

HMNZS NGAPONA ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED

LONGCAST

- 9 February 18 – Navy Club Lunch at Remuera Club
- 16 February 18 - Ngapona Assn Lunch at Manurewa RSA
- 18 February 18 – Northland lunch at Bay of Islands, 1230 at Kerikeri RSA
- 16 March 18 - Ngapona Assn Lunch at Waiheke RSA
- 24 March 18 – Navy Open day
- 13 – 16 April 18 - HMNZS Otago and All ships Reunion, Poenamo Hotel, Auckland
- 15 – 18 June 18 – Greenies Weapons Electrical Reunion at Napier

Hi Folks

HMNZS MOA AND HMNZS KIWI

Today marks the 75th anniversary of a heroic New Zealand naval engagement, the destruction of a Japanese submarine by two New Zealand minesweeper corvettes. The battle on 29 January, 1943, also led to Dunedin man Leading Signalman Campbell Howard Buchanan being posthumously honoured with two of the highest naval awards for bravery.

Leading Signalman Buchanan, a former factory worker, was 22 when he died from wounds received during the destruction of Japanese submarine I-1 by Royal New Zealand Navy (RNZN) ships HMNZS Moa and HMNZS Kiwi.

The ships engaged the submarine at Guadalcanal, with Kiwi ramming the submarine three times while the crew maintained constant fire, aided by Leading Signalman Buchanan, who used the signalling lamp to illuminate the submarine. He was the only New Zealand sailor to die from the battle.

The severely damaged I-1 eventually ran aground on a submerged reef, with Japanese artillery fire from shore forcing HMNZS Moa, which had taken over from Kiwi, to withdraw. The 55 surviving crew of I-1 (26 had been killed) made it to shore, but left behind valuable codebooks, which American divers retrieved later. They were the first Japanese codebooks to be captured during the Second World War.

Leading Signaman Buchanan was Mentioned in Despatches (posthumously) for Gallantry, an honour considered next to the Victoria Cross. He was also awarded the US Navy Cross for bravery.

In 2006 a road in Port Chalmers, Dunedin, was named Campbell Buchanan Lane. More information on the engagement and Leading Signaman Buchanan's service can be found on the [National Museum of the Royal New Zealand Navy](#).



HMNZS Kiwi

NORTHLAND LUNCHEON - VENUE CHANGE

Northland Luncheon - Sunday 18 February 2018, 1230 at Kerikeri RSA. Further information contact Jill Thompson 09 826 5191 or 021 2744426, Email: jillt.nz49@gmail.com Need to know the numbers attending by 13 February 2018 please.

NAVY OPEN DAY 2018

The RNZN will host the public at an Open Day on Saturday 24 March, between 1000 and 1600. Held every four years, these events are an opportunity to showcase the Navy Northland Lunch. Details to follow.

A NAVAL CAREER IN THE EYES OF COLIN ROSS - Pt. 14

Returning from annual leave in January 1975 it was straight onto PO's Command Course. The course I think was six weeks completing in early March, these things are a bit foggy after forty plus years.

The course contained a variety of subjects and evolutions from the usual parade ground stuff to physical training, lectures on Naval Law and customs etc. The best part for me was the sailing.

We did an overnight sail up to Kawau Is in two groups each in a cutter. This was an exercise in taking charge of the group in the boat and also navigation. The navigation I found really interesting, relating especially the different lights and relating them to a buoy on the chart, plus finding our way in the channel indicated by the green or if we were sailing into danger the red sector of light.

The weather was kind and balmy so made the time really enjoyable and was a lot of constructive learning. Found out a lot of what I had missed by being stuck in a stinking hot machinery space whilst transiting these beautiful spots.

The other memory is of our expedition. We left Devonport again in two cutters and sailed out to Great Barrier Island. The first night we spent in the old school at Wangaparapara before hiking off the next morning heading north towards Fitzroy. The walk was a well-defined path and passed the hot springs on the way. We were supposed to camp in a field outside Fitzroy and then tramp the second day to a Conservation Dept. hut the second day. We got to the field early afternoon and it had started to rain so by agreement we decided to hike on to the hut and have a roof over our head.

By the time we got to the hut the weather had changed to a fine day again, but we were now a day ahead of ourselves. The other plus in this was that as we approached the stream just below the hut there were two young ladies bathing starkers, so that had to be better than a night under canvas in a field.

The hut was comfortable for the night and we were given an option of either loafing around for the day or knocking off the climb of Mt Hobson that day or as part of our third days hike. We thought it would be a lot easier climbing it without our packs so opted to forego the day's loaf and 'knock the bastard off'. So off we went and scrambled up the hill, what a great 360 view from the top. The rough track was fairly easy going until the last section before the crest, which was pretty steep and required using the small plants as handrails to scramble up. The view was worth it.

