

# 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

### **HAKU - BLACK WATCH**

The last report I had is that she remains on the hard at Henderson while valiant efforts are being made to raise funds to have her hauled out and made water tight. She will then be moved to a suitable site for restoration. The Harbourmaster has been helpful but funds are urgently needed to save her. Please contact me if you can help.



### **TRAFALGAR DAY LUNCH**

Don't forget to register for the Trafalgar Day Lunch at the Te Atatu RSA on 19th October.

### **WEPONS ELECTRICAL REUNION**

A reunion is being held for the WE Branch. Contact [BRYONY.HENRICKSEN@nzdf.mil.nz](mailto:BRYONY.HENRICKSEN@nzdf.mil.nz) for further information.

### **INCIDENT AT PORTS OF AUCKLAND**

A man was in a critical condition after a straddle carrier he was operating overturned at Ports of Auckland at about 3.50am on last Monday. Ports of Auckland (POAL) acting chief executive Wayne Thompson said the cause of the incident was not yet known and a full investigation was under way.

Our thoughts are with the injured person and his family.

The container terminal was closed for 24 hours while the investigation was carried out. I was expecting a container from the USA to be delivered on Tuesday but due to the port being closed the vessel did not berth in Auckland but instead sailed to Melbourne to maintain its schedule. The vessel will now berth at Tauranga on 10th September and the container will be trucked to Auckland.

I just wanted to highlight the disruption to trade and the cost of having the port closed even for one day.

Auckland is the country's largest port processed over 580,000 containers last year and an average of about 35 containers every hour.

In 2016, POAL announced plans to introduce automated straddle carriers. By mid-2019, POAL will have a total of 27 new, fully automated N SC 644 E (1-over-3) machines to work in the container stackyard and to serve trucks. At the same time, 21 existing manual straddle carriers are being upgraded so that they can work hand in hand with the 27 fully automated machines. The unmanned machines are blue and the manned carriers will remain yellow.



Manned



Unmanned

**DID YOU KNOW?**

On 2nd September 1983 Inshore Patrol Craft (IPC), HMNZS *Kiwi* was commissioned and attached to the Christchurch Division of the RNZNVR.



HMNZS *Kiwi*

## **A NAVAL CAREER IN THE EYES OF COLIN ROSS - Pt. 44**

1994 was also the start of a continuing battle with skin cancer. I had a lump removed from the back of my neck just before joining MANAWANUI. When I explained to the doctor that I was off to sea he was not concerned and reckoned one of the divers could remove the stitches after ten days. This offer I declined. On a more serious level I would advise everyone to keep a good check on their skin and if in doubt get to one of the many skin cancer treatment providers.

On leaving MANAWANUI I was strolling past the Fleet Maintenance workshop on my way back to the RRS when a Leading Hand I knew greeted me and then floored me with the information that I was with him joining HINAU to complete the towed array trials on 14 January 1995.

Like a stunned mullet I got back to the RRS and confronted the Boss with this information. They were aware of it but had been battling with the Posting Authority to cancel this posting. The RRS had been trying to fill the Hull Desk for a considerable time and I had finally arrived in the billet when eight months later I had been poached for MANAWANUI and then before even sitting down I had been poached again to fulfil the requirements of an engineer for HINAU. They as well as I were not happy.

This battle was another lost and so I departed for Xmas leave knowing on returning from leave 14 January I would join HINAU and it was also scheduled to depart Auckland for Whangarei that day. As a consequence of this posting the RRS was subsequently allowed to advertise and fill the billet with a civilian employee.

Joining HINAU was a step back really for me. It was a small boat with not a lot of equipment so there was a lot of time to fill in. Most people who served on these vessels built in Whangarei will remember how reliable the systems tended to be. The controls were fairly basic and all in all the boat was run from the Bridge.

There seemed to be an initiation requirement when you first joined the vessel. This consisted of assisting the Hydrographers (Drogs) setting up the transmitting units, which allowed the boat to triangulate its position. These tended to be set up at trig stations being some of the highest points, however for the requirements of where we were working there were two not at rig points. One was up the chimney of the power station at Marsden Point and one up at the top of Hen Island.

