



LONGCAST

10 December 22 – Navy Club (Saturday)

16 December 22 - Ngapona Assn Christmas Lunch at Birkenhead RSA

18 December 22 - Neptune Service, DNB at 1000

25 December 22 – Christmas Day

26 December 22 – Boxing Day

27 December 22 – Christmas Day observed

Hi Folks

NGAPONA ASSN – CHRISTMAS LUNCH

Our Christmas lunch this year will be at the Birkenhead RSA on Friday, 16 December. This will be an excellent meal, but we need to know numbers for the caterer. Thanks to those who have already replied, but we need some more. Just reply to this email with names and numbers attending. (It will only take you a couple of seconds!)

NGAPONA ASSOCIATION – HELP REQUIRED

The Association Committee is concerned that the attendance at our monthly lunches is slowly declining, and we should be looking at ways to address this trend. Below are five questions that we would like answers to. With your help we can keep the Association operating as a vibrant organisation for the enjoyment of our members.

Please reply to this email with your answers – your help would be appreciated.

- a. What other activities would you like the Association to do instead of our monthly lunches for you to attend?
- b. Would you attend every second month for lunch, or have the present arrangement of monthly lunches?
- c. If we held only two functions in a year, would you attend both of them?
- d. Would you prefer to have only one venue to go for lunch, or go to a different venue each month?
- e. What are the main inhibitors resulting in your decision to not attend monthly lunches?

MEMORIAL SERVICE - HMS NEPTUNE

Memorial Service – 81st Anniversary of the Sinking of HMS NEPTUNE

Sunday 18 December 2022, 1000

St Christopher's Chapel, Devonport Naval Base

Rig: 1BW (negative swords)

A memorial service to remember the sinking of HMS *Neptune* will be held at St Christopher's on Sunday 18 December at 1000. I know there are some members of the Ngapona Association who like to attend this service.

As in previous years, there are opportunities to be involved in the service. As the base is still quietly opening up, we are just going for the 'simple but meaningful' approach with the service. We always need ode reciters and readers though. There will be morning tea following the service. It would be helpful if we had an idea of numbers, so RSVPs to this address would be appreciated.

michael.berry@aucklandanglican.org.nz.

On 19 December 1941, HMS *Neptune* sank after hitting a mine off the coast of Tripoli in the Mediterranean. All but one of the 764 personnel aboard lost their lives. Amongst the crew were 150 New Zealanders, many of whom were reservists. This event represents the largest loss of New Zealand life at sea and

forms a significant event in the history of our Navy and especially of our Naval Reserve.



ST BARBARA'S DAY

Yesterday was St Barbara's day. St Barbara is the Patron saint of all the Gunners, Sappers, Tunnellers, Miners, Armourers, Sailors, Firefighters and those in danger of sudden death.

EIGHT TYPES 26 FRIGATES FOR RN

HMS *Glasgow*, the first of eight Types 26 Frigates, being moved from land onto a submersible barge before being floated off downriver. BAE Systems say that over the coming days, the ship, currently weighing nearly 6,000 tonnes, will undertake a series of complex manoeuvres that will move her from BAE Systems' Govan shipyard, onto a barge before being towed downriver to a deep-water location in the West of Scotland and lowered into the water. The frigate will then be brought back upriver to Scotstoun to continue fitting out. "Once in position, the float off will involve the base of the barge being slowly submerged over a number of hours until HMS *Glasgow* fully enters the water. She will then return to BAE Systems' Scotstoun shipyard further along the Clyde, where she will undergo the next stages of outfit before test and commissioning."



UK DROPS FUNDING OF FUTURE TYPE 32 FRIGATE AND MULTIROLE SUPPORT SHIPS

The UK Royal Navy command formally “withdrew” an equipment plan to fund and develop its nascent Type 32 Frigates and Multirole Support Ships (MRSS) judging them to be “unaffordable,” a National Audit Office report has revealed, at least for now. The decision was made in July 2022, but only made public on Tuesday upon release of the watchdog’s “Defence Equipment Plan 2022-2032” document. The annual report reviews the MoD’s long-term financial planning by examining procurement, infrastructure and operational costs — in some ways similar to the US Government Accountability Office.

