



## HMNZS NGAPONA ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED

### LONGCAST

24 November 17 - Ngapona Assn End of Year Function at the Pt Chevalier  
RSA at 1900

24 November 17 – Steamex, SRFM

8 December 17 - Navy Club Lunch at the Remuera Club

8 December 17 – Maritime Societies' Annual Dinner, Northern Club,  
Auckland

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

### **END OF YEAR DINNER**

The Dinner was held last Friday at Pt Chev RSA and I would have to say that it was a disappointing muster - but those who attended had an enjoyable evening. I know it is a busy time of the year.

We intend to hold another Formal Dinner in June next year. The last one was a great success, the next one will be even better!

### **EMAIL ADDRESSES**

With Vodafone closing their email service this Thursday I know many of you will have new email addresses. (Don't depend on Vodafone to forward your emails for ever.) If you have a new email address please send it to me NOW so I can update the database.

My new email address is [jerry@payne.kiwi.nz](mailto:jerry@payne.kiwi.nz) please update your contacts.

### **REAR ADMIRAL STEER (RTD) AWARDED LEGION OF MERIT**

Royal New Zealand Returned and Services Association (RNZRSA) Chief Executive Jack Steer ONZM received today the United States of America's third-highest military honour.

Rear Admiral Steer (Rtd) received the Legion of Merit (Degree of Commander) from United States Ambassador to New Zealand Scott Brown, on behalf of President of the United States of America.

The honour was given in recognition for actions carried out during his appointment as Chief of the Royal New Zealand Navy from 2012 to 2015.

Rear Admiral Steer joins a select few other New Zealanders to be recognised as Commanders of the Legion of Merit, including: Lieutenant General Bernard Cyril Freyberg, 1st Baron Freyberg, VC, GCMG, KCB, KBE, DSO & Three Bars, and Air Chief Marshal Sir Keith Rodney Park, GCB, KBE, MC & Bar, DFC.

Baron Freyberg received the award after playing an instrumental role in the Allied victory in Europe during World War 2.

Sir Keith received the award following his command of the British Royal Air Force during the Battle of Britain, and the Battle of Malta, also during WW2.

The full citation for the honour is as follows:

The President of the United States of America, authorized by Act of Congress, July 20, 1942, has awarded the Legion of Merit (Degree of Commander) to REAR ADMIRAL JACK RAYMOND STEER

ROYAL NEW ZEALAND NAVY for exceptionally meritorious service as Chief of Navy, Royal New Zealand Navy from December 2012 to November 2015. Rear Admiral Steer displayed strong leadership, exceptional vision and guidance. He led the Royal New Zealand Navy in overcoming increasingly complex maritime challenges in the South Pacific and beyond, to include supporting multi-lateral and interagency PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP planning and missions during all phases of this naval operation between 2013 and 2015. Rear Admiral Steer contributed to maritime efforts by deploying forces to Combined Task Force 150 and Combined Task Force 151 from August to December 2014 and contributing ships during two separate deployments. In addition, he was instrumental in enhancing intelligence and information sharing between the United States and the Royal New Zealand Navy by providing insights into his Navy's extensive interaction with the Peoples' Liberation Army (Navy), facilitating a greater understanding of the Chinese perspective on disputes in Northeast Asia and the South China Sea. The superior effort, outstanding leadership, and personal initiative displayed by Rear Admiral Steer reflect great credit upon himself, the Royal New Zealand Navy, and his country.

### **A NAVAL CAREER IN THE EYES OF COLIN ROSS - Pt. 5**

INVERELL was on quite often used as a supply ship to supply RAOUL Island, this was at the time a weather station about 800k north of NZ. The first time we went up with a team of cullers and their dogs, they were to clear McCauley Island of the goats to allow the flora and fauna to regenerate into it's natural state. It was quite rough on the way up and the poor dogs were seasick. They were really glad to get off the ship even if it meant a trip in the Ship's motorboat to land on the island. They had about a week and successfully removed all the goats. The trip back was more comfortable for all involved. On another trip up I had a middle watch just prior to arrival there. I got up and felt none too flash but managed to do my watch and was glad to return to my hammock. When wakey wakey went I just managed to get out of my hammock but was doubled over with severe stomach pains. Went to the sickbay and the LSBA was immediately concerned and turned me into the sickbay bunk. By this time I was not in a good place, a backside full of penicillin and something to relieve the pain and I was the centre of attention. After a few signals the diagnosis was appendicitis. The ship immediately turned for Auckland being the closest hospital and steamed at full speed towards NZ. I was not aware of the drama but was really crap and out to the joe for most of the time. The two days prior to getting home were not great with a backside receiving a dose of penicillin twice a day, however by the third day approaching Auckland I was feeling somewhat better but had to endure listening to the crew discussing the meals they had whilst I was by now feeling extremely hungry.

These were the days before helicopters being a dime a dozen and able to fly over water. There was discussion of flying me in from Gt Barrier Island if necessary. By the time the ship arrived back at Devonport I was well enough to walk off the ship to the

ambulance and off up the hill to RNZNH. After a couple of days in hospital I was sent home for the weekend then back to the ship and sea the following week. They didn't want to operate while it was settling down but some three months later I was into hospital and had the offending appendage successfully removed.

