

NAVY

T O D A Y

MANAWANUI ON
OPERATION CALYPSO

RETURN TO
TIMOR-LESTE

NEW DESIGN FOR
NAVY SWORD

EXERCISE RIMPAC



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I had always wondered what the world has in store for me outside of IT, and I've always been searching for that special thing where I can do the thing I love.

– Ordinary Cryptologic Technician Ling Wingate



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Front Cover:
View of USS BOXER from HMNZS AOTEAROA during an eight-hour replenishment at sea.



Yours Aye

Acting Chief of Navy



By the time this edition of *Navy Today* is released, I expect the name of the new Chief of Navy will have been announced. I look forward to supporting him as he transitions into the new role. It has been a privilege to be your Acting Chief of Navy for the past three months.

Reflecting on my time in the role I continue to marvel at the achievements of our people and what we, as a small but professional Navy, deliver for New Zealand.

I was very proud to be a part of HMNZS TE KAHA's successful force generation visit to Wellington in June. The ship's company did a fantastic job showcasing the ship's combat capabilities to Members of Parliament, government officials and the Wellington public. It was also a wonderful opportunity for the public to interact with our highly professional and well trained sailors who are at the very heart of our capability and the most important part of our Navy, and Defence Force.

Our professionalism in delivering outputs and developing our capability is reinforced by the outstanding job our sailors have done during Exercise RIMPAC 24. HMNZS AOTEAROA and its ship's company played a vital role sustaining naval platforms of participating nations, while HMNZS

MATATAUA's dive contingent operated and trained alongside our international partners. We also had the opportunity to lead Command Task Force 173, the "Tanker Task Force", where the strong leadership of A/CAPT Andy Dowling, RNZN was critical to Exercise success given the importance of maritime logistics.

I have been privileged to preside over ceremonies recently that acknowledge command within our fleet. These included the Change of Command for HMNZ Ships TE MANA and TAUPO, and the Maritime Training Group. Command is the pinnacle of any naval officer's career and I congratulate CDR Michael Peebles, CDR Chris Bone and LT Toby Mara for their appointments as they become the kaitiaki of their shipmates.

In keeping with the theme of achievement, I was delighted to be involved in the NZDF Medic Graduation recently and acknowledge the success of our Navy junior medics who will now embed within the naval system as they become practitioners in the maritime health domain. We also have seen the recent graduation of 10 new RNZN divers, including the significant milestone of our first two females to join the Clearance Diver Trade, after an arduous five-month course. Both of these graduations show the emphasis that we put, and will continue to put, into the professional training and development of our people as we regenerate our Navy.

In July our Navy hosted the new Secretary of Defence, Mr Brook Barrington, where he was welcomed onto Te Taua Moana Marae and then during the day saw first-hand the professionalism, skill and passion of our sailors. This visit allowed us to demonstrate to the SECDEF that the Navy is a credible and capable force, future focussed, and a valued partner in the Pacific and Indo-Pacific with global reach.

The recent announcements with respect to cost savings and reprioritisation will have a direct impact on what we do as a Navy and

will undoubtedly create a level of uncertainty for our people. Whilst I acknowledge this is an unsettling time for many of us, the message is very clear, all of the NZDF – including Navy, Army and Air Force – must change the way we go about our business to ensure we can continue to deliver government directed outputs.

You should have a level of confidence and assurance that the senior NZDF leadership are committed to ensuring the impacts of any decisions are worked through as we navigate these challenging times.

I can assure you that your Navy will continue to go to sea and deploy on operations. We will maintain the focus on training and development of our people, and we will continue to deliver outputs at sea and ashore. Every dollar we spend, and everything we do, must be focussed on our core purpose – delivering maritime combat capability for the people of New Zealand.

As we navigate this period, it is important that we continue to look into the future and focus on the next Navy. When we look forward, it is clear the focus for our Navy lies within the Defence's Capability Plan and major activities such as the Maritime Fleet Renewal and Future Naval Base programmes. Options for fleet replacement present a significant opportunity for transformative change, allowing us to redefine our Navy, refine our operating concepts, and enhance the broader Naval and NZDF system. These programmes will occur within an evolving global environment, while also incorporating numerous technological advancements that are reshaping how navies operate worldwide.

As long as we remain focused on delivering maritime combat capability for the Government of New Zealand, we will continue to fulfil our role in supporting our nation, and safeguarding and advancing our national security interests.

He heramana ahau.

Commodore Andrew Brown
Acting Chief of Navy

RIMPAC 2024: INTEGRATED AND PREPARED



HMNZS AOTEAROA takes on fuel from commercial tanker MV ALLIED PACIFIC, proving a new capability.



Positivity, professionalism and lots of fuel at the pump sums up New Zealand's role in RIMPAC's 'tanker taskforce', with replenishment tanker HMNZS AOTEAROA earning praise for top interoperability at the world's largest maritime exercise.

HMNZS AOTEAROA arrived early to Exercise Rim of the Pacific 2024 (RIMPAC 2024) in Hawaii on June 23, ready to work with four other replenishment ships as part of Combined Task Force 173, RIMPAC's combat logistics task force.

This year CTF 173 came under the command of Acting Captain Andrew Dowling RNZN, only the second time the task force had been commanded by a foreign nation (Australia in 2022).

AOTEAROA's early arrival meant it could conduct Replenishment at Sea (RAS) trials with commercial tanker MV ALLIED PACIFIC, both alongside and then at sea.

These trials were a build up to a brand-new capability for AOTEAROA, in being able to receive fuel from a commercial tanker while at sea, in order to then dispense the fuel to customer warships. It's a sought-after capability, says A/CAPT Dowling.

"In terms of interoperability there's been some really good wins for the Royal New Zealand Navy," he says.

"We've been able to demonstrate the capability to take fuel at sea from a US commercial tanker, which at the moment only the US and New Zealand can do. And that means we can offer that capability to our partners, mainly to the US."

AOTEAROA received a total of 13,386,000 litres of F76 Diesel Fuel and passed a total of 6,384,000 litres of F76 and 460,000 litres of F44 AVCAT fuel to customer ships both inside and outside the exercise.

Overall AOTEAROA conducted RAS operations with 16 partner ships during the exercise, including a concurrent RAS with USS STERETT and HMCS VANCOUVER.

HMNZS AOTEAROA conducts a dual Replenishment at Sea with the US Navy's Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS STERETT and the Royal Canadian Navy frigate HMCS VANCOUVER.



From the top: HMNZS AOTEAROA with the 44,000-tonne Amphibious Assault Ship USS BOXER during an eight-hour replenishment at sea.

US Navy Chief of Naval Operations, ADM Lisa Franchetti, is greeted by CDR Rob Welford after arriving on board HMNZS AOTEAROA by helicopter during the sea phase of Exercise RIMPAC.

A Seamanship Combat Specialist in Force Protection mode aboard HMNZS AOTEAROA.



For many, a highlight was AOTEAROA's biggest ever tasking – replenishing USS BOXER, an Amphibious Assault Ship sailing to Asia for an operational deployment. On transit from San Diego, the 44,000-tonne ship and its aircraft needed refuelling before carrying on across the Pacific.

When a US Navy tanker suddenly became unavailable for the task, AOTEAROA stepped up.

