

HMNZS NGAPONA ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED

LONGCAST

11 November 18 – Armistice Day *Paea* and *Kuparu* Cruise
9 – 12 November 18 - Engine Room Branch Reunion, Rangiora
9 November 18 – Navy Club Lunch, Remuera Club
16 November 18 – Ngapona Assn Lunch at Grey Lynn RSA
17 November 18 – HMNZS *Ngapona* Wardroom Mess Dinner
23 November 18 – Change of Command, HMNZS *Ngapona*
29 November 18 - Change of Chief of Navy
30 November 18 – STEAMEX 18 at SRFM
7 December 18 - Weapons Electrical Reunion at SRFM
7 December 18 – 8th Maritime Societies' Annual Dinner, Northern Club
14 December 18 - Navy Club Lunch, Remuera Club
21 December 18 - Ngapona Assn Lunch at Orakei RSA

Hi Folks

ARMISTICE DAY REMEBERANCE CRUISES

There will be two cruises on board separate HDMLs on **Sunday 11th November** to commemorate Armistice Day. *Paea* will be leaving from Whangarei and *Kuparu* will leave from Auckland. A wreath laying service and lunch will be held on each vessel. If you wish to register for either cruise please reply to this email for further details.

There are a couple of places left on each vessel but you will have to be quick!!

WILLIAM C DALDY ARMISTICE CRUISE

Unfortunately this event has been cancelled due to lack of numbers.
Needed lots of people to pay for the coal!!

To all who have paid please send your bank account details to Jill jillt.nz49@gmail.com
so she can make the refunds.

HMNZS MANAWANUI

In August this year the Minister of Defence announced the purchase of the Norwegian survey vessel EDDA FONN to close the capability gap created with the decommissioning of the survey ship HMNZS RESOLUTION and the dive tender HMNZS MANAWANUI.

Of the six final options, one particular vessel came out as a clear contender due to its configuration, capability, materiel state, size and likely cost. This vessel was the EDDA FONN.

The EDDA FONN will undergo the first stage of modifications in Europe in January 2019, which is expected to take up to two months. The first stage modifications involve the fitting of the hydrographic systems, the Surface Supply Breathing Apparatus (SSBA) system and wet bell, dive recompression chamber, underwater Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV), boats davits and a new engine as well as some minor superstructure work. On completion of these modifications the ship will sail to New Zealand under a commercial crew but with RNZN personnel embarked to gain experience operating the ship. On arrival in New Zealand, currently planned for May 2019, the ship will be formally handed over to the NZDF and commissioned as HMNZS MANAWANUI. The ship will then undergo a second stage of modifications to fit it out with military specific equipment such as the armoury, magazines, communications, damage control equipment and any other equipment required for the ship to conduct military operations.

The stage 2 modifications will complete in October 2019, signalling the significant milestone of the ship being ready to proceed to sea under the NZ White Ensign and RNZN crew. The remainder of 2019 will be dedicated to acceptance trials and developing core mariner skills operating the new vessel.

LTCDR Mahoney, formally the Fleet Warfare Officer for the Maritime Operational Evaluation Team has been appointed as the commissioning Commanding Officer.



An artist's impression of HMNZS *Manawanui*

DID YOU KNOW?

On 8 November 1957, HMNZS *Ngapona* (P3561) ran into the reef off the southern tip of Rangipukea southwest of Coromandel. It was floated off two days later by *Manawanui*, after additional equipment had been brought to the scene by HMNZS *Stawell* and RFA *Arataki*, and beached in Te Kouma Harbour for temporary patching. Strops were placed under the vessel, catamarans and A-class buoys secured alongside, and the ML again floated off, where it rode with three feet of freeboard. *Stawell* delayed the tow back to Auckland because of bad weather, but attempted to return before the seas had moderated completely, and the ML received further considerable damage from the auxiliary floatation gear breaking loose while under tow. When slipped and examined, it was declared a complete write off, and it was broken up and burnt. A Board of Enquiry found the Commanding Officer, Commander Hilliard, negligent in failing to properly fix his vessel in the vicinity of known dangers, and he was awarded the Naval Board's extreme displeasure.



HMNZS *Ngapona* berthed DNB

A NAVAL CAREER IN THE EYES OF COLIN ROSS - Pt. 53

In November 2015 the whole of the Fleet Engineering Centre was invited to a meeting at which the new Dockyard Management Plan was revealed. As we had long suspected a lot of us did not feature in this plan. The whole thing had been basically devolved in Wellington between representatives from NZDF and Babcock.

Our current system was basically demolished and a new system was put in place that effectively almost promised the world. Every shortfall would be addressed and improved. We were also advised that the current atmosphere of mistrust and antagonism would disappear and be replaced by a warm collaborative environment. Some of this was real news to us. If there had been animosity between the systems then it was at the higher level. From what I observed at the lower level we had always had a collaborative approach and maybe I was lucky but certainly the Babcock Staff I worked alongside were very supportive and both parties worked towards the best outcome for our customer which I think we saw as the ships and the men that crew them.

