



## LONGCAST

15 September 23 - Ngapona Lunch at Glen Eden RSA

24 September 23 – Daylight Saving starts

13 October 23 - Navy Club

20 October 23 - Ngapona Lunch at Papatoetoe RSA

23 October 23 – Labour Day

10 November 23 - Navy Club

11 November 23 - Armistice Day

17 November 23 - Ngapona Christmas Lunch at Birkenhead RSA

8 December 23 – Navy Club

15 December 23 - Ngapona Lunch at Grey Lynn RSA

**Hi Folks**

**DEATH NOTICE**

It is with great sadness that I have to inform you that Gordon Cattermole (Mole) crossed the bar on Monday 21 August 2023, at the Ranfurly Hospital, Auckland.

Warrant Officer Writer, Gordon Cattermole R104366 (ex HMNZS Pegasus, RNZN, HMNZS Ngapona).

Gordon's funeral was held at the Naval Chapel, Devonport Naval Base on Friday, 25 August 2023.

RIP Mole.

### **SICK BAY**

Dick Tyson – Is in St. John's Hospital, Epsom

### **NGAPONA ASSN – MONTHLY LUNCH**

Our monthly lunch will be held this Friday, 15<sup>th</sup> September, at the Glen Eden RSA. This is your opportunity to meet with your shipmates and enjoy some fellowship.

### **COSMETICS**

Personnel can wear discreet make up and perfume/cologne in moderation. Discreet is defined as unobtrusive and natural in appearance. Personnel may wear a clear or pale nail varnish whilst in uniform, except for those personnel involved with food preparation. Chipped nail polish is not permitted. False eye lashes may be worn provided that they are trimmed, neat and are natural in appearance.

*(From HMNZS Ngapona's Weekly Orders – 10 Aug 23)*

### **NGAPONA CHALLENGE COIN POSSIBILITY**

The Ngapona Divisional Administrator is considering commissioning a ships challenge coin and would like to canvas for design proposals. If you are interested, please submit your ideas to this email address by 25 Sep 23.

