

HMNZS NGAPONA ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED

LONGCAST

23 June 18 – Northland Luncheon at Bay of Islands Yacht Club
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
18 August 18 – Navy Club AGM at Remuera Club
12 August 18 – HMNZS Ngapona Assn AGM at Pt Chevalier RSA
29 September 18 – Comms Assn AGM - Birkenhead RSA commencing at 1100

Hi Folks

NGAPONA ASSN - MONTHLY LUNCH

Had a great muster at the Birkenhead RSA for lunch last Friday. I counted 32 for pre-lunch drinks and 24 in the dining room

LAST CALL

Ngapona Senior Rates. This is definitely your last opportunity to register for the Mess Dinner on 30 July. Reply to this email if you would like to attend.

LEGION OF HONOUR RECIPIENT - MR NORM BATTERHAM

On Saturday 9 June 2018 100 year old Norm Batterham was awarded the Legion of Honour by H.E. Florence Jeanblanc-Risler, at the Pt.Chevalier RSA. The citation for Norm reads:

"Mr Batterham, you were born in Portsmouth in 1918. You were enlisted in the Royal Navy at the age of 18 years old, served as a petty officer cook in the Royal Navy throughout the Second World War, mostly on HMS Bluebell on convoy protection duties

in the Atlantic, Mediterranean Sea and Arctic. Early July 1943, you helped to protect assault convoys during the initial landings of the Allied Invasion of Sicily. On the D-Day, you were posted on the Landing Ship Tank 238, helping with the convoy of soldiers and tanks to the invasion beaches and transported wounded soldiers back to England. You remained in the Royal Navy until 1948, then served the Royal New Zealand Navy from 1948 until 1951."



UK PERSONNEL LEAVING THE ARMED FORCES TO KEEP THEIR ID CARDS

Minister for Defence People and Veterans Tobias Ellwood has announced that personnel leaving the armed forces will now be able to keep their military ID. The move will allow veterans to maintain their emotional connection with the armed forces, allowing them to keep the card they have carried on them throughout their career. Retaining their ID card, known as the MOD Form 90, will also allow service leavers to be identified as veterans quickly and easily, aiding their transition into civilian life.

Charities, Veterans UK, which manages armed forces pensions and compensation payments, local authorities and GPs will all benefit from the change, as they will not have to conduct time-consuming checks to identify individual veterans.

The Prime Minister last year also announced plans to provide the 2.5 million former armed forces personnel cards which identify them as veterans, in recognition of their service to the nation.

Tobias Ellwood said:

Instead of handing back their card to be destroyed on the day of discharge, the corners will now be cut off to show the card is no longer valid. This will ensure that security is maintained at bases and other sensitive sites.

Ministry of Defence: Published 7 June 2018

Surely this is something that NZ could do to recognise our Veterans. (Ed)

A NAVAL CAREER IN THE EYES OF COLIN ROSS - Pt. 33

Returning from Xmas leave everyone was refreshed and ready to tackle the refit and conversion. By mid January the crew had been pared down to a minimum manning level to safely accomplish the requirements of the refit.

The first task for ships staff was the marking and removal of all the boiler internal gear. The registration of all parts being removed from the ship was recorded on master sheets with where it came from and where it was being removed to. This becomes really important when you are trying to find equipment that has been removed to either overhaul it or later in the refit to replace it on board. The other issue we had to tidy up was LACHLAN. It was being utilised as the ship staff refit facility for the first time so we had to spend time setting up the workshop on board as well as sorting out the lay apart areas for each part of ship.

This was time well spent and both the workshop and the lay apart areas seemed to work well. We also had to set up a pneumatic workshop, which required running air supplies and services to it. I think the crew enjoyed this as they could see the finished results and also carry out improvements as work went ahead.

One of the bugbears of the whole period was the requirement to keep duties. As the Commanding Officer was still responsible for the safety of the ship and those working on board we had a skeleton duty watch right through the period. This included tasks like pulling the flag up at 0800 and pulling it down again at sunset, plus safety and security rounds. Living on LACHLAN was not the most comfortable as of course there was no air conditioning so we sweltered in the summer and froze in the winter, however I guess it was a reminder of how far progress had come in making ships more comfortable for the crew.

One of the most impressive first meetings in the New Year was the Addition & Alteration (A & A) Meeting. This is where all the proposed modifications are discussed. It was refreshing to listen to a Captain run the meeting and if the required drawings or equipment were not ready then he immediately took it off the list. This then meant at the end of the meeting we had a definitive list of what changes were going to occur.

One of the other issues that was raised early was Naval Staff were insistent that the Warrant Officers would have their own mess. The three Warrants on board at the time were more than happy to stay in the Upper CPO's Mess as we had on the trip home and had been the norm on other vessels up to this point. It didn't seem to make any difference what we thought; Naval Staff were insistent and got their way.

This meant that we went from a mess with a bathroom and toilet just outside the door to a mess just aft of the gun bay and we had to trek half way up the ship to the forward bathrooms and heads just like a large proportion of the junior rates. We didn't really see this move as much progress and it also was to lead to confrontation on my next posting.

The first task the Dockyard undertook was the opening of the removal routes to Engine room and Boiler room. This required a lot of removals to be undertaken in areas surrounding the soft patches and finally when they were open we started to see quite quick progress with whole pieces of machinery being released and lifted from the ship to disappear into storage or workshops for repair.