It meant BOXER had to be stationed 45m off AOTEAROA's port beam for 8.5 hours while close to 3,000,000 litres of diesel fuel and 350,000 litres of aviation fuel were pumped across.

Not only was it the longest replenishment AOTEAROA had ever undertaken, it was also the largest ship they had replenished since commissioning four years ago.

A/CAPT Dowling says without CTF 173, RIMPAC would not be possible.

“We'd have to bring the ships into port all the time, probably every three or four days, and that's not a realistic way to conduct maritime operations.

“I think everyone has a really good positive perception of New Zealand and really like our professionalism. RIMPAC is incredibly important, not just for RNZN but for the New Zealand Defence Force. It gives us the opportunity to work with not just Five Eyes partners, whom we would traditionally work with, but those other nations across the Pacific who believe in keeping good law and order, about keeping those economic highways clear, which we all depend on in the Pacific.”

Commander Rob Welford, Commanding Officer AOTEAROA, says they've added significant value to the exercise.





From the top: A New Zealand Defence Force team takes on the Hawaii Harlequin Rugby Club during RIMPAC sporties. The Kiwis, in borrowed kit, are in stripes.

Beach volleyball action during the RIMPAC sports competitions.

HMNZS AOTEAROA berthed against a backdrop of fireworks during 4th of July celebrations.



“I’ve been in navies for coming up to 38 years now, and I’ve never heard anyone complain about having too many tankers. We’re 20 per cent of the effort of the support ships to keep this exercise going. Without us, each of those other ships would have to work that much harder.”

Outside of the at-sea programme, AOTEAROA’s personnel took part in RIMPAC’s hotly contested sports competition in Pearl Harbor, participating in football, volleyball, basketball, swimming, golf, softball, strong arm, bench press, beach volleyball, bowling and a 5km run finishing 7th overall. Both the Women’s Touch and Men’s Rugby teams played friendly matches against the Hawaii Harlequin Rugby Club at Diamond Head with the locals hosting a BBQ on completion.

AOTEAROA and HMAS SYDNEY hosted a reception aboard AOTEAROA, closing the night with a Māori Culture Group performance, and a Ship Open to Visitors day, receiving more than 2,500 guests.

While at sea, a highlight was a visit from Admiral Lisa Franchetti, Chief of Naval Operations, the most senior operational Officer in the US Navy. ADM Franchetti was taken on a tour of the ship where she engaged with members of ship’s company who explained their roles and responsibilities on board and the capabilities of the ship.

AOTEAROA now continues its Operation Crucible deployment to Asia, including its support of the United Nations Security Council sanctions against North Korea.





MATATAUA DIVERS AMONG THE BEST AT RIMPAC

■ By LTCDR Brett Fitzgerald
Public Affairs Officer (Navy)

HMNZS MATATAUA's Survey, Search and Recovery Dive Team completed a successful contribution to the salvage diving component of Exercise RIMPAC 24.

During the exercise the team embedded within a multi-national contingent featuring dive teams from the United States, Peru, Canada, Mexico, Netherlands and Republic of Korea.

The exercise kicked off with familiarisation diving utilising a variety of different systems, many of which were new to the RNZN team. This was one of the highlights for Chief Petty Officer Diver Darren Mills who stated, "It was a great opportunity to trial new bits of equipment. It gave us a chance to see what else is out there and the capabilities our partners have".

One of the most innovative pieces of equipment was the Diver Augmented Visual Display (DAVD) system, an augmented-reality headset with a heads-up display that Ensign Cambell Julian described as being "like the EDITH glasses from the *Iron Man* movies". The first RNZN diver to use the system, Able Diver Morgan Frisbie-Jones, was impressed at how the infrared sensor allowed him to see areas the naked eye could not due to poor visibility in the basin.

The Kerie Cable was another new tool that the team trialled on the exercise. The system consists of a long, flexible thermic hose that can cut through objects underwater or on land.

Following the familiarisation phase the various dive teams were deployed to carry out a real life tasking in the area; to locate and recover lost mooring chains in Pearl Harbor. With multiple countries deploying at the same time with similar taskings there was a little bit of friendly pre-Olympic international competition to see who could recover their target first. The RNZN detachment was the first to successfully complete their mission, taking home some bragging rights, much to the delight of the team's OIC Lieutenant Christian Lloyd.

*Photography (above water):
CPL Maddy Butcher*

A highlight for many of the team was the chance to conduct dives on the USS UTAH, the first ship to be sunk in the 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor. The team were tasked with conducting a surface sonar scan in order to retrieve images of how the ship is lying on the seabed. Once completed the team had some time to explore the wreck and take in some history. Ensign Sam King called the experience “humbling”.

The team also embarked on the USNS GRASP, a rescue and salvage ship. From there the RNZN dive team conducted surface supplied diving on the wreck of the NASHUA (YTB-774) a large harbour tug that was sunk in 2012 to act as a dive training site. The purpose of this tasking was to determine the condition of the wreck, particularly measuring the lean to assess the need for preservation work to be conducted in the future.

LT Lloyd said the exercise was a success. “We got to trial new equipment, operate in a new environment and most importantly positively engage with our international partners.”





SUCCESSFUL SOUTH PACIFIC DEPLOYMENT FOR HMNZS MANAWANUI

Commander Yvonne Gray, Commanding Officer of HMNZS MANAWANUI, has now led her ship through two Operation Calypso deployments, both packed with highlights.

The ship returned to New Zealand on 10 June after an eight-week deployment that included working alongside Royal Australian Navy forces on the east coast of Australia, disposing of Second World War bombs in Vanuatu, marching in a street parade in Tonga and surveying areas of the sea floor in Ha'apai, Tonga.

For CDR Gray, the highlight was completing the disposal of five 1000lb bombs located in around 20 metres of water in Port Vila harbour, Vanuatu.

Five Maritime Explosive Ordnance Disposal (MEOD) divers from the expeditionary unit HMNZS MATATAUA used low order charges to crack the bombs open, filling them with sea water and rendering them safe with minimal disturbance to sea life and the reef (see *Navy Today July 2024*).

“From the planning at Headquarters Joint Forces in New Zealand and at MATATAUA, through to the liaison and cordon support from the Vanuatu Mobile Force, Vanuatu Police, and the Vanuatu Ports and Harbour Authority, this was an effective and efficient operation that really demonstrated the team effort between the New Zealand Defence Force and Vanuatu officials,” said CDR Gray.

MANAWANUI transited to Tonga to undertake a survey of a 41 square nautical miles area in Ha'apai at the request of the Government of Tonga, with the ship's Survey Search and Rescue (SSR) team completing it in just 72 hours.

Able Hydrographic Systems Operator Nicole Anderson, MATATAUA, led the team.

“The hydrographic survey will improve safety of navigation after the eruption of the Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai volcano and subsequent tsunami in January 2022. We were joined by two hydrographers from the Republic of Fiji Navy and one from the Tongan Royal Navy, which gave them some valuable experience and meant they were part of an important task which will benefit all Pacific nations and mariners when navigating in and around Tonga.”

Photos: PO Chris Weissenborn



Embarking MATATAUA's SSR and MEOD teams shows the value of the 'plug and play' dynamic between MANAWANUI and MATATAUA, says CDR Gray.

"At various phases of this operation, we've also been joined by the Mine Counter Measures team, Uncrewed Surface Vessel team and the Littoral Manoeuvre Craft crew, in order to successfully complete distinct operations. This illustrates the flexibility and significant capability that enables the Royal New Zealand Navy to conduct our tasks and helps inform what this might look like in our future fleet."