On a visit to Gisborne a game of rugby was arranged with a local club. After the game and a few quiet ones the opposing team requested a visit to the ship, which the crew were only too happy to arrange. You can imagine the Officer of the Day's consternation when the opposition team arrived alongside the ship on their Harley Davidsons and their Hells Angles jackets!!. However they were not a bad bunch of blokes and enjoyed their ship visit.

One of the other features was the annual Rockies sea week where all the units congregated and practiced all sorts of nautical manoeuvres. INVERELL was also there as part of the week. We worked out of Golden Bay and the Marlborough Sounds. It was probably exciting for the Rockies in their 72ft MLs, I have some photos of them trying to follow in line astern however the weather was not kind and they were leaping about a fair bit, we were grateful for once that we were on the bigger vessel and although INVERELL was not a great sea boat in heavy weather we were somewhat more comfortable than the crews on the MLs. I must add that all that sailed in them held the MLs in great esteem; they really were a good sea boat in all weathers although somewhat lively. The Fisheries MLs seemed to be in a Navy of their own, coming and going with little or no fuss and it seemed that people posted to them preferred to remain in this close-knit environment rather than joining the wider fleet.

Towards the end of my time on INVERELL I met a young Lady whom was to become my wife. I had been invited around to a mates place and his wife's sister was there. She was a nurse at the Wilson Home and after a few discussions I first started writing to her then we started going out together. There was a bit of a problem with this as there were now three of us on the same ship. One sister was married to a LME, another was engaged to a POME and here was me as an ME1 going out with a younger one. Whilst we were away from Auckland the three of us had a Church meeting each Sunday to ensure our letters home all corroborated and the same stories were being relayed in our letters.

Whilst on INVERELL I reached the ripe age of twenty and of course became entitled to a daily tot of rum. This institution was the focus of the day for some of the old hands. We had an ME1 on-board who was the Engineers Writer. He was a Rum Rat. Any one that didn't want theirs he would expect to receive it. It was rough one day and the rum issue was held on the Quarter Deck. The ship was leaping around and a couple of guys had a sip of their tot and decided it was probably not going to stay down so they tipped the rest over the side. This Rum Rat was so upset at this waste of rum that he went to the forward mess, collected all the rum glasses from their stowage and threw them over the side. This of course didn't endear him to the rest of the crew, as there was a scramble the next day to find enough glasses and mugs for rum issue.

Having been on INVERELL for over two years I was half expecting a posting, however it was somewhat accelerated when at Fleet Divisions the Admiral stopped to chat with me and asked, as they always seemed to, how long I had been on INVERELL. When informed over two years he sort of suggested I must be due a draft and of course that was almost taken as a command so on the next posting order I was posted into PHILOMEL.

On reflection although my two years on INVERELL was perhaps not the best posting as far as promotion and career went, it did allow me to see almost every port in NZ. I meet a lot of interesting people, some more helpful than others. I always felt that the ERA's were interested in furthering my engineering knowledge and went out of their way to involve me with hands on engineering as well as some of the theory that went with it. The watch keeping especially in three watches was long and tiring. Life at times seemed to consist of eating, sleeping and watch keeping. So with mixed feelings I departed the ship, kit bag on shoulder and gas mask slung over the other shoulder, on my merry way to a Stone Frigate and new experiences. One thing to look forward to was more time to court my girlfriend and a more settled and stable routine.

(Attached photo shows Inverell at Gisbourne 13 July 1966)

*To be continued*

### **CNS #23**

Rear Admiral K.F. Wilson RNZN CBE LVO JP  
Chief of Naval Staff: April 1997 to April 2000

Born 22/11/41 to Milton Egerton and Kathleen Eveline Rose Wilson of 64 Stanley Point Road. Attended Stanley Bay Primary and Takapuna Grammar before his Father, a bank manager with the BNZ was posted to Wellington, and then Heretaunga College. Joined the RNZN in January 1959 as a Cadet Midshipman and underwent initial training at the Royal Australian Naval College. Midshipman's time was spent in HMAS Melbourne and HMAS Vendetta and he then attended Britannia Royal Naval College, Dartmouth. After Sub-Lieutenant's courses in the U.K., he returned to NZ and joined HMNZS Taranaki, but was soon transferred to the minesweeper HMNZS Hickleton and spent the next year involved in patrols against the threat of the Indonesian Confrontation. He was awarded the General Service Medal with clasps for Malacca Straits and Borneo. He was the Officer of the Watch on 28 June 1966 that initiated the first hot action by New Zealand Forces since the Korean War, when he intercepted a small boat carrying Indonesian Marines attempting to infiltrate the Malayan Peninsula which resulted in fire being exchanged.