It doesn't take long for a ship to start to look like a wreckers yard. It was always weird doing rounds through the ship at night when there was no noisy ventilation fans running and also to walk past these big open black holes of the removal routes. Allied to the above issues the major items undertaken during the refit was the increase in fuel tanks to give the ship greater range and the fitting of steam atomisation to the boilers. The tank work initially put the onus on ships staff to get all the existing tanks clean and gas freed plus the cleaning out of former storerooms, which were to be converted into fuel tanks.

Once all the machinery had been removed there seems to be a period where not a lot happens on board the ship as most of the work is carried out in workshops. It wasn't until we went into dock that the major tank conversion work started in earnest. A lot of bulkheads were cut out and ship side plating removed. Most people will be aware that the original plan for the refit was a twelve-month period to do all the work. It wasn't till well into the refit that it was discovered there was an error in the material specification for the fuel tank bulkheads that required a large amount of rework. This had two ramifications, the first being the refit extension and what turned from twelve months to two and a half year refit. The other fall out from this was I ended up being posted at short notice. So from looking forward to taking a ship into and through a major maintenance period and the hard work but the satisfaction of seeing it through to completion and doing all the trials afterwards I was being shunted off early.

It was not the best outcome and was unexpected. I was sent for by the MEO one day, and when I arrived in his office I discovered the Posting Warrant Officer was also in attendance. He proceeded to tell the MEO that as the designated WOMEA that was supposed to go to CANTERBURY was no longer available I was to be posted there the following month. This did not please me on a couple of counts. As I informed them I didn't mind doing sea time but I didn't believe I should be expected to do others peoples sea time for them. It was also notable that the Posting Warrant would not address me during the discussion it was all directed at the MEO. This I thought was disrespectful as it was almost like I wasn't in the room. However as most will be aware you end up doing as you are told, so I had a month to tidy up what I had started and hand over to my relief. Again going home and passing on the news to my long-suffering wife was not great. I just felt that although I had reached the top of the lower deck tree I was really just a number.

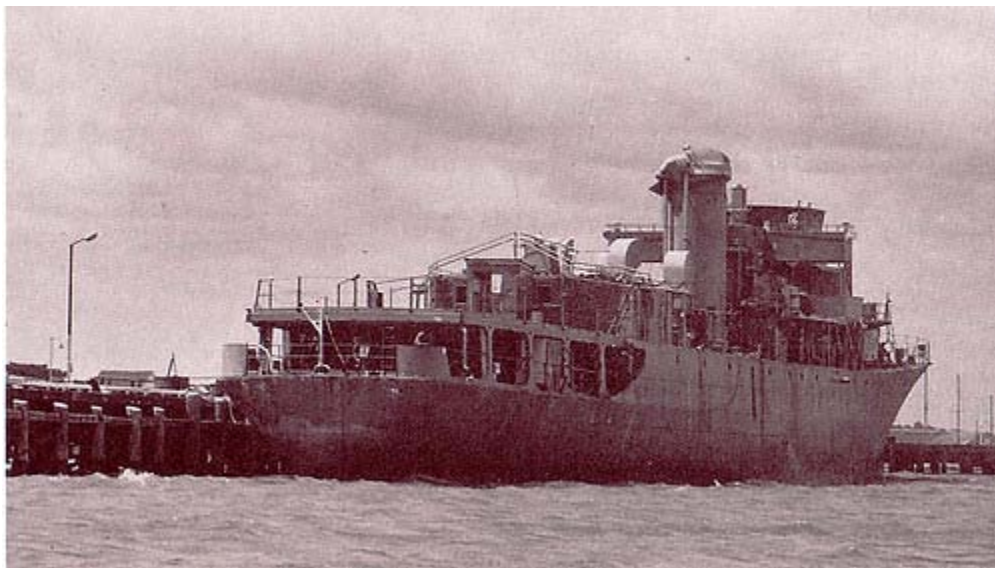
This was a really busy time and finally the day came when I had to reluctantly give up the reins to my successor and post across to CANTERBURY. It was not a good feeling and I must admit in hindsight it probably blighted my time on CANTERBURY as I basically didn't want to be there and it had made me take stock of my position and decide what I wanted to do in the future.

Arriving on CANTERBURY I was taking over from Dave Llewelyn. Dave and I had done the same Mechanics Course together and also served as CPO's on OTAGO, so I knew I was going to inherit a well organised and run branch. The hand over was done with a sea trip to Wellington, so I had a week to get to grips with the ship and officially took over from arrival in Wellington. It was fairly uneventful trip down although the first

night out after Dave and I had done a set of rounds through all the machinery spaces and after a shower before tea we sat down to have a quiet beer in the mess. Dave had just finished telling me that unlike the Y100s the generators on the Y160 Leander's were pretty reliable. No sooner had he uttered these words than the lights went out. So we scrambled off down to the diesel space and got a diesel running on load. It was not a big deal as one of the turbo generators had broken a drive belt so it was only a matter of replacing it and it was up and running again. However it did destroy Dave's statement of reliability.

The trip back to Auckland was calm and all went according to plan. We then only had a couple of weeks alongside before we all went on Xmas leave. So 1983 had started out full of promise with a period of refit and the challenge from getting a ship apart and then pitting it back together, to one of disappointment in being cut off at the pass so to speak and having to face an entirely different scenario than what had been expected for 1984.

To be continued



HMNZS Lachlan

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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