

HMNZS NGAPONA ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED

LONGCAST

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

23 June 18 – Northland Luncheon at Bay of Islands Yacht Club

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

NGAPONA SENIOR RATES MESS DINNER 30 JUNE 2018:

Ngapona Senior Rates Mess will host its 2018 Mess Dinner on Saturday 30 June 1800 hrs for 1830 start. Partners welcome, cost \$50.00 per person. Rig for service members is mess undress, with civilian equivalent to be worn by non-serving attendees.

NR & VR Senior Rates, please email your intentions to attend to hmnzsgapona@nzdf.mil.nz NLT Friday 8 June. Due to catering and serving staff limitations we expect to cap dining numbers at approximately 45, with first in first served so email sooner rather than later. This is likely to be CPO Brennan’s final mess dinner with Ngapona. Shortly after 8 June names will be confirmed and it is requested your \$50.00 per person payment then be made electronically with your name and “2018 NGA Dinner” referenced to HMNZS Ngapona Senior Rates Mess WESTPAC account 03-0252-0362331-000 by Wed 13 June. The Cox’n and Alva will put names on the white board and hopefully we can invite key staff who have helped us out over the past year.

NOTE: Non serving members of HMNZS Ngapona wishing to attend the Mess Dinner should contact me (editor@ngapona.org.nz) initially so I can collate names.

It is also intended to hold the Ngapona SR Mess AGM on the parade night of Wed 13 June at SRFM 2115 hours at which time mess dinner arrangements can be finalised.

DID YOU KNOW?

On 1 June 1929 the Auckland Naval Volunteer Reserve headquarters was opened by the Governor-General, Sir Charles Fergusson, and the men of the Auckland Division RNVR marched in and paraded. By the 1930'3 the base was a centre of a thriving social and sporting life for the reservists and a home to varied training activities. In 1948, it was named HMNZS Ngapona, but cap tallies were not issued until July 1954.



HMNZS Ngapona - after the class rooms were added

A NAVAL CAREER IN THE EYES OF COLIN ROSS - Pt. 30

With our arrival in Portsmouth the majority of the RN crew went on two weeks leave. With only a Retard Duty Watch to help we started some of the maintenance and checks we wanted to do prior to the two week AMP planned for on the return of the crew.

The major item on the list was an external boiler clean to be followed by a pressure test of both boilers. The external clean required the removal of all the outer boiler air casings and also the closing plates that gave access to the boiler tubes.

We knew from the way the plant was being operated that we had some real challenges coming up. It was apparent that the casings didn't fit well and this was allowing the forced draught air pressure to leak from the internal air space to the Boiler Room but

worse than that was the air leakage through the closing plates into the furnace. This effectively meant that we didn't have accurate control of the combustion in the furnace.

To make up for the leakage the ship had been operating with a higher forced draught blower speed than should have been required, this of course also meant a higher fuel consumption which was going to cause us problems on some of the longer steaming legs especially the long haul from Pearl Harbour to Pago Pago. We managed to better secure some of the casings but there were still many leaks.

Allied to this was the ship had been consuming 30+ tons of feed water per day on the way back to Portsmouth. This was abhorrent to Kiwis as we prided ourselves on normal feed water consumption being around 12-15 ton per day and had on occasions got below this. Making this more problematic for us was the fact that the RN was only using 20 ton of fresh water a day, which allowed them in a sense to ignore the feed water problems.

Although we knew we would only have a steaming crew on the way home that was around the 150 crew members we knew we would still be going through 30 tons of fresh water a day. So we knew we couldn't accommodate this feed water consumption. In normal steaming we always tried to remain on one evaporator (water maker) supplying both fresh water and feed water. One evaporator could distil a maximum of 48 ton of freshwater a day but in practice the output would average more like 40 ton per day hence we would require to run one evaporator full time and the second one for a few hours to make up the difference between usage and output from only one evaporator.