MANAWANUI took part in the Royal Tonga Navy's 50th anniversary celebrations. The ship was part of a formal Fleet Review and sailors from the ship and the Royal New Zealand Navy Band marched as part of a parade through the capital Nuku'alofa.

Acting Chief of Navy, Commodore Andrew Brown, was in Tonga to acknowledge the milestone, and to also represent the NZ Defence Force during King Tupou VI's birthday celebrations.

CDRE Brown also took the opportunity to meet with some of his counterparts and discuss a range of topics relevant to the region.

He says Tonga is a key partner nation to New Zealand, and our attendance at these events demonstrates the continued importance that is placed on the strong and deep relationship that we have as Pacific nations.



“Our Navy has a growing and vibrant Pasifika community with many of our sailors coming from, or having a strong cultural connection to Tonga, bringing unique perspectives to Te Taua Moana.”

The way her sailors conducted themselves in Tonga was one of the proudest moments for CDR Gray.

“During the celebrations for King Tupou VI’s birthday and the 50th Anniversary of the Royal Tongan Navy I watched the ship’s company interacting with sailors from other navies. They struck just the right balance of professionalism, having fun and being awesome defence diplomats.

“Operation Calypso is a special one. It gives us the opportunity to work with and for our South West Pacific neighbours, giving us the ever-important opportunity to learn from each other.”





Able Communications Warfare Specialist Hamish Maguire

All going well, after four years sailors receive their first Good Conduct Badge, to wear on their dress uniform.

Navy Today catches up with Able Communications Warfare Specialist Hamish (Maggs) Maguire aboard HMNZS MANAWANUI, newly presented with his badge.

"I'm 24 years old, from Te Kohanga in Waikato. I attended Tuakau College nearby.

"What brought me to the Navy? When I was growing up I was quite often at my grandparents' in Coromandel during school holidays and I always went fishing with my granddad. It gave me an appreciation and love for being on the water. And as corny as it sounds I've always looked up to the military and the sacrifices they make.

"I joined the Navy in 2020, in Basic Common Training intake 20/1. The hardest part of BCT is how mentally and physically draining it is. You have to have mental toughness and push on through it.

"As a Communication Warfare Specialist, my role is to provide secure, reliable and effective communications, using radio, satellite, visual and Information Technology. I really like being on the headset with another ship, although I lean more towards the flags and visual side of things. I rarely get a chance to do it, though.

"Because we have to maintain continuous communication, we're required to work rostered shift rotations (Watchkeeping) at sea.

"My usual day on-board starts with getting a shake at 2300 for my middle watch which runs 0001–0400. I do my four hours on the bridge, go back to my pit (bed) and get a 'make amend' sleep until 1000—occasionally interrupted by whole ship activities.

"I wake up, have a shower (dhobe), get dressed and by 1030 I'll be in the Communication Centre conducting standard operator checks (SOCS). At 1125 I'll cut away to have lunch prior to going on afternoon watch from 1200–1600, another four hours on the bridge. Dinner at 1730 and at 1800 I do a set of cleanos (cleaning up). About 1825ish depending on time and rounds I'll play a game of beanies in the junior rates mess, then by 1945–2000 another dhobe and back to my pit to get some sleep prior to middle watch again.

"In four years, some of my best moments have been working time with the Canadians while on board HMNZS TE MANA. Another was thankfully not getting gunner of the watch duty for a hands to bathe just off Hawaii in 25 degree water, and enjoying a splice the mainbrace (tot of rum) ceremony in Hawaii.

"One thing I'm particularly proud of was being given the opportunity to hoist and lower the New Zealand White Ensign during Anzac Day commemorations in Canada.

"My advice to someone in Year-13 at college is, if you're thinking about joining the Navy I would recommend joining earlier rather than later although it's never too late to join – especially in Comms. You're going to meet some amazing people, visit some gorgeous places and it's a good way to spend your younger years travelling and seeing the world with your friends."

“

My advice to someone in Year-13 at college is, if you're thinking about joining the Navy I would recommend joining earlier rather than later although it's never too late to join – especially in Comms.”

RECREATIONAL DIVER CHASES NAVY DREAM



After 16 years in Information Technology, Ling Wingate, 42, says she “took a leap of faith” and joined the Royal New Zealand Navy earlier this year.

She graduated from Basic Common Training in June and is now branch training as a Cryptologic Technician (CT). But as a passionate recreational diver with qualifications up to Advanced Wreck Diving, she’s hoping a career as a Navy diver might be an option one day.

“Why did I decide to join the Royal New Zealand Navy? To live my dreams and realise my goals,” she says.

On the IT side of things she was working in the industry as a Development Operations engineer. “You know all those cybergeeks you see in movies? It’s kind of how I describe it. It’s very nerdy.”

Ordinary Cryptologic Technician Wingate started getting serious about diving during a holiday in Fiji. “I’d been diving before but this time it was like a light bulb went off in my head.” Since then she’s obtained her PADI (Professional Association of Diving Instructors) qualification as well as SSI qualifications (Scuba

Schools International) and is now qualified in Open Water through to Rescue Diver, and ‘Deep’ (40 metres) and ‘Advanced Wreck’.

“I had always wondered what the world has in store for me outside of IT, and I’ve always been searching for that special thing where I can do the thing I love. Sure, IT facilitated an expensive hobby, especially towards the end of my career, but I used that hobby to work towards a whole new future. I started researching careers, and top of the list for me was Navy.”

She had held an idea of joining the Navy since she was a teenager, but she wanted a good reason. “I love everything the Navy stands for, but for me I didn’t want to just join and then stick it out. I wanted it to have meaning. I wanted to do something that would be incredibly rewarding.”

She was working to overcome a foot injury and in fact was turned down on her first application on medical grounds. “I dug deep, sent an appeal through, got through the fitness tests. Everything that was asked of me, I did it.”

She was inevitably twice the age of most of her Basic Common Training intake. “You do end up being the mother of the group and I had no problem being that, especially to the 14 other females in my intake. They were fresh out of home, and really, it was completely new to all of us. I went through the journey with them and we came out as equals.”

She enjoyed the physical challenges and the discipline during training.

“Those weeks really brought out a stronger side to me and I’m so proud of how I’ve grown.

“When I graduated, I bawled my eyes out. I think it was just the journey I had been through, and what was to come – it just mean everything.”

While her aspiration is to become a Navy diver one day, she says she intends to pursue her Cryptologic Technician trade to the very best of her ability.

“It took me 12 months to get here and I’ll be damned if I don’t give it my all. There’s so much value in the CT trade. It’s a whole new challenge in a whole new world. Diving I can do anytime and I would love to end up doing it for the Navy, but who’s to say I don’t stay in my CT role?”

Her advice to others wanting to join the Navy is to stay true to yourself.

“Remember that Basic Common Training is only four months out of your life and that the best is yet to come. You will grow to meet the best friends you will have forever and grow to be an amazing person. Remember that there will be lows but the highs will outweigh all of them and if you find yourself a bit low, remember why you are here and why you signed up.”

FROM ARMY RESERVE TO WARFARE OFFICER



Te Mihinga Rose Brock stood out as an Army Reserve private showcasing the Defence Force over recruitment webinars. Now she wants to develop her own path as a Royal New Zealand Navy warfare officer.

