

LONGCAST

10 August – Old Salts Lunch at Howick RSA
12 August 18 – HMNZS Ngapona Assn AGM at Pt Chevalier RSA
17 August 18 - Ngapona Assn Lunch at Henderson RSA
18 August 18 – Navy Club AGM at Remuera Club
21 September 18 - Ngapona Assn Lunch at Howick RSA
29 September 18 – Comms Assn AGM - Birkenhead RSA commencing at 1100
5 – 7 October 18 – RNZN Cooks & Stewards Reunion, Birkenhead RSA
19 October 18 - Ngapona Assn Lunch at New Lynn RSA

Hi Folks

HMNZS NGAPONA ASSN AGM.

This is a formal notice to HMNZS Ngapona Association members that our AGM will be held at the Pt Chevalier RSA on Sunday 12 August at 1500.
Any Notices of Motion should be sent to this email address by 30 July 2018.

OLD SALTS LUNCHEON

Howick RSA – Friday 10 August, 1130 muster. Lunch will be the chef's best carvery, seasonal vegetables and salads along with duff. \$20. Per head.
To assist in catering bookings are essential by August 3.
Contact: Jill Thompson on Mob: 021 2744426 email: jillt.nz49@gmail.com Or Keith Ingram on 09 5334336 email: keith@skipper.co.nz
'Up Spirits' maybe piped.
Friday 10 August 11.30 am – Howick RSA. 25 Wellington St, Howick.
Guest Speaker — WWII Merchant Navy Veteran Able Seaman Donald Love.

TRAFALGAR DAY LUNCHEON 2018

To all matelots past & present, who have served under any of the White Ensigns.
The President and Quarterdeck Division of the Te Atatu Memorial RSA are again hosting a Luncheon on Friday 19th October 2018 to celebrate in true Navy fashion the 213th Anniversary of the Battle of Trafalgar and you are invited to attend.
It will also be an opportunity to catch up with shipmates old and new. Pre-lunch drinks will be served from 1100 with lunch at 1200.
The guest speaker is Captain Andy Watts ONZM RNZN.
Please see attached application form.

SEAMANSHIP TRAINING AID FACILITY

The new Waterside facility which was opened last week allows Navy sailors to learn seamanship skills without leaving port. The barge is moored at the Devonport Naval Base and allows sailors to develop seamanship skills in a realistic working environment. The Waterside facility is a purpose-built barge designed for on the water training. The facility is accessed by a 35-metre bridge, weighs 145 tonnes, is 24 metres long and includes equipment such as decks, rails, lines and ladders, along with winches, HIAB cranes and hydraulics needed to raise and lower sea-boats.

The facility enables sailors to train in water-based seamanship skills such as man-overboard recovery, launching of rigid-hulled inflatable boats by crane, pilot ladder use, and life-raft launch and recovery. Skills can be practiced that develops experience before going to sea. Combined with the existing Seamanship Training Aids Landside Training Facility with its replica training ship hull, (completed in 2015), the Navy's modern Seamanship Training complex is now complete.



Seamanship Training Aid Facility - Waterside

DID YOU KNOW?

On 3 August 1941 the four-masted Finnish barque *Pamir* was seized in Wellington Harbour by the New Zealand Government, as Finland was deemed to be in enemy

occupation - in reality, Finland had joined the Nazi Germany's invasion of their mutual enemy, the Soviet Union. Managed by the Union Steam Ship Company, the *Pamir* made 10 successful voyages before being handed back to her Finnish owners in 1948.



Pamir

A NAVAL CAREER IN THE EYES OF COLIN ROSS - Pt. 39

On re-joining as a CPO within the first month I had an Instructional Technique course. For someone who had never been instructing this was a lifesaver and I guess an eye opener. I suddenly realised that you may think you know a subject but actually teaching it was a different ball game. It was also a great confidence booster being able to stand up in front of a group of people and educate them as well as yourself at the same time. I would have to say that I thought I knew most of the engineering subjects I was required to pass on to young crew members but through teaching in the school I certainly learnt a lot more and also learnt some things about myself.

I taught the Leading Hands Professional Course and also the Advanced Diesel Course. So there was a bit of variety and depth of knowledge difference in these courses.

Early in my tenure I was encouraged back to play rugby. It was a good social scene as we would have a run around on a Wednesday night and then retire to the Navy Sports Complex for dinner, most of the wives also came down for the dinner so was a good way to renew friendships and also meet a range of new acquaintances.

So playing with the Presidents grade Navy Water rats in the winter also led on to getting involved in the Ancient Mariners. The Ancient Mariners were a team of navy and ex-

navy players and was specifically set up to attend the Air NZ Golden Oldies Tournaments.

The first tournament I attended was 1991 in Perth Western Australia. This was amazing as these tournaments had developed from small beginnings and by the time we went to Perth there were something like 5-6000 rugby players. I remember the controversy at the time as there were three deaths at the tournament and a lot of newsprint came out about the folly of letting old unfit players run around at this type of tournament. I think the consensus reached by the players was that it was such a good idea that if you did pass away then maybe you did it happily doing something you enjoyed.