You could run one evaporator on exhaust steam, as this was waste steam it effectively had no effect on fuel consumption, however if the second evaporator was required to be used to keep up with consumption then it required to be used on live steam which required more boiler output and this had a serious effect on fuel consumption, so again we were going to be behind the eight ball.

So the external clean was done and we pressure tested both boilers discovering that a superheater tube the RN had plugged in the Falklands was still leaking. This was obviously not helping the feed water consumption and we required it to be re-plugged. The crew were not interested in doing the job and as it was still an RN ship we had to ask for permission for anything we wanted to do or have done.

With the crew's lack of assistance or interest this plugging of this tube became the first big issue to deal with. So we requested the boiler records from ashore and ran into a wall there as well. It took a lot of pushing and the help of the Defence Liaison Officer in London before they would release the records. This was not an auspicious start to the up coming maintenance period. In the end the Staff Boiler Technician came and plugged it and as a result the boiler pressure test finally passed.

During the first week of this leave period we still only had the original ten Kiwi's. The rest of the crew came up on two flights and towards the end of the second week it was great to greet the first flight. They were accommodated ashore for the interim but at the start of the maintenance period it at least gave us some of the crew that would be on the delivery voyage to start preparing for the trip home.

We had put together a list of job requirements for the maintenance Period and basically had to go cap in hand to get permission to do them or get assistance. It was pretty frustrating and on more than one occasion the Marine Engineering Officer had to calm me down.

During this time alongside just after we had arrived there was a decision that the RN would Beat the Retreat alongside the ship. When the ship had gone south to the Falklands they had dropped their motorboat and it had been in the pool for about three months. When the decision was made to Beat the Retreat because we were port side to they decided to replace the motorboat back on its davits. Because we weren't involved in this ceremony we had decided to go ashore to keep out of the way. Later we returned and as we were walking along the jetty I noticed Jack Baigent suddenly stiffen up. He had suddenly noticed that the RN had put the boat in the davit and to tidy it up they had re-painted the hull, obviously in a hurry as they hadn't bothered to clean the hull first so there was nicely painted grey sea weed hanging off the bottom of the boat.

I suspect there was an interesting discussion between Uncle Jack and the Buffer the next morning and was interesting to note the RN were up scrapping the hull the next day. Jack was the Whole Ship Co-ordinator and my respect for him, even after having him as our GI on joining, certainly went up another notch. He had the whole crew allocated to messes and lockers and managed the changeover in crew from RN to RNZN. When an RN member completed his duty and posted a Kiwi knew exactly when and where he was to fit into the messing system. Very smooth handover was achieved thanks to his professionalism.

We were due to complete the maintenance on the same day as the handover ceremony. So both ships' companies mustered in their finest gear on the jetty, the white ensign was lowered for the last time and the commissioning warrant for WELLINGTON was read out and up rose the New Zealand White Ensign. The ship actually didn't become ours until mid-night on the Sunday so a group of us managed to stay up and raise our glasses to the new addition to the fleet.

On the Monday morning it all started. We went to flying stations at 0900 as we were accepting a replacement Wasp (helicopter) to bring home. The Wasp duly arrived and put down on the flight deck. The Officers were there with champagne as this was the first landing on. It was plain to see the RN pilot didn't want to participate but duly got into the celebration. The poor guy was probably scheduled with other flights that day and here he was expected to drink at that hour of the morning.

We carried out a basin trial and then went to sea for a bit of a shake down before we started the long voyage home. Leaving port was my first attempt to drive the main engine from the MCR. I found it strange being in an enclosed space remote from the machinery and the throttle was a joystick as opposed to the big shiny chrome wheels that I was used to. It was great feeling to get out and finally know we were in charge of the ship. We did all those usual first day things like Man Overboard, life raft stations etc.

We then went back alongside one of the reserve ships in the harbour to take on ammunition, torpedoes I think, then back alongside for the last weekend before we finally were to depart for the big ocean and the long trek home.

The biggest advantage of this trip home was we only had to do break down jobs and there was going to be no exercises just steam from A to B.

To be continued



HMNB Portsmouth



HMNZS Wellington

Take care

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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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