Sub Lieutenant Brock, formerly with 3/6 Battalion, graduated from Junior Officer Common Training at Devonport Naval Base in December.

Her family comes from the Far North, from Utakura Valley in the Hokianga. After finishing at Carmel College, she enrolled at the University of Auckland in 2019, undertaking a degree in criminology and history. She joined the Army Reserve Force at the end of that year.

"I always wanted to join the military, but I wanted to study at uni first. When I heard about Army Reserves, I jumped to join, first as a gunner within Artillery but later corps changed to infantry. A lot of my friends from basic went that way, and the training exercises they did seemed much more up my alley; on the range for shooting development, urban warfare drills, and so on."

During the Covid pandemic she undertook rotations at Managed Isolation and Quarantine Facilities while studying full time. "It was really cool meeting people from different units and services."

After university she got a full-time job at a recruiting firm, which prepared her for her next posting. "My Regimental Sergeant Major asked a few of us to recruit for our Battalion, as our numbers were down. I started recruiting for 3/6, then Army Reserves, then I got a Short Term Regular Force Engagement contract and ended up going to places, being a bit of a 'poster girl' for a wahine in a combat trade."

The role expanded to SLT Brock organising and hosting nationwide recruiting webinars and a few other events to encourage youth and wāhine. "We'd get Army Reservists from different trades to tell their stories, how they can balance being in the Army and being a cop, or a lawyer, or a nurse, or a parent. It was daunting at first, but very rewarding and ended up being quite a successful endeavour. We'd have information evenings, where people would korero with us and ask questions."

As a private, SLT Brock wanted more responsibility, and looked at commissioning as an officer.

"You know, it's a funny story. Early on I hadn't considered Navy, because I was terrified of the idea of being on a sinking ship. The Army was more about being rough and a bit dirty. My dad is a pilot and I liked the idea of aviation. So I never imagined myself being in either the Army or Navy, but I'm so glad I did!"

She liked the multi-tasking roles taken up by Navy officers. "There's that balance of combat training but being very involved on a ship's bridge, having that position of authority. Someone suggested being a warfare officer. And I could always pursue a career as a pilot at a later stage."

As an officer, she likes the idea of building a rapport with her team, and being approachable if they need help or need to speak up.

"If I was able to give advice to my younger self, I would say – as clichéd as it sounds – that there's no such thing as a closed door. Joining the Army and then the Navy have been the greatest experiences of my life. Take every opportunity as it comes and if you want it badly enough, you'll find a way to overcome the challenges you face. Don't let anyone tell you otherwise."





NEW COMMAND FOR HMNZS TAUPO

■ By Simone Millar
Senior Communications
Advisor (North)

At just 29 years old, Lieutenant Toby Mara is in command of Royal New Zealand Navy Inshore Patrol Vessel HMNZS TAUPO.

The ship undertakes maritime surveillance, patrols, boarding operations, navigation training and search and rescue response, around New Zealand's 15,000-kilometre coast and out to the 200-nautical mile limit of the country's Economic Exclusive Zone.

But even at such a young age, Lieutenant Mara brings a wealth of knowledge to the bridge and the important work the ship's company undertakes.

The Aucklander joined the RNZN with no sea-going experience, but quickly learned about Navy life with his first posting to HMNZS OTAGO, as a trainee Watchkeeper. During this time, he travelled throughout the South West Pacific, circumnavigated New Zealand and conducted several deployments to the Sub-Antarctic Islands and Ross Sea.

LT Mara then posted to HMNZS TE MANA with the primary goal of obtaining his 'Warfare ticket', the final tick he needed to become a qualified Officer of the Watch. During this time he travelled from Hawaii, through South East Asia, and eventually onto Australia, taking part in several international exercises and wider defence engagement opportunities. Although just a Sub Lieutenant at this time, the exposure was invaluable and resulted in LT Mara gaining his final qualification and officially finishing his time as a trainee Watchkeeper.

But he says his posting to HMNZS HAWEA, the Navy's other Inshore Patrol Vessel, as a Navigation Officer will ultimately put him in good stead to steer TAUPO.

"Having experience in HAWEA makes me very comfortable with pilotage and how the ship manoeuvres. I think it will set me up well to supervise new Officers of the Watch on their basic course" he says.

And it's the 24-strong ship's company that makes this posting exciting for LT Mara.

"This will provide me an opportunity to mentor junior warfare officers and lead a small group of skilled RNZN sailors, taking the ship around New Zealand to demonstrate to the wider community what the Navy is capable of," he says.

"Within the Navy it's significant to undertake command as a Lieutenant as people are more comfortable talking to peers and if I can act as conduit right to the top, it's a powerful connection," he says.

LT Mara has also previously posted to Operation Protect, the New Zealand Defence Force deployment to staff Managed Isolation and Quarantine Facilities during the Covid pandemic. He worked at Task Unit North as the Current Operations Officer, before posting to Headquarters Joint Forces New Zealand.

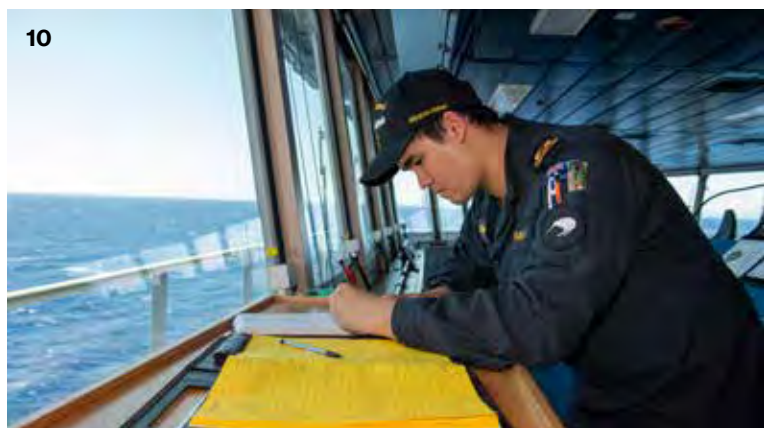
In July 2023, LT Mara was posted to Operation Pukeko in Bahrain under Combined Task Force 150, a Counter Narcotics Task Force which at the time was under French command. It proved a successful six months that resulted in approximately half a billion USD worth of narcotics being seized and destroyed.

Lieutenant Mara takes command of TAUPO from Lieutenant Samara Mankelov.

OUR PEOPLE

1. Newly appointed Secretary of Defence, Brook Barrington, poses for a picture with CDR Julie Simpkins, CO HMNZS PHILOMEL and CDRE Andrew Brown, Acting CN, during a visit to Devonport Naval Base.
2. ASCS William Matheson ready to serve canapes alongside Leading Hand Joanne Harris RAN during HMNZS AOTEAROA's cocktail function in Hawaii.
3. The Māori Cultural Group aboard HMNZS AOTEAROA at Pearl Harbor, following the ship's RIMPAC cocktail function.
4. HMNZS MANAWANUI ship's company proudly represent New Zealand at the King of Tonga's birthday celebrations.
5. ACH Janelle Barnhill sorts through HMNZS MANAWANUI's food storage.
6. LET Daniel Black becomes HMNZS TAUPO's latest Leading Hand.
7. CDR Bronwyn Heslop, Commanding Officer HMNZS CANTERBURY, promotes the Ship's Loadmaster, Isaac Leonard, to Acting Corporal.
8. Members of HMNZS MANAWANUI's catering team, ACHs Joshua Radford and Hope Fraser.
9. AET Kayla Ansley at work.
10. SLT Campbell Maitland, HMNZS AOTEAROA.
11. CAPT Jon Beadsmoore (Acting MCC) presents LT Samara Mankelow with a MCC Commendation for her 'Outstanding Contribution to our Navy'.
12. POSCS Scott Robertson takes position during the Change of Command Ceremony for HMNZS TAUPO.





