

# HMNZS NGAPONA ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED

## LONGCAST

11 May 18 – Navy Club Lunch at Remuera Club  
18 May 18 - Ngapona Assn Lunch at Glen Eden RSA  
4 June 18 – Queen’s Birthday  
15 June 18 - Ngapona Assn Lunch at Birkenhead RSA  
15 – 18 June 18 – Greenies Weapons Electrical Reunion at Napier  
30 June 18 – HMNZS Ngapona Senior Rates Mess Dinner  
20 July 18 – Ngapona Assn Lunch at Pt Chevalier RSA  
21 July 18 – HMNZS Ngapona Assn – Formal Dinner, Pt Chevalier RSA  
17 August 18 - Ngapona Assn Lunch at Henderson RSA  
29 September 18 – Comms Assn AGM - Birkenhead RSA commencing at 1100

Hi Folks

### **DEATH NOTICE - MAURICE MITCHELL**

It is with sadness that I have to advise that Maurice Mitchell, Ex RNZN REM NZ150308, President of The Navy Club Inc, crossed the bar at 1330hrs on Friday 4th May 2018. A service for Maurice will be held at Commerce Club, Ohinerau St, Remuera at 1100hrs on Wednesday 9th May 2018. Medals to be worn.

### **WELFARE**

I understand that Cliff Hodgman has had a couple of short visits to hospital recently and may need to go back again. We wish Cliff all the best.

## **RNZN COMMUNICATORS ASSN - AGM**

The next Annual General Meeting for the RNZN Communicators Assn will be held at the Birkenhead RSA on 29 September 2018 commencing at 1100. Items for the Agenda or remits are to be forwarded to the Secretary, John Titmus email [trixiedog@doglover.com](mailto:trixiedog@doglover.com) by 15 August 2018. This will allow sufficient time for items to be circulated amongst members.

## **SHIP BREAKING - SOUTH ASIA**

From a total of 206 ships, which were broken in the first quarter of 2018, 152 ships were sold to the beaches of South Asia for breaking, according to NGO Shipbreaking Platform. South Korean and UAE ship owners have sold the most ships to South Asian yards during the first quarter of 2018 with 14 beached vessels each, followed by Greek and Russian owners. So far this year, 10 workers have lost their lives and 2 workers have been severely injured when breaking ships in Chittagong, Bangladesh. Another two workers were reported dead after an accident at a shipbreaking yard in Alang, India. NGO Shipbreaking Platform said that ship owners “continue to sell their ships to the beaching yards despite the well documented deplorable conditions.” **Source :** [worldmaritimeneews](#)

The last known position of ex HMNZS Endeavour was on the beach at the Alang shipbreaking yard.

## **DID YOU KNOW?**

On 10 May 1980 the Y-turret and director control tower from HMNZS Achilles (later INS Delhi) were installed as exhibits at the Museum of Transport and Technology at the Meola Road site. The exhibit was opened by the Prime Minister, the Rt Hon Robert Muldoon, the Chief of Defence Staff, Vice Admiral ND Anderson gave the address, and cadets from TS Achilles conducted the ceremonial. The exhibit was moved to the entrance of the Devonport Naval Base in 1993.

## **A NAVAL CAREER IN THE EYES OF COLIN ROSS - Pt. 28**

In early August I was doing all the preparation to post to PUKAKI, this is the time to basically get your life in order and sort out bill payment etc. to try and alleviate some of the issues your wife would otherwise have to do.

I was sent for by FMEO and was concerned about what I hadn't done right or what I could have done better when out of the blue he asked me if I would be happy to go to UK again and be the Warrant Officer to bring the replacement Leander out to NZ.

As you will have noted I had spent all my previous frigate time on Y100 ships. To go and pick up an Y160 Leander was going to be a step up. As a bit of background the Y160 Leander's were Batch 3 of the class. The first of the Leander's i.e. HMNZS SOUTHLAND was batch one which were basically the same hull and machinery as the Rothsay Class (OTAGO & TARANAKI). After them came the batch 2 which had the same hull shape but were wider (WAIKATO), and had a changed machinery layout.

Finally the batch 3 Leander's were produced, these were wider again (CANTERBURY & WELLINGTON) with basically the same machinery layout as the batch 2's but incorporated a machinery control room.

The machinery control room (MCR) changed the face of watch keeping. As prior to that you were in the same space as the machinery and a lot of the watch keeping was done by ear. You could hear the machinery level or noise change and therefore either know what had created the change or start looking for the cause. With the MCR although you were still in the same vicinity as before it was an enclosed room that effectively isolated you from the machinery and hence cut out a huge amount of the noise.

This change created the new method of watch keeping in that you were more reliant on your eyes and there was a huge increase of gauges bringing information directly to your attention in the MCR. The biggest benefit I felt apart from the air conditioning which on its own was a huge step forward in making watch keeping more palatable was the fact that by cutting down the background noise you could carry out normal conversations. Up until this time all my watch keeping had been done adjacent to running machinery. Because of the noise there was very little conversation and most watches passed using sign language to indicate what needed to be done. The MCR suddenly made a more human environment where you could actually get to know those on watch with you and also carry out some advanced training whilst on watch.

