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HMNZS NGAPONA ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED

LONGCAST

- 15 December 17 - Old Salts Lunch at Orakei RSA
- 19 January 18 – Ngapona Assn Lunch at Swanson RSA
- 16 February 18 - Ngapona Assn Lunch at Manurewa RSA
- 16 March 18 - Ngapona Assn Lunch at Waiheke RSA

Hi Folks

DEATH NOTICE

It is with great sadness that I have to inform you of the passing of Lt John Cox RNZNVR (Rtd) (P999846).

John was a member of HMNZS Ngapona from 1995 to 2005. He joined as a rating and was CFR and was the Supply Officer for Ngapona for a number of years.

John was a founding member of the HMNZS Ngapona Association and will be sadly missed.

A service for John Cox be held in St Mary's-in-Holy Trinity, 446 Parnell Road, Parnell, Auckland, 11 am Wednesday 13th December, followed by interment at North Shore Memorial Park, 235 Schnapper Rock Rd, Schnapper Rock, Albany.

NGAPONA ASSOCIATION LUNCH

Our final lunch for the year will be held this Friday at the Orakei RSA at 1200. Make the effort and join us for lunch.

GREAT CHRISTMAS GIFT

Attention all serving and ex Ngapona personnel. Here is a great idea for a Christmas gift. Why not get a family member or friend to give you the joining fee for the HMNZS Ngapona Association. Just email the attached form and get someone to pay the fee. Nothing could be easier - Xmas sorted!

NAVAL RESERVE DIVISION OF THE YEAR

The Murano Trophy – The Naval Reserve Division of the Year was presented by Chief of Navy Rear Admiral John Martin to HMNZS Ngapona Tauranga Division, received by LTCDR Garth Mathieson.

Well done Tauranga!!

A NAVAL CAREER IN THE EYES OF COLIN ROSS - Pt. 7

Joining TARANAKI was both exciting and quite daunting. After two years on a small minesweeper with pretty simple and few steam and water systems here I was joining the modern fleet.

Although TARANAKI was at the tail end of a refit there was still a lot of machinery missing. The access route to the engine room, just fwd of the galley, was still open, the turbo blowers were still out of the boiler room and so there seemed to be some big holes especially around the amidships section of the ship. It was quite eerie doing rounds during the silent hours as there was no ventilation running and the vessel

seemed so quiet. Duty watch lived on the old TUI as accommodation as the refit was doing up all the mess decks and spaces.

Everyone went on Xmas leave and were all looking forward to 1969 when the ship would come to life and we would all be into a new learning experience. On returning from leave it was a busy time with the installation of machinery and systems seeming to be going at a breakneck pace.

Slowly the ship starting to come alive with the ventilation systems brought into service and then trials starting on diesels and auxiliary machinery. It was a busy time as I had a lot of learning to do, tracing all the steam, water and oil systems, some of which were confusing as a pipe went into a lagging block and two or three would seem to come out of it. During this time I was also seconded to the Dockyard lagging shop. The guys there were very welcoming and only too happy to allow us to get into mixing and applying lagging. It was a bit of an art which I think was pretty obvious what bits of lagging we had done and that done by the professionals.

One of the abiding memories is the smell coming from engine room and boiler room on the first times the ship flashed up, it was a musty smell as the new lagging dried out under heat and of course with the steam drains being open on equipment there was a lot of damp air around. After the dull noises I was used to in machinery spaces it was somewhat exciting to listen to turbines wind up. The forced draught blowers being the first, followed by the feed pumps, extraction pumps, circ pumps and the high pitched whine of the turbo generators. In those days we were watch keeping without ear defenders and this was to have a long-term effect on my hearing later in life.

It was a busy three months in proving all machinery and systems after the twelve-month refit. There always seemed to be things to do, valves that were reluctant to operate after a long shut down, machinery overspeeds to functionally check the operation of and load trials on both diesel generators and turbo generators. On completion of successful harbour trials the pristine ship was ready to proceed to sea and complete Sea Acceptance Trials.

On Friday 14th March 1969 a re-dedication service was held, effectively this was the ship being welcomed back into the fleet. Ships Company mustered on the jetty, a guard was paraded in the starboard waist and the raising of the NZ White Ensign was the real culmination of the ceremony. As a sideline it pays to remember that up till about 1967 all NZ ships flew the White Ensign, (The one the RN still flies for anyone unsure of what this means).