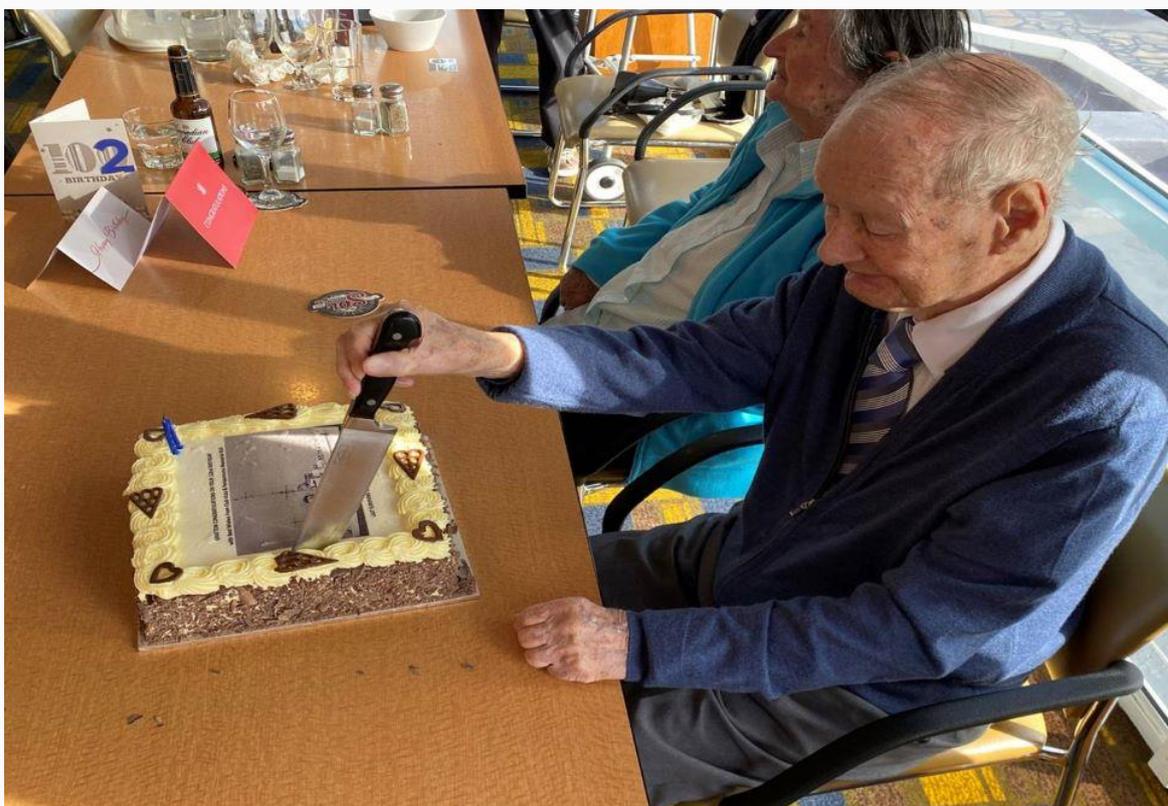
### **HMNZS OTAGO ASSOCIATION**

The HMNZS Otago Association was formed shortly after the Otago (F111) was de-commissioned, originally it was for the first commission crew, but it was soon realised that the association would have a very short life span, so it was then opened up to entitle all personnel who served aboard the Otago, throughout her life span. When HMNZS Te Mana was commissioned, with our pennant no (F111) the Association Constitution was amended to include all personnel who served aboard the Te Mana. When our little Sister, Otago (148) was commissioned, the association constitution was again amended to include all personnel who has served aboard her. The HMNZS Otago Association has around three hundred members, ranging from rear admiral through to ord/able rate. The association has its own web site, [www.hmnzsotago.co.nz](http://www.hmnzsotago.co.nz) on there, there is information on the ship, the association, membership forms, both hard copy & online, information on the next reunion etc. There is no cost involved with joining the association, we are still holding an annual reunion, sometimes a full three-day reunion, sometimes just a single day/evening reunion. In fact, the next reunion is being held at the Birkenhead RSA on Sat 7 Oct

2023. These are gatherings of old shipmates, meeting new shipmates, swapping stories of where the ships have been & what they have been up to. All in all, good times are had by all.

### **PASSING MARINE ENGINEER GRATTON LYNG**

Passing of Service No 10473 RNZN Marine Engineer Gratton Lyng. It is with deep sadness we announce on behalf of the family, the passing of RNZN Marine Engineer Gratton Lyng at 2030 Monday 14th August 2023 surrounded by his wife Mavis, family and love ones. Gratton had only just celebrated his 102nd birthday in May this year and was the last surviving WW2 veteran of the HMNZS Achilles. Gratton is survived by his wife Mavis, daughter Karen, son Dennis, and grandchildren.



### **RNZN COMMUNICATORS ASSN AGM**

The RNZN Communicators Association will hold its Annual General Meeting on Saturday, 23 September 2023, at the Birkenhead RSA, commencing at 1100.

### **INTERNATIONAL NOMINATION FOR 'SPARKY'**

The first of Damen's innovative new, all-electric RSD-E Tug 2513 class has been nominated for the 2023 Ship of the Year Award (formerly known as the KNVTS Ship of the Year Award). SPARKY is the result of six years of collaboration between Damen and Ports of Auckland Limited (POAL) in a quest for a

