

HMNZS NGAPONA ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED

LONGCAST

11 May 18 – Navy Club Lunch at Remuera Club
18 May 18 - Ngapona Assn Lunch at Glen Eden RSA
4 June 18 – Queen’s Birthday
15 June 18 - Ngapona Assn Lunch at Birkenhead RSA
15 – 18 June 18 – Greenies Weapons Electrical Reunion at Napier
30 June 18 – HMNZS Ngapona Senior Rates Mess Dinner
20 July 18 – Ngapona Assn Lunch at Pt Chevalier RSA
21 July 18 – HMNZS Ngapona Assn – Formal Dinner, Pt Chevalier RSA
17 August 18 - Ngapona Assn Lunch at Henderson RSA

Hi Folks

HMNZS TE KAHA UPGRADE

Today, Seaspan’s Victoria Shipyards (VSL) celebrated the handover of Her Majesty’s New Zealand Ship HMNZS TE KAHA at a ceremony in Victoria, BC. The handover ceremony marks the transfer of care of HMNZS Te Kaha from the Royal New Zealand Navy (RNZN) to Lockheed Martin Canada (NYSE:LMT) and VSL. Today’s event follows last month’s formal announcement that VSL had been awarded work on the Frigate Systems Upgrade for the RNZN’s ANZAC class frigates as a subcontractor for Lockheed Martin Canada.

HMAS AE1

A joint US and Australian expedition to survey Australia’s first submarine **HMAS AE1** has provided detailed new images of the 103-year old shipwreck, which lies on the seafloor off the Duke of York Islands in Papua New Guinea (PNG). The Royal Australian Navy’s **HMAS AE1** was lost at sea with all hands on 14 September 1914, and its fate had remained a mystery until its discovery in December 2017. It was the first loss for the RAN and the first Allied submarine loss in World War I but ultimately a tragedy felt by all Australians.

His Majesty's Australian Submarine AE1 was launched in the yard of Vickers Ltd at Barrow-in-Furness, England on 22 May 1913. She commissioned at Portsmouth on 28 February 1914 under the command of Lieutenant Commander Thomas Fleming Besant, RN. She was the first of two E Class submarines built for the fledgling Royal Australian Navy and was manned by Royal Navy officers with a mixed crew of sailors drawn from the Royal Navy and the Royal Australian Navy.



HMAS AE1

NEW BIOFOULING RULES

The Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) has released guidance on how international vessels can comply with strict new biofouling rules. Next month, New Zealand will become the first country in the world to introduce a nationwide standard for biofouling. From 15 May, all commercial and recreational vessel operators will have to show they have managed biofouling on their vessels before they enter New Zealand waters.

DID YOU KNOW?

On 7 May 1927, under the command of Commissioned Gunner Melville, HM Trawler *Whakakura* conducted the first training in the Hauraki Gulf for the initial batch of two officers and 20 men of the Auckland Division of the RNVR.

A NAVAL CAREER IN THE EYES OF COLIN ROSS - Pt. 27

So after Xmas leave and leaping into a New Year, 1981 looked like an interesting but more low-key time. Being home and a proper father was going to be a novel experience.

I was posted into the Fleet Maintenance Unit (FMU). Ironically the first job I got was back on OTAGO overhauling the aft fire pump. These pumps were a real pain in the proverbial, they had a long shaft so inevitably when you offered them up to the electric motor there would be an issue with the alignment and consequently the impellor would bind on the bottom sealing ring. It took a great deal of patience.

I had an ex-RN Po working with me; they obviously didn't believe in job and finish in the RN. As soon as the clock ticked past 1600 he started on about overtime and what time would we finish. After an hour of this incessant querying/complaining I told him in no uncertain terms to go home and finished the job on my own. It was certainly a lot quieter.

There were a variety of jobs that came up over this year and I must say the best part of some of them was researching the parts required and ordering them or more often than not having to think outside the square and make do with what was at hand.

Towards the end of the year I was shifted and became the Small Craft Engineer. This was to provide support to the Lake Class Patrol Craft and other small boats. In those days PHILOMEL had two Liberty Boats, the Officers Motor Boat (*White Lady*), Commodores Barge and the Captains Cutter. So there was always something to do or offer advice on.

The best thing about this job was that you basically worked alone and your advice was listened to. There are plenty of times in the past where your advice was not even acknowledged let alone listened to.

There was a lot of comment about being the expert but I have never been a believer that anyone is an expert, some people have more knowledge than others but everyone sometimes comes up with a bit of new knowledge, the secret I believe is learning from both your own experience and also listening and learning from other people's experience.

Some of the dates in these two years in FMU are a bit of a blur so whilst I recite these tales they may not be in the correct sequence however I think it is important to tell them and hope they are roughly in sequence.