AUSTRALIAN CAPE CLASS PATROL BOATS

Cape Class Patrol Boats (CCPBs) were built by Australian ship builder Austal for the Australian Border Force to replace the ageing fleet of Bay Class patrol boats. The Australian Government approved the funds for the replacement of Bay Class fleet in the 2010-11 Budget. The customs and border protection issued a request for tenders in July 2010. Austal was selected as a preferred bidder in June 2011. Austal was awarded a \$350m contract in August 2011 for eight Cape Class boats. Under the contract, Austal is responsible for providing design, construction and in-service support for the vessels. The CCPBs are deployed across the Australian exclusive economic zone (EEZ) to conduct security and surveillance operations. The fleet prevents unauthorised maritime access, piracy, maritime terrorism, marine pollution, illegal foreign fishing, unlawful import or export, and illegal activity in protected areas. The fleet is operated by the Border Protection Command to support its various partner agencies, such as the Australian Fisheries Management Authority, Australian Federal Police, Australian Maritime Safety Authority, Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service, Department of Immigration and Citizenship, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, and Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities. The CCPB incorporate a monohull design. The vessels are equipped with a high degree of surveillance technology. Each boat allows the simultaneous launch of two high-capacity response tenders (7.3m Gemini sea boats) to carry out rescues. The patrol boats are fitted with a motion control system for improved passenger comfort. The system consists of two roll fins and two trim flaps. The vessels can operate in more rigid sea conditions and travel longer distances than the current customs' fleet. The Cape Class is provided with gun mounts to install deck-mounted machine guns. It has an overall length of 57.8m, a beam of 10.3m and a draft of 3m. Each ship can carry a crew of 18. Accommodation facilities are provided for government officials and customs, as well as border protection officers.



RUSSIA'S EXPULSION PROVES COSTLY

The expulsion of Russia from the world cargo market is proving to be expensive to western freight concerns after Moscow's invasion of Ukraine in February, reports IHS Media. Maersk, in its first-quarter results released this week, put the price of "disengaging from all activities in Russia" at US\$718 million, with almost half of that linked to unwinding its 30 per cent investment in Russian port operator Global Ports International (GPI). Maersk said it was writing down all assets, which in addition to the GPI stake, involved writing off stranded containers, bad debt, employee-related costs, and exiting two warehouses and a cold storage facility. Part of Maersk's withdrawal from Russia is the winding down of its weekly AE19 sea-rail service launched in August 2019 that connected Northern Asia countries with North Europe via the trans-Siberia express line. All major carriers, except Cosco, suspended all bookings to and from Russia and Belarus. Estimates put the number of western containers affected at 10,000 TEU, valued at \$63 million.

Source: Schednet

TOMAHAWK MISSILES FOR JAPAN?

The reason why the Japanese government started considering the introduction of land attack cruise missiles is deeply related to the cancellation of the deployment of Aegis Ashore in 2020. Originally, Japan's basic stance has been to respond to the threat of ballistic missiles from North Korea with Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD). However, following the cancellation of the deployment of Aegis Ashore, which was supposed to be a key component of the BMD, then Prime Minister Shinzo Abe stated during a press conference on August 28, 2020, regarding his retirement as prime minister: "We will examine whether we can truly protect the lives of the people only by improving interception capabilities." This statement is believed to indicate his willingness to pursue the possession of some kind of offensive capability. Subsequently, in response to the significant progress in the technological level of North Korea's ballistic missile development, the Japanese government has been studying ways to enhance deterrence, and on December 6, 2021, Prime Minister Fumio Kishida stated in the Diet: "In order to protect the lives and livelihood of our citizens, we will examine all options, including so-called enemy base strike capability, in a realistic manner without ruling out any options. We will fundamentally strengthen our defense capabilities with an accelerated pace."

Source: NavalNews

NEWSLETTER

Last week was the final in the series of New Zealand Victoria Cross recipients. A new series will begin shortly, so watch this space. The following article was submitted by one of our Committee members. Many thanks!!

ROYAL NAVY SHIPS IN NEW ZEALAND

HMS ALLIGATOR

Atholl class sixth rate Launched at Cochin, India 29 March 1821, commissioned 1822.

Armament: 28 guns

Upper deck- 20 32 pounder carronades

Quarterdeck- 6 18 pounder carronades

Foc'sle- 2 9 pounder guns

Length: 113 feet 8 inches

Beam: 31 feet 6 inches.

Complement: 175

Note 1: In the rating system of the Royal Navy used to categorise sailing warships a sixth-rate was the designation for small warships mounting between 20 and 28 carriage-mounted guns on a single deck, sometimes with smaller guns on the upper works and sometimes without. It thus encompassed ships with up to 30 guns in all.

