

## LONGCAST

21 January 22 – Ngapona Assn Lunch at Titirangi RSA

31 January 22 – Auckland Anniversary Day

7 February 22 – Waitangi Day

18 February 22 - Ngapona Assn Lunch at Swanson RSA

18 March 22 - Ngapona Assn Lunch at Waiheke RSA

Hi Folks

### **CHINA HINTS AT 2022 AMBITIONS**

China set out its priorities for its 2022 economic policies last week placing much emphasis on stability. The annual Central Economic Work Conference, which took place in Beijing, outlined key goals, including taking steps to make macro policies more effective, energise market players and regain healthy growth of the real estate sector. “Stability is the key,” said Iris Pang, chief economist, Greater China for ING. “This reminds us of the policy environment before the trade war. But the background has changed a lot since then.” She noted that Covid-19 and international politics “do not seem to be helping”.

2022 is shaping up to be a pivotal year for China. After the Beijing Olympic Games in February, the National People’s Congress (NPC) and the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference will meet in March to begin preparations for the Chinese Communist Party’s (CCP) 20th Congress in November.

Continued tensions in the Indo-Pacific and reducing opportunities for engagement with Beijing are likely to “set the tone” for China’s international behaviour in 2022. Geopolitical competition is expected to “pick up” in 2022 as China pushes back against any signs of a coalition of Western countries challenging China’s rise. “Open conflict with Western powers is only a remote possibility in 2022, as it would scupper the CCP’s efforts to maintain a stable environment in the run up to the year-end party congress,” said Helena Legarda, MERICS senior analyst. “But the party’s internal focus means that engagement with China will remain difficult for foreign governments and businesses alike, reducing opportunities to manage tensions.”

*Source: Baltic Exchange*

## PAST ALONGSIDE PRESENT

Before we had the Lake-class Inshore Patrol Vessels, there were the Moa-class Inshore Patrol Craft – HMNZ Ships *Kahu*, *Kiwi*, *Moa*, *Hinau* and *Wakakura*.

They were constructed in Whangarei and commissioned into our Navy between the late 70's and mid-80's. There was a ship attached to each of our four Reserve Units and one which was a designated dive tender.

By 2007, they had all been decommissioned when the new Lake-class vessels, also constructed in Whangarei, started coming on stream.

Recently, HMNZS *Taupo* sailed on a four-week sea training deployment to the South Island. While on the transit, she met up with the former HMNZS *Hinau* which is now the Cable patrol vessel, Seapatroller.

Their crucial role is to patrol a 40km long lane between Ōraumua/Fighting Bay in the outer Marlborough Sounds and Oteranga Bay on Wellington's south coast. There are three power cables and four telecommunication cables that run between the two bays and the Seapatroller's crew is there to ensure that boaties don't drop an anchor, drag a net or even put out a line that could threaten the cables.

BZ to the former HMNZS *Hinau*. Still protecting and serving.

Does anyone know what's become of the other former RNZN Inshore Patrol Craft?



## LIGHT HOUSE OF THE WEEK – KAIPARA HARBOUR

Position: 36.21.5S 174.11.0E

Characteristics: Fl W 5s

Range: 6NM

Structure: White tower

The region consists of a vast extent of sand, both above the sea as enormous dunes and below the sea as shoals. The snow-white sweep of the unceasingly breaking waves marks the colossal expanse of the treacherous offshore shoal, which need to be seen on a clear day to appreciate their full extent.

The magnificent Kaipara Harbour provided an almost ideal port for the export of kauri timber in the early 1860s. However, in common with all North Island west coast waterways, the harbour mouth was narrow and choked by sandbanks and encumbered by a vast expanse of offshore sandbars. Large, deep-sea sailing ships found it difficult to navigate the only possible channel, called Galatea Passage. (Mariners named this passage after the barque Galatea that bravely entered in 1856.) The tumult of breaking seas over the enormous offshore banks presents a

