

## HMNZS NGAPONA ASSOCIATION INC

### LONGCAST

13 December 19 - Navy Club, Remuera Club at 1200

13 December 19 – Maritime Societies' Annual Dinner, Northern Club at 1830

20 December 19 - Ngapona Assn Xmas Lunch at Orakei RSA

17 January 20 - Ngapona Assn Lunch at Swanson RSA

29 January 20 – Auckland Anniversary Regatta

Hi Folks

#### **NGAPONA ASSN LUNCH**

Great gathering for lunch last Friday at the Grey Lynn RSC.

The NGA Divisional Coxswain, CPO Shane Kennedy, gave a very interesting address on the Navy's Sail Training Craft (STC). The Chico 40s are now 30 years old and have proved to be an excellent training platform for both BCTs and the more experienced sailors in the RNZN.

Many thanks to Shane for sharing his experiences with us.



### **NGAPONA ASSN - CHRISTMAS LUNCH**

Our final lunch this year will be at the Orakei RSA on 20th December 2019. This is a special event - more details to follow.

### **HMS QUEEN ELIZABETH**

Latest milestone in our carrier development. HMS *Queen Elizabeth*, RFA *Tideforce*, and HMS *Northumberland* showing that the Royal Navy can conduct replenishment at sea and launch jets at the same time - with a helicopter airborne to take the photo to prove it.



### **HMCS MARGARET BROOKE**

Halifax Shipyard has launched the second of six Arctic and offshore patrol ships (AOPS) for the Royal Canadian Navy in the Bedford Basin. The 103m future HMCS *Margaret Brooke* was launched during a ceremony on 10 November. The ships are being constructed as part of Canada's National Shipbuilding Strategy (NSS) and are intended to bolster the navy's combatant fleet.

Through the NSS programme, the government aims to replace the current surface fleets of the Royal Canadian Navy and the Canadian Coast Guard. Halifax Shipyard will also build 15 Canadian Surface Combatants for the navy and two AOPS for the Coast Guard (source: naval-technology)



HMCS *Margaret Brooke*

## SHIP OF THE WEEK - HMNZS GAMBIA

*Gambia* was ordered under the 1938 Naval Programme and was one of seven cruisers planned for this class. This was a new cruiser design for the Royal Navy and it met the requirements of the 1936 London Naval Treaty that restricted displacement to 8,000 tons. In 1943, both of the New Zealand Navy's two cruisers, *Achilles* and *Leander* were damaged in the Solomon Islands campaign, this being compounded by an explosion on board *Achilles* in June of that year, while in dockyard hands. Following discussions with the Admiralty, it was decided that New Zealand would commission a near new cruiser of the Fiji class which was then undergoing refit. Accordingly, the men standing by to recommission *Achilles* were drafted to commission HMS *Gambia* while the crew of *Leander* travelled to Britain and recommissioned *Achilles*.

On 22 September 1943 HMNZS *Gambia* was commissioned for service with the Royal New Zealand Navy, under Captain N.J.W. William-Powlett DSC, RN.

On 15 August 1945 the Japanese ceasefire was announced and during the time that the signal was being received a Japanese aircraft attacked the force, being shot down by a US Navy Corsair, pieces of the aircraft falling on *Gambia*. The ship also engaged the aircraft, and together with the rounds fired in the bombardment, *Gambia* has the distinction of firing the last shots of the Second World War. A platoon of Royal Marines and a platoon of seamen landed under the command of Lieutenant-Commander G.R. Davis-Goff DSC, RNZN on 20 August and took the surrender of the Japanese Naval Base at Yokosuka. Some ships of the British Pacific Fleet had anchored in Tokyo Bay on 31 August and on 2 September 1945, the Japanese signed the instrument of surrender on board USS *Missouri*. *Gambia* represented the Royal New Zealand Navy at this historic occasion. The ship sailed from Japan on 11 October, arriving in Auckland on the 30th. After a six week refit *Gambia* remained at Auckland, non-operational, until February 1946.

The ship was recommissioned with a steaming party on 8 February and sailed for Sydney on the 12th. At Sydney many of the New Zealanders on board were drafted off and the ship's company made up from British ratings being returned to the United Kingdom. With about 1000 men on board *Gambia* sailed from Sydney, via Melbourne, where a large quantity of gold bullion was embarked, for England, by way of the Suez Canal. On 27 March the ship arrived at Spithead and after a refit *Gambia* was paid off from the Royal New Zealand Navy on 1 July 1946. *Gambia* was paid off into reserve in December 1960. HMS *Gambia* was sold in 1968, leaving Portsmouth under tow on 2 December 1968. She was broken up in 1969 at Inverkeithing, Firth of Forth by T.W. Ward.





### **DID YOU KNOW?**

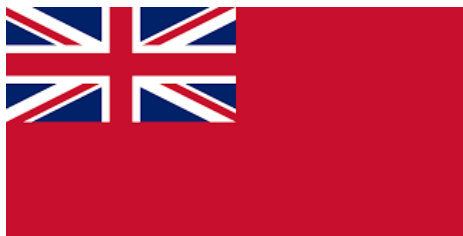
During the Second World War, German U-boats sank nearly 14.7 million tons of Allied shipping, which amounted to 2,828 ships (around two-thirds of the total allied tonnage lost). The United Kingdom alone suffered the loss of 11.7 million tons, which was 54% of the total Merchant Navy fleet at the outbreak of the Second World War. 32,000 merchant seafarers were killed aboard convoy vessels in the war, but along with the Royal Navy, the convoys successfully imported enough supplies to allow an Allied victory.

In honour of the sacrifices made in the two World Wars, the Merchant Navy lays wreaths of remembrance alongside the armed forces in the annual Remembrance Day service on 11 November. Following many years of lobbying to bring about official recognition of the sacrifices made by merchant seafarers in two world wars and since, Merchant Navy Day became an official day of remembrance on 3 September 2000.

Despite maintaining its dominant position for many decades, the decline of the British Empire, the rise of the use of the flag of convenience, and foreign competition led to the decline of the merchant fleet. For example, in 1939 the Merchant Navy was the largest in the world with 33% of total tonnage. By 2012, the Merchant Navy – yet still remaining one of the largest in the world – held only 3% of total tonnage.

Merchant Navy vessels fly the Red Ensign and are regulated by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA). King George V bestowed the title of "Merchant Navy" on the British merchant shipping fleets following their service in the First World War; a number of other nations have since adopted the title.

In 1928 George V gave Edward, Prince of Wales the title of "Master of the Merchant Navy and Fishing Fleets"; which he retained after his accession to the throne in January 1936 and relinquished only at his abdication that December. Since Edward VIII, the title has been held by the sovereigns George VI and Elizabeth II.



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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