

Cyclone Gabrielle

Despite being downgraded from a tropical cyclone as it started to affect New Zealand, officials have said Gabrielle should not be taken lightly. Ahead of its arrival, MetService warned: "Based on the position and intensity of Gabrielle, this system poses a very high risk of extreme, impactful, and unprecedented weather over many regions of the North Island from Sunday to Tuesday."

If any Veterans are requiring any urgent assistance, the RNZRSA has put in place emergency funds for any Veteran requiring assistance. This is available through the District Support Managers. Don't hesitate to contact your local RSA.

Auckland Council has a help line on 0800 22 22 00, or if it is an emergency dial 111.

NGAPONA ASSN – NAME BADGES

One of the privileges of joining the Ngapona Assn is that you get issued with a personalised name badge with the Ngapona crest. We have a number of these name badges waiting to be collected, unfortunately they can't be posted because they contain a magnet. They will be available for collection from Dave Thorpe at our next lunch at the Swanson RSA on Friday 17th February.

Please come along to the lunch and collect your name badge.

Look forward to seeing you there.



NEW SERVICE FOR PORT OTAGO

NEW Zealand's Port Otago has announced a new shipping service at one of its ports and a new chair at the company. Port Chalmers will soon be included on Zim's New Zealand to Australia (N2A) Service, which calls Melbourne, Sydney, Auckland, Napier and Lyttleton weekly and Tauranga and Port Chalmers fortnightly. Napier Port is also a new addition to the service, according to Australia's Daily Cargo News. Port Otago commercial manager Craig Usher said the first Zim vessel is due in early February. "While the service will initially be fortnightly, that may increase to weekly over time, depending on demand from local exporters and importers," he said. "The three Zim vessels on the New Zealand to Australia rotation are 1,730 to 1,800 TEU, adding valuable export capacity for lower South Island exporters. "This provides direct options into two major Australian ports, namely Melbourne and Sydney." Zim New Zealand general manager David Mitchell said the upgraded service complements the company's existing New Zealand coverage. "Adding Napier and Port Chalmers to Zim's service offers our customers more choice and more connections between New Zealand, Australia, the Far East, North America and beyond, as well as enhancing our coastal services," he said. Port Otago said Zim has also upgraded capacity to 1,700-plus TEU vessels on the New Zealand service in time for the summer/autumn agricultural and horticultural export season. In addition, Port Otago has appointed Tim Gibson as its new chair. Mr Gibson is currently Port Otago's director and he is to replace Paul Rea, who is retiring.

US BASES TO REOPEN IN THE PHILIPPINES

Once-secret ammunition bunkers and barracks lay abandoned, empty and overrun by weeds — vestiges of American firepower in what used to be the United States' largest overseas naval base at Subic Bay in the northern Philippines. But that may change in the near future. The U.S. has been taking steps to rebuild its military might in the Philippines more than 30 years after the closure of its large bases in the country and reinforcing an arc of military alliances in Asia in a starkly different post-Cold War era when the perceived new regional threat is an increasingly belligerent China.

Source: *JIM GOMEZ Associated Press*

ROYAL NAVY SHIPS IN NEW ZEALAND

HMS MIRANDA

A screw sloop built in the Royal Dockyard Sheerness and commissioned 25 Feb 1854. Reclassified as a corvette by 1862.

Armament: (as at 1856) -1 68 pdr MLBSB gun. 10 32 pdr MLBSB guns, 4 20 pdr RBL guns

Propulsion: Sail/Steam

Length: 196 feet 5 inches

Beam: 34 feet.

Launched in 1851, she was completed to see action in the Russian War of 1854 - 55. She commissioned at Sheerness on 25 February 1854 under the command of Captain Edmund M. Lyons, RN for service in the Baltic Sea during the Russian War of 1854 - 55. She did not sail for the Baltic, instead she joined Captain Erasmus Ommanney's Squadron for service in the White Sea. The Squadron consisting of *Eurydice*, *Miranda*, *Brisk* plus two French ships scoured the White Sea for Russian Ships. Not finding any Russian Ships the Squadron destroyed the Port of Kola on the 24th of August before withdrawing before the onset of Winter. Her crew received the Baltic medal even though she did not serve in the Baltic. She returned to Portsmouth in September 1854. In 1855 she deployed to the Black Sea for operations in the Sea of Azov. On 3 June 1855 at Siege of Taganrog on Sea of Azov, Boatswain Henry Cooper and Lieutenant Cecil William Buckley of *Miranda* landed destroying equipment and setting fire to government buildings. This despite the town being under bombardment and garrisoned by 3,000 Russian troops. For this action the pair were awarded the Victoria Cross. Captain Edmund Moubray Lyons of *Miranda* reported on 29 May 1855 that in the first four days of the squadron entering the Sea of Azov, the enemy had lost four steamers of war, 246 merchant vessels, together with corn and flour magazines to the value of at least £150,000.[7] During the Kerch operations on 17 June, Captain Lyons was mortally wounded, dying on the 23rd. Captain Robert Hall took Command on the 24th as the Senior Officer in the Strait of Kerch.[5][8] Upon the cessation of Hostilities, *Miranda* returned to Home Waters paying off at Sheerness on 21 April 1857.

Miranda recommissioned on the 4 Oct 1860 under the command of Commander Henry Glyn RN for the Australia Station. Captain Robert Jenkins assumed command in 1861.

1863 found *Miranda* in New Zealand waters and she was at Auckland when HMS *Orpheus* foundered when approaching the Manukau Harbour. Survivors from *Orpheus* were accommodated in *Miranda*.

Sailors from the *Miranda* helped to make up the Naval Brigade invading the Waikato, Lieutenant Downes being wounded in the shoulder during the attack on Rangiriri pa. Again, sailors from the *Miranda* made up part of the Naval Brigade attacking Gate Pa after the ship had been used to blockade Tauranga harbour to prevent the Maori being reinforced or receiving supplies from the sea. During the attack on the pa, the gunner of *Miranda* Mr. Watts, was killed by a tomahawk blow to the head during hand-to-hand fighting.

In November 1863, the *Miranda* fired on a Maori settlement at Pukorokoro at the head of the Firth of Thames. The settlement of Miranda named after the vessel was later established at Pukorokoro.

Miranda returned to England and was de-commissioned in June 1865 being broken up in December 1869.

Note: Another RN vessel HMS *Miranda* served in Australian waters from 1883-1886. She was a composite built sloop with a complement of 139. She was fitted with sail and also a 900-horsepower engine. She was in Wellington in April 1882 when a major fire broke out in Wellington. About 30 of *Miranda*'s crew with a ship's pump assisted in extinguishing the fire.



HMS Fawn (right) and HMS Miranda (left) during the Regatta of January, 1862 ("the race of the Maori war canoes")