THE RIGHT THINGS LINE UP AT THE RIGHT TIME



Commander Elizabeth Lewer, Commanding Officer HMNZS WAKEFIELD, talks to *Navy Today* about bucking the trend, mental health and handling North Korean mischief.

“Don’t be stupid, Elizabeth,” said the careers advisor. “We all know you’re going to be a lawyer.”

At CDR Lewer’s high school in West Auckland, successful young men and women were expected to go to university. She was about to buck that trend.

“There was some surprise at Massey High School when I said I was going to join the military, and people were a little taken aback. For me, I liked the variety and the opportunities a military career offered in terms of practical skills. There was the idea of higher learning at a later date, and I wanted to travel.

“My mum was very much an advocate of not getting into debt for education. She said to me, there are plenty of opportunities in the world – you just have to find them. The Navy came up one day and I started following that track. I never looked back.”

Today, CDR Lewer is the Commanding Officer of HMNZS WAKEFIELD, taking the ‘ship’ on 21 June from Commander Roger Saynor. WAKEFIELD encompasses Naval Staff at Defence Headquarters in Wellington but also includes other naval personnel posted to the Wellington region.



Left: CDR Elizabeth Lewer with her family following her Change of Command ceremony at Defence House.

She joined the Navy in 2005, choosing the Maritime Logistics Officer (MLO) trade.

"I was 18 years old, I had my 19th birthday in the bush on a tramping expedition. The MLO trade really resonated with me, it sounded like a way to help people, to have an enabling mindset. I liked the idea of the variety in the job."

She was posted to WAKEFIELD after graduation; her current posting is her third time there.

"I came through as a midshipman, and people who were senior to me all had priority for sea-going billets.

Is that unfair? "I'm not sure that military life is 'fair'. I think there is a certain level of luck that comes with postings. The right things line up at the right time."

For her, WAKEFIELD was one of those. "I wouldn't have changed it for the world. Coming to Wellington set me up for success in ways that going to sea first wouldn't have. I got to know so much more about how the naval system works. If I had to talk to someone, about medals or pay, I knew who to talk to. It gave me a level of benefit as a junior officer."

She did post to sea in HMNZS RESOLUTION, then HMNZS ENDEAVOUR, followed by a Deputy Maritime Logistics Officer billet in HMNZS CANTERBURY.

"I went through a mental health crisis at the time, and I was posting on and off ships as a result. That was a horrific time, but it was a shaping time in my life and thinking about it, I'm not sure I would change it. What scares people

about mental health is thinking your career is over. I fought for my career. I'm an example of knowing that just because something has gone wrong in your career, doesn't mean your career has to stop."

She thinks of it in practical terms.

"I know it's genetic. My brain doesn't always provide me with the chemicals I need. When I was quite young I didn't know how to handle it. I'm older, more experienced, and I think of it like type 1 diabetes – you take insulin."

In 2017 CDR Lewer was the Operations Officer on Operation Monitor in the Republic of Korea for 12 months, working with the United Nations Command Military Armistice Commission.

"It was a really trying time, and it felt like the two Koreas were probably the closest to war as they had been when I arrived. Then President Trump entered North Korea in 2018 and there were immense changes happening. I was conducting inspections along the demilitarized zone and it was very stressful. I also conducted a number of investigations into incursions into South Korea."

She was awarded a Chief of Defence Force commendation for her outstanding work in this posting, before posting to HMNZS TE MANA.

"I love sea time. I would go back to sea in a heartbeat. It's the one downside to promotion in my branch."

Back ashore she completed both a Bachelor degree and her Masters of Strategic Studies from Victoria University. She was promoted to

Commander on posting as the Personal Staff Officer to the Chief of Defence Force, her most recent role.

How's it going as CO WAKEFIELD? "It's been two weeks and everyone else has asked that question. It's kind of been like coming home. The Defence Force has changed so much in 19 years but I've come back and I see people I know.

"Our work at Naval Staff is about striving to make the Navy a better place. It's hard work, and it's different to hard work on a ship. But the dedication of the people here continues to amaze me. WAKEFIELD has such influence that extends beyond Defence House, and we really have to use that influence to make this place the best it can be. Let's set the tone for sailors and officers, and seek maritime excellence. It's that simple."

Have there been other options?

"I think it would be unwise, in the world according to me, to have all my eggs in one basket. It's totally reasonable for people to look outside.

"But when I have done that, I have always come back to Navy. For me, it's the people and the opportunities, and the pleasure of interacting with so many other military. I like the intent of the organisation, and I like the culture."



RETURN TO EAST TIMOR

Commander (rtd) Warren Cummins returned to Timor-Leste last month, nearly 25 years after he sailed HMNZS CANTERBURY into Dili Harbour during the country’s fight for independence. He tells his story to historian Captain (Hon) Dr Andrew Macdonald.

As CANTERBURY eased into the night time waters off modern-day Timor-Leste in late 1999 the tension ratcheted up as several Indonesian warships challenged the Kiwi frigate and the Australian vessel it was escorting, said Warren Cummins, CANTERBURY’s former Commanding Officer.

“Very tense, watchful and highly strung time – need to be calm, guide the ship reaction at a strategic level,” said Cummins of the potentially high-stakes moment in September 1999, off the eastern tip of Timor-Leste.

CANTERBURY, a Leander-class frigate with a crew of 245 sailors, positioned herself between the troop- and supply-carrying HMAS TOBRUK it was escorting and the challengers, which never closed within two kilometres.

The moment passed, but for Cummins, then aged 38 and now 63, this incident and the fabric of his next two months’ time in the tropical waters around Timor-Leste become a cornerstone of his career with the Royal New Zealand Navy.

“It was my most significant command experience without question – everything before and after paled into insignificance compared to it really,” said the Matamata man, who now calls Narrow Neck in Auckland home.

CANTERBURY and TOBRUK sailed unscathed into Dili harbour the next day, 29 September 1999.

Now, in July, roughly 25 years on, Cummins is returning with the veteran-led Back to Timor group, to revisit the places associated with his service.

E A S T T I M O R



Left: MAJGEN Peter Cosgrove, Commander Interfet (and later Governor General of Australia) addresses personnel aboard HMNZS CANTERBURY, with CDR Warren Cummins at right.

Opposite page: HMNZS CANTERBURY and HMAS TOBRUK near East Timor.

At the back end of 1999, the south east Asian nation formerly known as East Timor, occupying half of the island of Timor, was plunged into violence when a referendum supported a breakaway from Indonesia.

Between 1999 and 2002, New Zealand Defence Force deployed more than 5,000 personnel there as part of the International Force East Timor (Interfet), a non-UN peace-making task force to address the unfolding security and humanitarian crisis.

