

Hi Folks

NGAPONA ASSN LUNCH

Our next lunch is in two weeks' time at the Waiheke RSA, on Friday 17 March.

This is one of our most popular events, make sure you make a note in your diary now. Watch out for travel details in next week's newsletter.

HEADS UP

ANZAC day is looming and HMNZS Ngaona is in the process of getting the ball rolling. The Veterans and Ngaona Assn members as usual are more than welcome to attend and take part.

Padre may need a few readers. If you can assist, please contact Padre Michael Berry on michaelberry@gmail.com

If you wish to attend the parade, contact the Ngaona Coxn, CPOCSS Shane Kennedy, :09 446 1438, with your name and car registration number.

Muster at HMNZS Ngaona

Fall In - 0730

Step Off - 1745

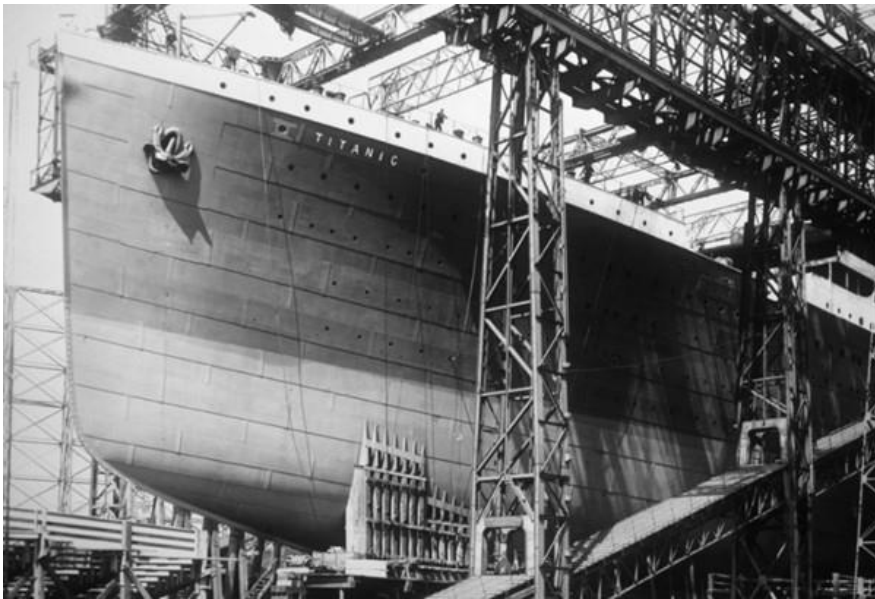
NEW SUBS FOR INDIA

Germany will pursue a \$5.2 billion deal with India to jointly build six conventional submarines in the country during Chancellor Olaf Scholz's February 25-26 visit, two Indian and two German sources said. The naval project is the latest attempt by a Western military manufacturing power to wean New Delhi away from its dependence on Russia for military hardware. India seeks to replace its ageing submarine fleet, with 11 of its 16 conventional submarines more than two decades old, and as it seeks to counter China's growing presence in the Indian Ocean.

SHIPYARD RE-OPENS

Monday marked the official completion of the first vessel to be constructed at Harland & Wolff's Belfast base in 20 years, as the famous shipbuilding firm unveiled its first Cory barge. The vessel is the first of 23 to be built for the London-based Cory Group. It is the first ship to be built at the iconic site since the Anvil Point in 2003. John Wood, group chief executive officer of H&W, said: "It is fantastic to walk round the fabrication halls in Belfast and see them being a hive of activity, with our apprentices putting into practice the skills they have learned from our experienced workforce." It has been fascinating to watch the adoption of new technology with our twin headed robotic welding line delivering production improvements by a magnitude of four to six times against conventional production and welding methods." I am very encouraged with the progress being made and it is the perfect steppingstone towards full scale shipbuilding."

The RMS Titanic was constructed by Harland & Wolff between 1910 and 1911.



ROYAL NAVY SHIPS IN NEW ZEALAND

HMS ESK

Built in Milwall in 1854 as a Highflyer class screw corvette.

Armament: 1 x 10-inch 84 pounder; 20 x 32 pounder. Later, 1 x 10-inch 84 pounder; 18 x 8-inch guns

Propulsion: Sail/Steam

Length: 192 feet

Beam: 36 feet 4inches.

HMS *Esk* served on the Mediterranean Station from 1854 until 1856 and was in the Black Sea during the Crimean War. She transferred to the East Indies Station serving there between 1856 and 1863 participating in the Second Opium War at Canton. She then transferred to the Australia Station.

HMS *Esk* participated in the Battle of Gate Pa and transported General Cameron and a number of troops from Auckland to Tauranga at the beginning of the campaign. Many of her ship's company were then to the Naval Brigade. The Brigade was made up of about 420 sailors from *Esk*, *Falcon*, *Harrier* and *Miranda* under the command of Lieutenant Charles Hotham. A 110-pounder gun from *Esk* was used to bombard the Maori positions. This gun was commanded by Captain Hamilton, the commanding officer of *Esk*. The pa was surrounded, and the bombardment began. Several of some one-hundred shells fired by the *Esk* gun overshot the pa and burst amongst the sailors attacking at the rear. Once a breach was made, sailors and troops entered the pa and fierce hand to hand fighting resulted. Leaving his gun, Captain Hamilton took control of a combined party of sailors and troops of the 43rd Regiment and entered the pa but was almost immediately slain with a bullet to the brain. Lieutenant Charles Hill, a survivor of

the wreck of the Orpheus was also killed in the action.

The British retreated from the pa having sustained numerous casualties and with many of their officers killed or wounded. HMS *Esk* also lost three other crew members.

In 1866 HMS *Esk* assisted in an attempt to lay a cable across the Cook Strait from Lyall Bay in Wellington. Unfortunately, when about halfway across the strait the cable became fouled in the machinery on the ship and the attempt was aborted.

HMS *Esk* departed the Australia Station on the 2nd of July 1867. She was paid off in the UK in 1868 and was broken up at Portsmouth in 1870.



On 29 April 1864, both a British army regiment and a naval brigade pummeled Gate Pa from two sides with big guns for eight hours and then, seeing no signs of life and thinking they had annihilated the Maori defenders, the British enthusiastically moved in to take the pa. To their great surprise, they were met by “very sharp fire” that immediately took down dozens of men. What the British hadn’t realized was that the Maori had hidden themselves in a series of trenches, similar to the foxholes later employed in World War I, and hadn’t been hit by the gunfire at all. Although the defenders were far outnumbered by the attackers, the latter suffered more than twice as many casualties during the assault, including most of their officers. Without commanding leadership, the assault forces scattered in disarray, leaving their dead and wounded behind. It is telling that after the British retreated, the Maori tended not only to their own fallen warriors, but also offered water and kindness to their wounded enemies.

Regards

Jerry Payne

President

HMNZS Ngapona Assn
