

# HMNZS NGAPONA ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED

## LONGCAST

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

12 October 18 – Navy Club Lunch at the Remuera Club

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

### **TRAFALGAR DAY LUNCH**

Reminder - have you registered for the Trafalgar Day Lunch at Te Atatu RSA on 19 October. See attached form.

### **ARMISTICE DAY MEMORIAL CRUISE**

There will be a cruise aboard the Steam Tug, *William C. Daldy*, on **Saturday November 10** to commemorate Armistice Day the day before with a Memorial service and wreath laying, followed by BBQ lunch and up spirits. 0930 to 1330. Tea/Coffee and sticky bun on sailing. Cash Bar. \$65 per person.

Jill Thompson 09 836 5191 or 021 2744426 or email [jillt.nz49@gmail.com](mailto:jillt.nz49@gmail.com)

See attached flyer.

## **NEW VETERANS ADVISORY BOARD APPOINTED**

'Who should be considered a veteran' will be the main question facing the new appointees to the Veterans' Advisory Board.

The Board is a statutory body which was established as part of the Veterans' Support Act 2014. The Board's function is to provide advice to the Minister for Veterans on a range of issues impacting veterans, including advice on policies and entitlements.

"The recently released report by Professor Ron Paterson analysed the Veterans' Support Act, and identified 63 recommendations which aim to improve it," says Minister for Veterans Ron Mark.

"Many of these recommendations are already underway, but several, including looking at how we classify a veteran in New Zealand, need further work.

"I have decided to ask the Veterans' Advisory Board to focus on this important issue.

"It will be complex – as it will involve not just a consideration of military matters – but also consideration of the broader social sector in New Zealand, including what entities such as the public health services and the ACC have to offer military personnel and former servicepersons.

"The Board members who will be undertaking this piece of work will be bringing to it a wide variety of skills and experience.

"Most, but not all of them, have military backgrounds.

"The Board will be chaired by Leith Comer, who has extensive knowledge of the workings of government and leadership experience in the military, private and community sectors. He served in the New Zealand Army for 21 years, and has held senior positions as a public servant, including being the Chief Executive of the Ministry of Maori Development.

"The Deputy Chair will be the Hon Chester Borrowes, who has experience in a non-military service, in particular with the New Zealand Police, as well as a distinguished Parliamentary career.

"The other members are; RSA President BJ Clark, Fiona Cassidy, Baden Ewart, Denise Hutchins, Group Captain Leanne Woon and Warrant Officer of the Defence Force Mark Mortiboy. Michelle White is a deputy member of the Board.

"I have asked the Board to report to me by 30 June 2019," says Ron Mark

## **HMNZS HAKU - BLACK WATCH**

An ignominious end for a fine lady. The Harbourmaster had her crushed and taken to the tip last week. He was asked if some parts could be salvaged but to my knowledge did not give the courtesy of a reply.

The attached pictures show all that was left at the scrap dealer's yard.

RIP Haku





### **DID YOU KNOW?**

On 29 September 1946, consequent upon the impending disposal of HMNZS *Philomel* (Ship), HDML 1184 (later HMNZS *Paea*) was directed to fly the pennant of HMNZS *Philomel*, and was renamed when the old cruiser finally left the Training Jetty.

### **A NAVAL CAREER IN THE EYES OF COLIN ROSS - Pt. 47**

The Ancient Mariners geared up in 1999 to attend the Air NZ Golden Oldies Festival in Adelaide. This rugby festival was to finish a week before the Melbourne Cup. I had always had a vision of attending one of these iconic horse races but there was the issue of what to do for a week prior to the race.

Having always been intrigued by Outback Australia I picked up a few brochures and decided on one that would take me from Adelaide up to Alice Springs and then I could fly back to Melbourne for the cup.

The more I looked at this outback tour the better I liked it. It was departing Melbourne the Saturday of the final Golden Oldies dinner so I could travel north and pick up the tour on the Monday when it reached Dubbo. Kerry also got interested in it so decided she would fly over and make a start at the origin of the tour in Melbourne.

The idea of the Melbourne Cup went out the window and we decided to embark on the whole tour which was a bus and camping tour from Melbourne right up through central Australia and we would leave the tour in Darwin to fly home. It turned out one of the best holiday decisions we had ever made.

So the Ancient Mariners arrived in Adelaide determine to live life to the full. The rugby wasn't as hard to get over as the partying was. The mid-week BBQ was on the banks of the Murray River; they had food tents, beer tents and live entertainment laid on. It was a great day.

The three games of rugby in a week took their toll however the social occasions were well organised and the entertainment was spot on. However I must admit my eyes were really on the forthcoming outback trip and so on the Monday morning I packed up and caught my arranged transport to Dubbo.

There as promised was the bus tour awaiting our arrival and it was great to greet Kerry again and hear of the previous two days she had spent on the tour from Melbourne. There was a real ethnic mix with the tour comprising of people from USA, Canada, Holland, Germany, UK, Australia and even, which was evidently really unusual, a couple from Japan and they proved tremendously popular.

