torres Strait.

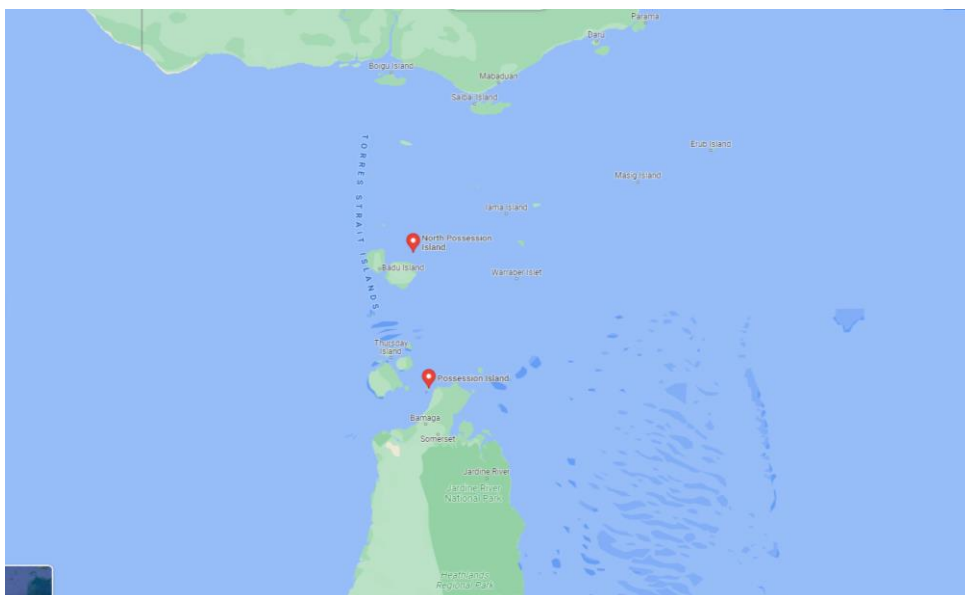
18 Sept 1792. The charting has continued. The ships come to anchor near a set of three small islands. Bligh sends a party ashore to take possession of all the Torres Strait Islands he has charted for His Britannic Majesty King George 3rd. The island they landed on Bligh named Possession Island. This was later changed to North Possession Islet.

Providence and *Assistant* were to experience many navigational hazards during the transit of the Straits, some of which were only escaped from through superior seamanship. The names given by Bligh to such areas reflect the hazardous nature of the passage. Names such as 'Hell Gates'. Eventually they reached the end of the reefs, and through a channel about 500 feet wide at four fathoms deep at its most shallow place, left the Strait. The channel was named Bligh's Farewell. The transit took 19 days.

From the Torres Straits, Bligh sailed for Coupang. Unfortunately, below decks, the breadfruit was not doing well due to the heat of the tropics and the lack of rainfall experienced on the voyage.

The stay in Coupang was short, and the two ships soon left for the West Indies.

(to be continued)



Regards

Jerry Payne

Editor

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