sustainable, zero-emissions tug suitable for New Zealand's unique environment. Delivered last summer, Sparky is Damen's first, fully-electric tug capable of 70 tonnes bollard pull that can undertake two or more assignments at full power before being recharged. This takes just 1.5 to two hours. The key challenge for Damen was how to install all the equipment for the E-Drive into a hull just 24 metres in length, with one of POAL's requirements being that that the vessel should be operable by two crew. This along with a range of other capabilities was achieved through mutual cooperation and continuous two-way communication between the two parties. The solution was to have four identical and independent battery packs, each in its own insulated, temperature-controlled battery chamber and directly connected to the propulsion system. The battery packs are designed to have a life equal to or longer that of the tug itself; 30 years / 30,000 cycles. Another advantage of having a dispersed energy source is that the propulsion system can be scaled up or down, and it will be used in other Damen tug types, both larger and smaller. SPARKY brings with it all the benefits of Damen's proven RSD Tug 2513 series. These include always 'bow first' operations and its Damen-patented twin fins skegs give it excellent manoeuvrability and course stability despite its small length to width ratio. The compact dimensions of the standard RSD Tug 2513 are also ideal for manoeuvring in tight harbours and locks, and the combination of a high freeboard, large bow height fore and aft, beam, low VCG and large flood angles make Sparky extremely safe. Other features include having the complete superstructure spring-mounted on the hull. This results in very low noise and vibration levels in the accommodation and wheelhouse. A high degree of automation across the engine room, switchboard room and battery rooms, combined with Damen's Human Machine Interface (HMI) linked to the central alarm, monitoring and control systems, makes it easily controlled by the two crew members. "We are delighted that the RSD-E Tug 2513 Sparky has been nominated for this prestigious award," says Erik van Schaik, Product Manager Tugs at Damen. "It has been a long time in the making and many parts of Damen have contributed to its development, alongside POAL. We believe that its introduction heralds a new chapter in harbour towage and a milestone in sustainable shipping. "Damen is one of three contenders for the award, which will be presented on Monday 6th November 2023 during the Maritime Awards Gala. This will be held in the Ahoy Rotterdam."



### **CHINA – PHILIPPINE DISPUTE**

The WWII landing ship tank (LST) BRP SIERRA MADRE, which was grounded on Second Thomas Shoal in 1999 to defend Philippine territorial claims. Last week, the Chinese government claimed that the Philippines promised to remove a small outpost from Second Thomas Shoal, a disputed low-tide feature in the Philippine exclusive economic zone. The Philippine government denied that it had any prior agreement to cede any of its sovereignty in the Spratly Islands, where China's maritime claims overlap with the Philippines' internationally-recognized waters. The object of China's request is the BRP SIERRA MADRE,

the wrecked World War II LST, serves as a makeshift Philippine base on the reef. China has attempted to blockade the outpost using a fleet of China Coast Guard and Chinese maritime militia assets, which regularly harass Philippine supply convoys with water cannon, laser illumination and aggressive manoeuvring. China's foreign ministry has ordered the Philippine government to remove the base and "restore" the reef. In a statement this week, the China Coast Guard even suggested that the Philippine government agreed to remove the wreck back in 1999, the year that the vessel was driven aground. "I'm not aware of any such arrangement or agreement that the Philippines will remove the ship from its own territory, in this case, the BRP SIERRA MADRE from the Ayungin Shoal [Second Thomas Shoal]," responded Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos, Jr. on Wednesday. "If there does exist such an agreement, I rescind that agreement now." An official in Marcos' National Security Council, Jonathan Malaya, called on China to name the person who made such a promise and prove that it happened. "They are the ones making this claim; therefore, it is their responsibility to back up their claim," he told reporters. "Insofar as we're concerned, we have not and will never sign or agree to anything that would in effect abandon our sovereign rights and jurisdiction over the West Philippine Sea, in particular Ayungin Shoal." The rhetoric marks a steep change in relations between the two nations. Former President Rodrigo Duterte emphasized closer relations with China, and he spoke of accepting China's assertive presence as the price of avoiding war with a superior military. The relationship with Beijing changed quickly under Marcos, who has emphasized ties with the U.S. and has approved new base facilities for American forces on Philippine territory. The government recently launched a media campaign to show the Chinese blockade at Second Thomas Shoal, and now that the regular convoy run-ins with the China Coast Guard have been widely publicized, there may be less room for accommodating Beijing in the Philippine public square. On Wednesday, a top Philippine Coast Guard official accused China's apologists of treason. "If you are a Filipino, whether in government or private sector, regardless of your politics, defending and making excuses for China's aggressive behaviour should deem you unpatriotic, and a traitor," said PCG spokesman Cmdr. Jay Tarruela in a social media post Thursday. "While I recognize freedom of speech as an important right guaranteed by our constitution, it should not be misused as a means to justify unpatriotic actions by acting as China's mouthpiece. "While China asserts that it has a historical and legal basis for ownership of the Spratly Islands and the surrounding waters, the Permanent Court of Arbitration in the Hague rejected its sweeping claims in 2016, including any claim to Second Thomas Shoal. Beijing rejected the court's decision and has ignored it. "There is no grey area because the arbitral tribunal expressly ruled that Ayungin Shoal [Second Thomas Shoal] is a low tide feature forming part of the exclusive economic zone of the Philippines," retired Philippine Supreme Court Associate Justice Antonio Carpio told Rappler. "There is no legal dispute as to the ownership of the oil, fish, and gas. It belongs exclusively to the Philippines."