In May 2002, East Timor moved to shrug off its past when it became the first new sovereign state of the new century, the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste.

Returning to Cummins' story, CANTERBURY was deployed under the Interfet (Australian) order of battle rather than the Interfet (New Zealand) one.

"Went ashore and in-briefed in an equally tense atmosphere," wrote Cummins. "No overt conflict, just highly tense and wary troops providing calm in a shattered physical environment."

After the independence vote, pro-Indonesian militia groups began attacking civilians.

Dili – the capital of the emerging nation – was the epicentre of the violence, which spread throughout the country. About 1,400 civilians died, and some 500,000 people were displaced from their homes. Entire towns were destroyed.

Five New Zealand soldiers died during New Zealand's deployment to Timor, including Private Leonard Manning, killed in action in July 2000.

Once he had been in-briefed, CANTERBURY eventually departed Dili harbour to undertake its core maritime tasking.

During the course of her deployment, all of CANTERBURY's crew managed to put boots on Timor-Leste to support operations, including as security for the first UN post-election food distribution and getting the first toilet working again in downtown Dili.

As the book *Operation East Timor* (Crawford, Harper 2001) noted, CANTERBURY's deployment, which ended early December 1999, followed a routine of patrols of the Timor-Leste coast, with brief visits to Darwin.

E A S T T I M O R



One of the marks of our success [was] that everyone felt that they had contributed in some small way to a move back towards normality”

For much of this, she was a guard ship for Dili, protecting the area of sea and airspace of the capital's harbour. Early on, she acted as the air-control ship for aircraft landing at Komoro Airport.

“Maritime threat level was high, but with good operating conditions as most small craft had been displaced,’ wrote Cummins, who had previously deployed to the Persian Gulf region. The Seasprite helicopter was used frequently for reconnaissance.

“Threat from Indonesians was unknown – with some probing and activity which kept us on alert. Great sonar conditions which allowed for CANTERBURY’s capabilities to be higher than expected (and with good results from it),”

“Operations close to the coast were a bit fraught – not a littoral [i.e., near-shore] ship so stuck out like a sore thumb! Despite that we had protection so took the firm stance when needed.”

In mid-October, CANTERBURY escorted TOBRUK all the way to Suai, a tasking CDR Cummins sought so the Kiwi ship could help land the supplies and equipment for 1st Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment.

‘It was important that the Royal New Zealand Navy be directly involved in this significant New Zealand operation,’ said Cummins, adding CANTERBURY otherwise sat outside the Kiwi order of battle.

The ship also fostered a good working relationship with the Interfet (NZ) order of battle, which was under the command of then Brigadier Martyn Dunne.

“Went ashore and did that when possible as the operational tempo shifted from potential warfighting, to national rebuilding,” said Cummins.

“We also provided a measure of relief for some of the land-based troops, able to join the ship for a day while the work party were ashore.”

Overall, Cummins rated CANTERBURY as a ship with the right capabilities for the high-medium environment in which she was deployed in the waters around Timor-Leste.

“One of the marks of our success [was] that everyone felt that they had contributed in some small way to a move back towards normality [in Timor-Leste],” he said.

Above: CDR Warren Cummins greets CAPT James Kaio (now COL) on the fo’s’cle of HMNZS CANTERBURY.

Proudly Kiribati



Photos: CPL Naomi James

Proudly Kiribati

Able Communications Warfare Specialist Ashley O'Connor-Palmer says she loves to represent her I-Kiribati side and educating people on her country. She tells her story to *Navy Today*.

"I spent my early childhood in Fiji and my family moved to New Zealand. I joined the Navy at the beginning of 2020 because I wanted to help people.

"I'm a Communication Warfare Specialist. I handle military messaging, satellite and tactical, visual and radio communications. I've served aboard frigate HMNZS TE MANA in Canada for almost a year while it was being upgraded, and participated in operations in Fiji in 2023 while aboard HMNZS CANTERBURY. I also had the opportunity to represent the NZDF in the Solomon Islands for the 80th Anniversary of Allied Landings at Guadalcanal in 2022.

"I'm I-Kiribati and New Zealand European. Being a mix creates a lot of confusion as I do not look I-Kiribati at all. But I still love to represent my I-Kiribati side and educating people on my country as it's still quite unheard of to most people.

"I-Kiribati people are very compassionate, friendly and extremely hard-working people who love to have a laugh.

"I have a really strong appreciation for our language and culture – especially the dancing! As a child it was something I enjoyed the most. It was hard work learning and training for it, but that is what made it rewarding. It's a very unique style which follows our national animal, the frigate bird.



"Serving in the Royal New Zealand Navy, I wear my uniform with the same pride that I would have when wearing traditional Kiribati wear.

"Respect is a value most I-Kiribati people practise and something I bring every day to my work. We treat our elders with the highest respect due to them living a long life and the knowledge they pass on to their family and children. At work, I respect those of higher rank. It's not quite the same – I wouldn't go out of my way to cook and clean for them personally like I would for my grandparents or great aunts and uncles! But my cultural values definitely taught me discipline and to learn to be able to follow orders when given them without complaining.

"My mother has been a big influence. She brought my sister and me up on I-Kiribati cultural values and practices. For that I am incredibly grateful.

"I keep my language alive by going out of my way to learn more, speaking it at home and teaching my niece and nephew, so they can grow to appreciate the culture and language.



I think if my younger self could see me now she'd be proud but a bit confused because I initially wanted to join the Army. I'm sure she'd think how cool it is that I have the opportunity to live abroad for work and get to travel for a living. I'm so proud to have had the opportunity to do that in uniform."

NEW DESIGN FOR OFFICER'S SWORD

The Royal New Zealand Navy has commissioned a new Officer's sword that combines the coronation of King Charles III with unique elements of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Last year Rear Admiral David Proctor, then Chief of Navy, was offered an opportunity from the Navy's sword manufacturer, UK-based Pooley Swords, to reinvigorate the design embossed on the Officer's sword.

The new sword still maintains traditional elements on one side of the blade, but now includes the silver fern and Southern Cross. The opposing side adds Māori design incorporating elements of Aotearoa and its seafaring origins.

His Majesty the King's Cypher, announced in September 2023, features on the sword, replacing the EIR cypher. It is one of the first instances of the King's cypher appearing on a Defence Force item.

Lieutenants Te Naawe Tupe and Codi Wehi-Ngatai worked together to create the Māori designs. LT Tupe had previously designed work for Navy units, including the stingray (whai) seen on the unit badges for the Leadership Development Group.





The first design represents two birds, Mumuhou (left side) and Takereto (right side). These birds are known by Māori as the two birds who guided waka to Aotearoa. They would foretell the winds, calm seas and fine weather.

The next design represents the Navy's vessels and its people.

The long koru on the left hand side represents current ships commissioned in to the RNZN, with the koru beneath representing officers and sailors currently serving. This design is reflected on to the right hand side. The reflection is meant to symbolise the past ships of the RNZN, and those that previously served.

These koru are linked, and mirrored, symbolizing where people are going is in direct relation to where the Navy has been. This design acknowledges the past, and present.

Beneath that is a whale's tail beneath, a representation of journey. Māori mythology tells how the first Māori came to New Zealand on the back of a whale. This symbol brings protection in and around the water, and imbues strength.