The first night I was with the tour we camped in a dry creek bed. On arrival everyone turned too and pitched the tents. Some of us being more useful than others. When the camp was arranged we were picked up in an old army 4 x 4 and did a tour of the cattle station. This was an eye opener for us of course as it was the first experience of the size but also the poor quality of animal feed. No wonder they have one cow to the square mile!

Next stop after a quick break at the Woomera Rocket Range was in the opal mining area of Coober Pedy. This place is really intriguing and looked more like a moonscape rather than earth. It's a pretty compromising climate with really hot harsh summer days and bitterly cold nights. Therefore the inhabitants live underground where the temperature stays stable at about 20 odd degrees. We toured an opal mine and even inspected the underground church. That night we were accommodated underground in what was very like a backpackers hotel.

Next day we were up and off to Uluru (Ayers Rock). We arrived late afternoon and went to the observation point to watch the sun go down. It is truly amazing watching all the colour changes as the sun slowly disappears behind the rock and suddenly it goes completely dark. Show over for the day.

The next day dawned and a decision was required as to whether to climb the rock or do a tour around the whole base. The Aboriginals regard the rock as sacred and as such I was uncomfortable about climbing it, however it has always been something that appears in all tour brochures, climb the rock!

However the decision was taken out of our hands as it started raining which closed the climb. This was another lucky experience as the tour guide had been there many times and it is the first time he had seen it rain. It is an amazing change from a huge bare stone standing out in the middle of the landscape to suddenly here is the same stone glistening with water and waterfalls cascading down all the nooks and crannies. So no climb and instead an inspection of the circumference of the base with its many hidden surprises of rock pools and little hidden microclimates. We also went out about twenty kilometres to Kata Tjuta (the OLGAS). This is another isolated group of rocks with a hidden valley, which was just a lovely walk.

Our next stop was at Kings Canyon. We spent the day walking around the rim of the canyon and looking at both the wild life and also the view down into the canyon. In the afternoon we walked up the canyon floor, this was called "The Garden of Eden" and spectacular it was. A small stream flowing down the centre and all sorts of vegetation around the path. A true oasis in what is a red pretty barren landscape.

We left Kings Canyon for Simpson's Gap. This was on a back road, which was just red clay. It had rained heavily overnight and the road was a bit of a quagmire. The decision to travel it rather than detouring a long way back around the way we had come was only made as there were two buses going the same way. It was a pretty mud splattered bus when we got back to tarmac at Simpson's Gap

Simpson's Gap is a chasm between two vertical cliffs. It is quite eerie squeezing between the outcrops and hoping they don't suddenly close. We then visited an old mission station and church before arriving at Alice Springs.

It was a two-day break at Alice. We helped the driver clean the bus to make it look presentable again and spent time in town buying mementoes etc. The first night we took a "Camel to Dinner". This incorporated getting on a camel and trekking down a dry riverbed to a restaurant. The worst part of the ride is the camel getting up off his knees once you are mounted. It really feels like you are going to tip right over its head. The motion is very smooth however and it is surprising how soft footed they are.

Next part of the journey was north to Tenants Creek. We camped out the back of a pub and during a few quiet beers that night the Proprietor informed me the All Blacks had stumbled at the World Cup again being beaten by France. Put a wee bit of a dampener on the evening.

From there we visited Katherine Gorge and finally up to Kakadu National Park where we saw Aboriginal Art in caves thousands of years old. Impressive.

Next day we cruised the Margaret River. A crocodile cleaned up a wading bird. One minute the bird was there and the next it was gone. Crocodiles look so docile lying in the sun on the river bank, however when we visited a crocodile farm it was just amazing to see how quick they can move especially charging out of the water, frightening really.

We were then off to Darwin and for us the end of the tour. We had a tour photo shoot at the museum, which stands just off the beach. We couldn't believe it, we had just come from the crocodile farm and our tour mates were climbing off the bus and wading in the water. Kerry was yelling at them to get out as a sure indicator that it was not safe was there were no locals in the water or on the beach.

The bus continued on for another two weeks ending the tour in Sydney, however for us it was time to return home. A long flight and overnight in Melbourne then the last leg back to Auckland.

Returning to work was a bit of a come down. Over the next four years I had a mix of looking after RESOLUTION's maintenance but also deployed south a couple of times to oversee the slipping of MOA in Dunedin and KIWI in Christchurch. One of the noticeable differences in these slipping's was the lack of containment of the run off from hull cleaning. It was just allowed to run back into the harbour.

In Dunedin the slip was adjacent to the fish factory. We got a complaint one day that the spray painting fumes were being sucked into the fish factory so that halted work until the wind changed. I really enjoyed these projects as you were on your own with no one looking over your shoulder and any decisions were made on the spot without requiring a meeting.

So by the time I got to 2004 I was pretty much looking for a change of scenery. Fortunately the Warrant Officer looking after TE MANA resigned and the Project Officer asked if I would like to take over the role. This I jumped at as I always felt a change was as good as a rest. Little did I know this was to be my lot for the next ten years.

*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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