Coming out of the meeting there was a real sense I think of betrayal of us. Some of us had gone the extra yards to accomplish the required outcomes only to find at the end of the day we were effectively sold down the river. I have never resisted change but I saw this as people, whom had no idea what we actually did, negotiating a contract with a company whom had promised outcomes for the proceeding twenty years without quite delivering.

It was obviously Government policy to outsource and some in defence saw this as an opportunity to off load the responsibility of delivering mission capable ships.

Unfortunately those people will as usual never have to deal with the outcome of their decisions.

It must be admitted that NZDF made every effort to enable us to apply for other jobs by offering support in updating CV's etc., however I don't believe they understood the real feeling or sense of disappointment, frustration and also uncertainty that we faced. This only affected the civilian staff, as the uniforms would be absorbed into the new structure.

I must admit that I was probably one of the winners out of what happened. Here I was at 67 years old basically at a crossroads. Would I retire or did I want to continue working. My health was at the time good again and I was keeping myself fit. I was still enjoying my job so would probably have continued working for a few more years.

However the decision to take our jobs away in a sense made a decision for me. There was a job created in the new system, which I am sure had I applied I would have won. This was the Hull desk in the new overseeing part of the Navy structure dealing with the outcomes provided by Babcock.

I really didn't see it as an option as I would forgo my redundancy package to take it up and of course being 67 I realistically only had a few more years of work anyway. The other factor was the Dockyard Management would come up for renewal in another five years and there was no guarantee after the last negotiation that these jobs wouldn't also disappear.

The three months between being formally advised our jobs had gone and the actual terminal date, as the 28th February 2015 would be, were really long and frustrating. We effectively were cut off from our jobs and not involved in the ongoing maintenance decisions. With time on my hands I set to tidying up the outstanding issues.

For anyone being made redundant there is a lot of self-recrimination. What had I not done, or what had I done wrong. What could I have done better and maybe avoided this outcome. It doesn't matter how many times you are told that this is not your fault or the outcome would have been the same no matter what, you travel down a fairly dark road. I have always maintained that redundancy is just a nicer word for sacking. In both instances for whatever reason your job has been taken away from you. This maybe a bit of a brutal statement but it's one I will standby.

I guess in a sense I was lucky, I had travelled down a dark road during 2012 with cancer and had come out the other end I think a little more resolute and therefore able to see some light at the end of the tunnel. I was also in the position of no family to worry about monetarily and no mortgage etc.

The notable thing that happened during this time was that in the last week the following things happened. The Field Service Team I had dealt with from AirNZ came over and presented me a model of a Boeing 767 suitably mounted and with an inscribed plaque thanking me for my engagement over the years with them. Also in that last week I had offers of employment from three different firms I had dealt with over the past years.

These were uplifting events that helped make the final few weeks tenable. I knew that on the last day there would undoubtedly be a morning tea farewell for those of us leaving but my feelings were such I didn't want to be there and listen to pointless speeches of how much we had delivered for Defence so I had advised my boss I would be taking a mental health day on the Friday.

On the Thursday I was fronted up in the Captain Fleet Support's office and presented with a couple of farewell items. A lot of people could see the irony of this as three months before I had been in this same office to be advised I had won the Civilian of the Quarter. This is an award to acknowledge members of the civilian staff who had performed over and above expectation.

However I got through this and departed my service with NZDF having served a total of twenty-seven years five months in uniform and another almost twenty years as a civilian. So apart from three and a half years as a Shift Engineer at North Shore Hospital, my whole working life had been with Defence.

On the day of our severance I was on my way to Okoiriore to have a boys weekend with the guys I played touch rugby with at Takapuna. At the same time I was negotiating with MML (Maintenance Management Ltd) to undertake the role as the Overseer for TE MANA's habitability up grade. So after a week off I started work in this role, which lasted till March 2016 at which time I again retired!!

I had just got into retirement mode when I got an un-expected call from Babcock inquiring would I be happy to do some work for them. I had to give this a bit of thought but put my prejudice away and went to a meeting with them. I had a few things that I wanted and would be conditional on me accepting any role with them.

For the first time I got to state my own pay rate, which they were happy with, in hindsight I probably could have asked for more. Also I didn't want to work full time so I negotiated three days a week and working 0800-1400. With that I went back to deliver some knowledge around what parts Defence had supplied for contracts etc. I have found the past two years really good. I didn't need to work but have found that this job has kept up my social contacts, got me out of the house and doing research, which is something I have always enjoyed.

My current contract runs until 20th December 2018 and I doubt it will be extended. By then I will be 71 years old and will probably be of a mind to perhaps slow down a little and enjoy these remaining sunshine years.

Next week I will sum up the preceding fifty-four years and note some of the changes I have experienced.

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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