The design continues and incorporates the underlying values of the Royal New Zealand Navy, and the New Zealand Defence Force, with Tū Kaha (Courage) on the left, and Tū Tika (Integrity) on the right.

This surrounds the design of Tangaroa, the Māori God of the sea, depicted by a Taniwha/Manaia who is wielding a trident. Tangaroa exercises his control over the ocean, its tides and its creatures. Māori show respect to Tangaroa, and acknowledge his presence for safe travel to their next destination, and for the resources he provides.

Mumuhou and Takereto are reflected again beneath Tangaroa, again as a guiding symbol for the decisions that

we make, with respect to the core values, and the guidance needed to traverse Tangaroa.

Finally, the base of the sword represents the two other core values of Tū Tira (Comradeship) on the left side and Tū Maia (Commitment) on the right.

LT Tupe says he and LT Wehi-Ngatai were very keen to be involved.

"It was something we wanted to leave our mark on," he says. There have only been three swords issued so far: one gifted to the Governor General and two issued respectively to Minister of Defence Sword of Honour recipients graduating from JOCT 23/02 and JOCT 24/01.

He is particularly proud of the manaia design.

"That representation of Tangaroa is quite unique and makes the sword Navy-centric. I don't have a sword myself, but seeing this in service is enough for me."

The Changing of the Crown

According to the College of Arms, United Kingdom, the form of stylised Crown used in His Majesty's cypher is what is sometimes termed a 'Tudor Crown' and differs from the stylised Crown used by the late Queen Elizabeth II which, with its higher and dipping arches, was closer in form to St Edward's Crown.

In theory anything displaying a St Edward's Crown should be replaced with a Tudor Crown. During the coronation of King Charles, changes were made to ceremonial uniforms to celebrate the new monarch.

The College of Arms says the new cypher and new rendering of the Crown will be introduced gradually, similar to what happened in the 1950s and 1960s as Queen Elizabeth II's cypher came to replace that of King George VI.





Left: LT Te Naawe Tupe with the new RNZN Officer Sword.



104 year old veteran reflects on WWII

■ By Laura Jarvis, Senior Communications Advisor (South)

At 104 years old, World War Two Naval Officer Lieutenant (retired) Keith Williamson, says his time at war was a part of his life unlike anything else he experienced.

Studying to become a teacher at Otago University as the war broke out, by 1941 the 21 year old was thousands of miles away from home, awe-inspired at the completely different world he found himself in.

Eighty years on, he still reflects on the memories he made and the friends that were lost.

After completing initial seaman's training in Suffolk his first posting, was to HMS STORK, commanded by famed U-boat hunter, Captain Frederick 'Johnnie' Walker.

He would quickly come to find that no amount of training would prepare him for the real battle.

Escorting merchant ships between Liverpool and Gibraltar, STORK would often be found at the front of a convoy of up to 50 vessels, waiting for a sign from ASDIC crew in the bowels of the ship that they were in danger.

"When the alarms bells started ringing and everyone sprung up, your initial reaction, well quite plainly it was fear."

"I remember a Captain once said to me, "don't be afraid of being afraid" and that stuck with me. It's normal to be scared and it would have been ridiculous to claim that you weren't. As the battle proceeded, those feelings subsided because you had a job to do."

"To start with, my job was ammunition rating, in other words, passing a shell onto the next bloke."

However, LT Williamson described the moments in between the battles as almost peaceful, sailing through seas with Vera Lynn songs playing over the loud speakers.

"I remember when it came to the mess, they favoured me, 'Kiwi first' sort of thing. They were very good in that way."

"We had no trouble sleeping to, you were that tired that from the moment you got into your hammock, you were asleep in no time."

Even so far away from home, his down-to-earth New Zealand nature was always apparent.

"When things were quiet, it was my job to take Captain Walker his early morning cup of tea and I would say good morning sir, and some remark about the weather, he was a really nice man to deal with," he said.

"When we got a new Captain, I was told that I was too familiar for an ordinary seaman. I should just say Captain, sir."

LT Williamson then commissioned as an officer and travelled to America where he would be part of the Combined Operations, working on Landing Craft Infantry – Large (LCI-L) ships with the army to deliver troops to theatre.

Sailing around the North Atlantic Ocean and Mediterranean Sea, the weight of his new title was heavy on his shoulders. Keith was no longer delivering cups of tea but responsible for up to 200 soldiers.

"The tensest moments were just before putting troops ashore. You were waiting in the dark, low on sleep and you start to wonder, what's going to happen next."

"After our first landing there was some surprise, I remember saying to myself, I'm still alive."

Eventually, his ship was laid up and in-between postings, Keith was granted three months home leave, arriving back in Dunedin just before VE Day.

"One moment you're a naval officer and the next minute you're back in the classroom, you just accepted it."

"I used to think, was it even really me?"

Keith Williamson holds photos of two close friends, Ray Graham and Stuart Read, who died during World War Two.

Photos: CPL Sean Spivey



Sailor inspires next generation

Able Cryptologic Technician Georgia Brouwer was enthusiastic about promoting the Royal New Zealand Navy almost from the beginning.

During her basic training she assisted Defence Public Affairs in a mini-documentary on 'The Longest Day', a key testing point in sailor training. Not long after she graduated, she was asked if she'd like to become a recruiting ambassador.

The Recruiting Ambassador Programme involves shore-based Royal New Zealand Navy personnel who make themselves available to promote the Navy at schools and careers events.

"My first event was in 2022 in Rotorua, while I was doing my trade training. I loved doing it so much. It gets you out of the office, talking to young people about the potential of the Navy as a career, something that's a bit outside the 'normal'."

The focus tends to be senior students, year-11 to year-13.

"I get all sorts of questions. A lot of people are worried they're not fit enough and want to know if they have to be really fit. They've seen movies and they're scared basic training is going to be a harsh environment. They worry that they don't have a say in their career. They want to know about educational requirements. And they ask me about my job, and I tell them that you have to join to know about my trade.

"I tell them that it's a work environment. You get medical benefits, annual leave, sick leave, time off for bereavements. You're taken care of, just like any other job in the public sector."

She's given talks in Auckland, Taupo, Whakatāne and twice in Rotorua. The last is her favourite location because that's where she's from.

"I had no idea what I was going to do after I finished school. University seemed like the only option. It took me a couple of years to work it out. I love being in the Navy – no day is the same, that's for sure."

She's also handled phone queries for Defence Recruiting. "I've since met two people that I spoke to over the phone, who have now joined the Navy."

"It's such rewarding work. In Rotorua I've met students I remember from when they were in primary school, and they're now in high school. They remember who I am. It's like talking to the next generation about what their options are."





TRENTHAM MESS SETS A TABLE FOR NAVY

■ By CPOMED Aaron Gibbs

In the heart of Trentham, a project born out of respect and camaraderie has taken shape, symbolising the unity and dedication of the New Zealand Defence Forces.

In November 2019, a new member joined the Trentham Warrant Officers' & Sergeants' Mess, bringing with them a vision that would soon become a cherished addition to the establishment. The mess, a hub for members of the New Zealand Army, Royal New Zealand Air Force and Royal New Zealand Navy, serves as a vital space for networking and houses an extensive collection of service memorabilia.

However, it lacked a certain piece that represented the RNZN collectively. This gap sparked an idea that would lead to a labour of love and a testament to the tri-service fraternity.