So we arrived back at the hut feeling pretty smug at having achieved one of the required goals without too much hardship. That night the Instructors informed us that the next day's hike included being on the top of Mt Hobson to watch the sun come up. So much for achieving the summit without our packs, there was a fair bit of grumbling that night but the next morning we were up and on the move about 0400.

The climb was a lot more difficult in the dark and also carrying our packs however we made it in time to watch the sunrise and that was fairly spectacular. We spent about an hour on the summit then hiked our way back to Wangaparapara and our sea transport. After another night there we sailed to Kawau Is. The sea was reasonably rough from memory and we came into Kawau Is via the northern entrance. This was a bit tricky as we had the sea up our butt and a cutter surfing down the waves can be pretty exciting or was that frightening.

We camped for two nights ashore at Kawau Is, the boats were pulled up on the beach in front of Governor Hobson's former abode. This had a bar so of course we all decided to

have a team meeting in the bar, after about an hour a couple of course members disappeared only to reappear a short while later with a cutter anchor and the rope paid out all the way back to the boat. The anchor was placed in the middle of the bar much to the Owners amusement and was the centrepiece for the afternoon. At about 1600 the bar owner came over and politely asked if we could remove the anchor, he advised us that the Survey ML's were surveying off Kawau and they came alongside each night, he didn't want to risk having two ML anchors deposited in his bar to upstage the lonely cutter one.



Mansion House, Kawau

The other thing that stood out on course was the sea safety exercise. You were dropped at sea with a life raft and spent the night in the life raft. The weather was so foul that they decided to drop us in the upper harbour from a liberty boat. The wind was gusting really strong. We all managed to scramble into the life raft safely and one of the first things they taught us was to immediately take the sea sick pills, no matter how good a sailor you thought you were, take the pill because of the fluid motion of the rubber raft.

So in we clamber and take stock of the supplies, water etc. but where were the seasick pills. We were never sure if they were left out of the survival pack on purpose or it was an unfortunate oversight. So it didn't take long for the first person to rush to the hatch to heave, of course that set off a chain reaction and not everyone could fit in the entrance so very quickly the raft was not a pleasant place to be.

Luckily the wind was so strong it blew us down and across the harbour depositing us at the Bayswater Marina. Being forward thinkers we immediately rang the base for the Instructors to come and pick us up to be informed that we had to find our own way back. Deflating the raft and apportioning the load amongst the class members we set off, however just up the road there was a truck that had stopped to ask if he could help.

The driver was off to the dump, the old Devonport tip that was on Lake Road at the time where the soccer fields are currently (Alan Hill Stadium I think). So with a bit of trading he agreed to drop us off at the Main Gate PHILOMEL. We were pretty pleased with ourselves when we rolled up to the gym (now the Conference Centre adjacent to the Chapel) to receive a bullocking about our lack of initiative. We were pretty gobsmacked at this as we felt we had shown a lot of initiative, however they were the leaders and knew best, we just wanted to get it over with.

Finally we reached the end of the course, whilst it was enjoyable in parts it did seem to be repetitive with some of the subjects we had covered in prior courses, but I guess like all courses when members are coming from different backgrounds it is to ensure you all end up at the same concluding place at course end.

Like every course in those days there was an obligatory requirement to celebrate the successful conclusion with a final get together at the Senior Ratings Mess at lunchtime on the final day. Of course there was a lot of speculation about where our postings would be, some of the course members already knew they were returning to their former positions, however the three new Mechanicians hadn't received our posting notifications.

Whilst enjoying my pint and telling tall tales I got a tap on the shoulder and turned to find Warrant Officer Mechanician Alastair Yorke grinning at me. Alistair had been on OTAGO when I was there in 1972 and whilst in Hawaii had ended up as the Charge Chief when the WMEA had flown home.

Yorkies first question flummoxed me when he asked if I had my sea kit packed. When replying I hadn't been advised of my posting or when it was to occur he quickly informed me he had spoken with the Posting Warrant Officer and I was joining TARANAKI on the Monday. Boy that rocked me.

So going back to get our final sum up of the course etc. I received official notification that I would be joining TARANAKI on the Monday. So my time ashore had come to an end and I was about to start on an extended period of time at sea which will become apparent in the story ahead, however I was not exactly over the moon as I had hoped to go to one of the Leander's, as much for a change as anything else, also of course I had to give Kerry the news and really hadn't expected to be posted that quickly.

I was also aware after talking to Yorkie that TARANAKI was deploying to the Far East after an extensive work up in Australia so I wouldn't be home for a considerable period of 1975, not an easy subject to discuss with ones Nearest and Dearest.

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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