Later in my time in FMU (1981) I think, there was a cyclone in Tonga and the Navy was required to send help. TARANAKI was tasked to provide the platform and support; as well FMU was required to supply manpower. I cleared Lower Deck in the workshop and impressed on the young fellas that as part of Naval tradition we were on occasions required to assist counties in time of need and that FMU needed to supply a working

party of ten. To reinforce my address and asking for volunteers indicated that I had my hand up as the first volunteer. Reluctantly on most part I ended up with the volunteers, I didn't think I would be required to go as there were ample Senior Rates on the ship. However when the final list came out I was top of the list so again I was phoning home to advise Kerry I would be away for a week or more.

So off we went to Tonga. When we arrived after discussion the ship was deployed to an outer island, Ha'apai to assist. When we arrived the FMU party was hoisted off the Quarter Deck and into an Iroquois helicopter. They flew us in to the island, underslung was a load of tents, half way in the load dropped into the ocean, according to the pilot it was an equipment malfunction, the consensus of opinion amongst us was the pilot had pushed the wrong button!!

The major task was replacing the water catchment over the reservoir, this was a wooden frame with corrugated iron on the frame to catch rainwater and direct it into the reservoir. We got stuck in and rebuilt it. The corrugated iron was pretty battered and twisted. Just next door there was a whole roof section that had lifted off the adjacent building and had fortunately touched down in one piece. We requested we use it to provide a better catchment. The locals were horrified that we wanted to use it as it was the church roof and no way would we be allowed to use that.

The Air Force had told us that they would be back at the landing ground at 1700 and if we weren't there we would be left overnight on the island, I can assure you we were all back there before 1700 as we were hot, sunburnt and tired. The chance of a cold beer, a decent shower and even our stretcher on the deck was more appealing than a night on a tornado wrecked island.

The next day we were taken in to the airport the Air Force were operating from to await other tasks, one of the things that stands out here was down the road there was a roof that had blown onto the road. The locals had just been driving around it. It took twenty sailors to get around the roof and march it off the road so that it was open to normal traffic. There was bent and twisted corrugated iron lying everywhere and little kids running around it. We started picking it all up and stacking it mainly to remove the danger to the children, the locals didn't seem to worry about it.

At the end of this deployment it was quite satisfying to stand back and look at some of the tasks completed. It is probably one of the most worthwhile parts of being deployed on these assistance tasks. You never know what is going to crop up and it seems to suit the Kiwi personality to get stuck in and fix stuff.

As the Small Craft Engineer I got to utilise the training recently received in UK into practice. I remember flying to Wellington on a couple of occasions to assist the Engineer repair defects. This was also satisfying and it really enhanced the knowledge of Paxman engines. I may add that the Paxman Ventura engines were not the easiest to work on. The exhaust system ran down through the Vee between the two cylinder banks. The flanges were a real bastard to work on, especially getting the bottom two nuts loose and retightened. Knuckles were often skinned.

The other job I remember vividly is Waitangi 1982. The Fleet Engineering Officer (FMEO) sent for me. On arriving in his office I was informed that the Commodore's Barge was suffering from a bad fuel leak on the fuel pump so I was to be dispatched with a spare pump to rectify this problem. I was provided with a car and driver to call in at home and get a few clothes then off to Waitangi.

On arrival the car dropped me off at the jetty. It was not a difficult job to change the pump, took a couple of hours from memory. Finished the job and took the boat out to ensure no leaks then packed up my gear and they dropped me off on the Waitangi Wharf. Being hot and bothered I decided I would go and have a cold beer before trying to find where I was to stay overnight. I was standing at the bar in my diesel impregnated overalls when the next thing is it was flooded with sailors in their pristine whites. A couple of the young officers looked sideways at my attire so I decided I had better make tracks before someone complained to the Crushers that I was there out of the rig of the day.

I finally got put up in a motel with the shore party. Had a quiet night and then the next morning stated to make enquiries as to getting back to Auckland. From having anything I wanted and a car and driver to get me there, getting home was the exact opposite, in short no-one wanted to know me. Finally managed to find a truck going back to pick up gear and cadged a ride.

FMEO was apologetic when I explained the difficulty I had in returning and assured me it wouldn't happen again, yeah right I had a similar experience a few months later after being sent to Wellington again for engineering assistance and had a heck of a job getting someone to approve my flight back to Auckland.

These are just a few of the incidence that happened in my eighteen months in FMU. Next week I will explain how my shore time came to an end. I was initially posted to relieve the Engineer on PUKAKI, I was looking forward to my first posting in sole charge but as you will see the best laid plans of mice and men are sometimes inadvertently derailed.

To be continued



The Officers' Motor Boat in 1944. Informally call 'the White Lady', it was typical of the craft built at the Auckland dockyard before World War II. RNZN

White Lady



Matamua



Commodore's Barge

Take care

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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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