The initiative aimed to create a table that would not only serve as a functional piece of furniture but also as a symbol of the RNZN and collective spirit of the New Zealand Defence Force. The journey to realize this vision was supported by generous contributions from various individuals and groups. Dave "Pirate" Pilgrim, a name synonymous with generosity within the community, donated a rimu countertop and his Bosun's call.

HMNZS PHILOMEL Boats contributed a small white ensign, while the Trentham Junior Ranks Mess provided the table frame, which Staff Sergeant James Caird meticulously restored. The project was a collaborative effort, with many reaching into their pockets and hearts to donate cap tallies, coins, and funds.

Staff Sergeant Ray Barber played a pivotal role, dedicating his time and skill to assemble the table. His efforts were a personal sacrifice, much to the relief of his wife when the finished piece finally left their shed. The table was introduced to the mess on 14 June, taking pride of place under "Pussers Corner." Its design is rich with symbolism; the flag is displayed in a dynamic wave, capturing the essence of a flag fluttering in the breeze. A poppy adorns the table, serving as a poignant reminder of remembrance. An intentional blank space among the coins holds a silent promise to honour both the past and the future vessels of the Royal New Zealand Navy.

This table is not just a piece of furniture; it is a narrative of unity, a physical representation of the bond shared by those who serve. It stands as a place for reflection, conversation, and remembrance, a focal point where stories of valour and fellowship can be shared. The Trentham WO's & SGT's mess's new addition is more than a labour of love; it is a beacon of the collective identity and enduring spirit of New Zealand's service members.



Above: From left, WO1 Jason Rapana (Warrant Officer of The Mess and WO Chief People Officer), CPOMED Aaron Gibbs and WODR Lance Graham, Warrant Officer of the Navy.

Photo: POYDS Bridget Perry

50th Reunion Weekend

Join us for the 1/75 & 2/75 Intake (BCT's, WRENS, Apprentices, Officers) 50th Reunion Weekend!

17th–19th January 2025 at Devonport RSA

Friday Evening

1800–2000 Cocktail Party, dress is smart casual. There will be a presentation for those still serving and presentations of cap tally boards for those who have completed 20+ years. This is yet TBC but if interested submit names to Muzz Kennett (gmk.kennett@gmail.com) by 1 August.

Saturday Daytime

Visit to the naval base, with a possible ship visit. Bring photo ID for base entry.

Saturday Evening

From 1800. Dress Code: Smart Casual with a fun 70's twist! Dust off your flared pants, platform shoes and chunky jewellery. Sit-down meal with cash bar, dancing.

Sunday Brunch

From 1000 at the Navy Museum. Buy your own brunch at the Museum cafe.

Reunion Cost:

\$130 per head for both nights.

Deposit: \$50 required on registration by 1st October, with full payment due by the end of November. A \$20 late fee will apply.

Deposit or pay in full to Kiwibank 38-9012-0704292-10 (K Higgle Navy Reunion). Please put your name/rank/mobile as reference. Email: Kevlqvstofish@gmail.com with your name/address/rank/mobile number to cross reference payment.

MID-WINTER DIP

On Sunday 23 June 2024, several members of Dunedin Navy Reserve Unit HMNZS TOROA braved the elements and took part in the annual Mid-Winters Swim at St Clair Beach. Although some tried different approaches to keep warm, all agreed that it was cold with the air temperature being 8 degrees Celsius compared to the sea temperature of 9 degrees.

The hardy souls from left: AHST Kenneth Woodall, AMED Rob Annesley, CPOWTR Barry McCone, CPOWTF Neil Leonard, OMTO Max Spiers, OMTO Isabella Kennedy, OMTO Nora Paicu, and LT Cameron Ogle.



PROMOTIONS:

Congratulations on your promotion

Updated to 16 July 2024

LDR Dominic AITKEN

POMT(P) Mak AKANIA

A/LTCDR Calvin ANDERSEN

ENS John ANDERSON

SLT Jaz BENT

SLT Georgia BILBY

LET Daniel BLACK

AMT(P) Kori BROWN

ACWS Patrick DOWER

ENS James DUANMU

CPOSTD Samuel DYSART

SLT Alex EICHELBAUM

SLT Nick GEORGIEV

LCT Leah GILVRAY

LTCDR Nathanael HINTON

A/LMT(P) Liam HORNER

AMT(L) Jamie JOHNSTON

SLT Amos KAMO

LWTR Courtney KAPI

ENS Donald MCINTOSH

SLT Graham NELSON

POYDS Dennis NEPIA

SLT Thomas PEOPLES

A/POPTI Hamish PYNE

A/LNP Christian ROBERTSON-WALLIS

SLT Samuel RUCK

LEWS Euan SAPWELL

ACSS Paanga SMITH

POCT Taane TAPP

LWTR Dione TAURUA

ALSS Hosea TELEFONI

ENS Julian THOMPSON

PODR Te Mana TOHIARIKI

POMT(P) Kurt TURPIE

POET Brendon WATTS

POLSS Jacob WEBB

ENS Lucia WEST

LTCDR Olivia WEST

POET Jayden WILSON

15 ROUNDS

WITH LINDA MAHER



01

Job Title and description:

Campaign Manager, Events and Protocol Office. We get to be involved in most of the major ceremonies and events on base and beyond.

02

Date Joined RNZN:

September 2011.

03

Favourite ship(s) in the Navy

The Mighty OTAGO – but they're all special; I was taught not to have favourites.

04

Favourite moments in the job

Remembering I don't have favourites – It would have to be the people. It's a unique, diverse environment and to be able to be a part of providing a professional ceremony/event and knowing it all went well is pretty satisfying. Striving for perfection and getting better all the time! Every day is a learning day in this job.

05

Hometown:

Dunedin.

06

High School:

Queens High School.

07

Favourite book:

I'm an avid book reader, and like everything from psychological thrillers, to good old comfy chick lit, but some standouts of late include the *Tattooist of Auschwitz*.

08

Favourite movie:

The Green Mile – a lesson in never judging a book by its cover!

09

Favourite album:

A Hard one, I like the 'Hair' Bands and good old 80s Rock, so if I had to name one, it would be one of the Jimmy Barnes' albums.

10

Favourite song:

Sooooo many, played loud!!

11

Favourite holiday destination:

Somewhere warm, sunny, with blue water, white sand and coloured drinks with umbrellas in.

12

Outside of work, what's the one thing you enjoy doing?

That's an easy obvious one, it has to be badminton. I do a lot of volunteering at tournaments, both local and international, I also play – in a fashion!

13

What's something about you that not many people know?

A hard one, I'm a pretty basic 'what you see is what you get' kind of person, so you probably know most things.

14

A person that taught you a valuable life/Navy lesson... and the lesson was?

I started my NZDF career in FEC with the Engineers, and it was a real baptism of fire (I think the phrase they used often, was possum in headlights!), and I'm totally grateful that I did, they taught me resilience, they taught me courage, they taught me humility (yes believe it!), but most of all, they taught me how to be me in this crazy environment.

15

How would you describe the Navy in 10 words or less?

A happy madness and a constantly moving rollercoaster.



NZDF SAFETY AWARDS 2024

Let's recognise those who have improved health and safety in the NZDF this year.

Nominations close 6 September.

Visit the Safety page on the ILP, or email NZDFSafety@nzdf.mil.nz