

HMNZS NGAPONA ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED

LONGCAST

- 21 September 18 - Ngapona Assn Lunch at Howick RSA
- 29 September 18 – Comms Assn AGM - Birkenhead RSA commencing at 1100
- 30 September 18 – Daylight Saving starts
- 5 – 7 October 18 – RNZN Cooks & Stewards Reunion, Birkenhead RSA
- 19 October 18 - Ngapona Assn Lunch at New Lynn RSA
- 19 October 18 - Trafalgar Day Lunch at the Te Atatu RSA
- 9 – 12 November 18 - Engine Room Branch Reunion, Rangiora
- 16 November 18 – Ngapona Assn Lunch at Grey Lynn RSA
- 7 December 18 - Weapons Electrical Reunion at SRFM
- 21 December 18 - Ngapona Assn Lunch at Orakei RSA

Hi Folks

DEATH NOTICE

ETHERTON, Neil. Passed away peacefully on Thursday 6 September 2018, at North Shore Hospital, aged 91 years. Much loved husband of Margaret (deceased). Loved father and father in law of Brett and Barbara, Wayne and Sally, Karen, Scott and Clare, and Leigh (deceased). Loved grandfather of Kylie, Toyah, Sophie, Michelle, Nick, Vika, Haani, Anastasia, Bryn, Troy, William, and great grandfather of Alex. A service to celebrate Neil's life will be held in The North Harbour Chapel of Dil's Funeral Services, 185 Schnapper Rock Road, Albany on Thursday 13 September at 1.00 pm, followed by private cremation. In lieu of flowers donations would be gratefully received to The Blind Foundation www.blindfoundation.org.nz or can be left at the service.

I understand Neil was a Lt Cdr at HMNZS Ngapona in the 1960s



Neil Etherton

HMNZS HAKU - BLACK WATCH

It is with some sadness that I have to report that the small team that was intent on saving Black Watch and returning her to her former glory have had to abandon the mission due to lack of support from the wider community. The funding was 'almost' there with enough in pledges to at least make a start but it was felt that there was not enough willing manpower to see the project through to a satisfactory conclusion. The worst result would have been money spent and a half finished project, we have seen this happen many times in the past.

Thanks must go to the few dedicated people who put in the effort - you did your best. It is now over to the Harbour Master to dispose of her.

For those who served on Haku it is a sad end. We should now ensure that the same fate does not befall the few remaining HDMLs.



HMNZS Haku - ZMRC (Q1349)

DID YOU KNOW?

On 10 September 2004 backfilling of the fuel storage tunnels at Devonport Naval Base commenced. The four tunnels were constructed between 1943 and 1947, each to hold 6,000 tonnes of Furnace Fuel Oil (FFO) in a cavity 115m long and 8m in diameter. When the RNZN changed to F-76 diesel fuel in 1977, the lighter oil began to seep through the unlined concrete facings of the tunnels. The tunnels were cleaned in 1993 and the landowners above the excavations advised in 1996. In 2003 a resource consent was obtained to backfill the tunnels not on Defence land and the remaining space used to store 2,400 m³ fuel in pre-fabricated steel tanks.



The interior of a tunnel during construction

A NAVAL CAREER IN THE EYES OF COLIN ROSS Pt. 45

So I returned to the RRS into my old job but without a uniform. The RRS was quite a tight little group. Every Monday morning there would be a team meeting and update, what was expected to happen in the coming week etc. At 1530 on a Friday we all had to log off our computers so they could back up the weeks records so by 1600 we would all be in the lunch room for a few quiet bebies and a chat about the weeks highlights or lowlights.

I had picked up the job of the refit supervisor for WELLINGTON'S upcoming maintenance. So with a Spec Writer flew to join the ship in Sydney. This was the first time I had been back to Garden Island since 1975, so was amazed at the changes. The Rockers was still operating and Harry the Wheels or by now it was Harry the axles as the wheels had long gone from his pie cart. But the rest of the place had been transformed with new wharf and facilities; the Graving Dock was still the same big hole in the ground.

We sailed on a Monday morning bound for Western Australia where we would depart the ship and fly home. The first day we made good progress in filling out work details, but when we turned the corner into Torres Strait the weather was atrocious and remained that way virtually till we arrived in WA. So not as much was achieved as we had hoped, however we did manage to meet the CO and HODs to brief them on when and what the maintenance load looked like along with the budget.

Being the lead supervisor I found was an onerous task. As well as overseeing the work going on and keeping a check on the spending from the other sections I still had to supervise my own workload. So the ship returned from overseas and we went into the

maintenance period with a set amount of maintenance. The thing about maintenance was you were never quite sure what was going to come out of left field. On completion of the maintenance period there was always a wash up meeting. This brought together the original aims of the maintenance and what had been achieved highlighting areas of improvement and outstanding issues to be addressed.

In the original concept of this overseeing of maintenance the RRS would oversee the maintenance period and then the Operational Repair Group would handle the ships issues from then on in. This created a few issues and we were sometimes frustrated that issues identified during the maintenance would be handed over to the ORS where we would have preferred to see them through.