One of the things that was noted in Perth was the way the Americas Cup had cleaned up and modernized Fremantle. I had been there in 1975 on TARANAKI and it was a real run down maritime port. By 1991 after the 1987 Americas Cup the pubs had all gone upmarket and the facilities were just great. We had a great time, and a lot of laughs as well as a little bit of running around a park. The final dinner was a sit down meal where all 5000+ people were all waited on. The music was great as well and it was a really pleasant way to complete the festival.

When I returned to work I found that I had been re-assigned to teach apprentices. This required getting all the notes from the Leading Hands Course and bulking them up with more depth in the subject. So again I was flat out trying to produce the notes prior to having to teach the subject.

As part of the course the apprentices went on a sailing exped. The class was split between two on the Navy's Chico yachts. As one of their instructors I was expected to go as well. Off we went sailing down to Tauranga and then back up to Kawau Island. I had noticed that I was starting to have difficulties with my eyesight, most notably when reading the paper my arms weren't long enough so I would have to put the paper down and move back a bit to get my eyes to focus correctly to be able to read the paper. Unfortunately it became an issue on this exped, as I couldn't see the chart well enough to put a fix on the chart.

So this was the first part of growing older and having to get used to my body letting me down, however it did drive me to go to the Optometrist and get reading glasses. Amazing what a difference they made with being able to read everything normally. It was also interesting in that way back in 1964 when I was doing my medicals etc. to join the navy the doctor had noted that I would probably need glasses in later life.

Also in 1991 was the 50th anniversary of the RNZN. I had arranged to spend a couple of weeks on MONOWAI to further my diesel knowledge and also I was looking at going back to sea. I was, and still am, a great believer in that if you wear the uniform then part of the requirement is to do your share of sea time. So I was really sussing out a likely posting, as I had no ambition to go back to a frigate.

The celebration of the navy 50th was all units were deployed around the coast to visit different ports. The reality of it was that it was great to go to these ports and celebrate but unfortunately there weren't enough days at sea between ports to allow the body to recover. By the time we got to Lyttleton I was glad my time was up and it was time to return to Auckland and resume normal life.

When I arrived home I suggested to Kerry that we go up to Mangawhai Heads and look at what was available to buy as a bach. So we went up for the weekend and looked at about four different places and settled on the one we wanted. Luckily when we went to the Real Estate agent I noted that the price had dropped from the week before so we went in with an even lower price and it was accepted. We still have the place today although it is slightly different now from when we bought it.

At the end of 1991 I was at a training department meeting, the meeting was interrupted and the Chief Shipwright was asked to go and see the Training Commander. He returned a while later to advise us that he had been shoulder tapped to join CANTERBURY, which was sailing later that day to Samoa for cyclone relief assistance. As a parting word he advised me that I would probably be the next one sent for and so it came to pass.

I was sent for and advised to get my sea kit together and join CANTERBURY that afternoon ready to deploy to Samoa.

Joining CANTERBURY seven years after my last posting there was a bit like coming home again. What I didn't expect however was to be put on the watch bill. It was a bit of a refresher course on the way up there. We steamed north to Apia and were then deployed to one of the outer islands. The devastation was pretty bad so a group of us were sent ashore to render assistance to the local hospital.

To get there we were flown in by Wasp helicopter. We were sitting in the back of the chopper with a pump between us when the pilot took off. Almost as soon as we left the flight deck he flipped the chopper on its side to change heading and we nearly whistled out the side of the chopper as we were sitting on the deck in the back and not strapped in. Luckily we survived that scare and were deposited on the grounds of the hospital.

Because of the devastation one of the first requirements was to restore the water catchments. The hospital had about four Bures around it. We picked the one with the least damage and spent our hours ashore re-instating the guttering on the bure and connecting it to the nearest concrete water tank.

The locals watched us doing all this and it wasn't till shortly before we were due to be returned to the ship that one of the locals informed us that the water tank we had connected up was never used as it had a crack in the concrete bottom. You can imagine how well pleased we were with this advice, what a waste of a day.

In all we spent about a week assisting at various sites. I have always enjoyed these types of assistance requirements, it really gives you a buzz to know you have assisted in some small way to perhaps return their lives to something a bit more normal than they had just experienced.

We were then sent back to Apia, as there was a meeting about the ongoing support requirements. We were very keen to find the outcome of the meeting as if we had been deployed again it meant that we would be spending Xmas up there. Luckily they decided to send us home. Before we sailed we de-stored everything we didn't need in the way of food to get us home.

We were disappointed that we hadn't been able to do this out on the most affected islands, as we were sure that the majority of food landed would not necessarily go to the people that needed it most.

We steamed back south and arrived back in Auckland in the late afternoon of Xmas eve. I had to apologise to Kerry as obviously I had done no Xmas shopping but she didn't seem too worried and it was just great to be home for Xmas anyway.

After Xmas leave I returned to the Engineering School to pack up my gear as I had been posted to MONOWAI and was looking forward to serving in a part of the navy which actually produced something tangible for the time at sea. This was to be a fairly busy two years but one I look back on with a lot of fine memories.

To be continued.



HMNZS Monowai

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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