Note 2: A carronade was a smaller gun than a cannon but fired the same size ball. It was a stubby barrel-sized lethal deck gun.

Captain George Robert Lambert RN, was to command the *Alligator* from her commissioning until she was paid off in 1835 and hence was in command while the ship was in New Zealand waters. He was to retire as an Admiral in 1864. *HMS Alligator* served about Australia and New Zealand during 1834 and was present at Waitangi, saluting the raising of the first national flag of New Zealand in March of that year. However 1834 was to prove to be an historic year for the *Alligator* as it was involved in the rescue of the crew and passengers of the barque *Harriet*, wrecked off Cape Egmont 29 April 1834. Using three ship's boats, all crew and passengers made it to shore safely to a place now known as Harriet Beach. One of the shareholders in the *Harriet* and on board at the time, was John Guard. He was accompanied by his wife Elizabeth, and their infant children John and Louisa. Unfortunately, local Maori became aware of the survivors and subsequently attacked them. All were captured following a struggle in which 12 were killed. Including Elizabeth Guard's brother. At some point, and in some manner, negotiation between the survivors and the Maori resulted in John Guard and some others being permitted to leave, in order to raise a ransom to be exchanged for the freedom of those left behind. They sailed one of *Harriet's* boats to Cloudy Bay in the South Island and from there took passage to Sydney in the

Joseph Weller. Subsequently the Captain of the *Joseph Weller* agreed to take the ransom to Moturoa near New Plymouth, in order to secure the release of the remaining captives, however he was blown off course and eventually reached Port Jackson instead. The ransom could not be paid. Meanwhile, Governor Bourke in Sydney, being made aware of the plight of the survivors of the *Harriet* dispatched *HMS Alligator* and the Government schooner *Isabella* to enact a rescue. On board were three officers and sixty men of the 50th (Queens Own West Kent) Regiment of Foot, detachments of which had been employed as escorts to prisoners being transported to Australia.

It was thus, some four to five months after the captives were first taken, before the rescue party were to reach the area. On her arrival, *HMS Alligator* dropped anchor but declining weather caused the ship to run to shelter to a bay on D'Urville Island which was named Port Hardy (in honour of the Captain who served Lord Nelson). When the weather subsided, the ship returned to the Egmont area whereupon Captain Lambert took an influential chief as hostage. Eventually eight prisoners were released by the Maori, but these did not include Mrs Guard or her children. The prisoners were found to be half starved, full of vermin, nearly naked and frightened for their lives. On the 28th September 30 soldiers and marines attacked a pa where it was believed Elizabeth Guard was being held. The Maori fled taking Mrs Guard and her daughter with them, the son being held at another location by another tribe. However, two days later, Mrs. Guard and her daughter were exchanged for the chief being held in *Alligator*. Eyewitnesses have reported that she was calm and collected when rescued apparently having been well treated. On the 8th of October, having established the pa where the son was being held, the *Alligator* and the *Isabella* proceeded to bombard the site for three hours firing some 306 shots. Eventually, following the bombardment, the ships landed a strong force which included John Guard and his men. The force was approached by some Maori one of whom, (perhaps a chief), had the boy strapped to his back. One of the sailors grabbed the child and cut him free. The chief was immediately executed. The crew of the *Harriet* then took it upon themselves to extract revenge for the death of their shipmates by opening fire on the remainder of the natives. Thinking an order had been given to engage the Maori, the soldiers began firing also. A full-scale engagement ensued which may have lasted several days. Eventually order was restored and the landing party returned to their ships. Captain Lambert sailed to the Bay of Islands from where all of the crew of the *Harriet* except the carpenter, (who had been one held captive for the 4-5 months), took passage to London on the *Elizabeth*. Eventually the *Alligator* returned to Sydney with the Guard family on board.

This was the first engagement between the Maori and the Royal Navy, it wasn't to be the last.

HMS Alligator was to serve as a depot ship in Trincomalee in 1841, a troopship in 1842 and a seaman's hospital in Hong Kong in 1846. She was sold in Hong Kong in 1865.

Postscript: In 1835 a Committee of the House of Commons after investigating the affair found that excessive force had been used during the rescue.

Regards

Jerry Payne

Editor

HMNZS Ngapona Assn

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