On return to New Zealand, he was promoted to Lieutenant and joined HMNZS Inverell as the Navigating Officer and the Supply Officer. During his time on board, he was also posted as the Commanding Officer of the Fishery Protection vessel HMNZS Kahawai. A two-year posting to the tanker HMNZS Endeavour followed, initially as the Navigating Officer and then the Executive Officer. The ship undertook four resupply trips to

McMurdo Base during his time on board and he became an experienced ice navigator. He also spent time on loan as the Commanding Officer of another Fishery Protection vessel, HMNZS Maroro.

In 1969 he undertook the one-year Long Torpedo and Anti-Submarine (TAS) Course at HMS Vernon at Portsmouth in the UK. He was then posted just down the road to the Royal Yacht, HMY Britannia as it sailed for the Royal Tour of Fiji, Tonga and New Zealand in 1970.

Specialist appointments followed as the TAS Officer in HMNZS Otago and on the staff of Commodore Auckland. He then became the Junior Officers Training Officer at HMNZS Tamaki.

In late 1973, he was back in the U.K. for three months as an Additional Equerry to HM The Queen at Buckingham Palace. He then served as the NZ Equerry to HRH The Duke of Edinburgh for the opening of the 1974 Commonwealth Games in Christchurch. Later, when The Queen joined the Royal Yacht, he became the NZ Equerry to The Queen for the 1974 Royal Tour. At the conclusion of the tour, he was made a Lieutenant of the Royal Victorian Order for personal services to the Sovereign.

More sea time followed as the Operations Officer in HMNZS Waikato before being posted on exchange service with the US Navy on the Staff of Commander Third Fleet in Hawaii for three years.

Returning to NZ in mid 1979 he became the Executive Officer and later, on promotion to Commander, the Commanding Officer of the frigate HMNZS Canterbury.

After specialist training in Australia he was posted to Naval Headquarters in Wellington as the Director of Plans, before returning to Devonport to take command of the frigate HMNZS Waikato and then HMNZS Southland – the first 3-frigate C.O. and Commander of the 11th Frigate Squadron.

He was posted ashore in late 1985 as the Fleet Operations Officer and Queens Harbourmaster on the Staff of the Commodore Auckland.

Promoted to Captain in early 1987 he was initially the Director of Resources and Programmes on the Defence Staff in Wellington before assuming the Force Development role on the Naval Staff. He initiated and achieved the NZ Government approval of the ANZAC Ship Project which resulted in the on-time on-budget delivery of HMNZ Ships Te Kaha and Te Mana.

During 1989/90, he undertook a post-graduate course at the Canadian National Defence College before returning to Devonport and becoming the Captain Naval Training.

Promoted to Commodore in early 1991 he took up the post of Deputy Chief of Naval Staff. He was made a Commander of the British Empire in the New Year's Honours that year for his achievements with the ANZAC Ship Project.

Returning to Devonport in 1993, he became the Commodore Auckland, the senior operational post in the RNZN. To better reflect that reality, he changed the name to Maritime Commander on his own cognisance, and fortunately only received raised eyebrows from Wellington. He also made what others thought were innovative moves such as establishing a day-care facility for female sailor mothers, initiating the

establishment of a navigational training simulator, and a reconstruction of the Naval Stores complex – he thought them just common sense and overdue. He also championed fair representation for women on Naval Promotion Boards and course selection processes.

Promoted to Rear Admiral in 1995 he returned to Defence Headquarters as the Deputy Chief of Defence Staff before becoming the Chief of Naval Staff in 1997 where his modernising influence continued. He established the Warrant Officer of the Navy; took the RNZN into the Baldrige Excellence Programme that eventually resulted in a Gold Award; instituted Change of Command Ceremonies; and started the Sailor of the Year Programme among many other initiatives. His most satisfying creation was the establishment of the Navy's Core Values of Courage, Commitment Comradeship, later adopted NZDF-wide.

He retired from the RNZN in April 2000 after a career of over 42 years. He became a Justice of the Peace in 2001.

He then joined Auckland City Council as its Manager of Emergency Management and later became the Group Controller or overall director of operations for the whole Auckland region. He introduced new programmes into the Council including a comprehensive Business Continuity programme and a digital management programme for Civil Defence that was adopted by all Auckland Region councils.

He left Auckland City Council in 2006 and started his own consulting firm and later took over an automotive aftermarket business. Both are still in successful operation in Devonport.

In 2012 he took on the role of Secretary of the Returned & Services Association in what has always been his home town of Devonport, and later the Chair of the Devonport RSA Memorial Trust. His other activities include executive positions on several other not-for-profit organisations and charities; mentoring several businesses and organisations, and gardening in his spare time. He has published three books – Waitangi Witness (A History of the Navy in the Bay of Islands), Military Strikes and Mutinies (The record of the mutinies in the NZDF, particularly the 1947 naval mutiny), and The Compleat Guide to HMS New Zealand (A comprehensive record of this country's gift ship) - all published by Quarterdeck. His most recent book, RNZN Diary (A day-by-day record of the events and happenings in the RNZN's first 75 years), is currently with the printers, to be followed by a complete record of the Ship's Badges of the RNZN which will be on the shelves in early 2018.

Take care

**Jerry Payne**

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President

HMNZS Ngapona Ex Members 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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