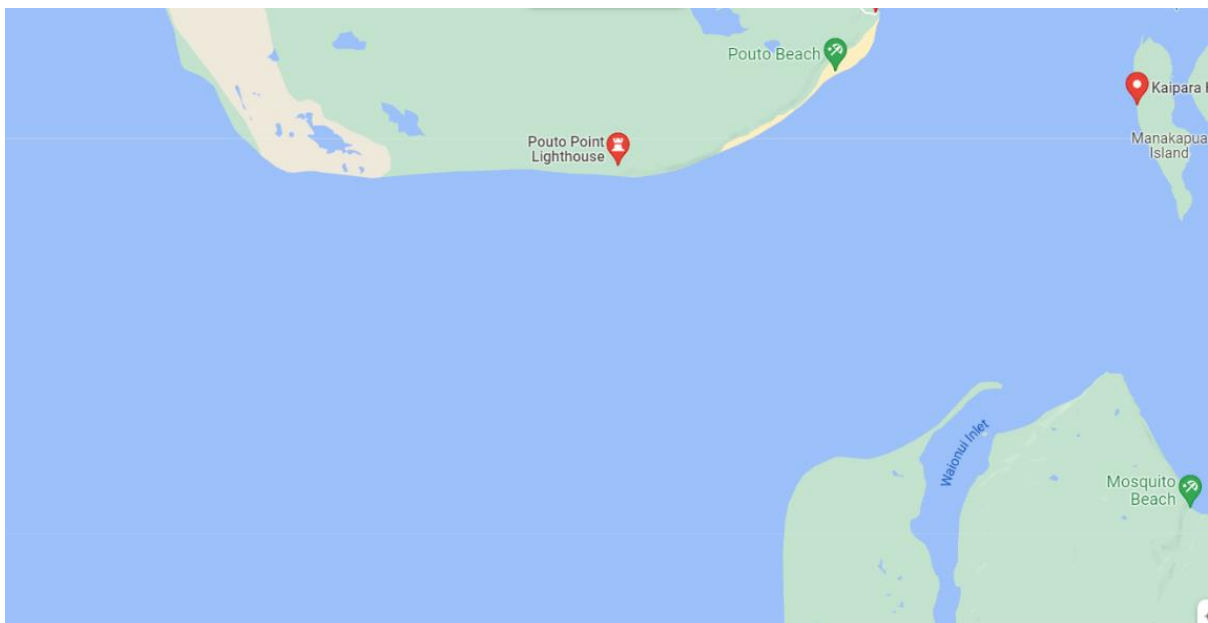
daunting prospect to any mariner, especially when the weather is marginal. Captain Cook passed the Kaipara, sailing too far off to appreciate the existence or extent of the harbour. The toll of strandings, capsizings and losses of ships and men between 1870 and 1905 makes appalling reading. Almost every year during this period saw the loss of a ship. Records of the time show that there were some 22 ships stranded, driven ashore or capsized — causing the loss of 25 men.

In the early days, beacons placed among the sand hills were the only navigational aids visible by daylight. Ships offshore were not encouraged to navigate by night as they had no means of knowing precisely where they were.

The department commissioned Mr Scott to build a light as high up and as visible as possible from seaward. As the area had to be stable and large enough to support a lighthouse with keepers' houses, they were fortunate to find a small outcrop of sandstone on which to make a start. Mr Scott used additional broken road metal brought from Auckland to construct the foundations. Living and working among constantly drifting sand must have been difficult and tiresome during the construction phase. Mr Scott reported that the workmen had to wear goggles for protection from wind-blown sand. It was a portent of weather conditions to come.

Mr Scott completed the construction and commissioning of the second order dioptric light in 1884, with a character of flash white every ten seconds. The red wooden tower stood 13.5 metres in height giving an elevation of 85 metres above the sea, having a range of 23 nautical miles. Two leading beacons marked the best approach through the shoals. The front beacon stood 13 metres high, painted black with a white central stripe, and the rear beacon lay 800 metres behind it with a white bullseye placed in the centre. The red tower changed to white about 1923/24.

The lighthouse tender Stella supplied the station using surfboats and the breaking surf occasionally swamped them as they were coming ashore. Such an event was a disaster for keepers and their families at any station, as their dry stores such as flour and sugar were drenched. In addition, the salt water ruined all chaff and oats for the horses. A typical load included stores for three months and items such as '200 gallons of paraffin oil, 12 lbs. vermilion paint, 3 gallons of oak varnish and a sprung cart'. Fortunately, the Kaipara station staff were able to augment their fresh provisions and horse feed by going to Pouto on Fridays. Living among the sand dunes must have been a nightmare for early keepers. They often reported strong gales and thick rain squalls blowing sand in great clouds over the dome of the tower and blocking up doors. Often, they could not even see the bar offshore. They had to dig the sand away from halfway up the stable doors in order to get the horses out. The small collier TSS Titoki, operated by the Anchor Shipping Co., may have been the last regular caller when she ceased deliveries of coal to the dairy factories at Dargaville about 1946. The Graveyard remains as dangerous as ever to shipping, with only a few courageous fishers venturing there now.



This is the last in the series of 'LIGHT HOUSE OF THE WEEK'. We have circumnavigated New Zealand clock-wise and are now back at the starting point. In researching this project, I have learnt a lot about the coast of New Zealand and something of our early pioneers; they were certainly a tough breed.

Next week we start on a new topic, 'The Life of Capt. Bligh RN'. It will be broken into 26 weekly instalments. I hope you will enjoy reading about this fascinating seafarer.

Regards

**Jerry Payne**

Editor

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