In 1997 I picked up the Overseeing task to convert RESOLUTION from its USN configuration to the configuration destined to allow it to become the RNZN's hydrographic ship. In line with the brief I flew to Tahiti with a Spec Writer and a representative from the Defence Scientific Establishment. This was to check the current state of the ship and put together a maintenance package for the vessel on arrival in Auckland.

So off we flew full of enthusiasm and after a good flight we landed in Tahiti. I should say the plane thumped down on the runway causing me to observe that the pilot must have been used to landing on aircraft carriers, as it really was a heavy landing. We were assigned two nights in a hotel awaiting the arrival of the ship. It was quite late when we reached our accommodation so by the time we had organised a late dinner and a couple of quiet bebies it was off to bed.

The next morning we met for breakfast and it was pleasant sitting on the patio, breakfast over we were enjoying a quiet morning coffee and were watching this grey ship come over the horizon. As RESOLUTION was not expected till the following day we assumed it was one of the French Navy vessels.

However as it got closer we observed that the silhouette was very similar to the photos we had seen of the TAGOS class of which RESOLUTION was one. So it became a bit of a scramble to get from the hotel to be in the port when she berthed.

The next couple of days alongside were spent familiarising ourselves with the ship layout and also utilising what drawings we had of the conceptual layout for the hydrographic role.

Along with the maintenance there were also a lot of configuration changes proposed to allow the ship to meet its new role. In the concept drawings we had seen before leaving NZ there had been the requirement to fit boat launching ability obviously for a survey boat and a Rhib. When we looked at the position of the new davits and considered the weight of the proposed boats we could see it was never going to work. The top of the davit was higher than the bridge and in all the drawings of the boat deployment it was noted that the ship was upright. This was not going to be a fact in real life, as the ship had no way of ballasting to counter the weight of the boat being swung outboard. I well remember the difficulties we had on MONOWAI sling boats outboard especially in less than calm weather. So we made a phone call back to NZ pointing out the perceived issue and this led to quite a major re-design.

The trip back from Tahiti was a good chance to observe the operating characteristics of the vessel and problems that needed to be addressed. The crew were all berthed in either single or double cabins. It operated with a crew of approx. thirty members. The new operational requirement was at the time to accommodate up to approx. 40-45 crewmembers. This meant some of the cabins would be re-arranged to accommodate four persons. The original concept was that the Officer of the Watch would be one of the Hydrographic Officers. However on review it was decided that there would be additional watch keeping officers carried. This of course upset the original concept and along with this change it meant that there would be another steward required, with these changes there would now be a requirement for an extra Chef. So suddenly we were going from a comfortably accommodating the crew to a fairly compact accommodation requirement. The other issue that is never addressed in changes like this is that things like the air conditioning which was designed around the former USN requirement was now expected to handle some of the areas where there had been a 200% increase in personnel.

The other issues were around some of the logistics. Things like the ship still only had the same fridges and water capacity, so these changes did bring some issues through the life of the vessel. The conversion got under way and it was a really interesting time. I think I enjoyed it but some of the hours were rather long. During the conversion it was always noted that the fitting of the fansweep sonar would be an issue and this was not fitted until a subsequent maintenance period the following year.

At the end of this phase of the conversion we had changed some of the major configurations needed for the future roll. The fitting of the Rhib cradle and launching crane further aft and a deck down was a large change from the original concept. The accommodation changes were completed and the initial fit out of the Operations Room was achieved. The ship departed and successfully completed its sea trials.

During this time there was a major re-organisation of the two maintenance support organisations. It would be decided that for more continuity there would now be a Ship Manager for each ship. They would be responsible for all aspects of required maintenance for the vessel, this included during maintenance periods and also maintenance support operationally for the vessel. As I was at the time knee deep in dealing with RESOLUTION then I logically became the Ship Manager for her. This was the start of a very interesting six or seven years in which I was involved with the vessel, although there were other things that I got involved with as well.

During my time in the RRS it was decided that there was not enough experience in Marine Coatings. This expertise had always resided in the Dockyard. So there were four staff put through a one-year coatings inspection course.

This was a module driven course. There was a one-week introductory course and then eighteen modules that we had to complete. It was tough going with most of the module work done in our own time. As I knew very little about the ins and outs of paint and preservation, every module included a lot of background reading I needed to do to complete the module. Bear in mind that most of the other people doing this HERA course with us had been involved in the paint industry for some years and had a

painting background. There was a two-week practical course at the end and then two three-hour exams plus a practical exam.

With great trepidation exam day arrived. The hours of extra reading paid dividends, plus unlike some of the other course members we had that thing called exam technique and assigned our time to questions appropriately. At the end of this stressful day we went away not sure of the outcome.

It was hugely relieving to find we had all passed and hence were now recognised Coatings Inspectors.

To be continued

Take care

Jerry Payne

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Editor

HMNZS Ngapona Assn Inc

"There are good ships, and there are wood ships, the ships that sail the sea."

"But the best ships are friendships, and may they always be."

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