

HMNZS NGAPONA ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED

LONGCAST

16 March 18 - Ngapona Assn Lunch at Waiheke RSA
24 March 18 - Navy Open Day, DNB
13 – 16 April 18 - HMNZS Otago and All ships Reunion, Poenamo Hotel, Auckland
14 April 18 – Book launch, ‘Sailors Against the Odds’ Ngataringa Sports Complex
20 April 18 - Ngapona Assn Lunch at Onehunga RSA
15 – 18 June 18 – Greenies Weapons Electrical Reunion at Napier

Hi Folks

BREAKING NEWS

Ex HMNZS Kuparu has rounded the top of the North Island on her way to Whangarei. After sitting on the hard for 15 years she has had an 18 month refit and was relaunched at Helensville in December last year. When Scott Perry bought her she was almost ready for the chainsaw. He has, almost single handedly, saved a piece of naval history. Tonight she is berthed at Russell and tomorrow will proceed to Whangarei where she will meet up with ex HMNZS Paea after almost 33 years. Paea is currently on the hard undergoing her refit and will be back in the water on Thursday. For ML buffs this is an exciting time, two MLs, in almost original condition, will once again be berthed side by side.

For details on Kuparu's restoration make sure you get a copy of the latest *Professional Skipper* magazine, on sale this week.



Kuparu at Whangaroa Harbour



Kuparu at Russell

HMNZS MANAWANUI DECOMMISSIONED

The Royal New Zealand Navy decommissioned its diving and mine counter-measures support ship HMNZS Manawanui in a ceremony at Devonport Naval Base on February 23.

The ship was paid off after 30 years of service and the ship's White Ensign was lowered for the very last time.

Manawanui was commissioned into the navy in 1988. She was built in the UK in 1979 as a diving support vessel, the Star Perseus, for North Sea oil rig operations.

She is fitted with a triple lock compression chamber, a wet diving bell, a 15 tonne crane and workshop facilities including electric and gas welding equipment and a lathe. She has a four-point anchoring system to keep the ship in position when undertaking diving operations.

Manawanui is the third ship of this name to serve in the Royal New Zealand Navy. The name translates as "Big Heart".

Manawanui, and the hydrographic ship HMNZS Resolution which was decommissioned in 2012, are being replaced by a single ship which will carry out both functions.



WAIHEKE LUNCH

One of the highlights of the year for the Ngaiona Assn is our monthly lunch held at the Waiheke RSA. This year we are going to make it a bit special, so mark the date, 16 March in your calendar. Bring some friends and make a day of it.

A NAVAL CAREER IN THE EYES OF COLIN ROSS - Pt. 17

OTAGO had returned from a trip to the States just prior to my joining her. On the trip back she had suffered from condenseritis. This is the leakage of salt water into the boiler feed water. This is a real issue for steamships and after a maintenance period it was hoped the issue had been fixed.

We sailed for a shakedown, patrol and visit to Wellington and very soon after getting to sea the condenseritis returned. This meant that when we go to Wellington we were forced to investigate the source of the leak. In each main condenser there are hundreds of tubes carrying seawater that cools the steam exiting from the bottom of the steam turbine, so finding which one is leaking is a challenge. The method is to fill the steam side with water and add fluorescence dye, then climbing into the empty salt water side an ultra-violet light is played over the tubes, this picks up any fluorescence that is leaking through around the tube or packing.

Sounds easy but unfortunately it is a slow process. It was not helped by having to stand in salt water up to your knees, which in the middle of winter was extremely cold. An eight-hour shift of this was no fun and we worked around the clock over the weekend to be ready to sail on the Monday.

On the Sunday afternoon as we were working away, the WOMEA Phred Hennesey and the Engineer Del Cootes came down to see how we were getting on, they were going ashore for a brief refresher and said they would cook up a feed for us when we finished at 2000. So we beavered away finishing up and went off for a shower at 2000, when we walked down the main drag as they were going to cook up in the engine room you could smell rum. What they had done is marinade the steak in rum; it was truly the worst steak I have ever tasted.

The other thing was the water we had drained from the condenser with the fluorescence dye which is a bright green had to be pumped out, so we just pumped it over the side, we were alongside the Overseas Terminal and of course it was well lit, the ocean turned a bright green so we were hoping no one would notice, in those days everything was a bit more lenient and it didn't seem the Authorities even noticed.

On the trip back to Auckland once again the tubes leaked so the decision was made to re-pack both condensers, so that was a time consuming job undertaken by the Dockyard. It was interesting to see how easy it was to re-pack the tubes with both end covers off the condenser and a nice stage fitted at each end of the condenser. The job was completed prior to Xmas and we went to sea to prove the repair.

1978 started a pretty intensive year. There was a fairly big crew change so a needed shake down. This went well, but there was a lot of outstanding leave so the decision was made to send a bunch of the crew on leave. We were conducting a gunnery training class out of Auckland so wasn't going to be too arduous on the rest of us so off they went and were to be back to relieve us so we could go off on leave.

The week went quite well and we returned to Auckland. On the Friday we were having a Family Day but in the process would transit to Whangarei for the weekend. It was great to take Kerry to sea so she could see some of what I did for a job. A visit to the bridge was interesting and the Captain took time out to talk to her, something he seldom did with me. Unfortunately once we got out of the gulf Kerry took to my bunk sea sick so that wasn't too great. So after a weekend in Whangarei we returned to finish the gunnery training and we were all looking forward to getting alongside and going on leave.

On the way back in we suddenly came up to 28 knots. Everyone was excited thinking "Great we will be home early". Unfortunately the Captain got on the blower to advise us that we were returning to Auckland to fuel urgently and were then departing straight away for a search and rescue in mid Tasman. You can imagine how excited we were at that news!

So for the next ten days we were looking for a missing yacht and it was hard going, we only had one boiler front stoker, this was to prove an interesting time as the radar was shut down and they had a couple of look outs up the mast to look for debris in the water. So inevitably when the ship went to stop the safeties lifted on the boiler and scared the living bejesus out of the guys up the mast.

Nothing was found so after ten days and short of fuel we returned to Auckland.

We mentioned to the Captain that as the ship was very light, the props were actually coming out of the water as we rolled, that when he went astern in Auckland he would not get the same stopping motion. So sure enough we come in to Calliope Central and he goes astern and the ship just merrily sails forward, so suddenly we get a "Full

Astern". Luckily there was nothing in front of us in the berth so we managed to stop pretty much where we should have.

I had just gone auxiliary and had a shower when there was a knock on the mess door; it was the Captain's Steward with an open bottle of beer on a silver tray. "With the Captains Compliments for CPO Ross" the steward said. It was nice to be acknowledged for our quick response but a beer at 1000 is a bit early in the day, however if your Captain shouts who am I to say know. It was a much-appreciated acknowledgement anyway.

So we finally got to go on leave, the other watch were more than happy as they had a period of unchecked leave.

To be continued.

Take care

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Editor

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