So I assisted the first of them at the trig stations and thought it was a doddle. The next one required the scaling of the chimney at Marsden Point and attaching it to the rail on the walkway around the top of the chimney. I had never had too many issues with heights and some stokers will remember how we had to scramble around the funnel tops on frigates to remove the funnel covers. This was done in plastic sandals, no safety harness and in all sorts of weather; Health and Safety would have had a field day in the current climate.

So up the inside of the chimney we went carrying all the gear and this was no issue, maybe this was because it was pretty dark so you couldn't see a lot. However opening the top door and stepping out onto the open grated walkway, where you could look at the ground a long way below you was not a pleasant experience. I avoided the hike up the island for the final point as we were busy on-board, phew!

Working out of Marsden Point was interesting. It was only a short motor out before we could stream the towed array and then it was a long slow drag out past Hen Island before turning back and retracing our course. This was done at about 3-4 knots from memory so it was a long slow cruise.

One of the biggest issues was the weather. We could only operate in pretty calm weather, so if we were alongside at Marsden due to sail, first thing in the morning we would take the Land Rover along the coast to look at the sea conditions. As soon as we returned the decision to either sail or not was made and hence set the pattern of the day.

I found it really frustrating that if we weren't sailing the first question the crew seemed to ask was what time was leave being piped. This modern way of thinking was at odds with my past experience where your expectation of leave revolved around ensuring all defects or tasks were completed, so leave tended to be further down the track and a privilege not a right. Not the modern thinking at all which seemed to revolved around me the individual not us the team.

We tended to do two to three weeks up there before returning to Auckland to catch up on maintenance requirements and a bit of R & R. So the time seemed to pass relatively slowly and these small vessels were not really comfortable even in a relatively smooth sea. They were fairly cramped and of course there is nowhere to go. You can't run around the upper deck, there was no gym or TV, so it was a limited life style.

We departed from Auckland after one of these returns on our way up to Marsden Point. The Land Rover was also dispatched to drive up and check the transmitting stations on the way. They were usually on the jetty waiting for us when we arrived. This time however there was no one there and we had to berth ourselves.

As time passed our concern grew. Finally we received a phone call informing us the two chaps had rolled the Land Rover on one of the back roads out of Mangawhai. To make it worse the driver had handed over to his mate after one of the stops and the current driver had no licence. This of course did not impress the CO and it cost another day alongside while they sorted out the recovery of the vehicle, the legal position and of course the usual investigation.

We continued on with these trials and at the beginning of a week we were ready to depart and just awaiting the staff from Defence Scientific Establishment to arrive as they were spending a day looking at the operation and the analysis of the data. They had just arrived on the jetty when the boat went black and the smoke alarm went off.

Scrambling down the generator space we managed to clear the smoke and couldn't see any reason for the smoke and generator failure so re-started the generator. Wow that was a shock as the alternator was like a welding machine. Sparks and smoke everywhere. This meant we couldn't sail, as we required both generators

Further investigation showed that with vibration over time one of the cables coming out of the generator had been rubbing on the edge of the cable box and had finally worn through to the cable, which had promptly shorted out on the casing. With the shower of metal particles being thrown around we were concerned that the small metal particles from the arcing had buried themselves in the generator rotor wiring. This meant returning to Auckland to change out the alternator before we could continue on the trials.

The trials lasted from the January till May. During this time the RRS advertised for a civilian to fill the hull position. Because I had really enjoyed the job I threw my hat in the ring. At the same time they were advertising for a caretaker for NGAPONA and this was to look after HINAU, so I threw my hat into the ring. After a series of different interviews I ended up with a choice of both jobs.

After consideration I accepted the RRS Hull job. The major reason was I saw it as more of a challenge and no two days seemed to be the same. So of course to accept this civilian job I had to put in my notice to terminate my navy contract. I agreed to complete the trials on HINAU and everyone was happy except for the Posting Authority. They advised me the intention was to promote me in the near future but they couldn't or wouldn't put this on paper so I went with what job had some definite future outlined and in May 1995 left the RNZN uniform branch for the final time.

It must be said I guess that this was not an easy decision as I had spent some 27 plus years in uniform and although it was still employment with the Defence Force it was a bit of an unknown future involvement and as to how it would pan out. One thing that I was looking forward to was nights and weekends at home. No duties and no requirement to do those military things like guards or divisions.

*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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