BRP SIERRA MADRE may be a fitting symbol of resistance. She was built in six weeks in Evansville, Indiana in 1944, one of the 170-plus LSTs that the Missouri Valley Bridge & Iron yard contributed to the war effort. She served with distinction in the Pacific theatre, and the U.S. Navy reactivated her in 1966 for service in Vietnam, where she supported helicopter gunships and patrol boats in the Mekong Delta. At the end of the war in 1975, she brought 3,000 Vietnamese refugees to Subic Bay, and she was gifted to the Philippines in appreciation for assistance with the evacuation.

## **BALTIC SEA EXERCISE**

Major naval drills about to start in the Baltic Sea involving some 30 ships and more than 3,000 Western service members will for the first-time practice how to respond to a Russian assault in the region, Germany's navy chief said on Friday. "We are sending a clear message of vigilance to Russia: Not on our watch," Vice-Admiral Jan Christian Kaack told reporters in Berlin. "Credible deterrence must include the ability to attack." The two-week Northern Coasts exercise, set to start Sep 9, will see troops from all NATO countries on the Baltic Sea, plus soon-to-be member Sweden and non-Baltic allies the U.S., Canada, the Netherlands, Belgium and France, train side by side. They will practice amphibious operations and strikes from sea to land. The U.S. navy will send the MESA VERDE into the drills, Kaack said, a ship of more than 200 meters (656 ft) length, designed to transport and land some 800 marines in an amphibious assault. Securing the sea routes through the Baltic Sea is another focus of the exercise that will take place off the coasts of Latvia and Estonia. "Finland and the Baltic states depend to almost 100% on the maritime supply routes through the Baltic Sea," Kaack noted. "Should the Suwalki Gap be blocked – and this can be done easily as there are only two roads and one railroad line – then we are left with the sea routes only, and that's where we will then have to make our way through." The Suwalki Gap, a narrow land corridor of some 65 kilometres (40 miles), is the only connection linking the Baltic states to Poland and NATO's main territory in Europe.

*Source: Reuters*

## **AUCKLAND ROCKIES**

In 1995 Lt Cdr John McEwan produced a 400-page book on the history of the Naval Reserves in New Zealand. This well researched book gave the history of the founding of Ngapona and its activities up to 1995. John has started researching the period 1995 to 2020. He needs help with any historical material, including photographs and medallic recognition for that period. If you are able to assist, please contact John; [john.mcewan@xtra.co.nz](mailto:john.mcewan@xtra.co.nz) The intent is to have the book complete and ready for sale for the Ngapona Centenary in October next year.

Your help is need **NOW!**

## **PLEASE NOTE**

It has been decided that the weekly newsletter will now go out on a monthly basis, the Monday before our monthly lunch.

I hope you have enjoyed the weekly dits over the last ten years and I look forward to keeping in touch on a monthly basis.

**FROM THE EDITOR**

Regards

**Jerry Payne**

Editor

HMNZS Ngapona Assn

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