On Monday the 17th of March we were supposed to proceed to sea for sea trials, however there was glitch to the plan. Whilst flashing up on the Sunday night we had just changed from shore power to ships power, both turbo generators running on load when suddenly the ship went black. Unfortunately the boiler had burst a boiler tube effectively meaning the boiler had to be shut down in a hurry and all machinery of course stopped.

Shore power was restored and the troubleshooting started, it appeared due to a low water level in the boiler the tubes had lost circulation and burnt out or burst. This of course then ensured we would not be going to sea on Monday and there would of course be an inquiry.

The repairs took four months; the subsequent Court martial cleared the Petty Officer in charge of the watch but again a lot of us learnt a lot from the evidence produced during this process. Finally in August we got to successfully complete sea trials. The most notable of these are the full power trial and the full astern trial.

The full power trial was done over four hours in deep water outside Great Barrier Island. It was a bit of an eye opener for me having been used to 15knots on a sweeper to be doing 30knots on a frigate. This is equivalent to about 50k per hour so you cover a lot of distance; the boilers are also consuming about ten tons of furnace fuel oil per hour. One of the things about these ships at full power, once all the systems settled down they ran very well, however if anything happened it really happened in a hurry so you had to be on your toes on watch.

These ships when full astern could get up to 23 knots, however because of the square transom there were quite violent vibrations sent through the ship, as well the quarterdeck would be swamped by water so there was lot of securing done prior to this trial. It was quite alarming on watch to feel the vibrations through the hull and the violent movement of the steam ranges in the machinery spaces. This trial was subsequently discontinued in later years.

It was great to run through all the trials and also go through battle situations as we worked up towards the end of the year. This included participation in an exercise off Australia with seventeen warships including BLACKPOOL and TARANAKI. This was my first experience of big fleet exercises so was quite exciting watching various ships changing station and also fuelling at sea. Was pretty impressive approaching a tanker at 26 knots and then doing a fast back down to come down quickly in power and speed to match that of the tanker. The boiler front stokers had to be on their mettle and manoeuvre the sprayers efficiently to avoiding the embarrassment of lifting safety valves.

After this exercise we transited back to NZ and Xmas leave. During 1969 Kerry and I had become engaged, so we happily spent Xmas 1969 with my parents at the bach in Tairua. We also decided to get married in December 1970 after my first Far East deployment. This was a good holiday after a very busy year full of firsts and a lot of learning experiences. Looking forward to 1970 was good knowing that the crew from 69 would basically be the same for the 1970 deployment. In those days there were very few crew changes over the two-year cycle between major maintenance so the crews became very familiar with each other and some long life friendships were formed.

To be continued

CNS #25

Rear Admiral DI Ledson RNZN ONZM

Chief of Navy: April 2004 to April 2009

Rear Admiral David Ian Ledson, ONZM was born on 13 January 1951.

He attended Inangahua College and Christchurch Boy's High School and joined the Royal New Zealand Navy as a cadet midshipman in January 1967. He underwent training at the Royal Australian Naval College, Jervis Bay. From 1969-71 he studied at Auckland University and obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree in history.

He served in HMNZS Waikato between July 1973 and October 1975, followed by almost two years in HMNZS Otago. He then attended warfare courses in the United Kingdom, specialising in navigation. After the course he returned to HMNZS Waikato as the Weapons Control Officer.

In March 1980 he became the Personal Staff Officer to the Chief of Naval Staff before returning to HMNZS Waikato as the Operations Officer in April 1982. Between January and June 1984 he attended the Royal Australian Naval Staff College in Sydney. In October 1985 he joined the staff of the Chief of Naval Staff as the Director of Naval Operational Data Systems until October 1989 when he became Commanding Officer of HMNZS Waikato. In November 1990 he was attached to Blohm & Voss, in Hamburg for eighteen months for duties with the ANZAC Ship project.

In July 1992 he was appointed as Chief of Naval Development on the staff of the Chief of Naval Staff. Between July 1994 and June 1995 he was posted to the United States' Naval War College. After the War College he was appointed Director of Resource Policy for the Chief of Defence Force.

In February 1998 he was posted as Captain Fleet Support and was promoted Deputy Chief of Naval Staff, with the rank of commodore, in April 2000. He became Chief of Navy and was promoted rear admiral on 8 April 2004.

He was named a Companion of the Royal Society of New Zealand in 2009.

Take care

Jerry Payne

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President

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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