Back to this discussion with FMEO, of course I pointed out 1: I was about to post to PUKAKI and he didn't see changing this as an issue and 2. I had never been on a Leander and again he didn't see that as an issue as he said, "it's basically the same thing, steam going through pipes and cooling water systems cooling". So it was I agreed that professionally this was step forward and also a good change to keep interest and learning levels up.

The change meant I would again be away for three plus months in UK. This would not really cause any domestic upheaval, as I was about to go to sea anyway. One of the other advantages I saw was the ship was coming to NZ on its delivery voyage and would immediately go into a major refit to upgrade the boilers to steam atomisation and also structural changes to increase the fuel capacity as at that time the RNZN did not possess a tanker so fuel remaining and distance to ports was always a critical factor. Looking forward to a ship in major refit was also an influence to agree to go as I could see it would be a challenge and have always believed that one of the best ways to learn is to have an equipment stripped down to bare and then rebuilt, you learn what's inside and usually more about how it should work. One of the things I was unsure about was how the systems operated so the first thing I did were getting a drawing of each system and put it into a folder to take with me. I think most of the crew were amused to see the Warrant Officer down tracing systems when we were alongside in Portsmouth.

The first issue to contend with was being promoted to Warrant Officer. I was told some days before we were due to depart that I wouldn't be promoted prior to deployment. This I felt was unfair as I was a firm believer that the rank went with the job. So with nothing to lose in a sense I dug my toes in and told the MEO designate that if I was promoted then I wouldn't be doing the job. Not often I won too many battles with the hierarchy but after much discussion this one I did win.

Unfortunately the promotion was the day before we flew out and in good engineering tradition you have to celebrate these successes and so we did. We had a party at home the night before the advance party were to fly out and I remember the difficulty to get everyone to go home late at night when I had to be up a 4am for transport to pick me up and go to Whenuapai. Was probably not the brightest idea I have had and so it was a pretty jaded body that arrived at Whenuapai the next morning.

We were on an Air Force 727 flight to Singapore. Of course those planes were only short haul so it was off across the Tasman to Richmond Air Force Base in Sydney then up to Darwin then Singapore. These fuel stops of course extended the flight time and it seemed to take forever to get to Singapore. Trying to order wine or beer inflight was of course not an option and from memory the meals were bagged meals so not exactly first class. I guess at least we were in seat as opposed to parachute seats. On arrival in Singapore we were met by the Defence Liaison Staff and trundled out to Dieppe Barracks for the night. Being sailors of course we knew our way to the Sergeant's Mess and were having a quiet few top ups when the few army people in the mess leapt to their feet. Reclining in the mess the sailors remained seated wondering what was going on. Next minute a very red faced army Warrant Officer appeared in front of us and informed us, "This is my mess and etiquette is that everyone stands when I enter the mess". As sailors we explained that in our mess there was effectively no rank and it was our relaxation space. To this he replied, "You have an option, get to your feet or I will close the bar". That got our attention and we stood all thinking what an archaic system.

To get even, as we must being the Senior Service, a couple of the CPO's went away and bought their stock of rum into the mess, inviting all his staff to have a tot. By the time we left the mess to go and check out Sambewang most of his mess members were the worse for wear. We showed him!!!

We had to go to Sambewang for a trip down memory lane. I had been back twice with FMU in 1981 & 82 so nothing was too different for me but a few of the others hadn't been for a while and were amazed at how contracted the area had become. However the Nelson Bar was still operating so we ended up there and were back to bed late again so my body was running out of puff.

The next day we were on a commercial flight from Singapore to London and arrived in London about 6am so bleary eyed we were taken to our accommodation and were informed we would be picked up at 9am for a briefing at NZ house.

The briefing was mercifully short. It was just to lie out the programme. The ship we were going to take over (HMS BACCANTE) was currently in the South Atlantic. It had been deployed to the Falklands as part of the second wave of ships and had been down there for a while; it however had arrived after the surrender so didn't take part in the Falklands War. So the plan was to fly us down to Ascension Island to join the ship on its way back to UK. This meant we would have about ten days steaming time to get a feel for the ship and assess what we needed to do to get her back to NZ.

After the briefing we went to one of the local pubs for a catch up with the Defence Staff. Dell Cootes was the Commander at the time so was good to catch up with my old boss and chew the fat. We were all pretty tired and after a siesta in the afternoon it was off to see some of the sights locally around London. We had two days and then went up to Brize Norton and stayed overnight there ready for our flight down to Ascension Island. Our relaxation time was coming to an end and we looked forward to tackling the challenging task of assessing the state of the ship and also raising jobs to be done on the vessel being delivered into Dockyard hands in Devonport NZ early December.

*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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